

Appendix 3: Historic Environment Character Zones Assessments for Stone

This appendix provides an assessment of the historic environment for each of the Historic Environment Character Zones (HECZs) which lies around the market town of Stone.

It should be noted that the information and any recommendations contained within this appendix is subject to amendment should any new information become available.

For further information regarding the Historic Environment Record (HER); Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) and designated sites please contact:

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STHECZ 1 – Darlaston Grange (HECA 26a)

Summary

The historic environment comprises a well preserved 18th/19th century field pattern which is probably closely associated with the development of Darlaston Grange as a single phase farmstead in the early 19th century. The development of the landscape and the farmstead may have been carried out by the owners of the Darlaston Hall estate. An earlier road system survives fossilised within the two field boundaries and possibly as a cropmark to the west of the zone.

Medium to large scale development within the zone would have a significant impact upon the historic environment assets (HEAs). However, should development be planned for the zone there would be a need to address impacts upon and potential mitigation strategies for:

- the historic farm buildings at Darlaston Grange
- the impact upon the historic landscape character in terms of its regularity and its relationship to the farmstead and to the assets contained within STHECZ 3.
- The impact upon the legibility of the former road system which survives fossilised within the existing field boundaries.
- The potential for unknown below-ground archaeological deposits to survive.

Early consultation with the Cultural Heritage Team at Staffordshire County Council is advised.

Designations

No designated sites currently lie within or adjacent to the STHECZ.

Archaeological Character (Map 1)

Little archaeological work has been carried out within the zone to determine evidence of human activity between the prehistoric and early Saxon periods. However, the zone lies within the Trent valley and aerial photographic surveys carried out across the southern portion of this valley within the county have identified intensive human activity from the Neolithic period onwards. It is therefore likely that there was a degree of human activity within the zone during the prehistoric period.

Within the wider area there is evidence for human activity during the prehistoric period. Approximately 1.9km to the north two probable Bronze

Age barrows¹ lie within the Bury Bank hillfort. The hillfort itself has not been dated and although these monuments are usually associated with the Iron Age, some are known to have earlier origins. The presence of the hillfort suggests a centralised power base was present within the area from at least the late Bronze Age/Iron Age, which oversaw a dispersed settlement pattern across the landscape supporting the theory of woodland clearance from this period. The hillfort would have provided a cultural, economic and administrative focus for the surrounding communities. It is likely that any pattern of human activity which may have existed within the zone was similar in nature from the prehistoric period into at least the Saxon period.

Historic Landscape (Map 2)

The historic landscape of the zone is dominated by a surviving semi-regular field system of probable 18th/19th century date. It is possible that this represents a re-planning of an earlier field pattern or the new enclosure of either Unenclosed Land (heathland or common land) or woodland. The enclosure of this landscape is likely to have been associated with the Darlaston Park estate, the heart of which lies to the north of the zone (in STHECZ 3).

The surviving historic farmstead, Darlaston Grange, was almost certainly built to farm this landscape. It is of a regular courtyard plan and such farmsteads have been identified nationally as post dating the 1790s². Map evidence suggests that Darlaston Grange was built between 1817 and 1834-36. This particular farmstead plan is the most common form in Staffordshire and is spread widely across the landscape. Regular courtyard forms appear to represent a deliberate development aimed at improving agricultural productivity being taken forward by wealthy landowners. This supports the hypothesis that this farmstead may have been constructed by the owners of Darlaston Grange.

Historic mapping also suggests that the local road system was altered between the late 18th century and the late 19th century. It appears that the original alignment of the road to Yarnfield passed to the north of Darlaston Grange where it joined a road at Darlaston Green (see STHECZ 3); this still survived in the 1830s/40s, but had been removed by c.1880. The farm track leading south from Darlastonwood Farm (beyond the zone) probably formed another local road which continued south from its current end point to meet a road aligned north west – south east. Both of these roads existed in the 1830s/40s and survived until at least the mid 20th century, possibly going out of use at the time the M6 motorway was constructed. However, the line of both roads are fossilised within surviving field boundaries. The hollow way and possible quarry³ identified on aerial photographs on the western edge of the zone may relate to one of these former routes.

¹ Staffordshire HER: PRN 00601

² Lake 2009: 19

³ Staffordshire HER: PRN 04599

Yarnfield Lane running along the southern boundary of the zone to the south of Darlaston Grange was constructed between 1817 and 1834-6 and consequently forms part of the re-planning of the road system discussed above.

Historic Assets Summary Table

Survival	The zone has seen moderate disturbance through agriculture, but several historic environment assets (HEAs) survive; including the farmstead and the historic landscape character.	2
Potential	There are limited known HEAs, but this lack of knowledge could be due to lack of investigation rather than poor reservation.	2
Documentation	HER data	1
Diversity	The HEAs are limited in date, but include the built environment, cropmarks/fossilised roads and historic landscape character.	2
Group Association	There is probably a strong association between the origins of the farmstead and the well preserved field pattern. The former roads are likely to have determined the original location of the farmstead in the landscape.	3
Amenity Value	The historic environment could define a sense of place in terms of understanding the development of the surviving 18 th /19 th century landscape – particularly when read in conjunction with STHECZ 3.	2
Sensitivity to change (to housing expansion & infrastructure for SBC)	The historic environment is highly sensitive to medium to large scale development. Such development would impact upon the relationship between the farmstead and the historic landscape character.	3
Overall Score		15

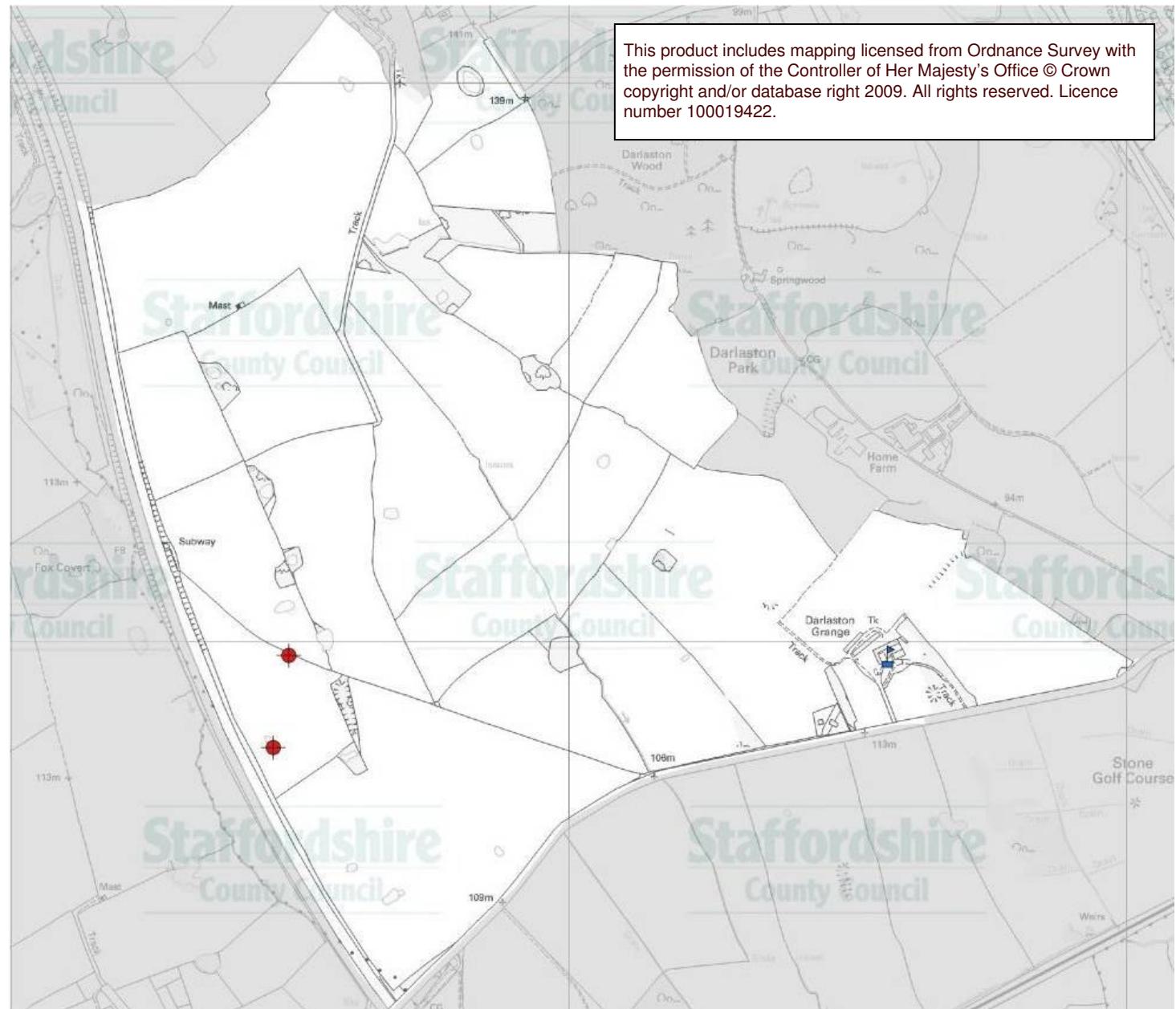
Bibliography

Lake, J. (2009). 'Historic farmsteads: national context' in B. Edwards *Historic farmsteads & landscape character in Staffordshire*. Unpublished report.

Map 1: Known historic environment assets from the HER

Legend

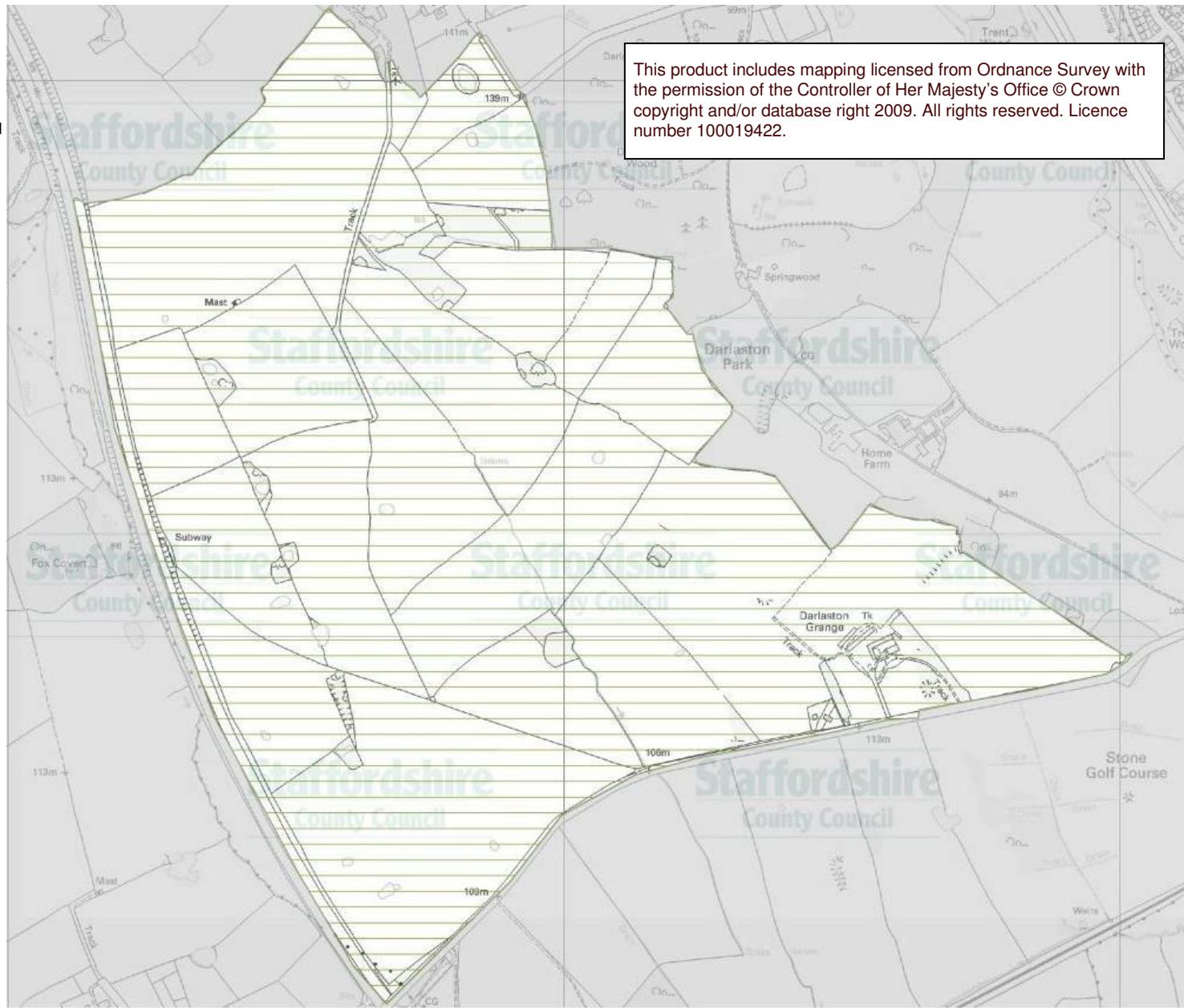
- ▲ Building or Structure
- Monument



Map 2: Refined HLC

Legend

- 18th/19th century semi planned field systems



STHECZ 2 – Walton Heath and Pire Hill (HECA 5f)

Summary

The historic environment of the zone is dominated by well surviving early field systems. Those to the north and south originated from former arable open fields⁴ of medieval origin probably associated with the settlement of Walton and possibly Aston. The early irregular fields adjacent to Walton Heath may have been created in the post medieval period from a larger area of heathland. The heathland character of Walton Heath survived until the later 20th century when it was formed into a playing field. To the north west is an area of small rectilinear fields, which survives well and whose origins may date between the 16th and 18th centuries.

Associated with these field systems is a dispersed settlement pattern which comprises five surviving historic farmsteads. The origins of two of these farms may be closely associated with the enclosure of the field systems throughout the post medieval period; the remaining three were probably single phase large farms dating to the later 18th/19th century.

Medium to large scale development within the zone would impact upon the historic environment assets (HEAs). However, should development be planned for the zone there would be a need to address impacts upon and potential mitigation strategies for:

- the dispersed nature of the settlement pattern and the upon the individual historic farmsteads
- the impact upon the historic landscape character which has probable post medieval origins and its potential relationship with the settlement pattern.
- The impact upon the surviving features of the watermeadows associated with the Filley Brook.
- The potential for unknown below-ground archaeological deposits to survive.

Early consultation with the Cultural Heritage Team at Staffordshire County Council is advised.

Designations

No designated sites currently lie within or adjacent to the SHECZ.

⁴ Open field: An area of arable land with common rights after harvest or while fallow. Usually without internal divisions (hedges, walls or fences). (Scope note reproduced from the Thesaurus of Monument Types by kind permission of English Heritage © 2009)

Archaeological Character (Map 3)

Little archaeological work has been carried out within the zone to determine evidence of human activity between the prehistoric and early Saxon periods. However, the zone lies within the Trent valley and aerial photographic surveys carried out across the southern portion of this valley within the county have identified intensive human activity from the Neolithic period onwards. It is therefore likely that there was a degree of human activity within the zone during the prehistoric period.

Within the wider area there is evidence for human activity during the prehistoric period. To the west a collection of six stone tools⁵ were found which have been dated from the Neolithic to Bronze Age period. Such a collection may suggest more intensive human activity in the vicinity rather than representing casual loss. Other prehistoric sites, enclosures and ring ditches⁶, of possible Bronze Age date are located to the east and south of Stone having been identified as cropmarks⁷ on aerial photographs⁸.

Approximately 4km to the north of the zone two probable Bronze Age barrows⁹ lie within the Scheduled Bury Bank hillfort. The hillfort itself has not been dated and although these monuments are usually associated with the Iron Age, some are known to have earlier origins. The presence of the hillfort suggests a centralised power base was present within the area from at least the late Bronze Age/Iron Age, which oversaw a dispersed settlement pattern across the landscape. The hillfort would have provided a cultural and economic focus for the surrounding communities.

It is likely that any pattern of human activity which may have existed within the zone was similar in nature from the prehistoric period into at least the Saxon period.

Historic Landscape (Map 4)

The historic landscape of the zone is dominated by early field systems of probable late medieval or post medieval origin. In the centre of the zone is a 20th century playing field which was created out of the small Walton Heath. Other than the change in vegetation which defines heathland the area remains unenclosed. This area is surrounded by well preserved early small irregular fields which potentially were created by individual farmers enclosing a once larger heathland possibly from the late medieval period onwards. Two

⁵ Staffordshire HER: PRN 0069; PRN 02101; PRN 02102; PRN 02103; PRN 02104

⁶ Ring Ditch: Circular or near circular ditches, usually seen as cropmarks. Use the term where the function is unknown. Ring ditches may be the remains of ploughed out round barrows, round houses, or of modern features such as searchlight emplacements. (Scope note reproduced from the Thesaurus of Monument Types by kind permission of English Heritage © 2009)

⁷ Cropmarks: Monument visible as a mark in standing crops, parchmarks or soilmarks, but where no subsurface deposits have been proven eg by excavation or other ground disturbance. (Scope note reproduced from the Thesaurus of Monument Types by kind permission of English Heritage © 2009)

⁸ Staffordshire HER: PRN 04610; PRN 04613; PRN 00669; PRN 04590

⁹ Staffordshire HER: PRN 00601

historic farmsteads are associated with this landscape. Little Mickleover Farm is a small farmstead on the far western edge of the zone of loose courtyard plan, which possibly developed over a long period of time. Consequently it may be associated with the enclosure of the field system around it. The other farmstead, Walton Heath Farm, is located on the edge of the former extent of Walton Heath itself. It is of a regular courtyard plan, which suggests that it was developed in a single phase between the 1790s¹⁰ and the late 19th century. The regular courtyard plan is the most common form in Staffordshire and is spread widely across the landscape. These forms appear to represent a deliberate development aimed at improving agricultural productivity being taken forward by wealthy landowners at this period.

To the north and south of the zone the field pattern is dominated by Piecemeal Enclosure. This form of enclosure fossilises the outline of the former open field arable farming in its field boundaries in the form of a reverse 'S' or dog-leg boundaries which follow the line of the ox-plough associated with medieval ploughing. To the south of the zone ridge and furrow¹¹ earthworks were identified on aerial photographs in the 1960s which also retained the form of the long strips created by medieval ploughing techniques. The open fields and heathland were probably associated with the small settlement of Walton from the medieval period onwards.

The Piecemeal Enclosure was probably created in the Post Medieval period through a means of informal, verbal agreements between farmers who wished to consolidate their holdings into a block rather than being scattered across two or more open fields. The Piecemeal Enclosure survives well across the zone.

A further five historic farmsteads are associated with the Piecemeal Enclosure. Walton House Farm and North Pirehill Farm, lying towards the south of the zone, and Micklow House, to the north east, represent a further three regular courtyard farmsteads whose origins are probably similar to those of Walton Heath Farm. The other two farmsteads, both displaying a dispersed plan form, were located to the north of the zone although only one of these, Walton Hill House, survives. This latter farm may well have developed incrementally over a long period potentially first planned to farm the newly created fields in the post medieval period. The other small farmstead was located on the northern edge of Walton Heath until the second half of the 20th century and its demolition may well be associated with the loss of the heath itself at a similar period.

Part of the field system to the north of Walton Hill House, which survives as Piecemeal Enclosure, may have been adapted to form a watermeadow during the 18th/19th century fed by the Filley Brook. The development of water

¹⁰ Lake 2009: 19

¹¹ Ridge & Furrow: A series of long, raised ridges separated by ditches used to prepare the ground for arable cultivation. This was a technique, characteristic of the medieval period. (Scope note reproduced from the Thesaurus of Monument Types by kind permission of English Heritage © 2009)

meadows during this period meant that the landowners could control the flooding of the land and ensure an early crop of grass and subsequent multiple crops for fodder. This enabled them to over-winter larger numbers of animals. It is possible that upstanding earthworks survive in this area associated with the watermeadow as well as other structures such as bridges and sluices. Further watermeadows have been identified in the area of 18th/19th century semi planned fields in the north west of the zone. The main drains survive, but the watermeadow earthworks appear to have been ploughed away.

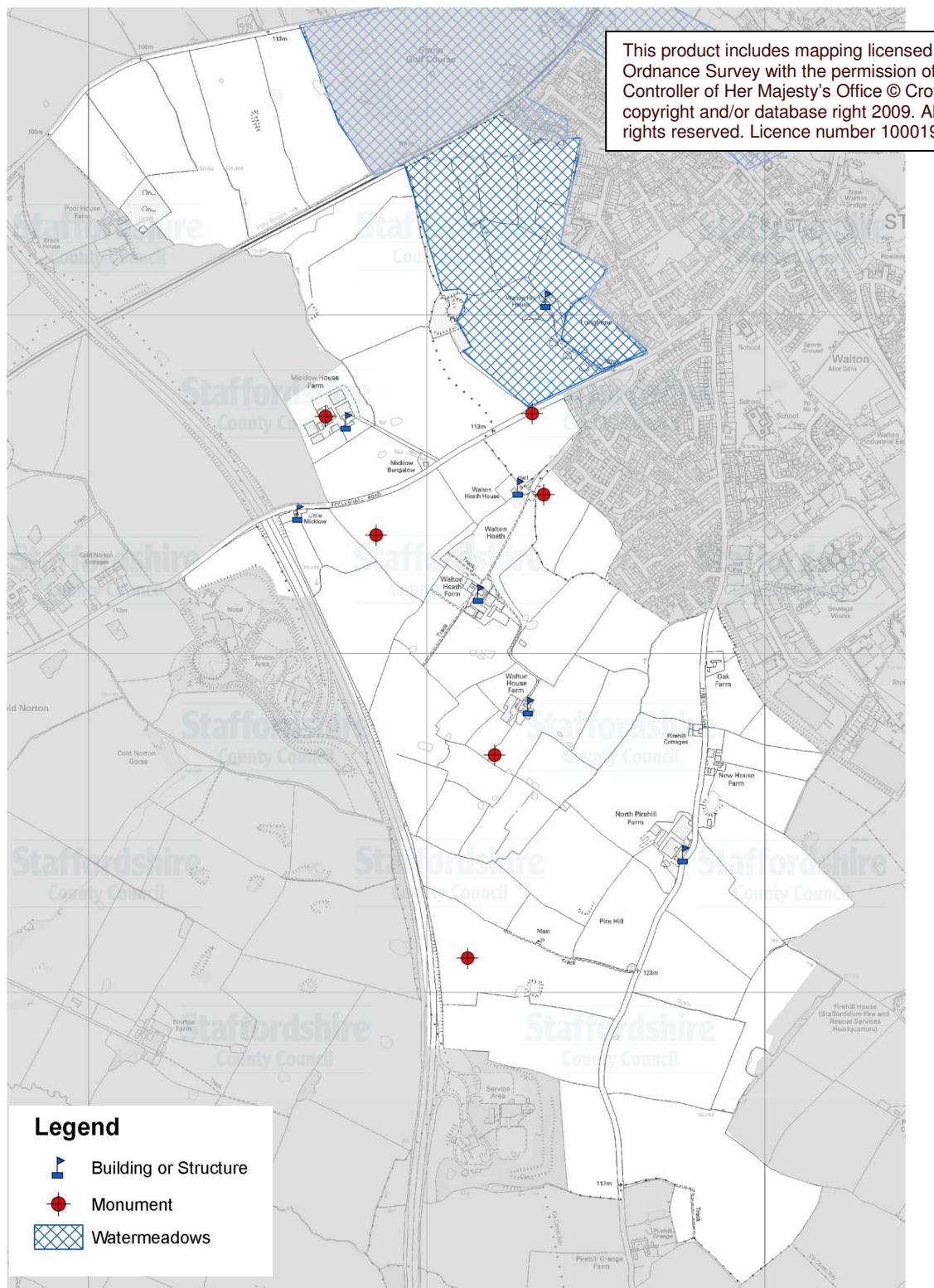
The field system around Micklow House has been impacted by field boundary removal during the later 20th century, although some of the reverse 'S' curve field boundaries, associated with medieval open fields and the later Piecemeal Enclosure, survive.

Historic Assets Summary Table

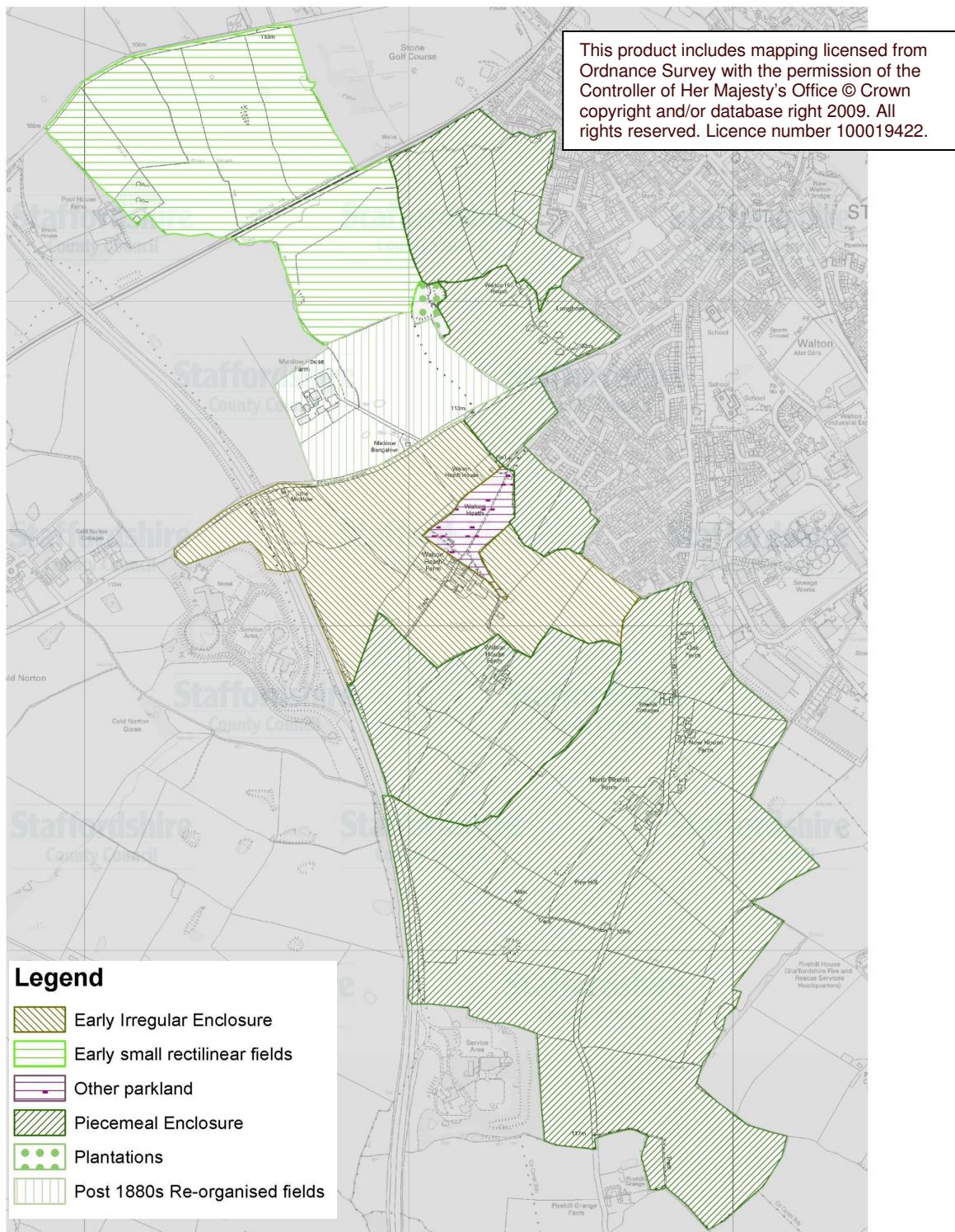
Survival	The zone has seen moderate disturbance through agriculture, but several historic environment assets (HEAs) survive; including the historic farmsteads and the historic landscape character.	2
Potential	There has been little archaeological work carried out within the zone and this probably accounts for the lack of knowledge rather than poor preservation.	2
Documentation	HER data & watermeadow survey	2
Diversity	The HEAs are of various dates and include the built environment and historic landscape character, which have different origins. There are also the potential remains of watermeadow systems to the north of the zone.	3
Group Association	There is the potential for several of the farmsteads to be associated with the well preserved historic field systems within the zone.	2
Amenity Value	Current knowledge gives limited potential for the historic environment to play a significant role in creating a definable and promotable identity to the zone.	1
Sensitivity to change (to housing expansion & infrastructure for SBC)	The zone's historic environment is highly sensitive to medium/large scale development. Such development would impact upon the historic landscape character and the dispersed settlement pattern of farmsteads of different forms and origins.	3
Overall Score		15

Bibliography

Lake, J. (2009). 'Historic farmsteads: national context' in B. Edwards *Historic farmsteads & landscape character in Staffordshire*. Unpublished report.



Map 3: Known historic environment assets from the HER



Map 4: Refined HLC

STHECZ 3 – Darlaston and Meaford Parks (HECA 13h)

Summary

The historic environment assets (HEAs) and the historic landscape character comprises a well preserved 18th/19th century landscape dominated by parkland and watermeadows associated with two estates centred on Meaford Hall and Darlaston Hall; although the latter property has been demolished. The earthworks of the watermeadows survive and the extant architecture of Meaford village is closely associated with the nearby hall. The historic parkland at Darlaston is not as coherent as that associated with Meaford Hall, but surviving features include a walled garden. Restoration of parkland at Darlaston Hall could further enhance the legibility of the historic landscape character of the zone, which could be further promoted potentially through the Borough Council's Green Infrastructure plan.

The highly sensitive nature of the historic environment within the zone means that medium to large scale development would have a significant impact. However, should any development be planned for the zone there would be a need to address impacts upon and potential mitigation strategies for:

- The impact upon the historic buildings, both listed and unlisted, and their settings
- The impact upon the Conservation Area
- The impact upon the setting of the Scheduled Monument
- The impact upon the HEAs and the closely associated surviving historic landscape which define the character of this zone dominated by the two 18th/19th century estates. Any development should consider how this character could be reflected in its design and layout.
- The potential for unknown below-ground archaeological deposits to survive.

Early consultation with the Cultural Heritage Team at Staffordshire County Council, the Conservation Officer at Stafford Borough Council and English Heritage is advised.

Designations (Map 5)

Two conservation areas, Meaford (109) and the Trent & Mersey Canal (083), fall within the zone. There are also four listed buildings including the Grade II* Meaford Hall and the Nursery House.

The Bury Bank hillfort, a Scheduled Monument, lies adjacent to the north overlooking the Trent Valley.

Archaeological Character (Map 6)

This zone lies within the Trent Valley and aerial photographic surveys carried out across the southern portion of this valley within the county have identified intensive human activity from the Neolithic period onwards. It is therefore likely that there was a degree of human activity within the zone during the prehistoric period, although currently little or no archaeological work has been carried out.

Immediately to the north and overlooking the zone lies Bury Bank hillfort, a Scheduled Monument. Within the hillfort are two probable Bronze Age barrows¹², which represent the earliest evidence for human activity in the immediate vicinity. The presence of the barrows would suggest an open landscape upon the hill top at least by the Bronze Age as these monuments were designed to be seen and in this context they may also have functioned as territorial boundary markers.

The hillfort itself has not been closely dated and although these monuments are usually associated with the Iron Age, some are known to have earlier origins. The presence of the hillfort suggests a centralised power base was present within the area from at least the late Bronze Age/Iron Age, which oversaw a dispersed settlement pattern across the landscape and thus supporting the theory of woodland clearance from this period. The hillfort would have provided a cultural and economic focus for the surrounding communities. It is likely that any pattern of human activity which may have existed within the zone was similar in nature from the prehistoric period into at least the Saxon period.

Currently the only evidence for human activity within the zone during the later Saxon period comes from Domesday Book (1086) where Meaford is recorded as being held by the Earl of Shrewsbury with a portion of the manor having been granted to the abbey St Remy in Normandy, northern France. Between the two landlords there were approximately 14 householders within the manor of Meaford by the late 11th century and it is likely that this area was settled by least the late Saxon period.

Historic Landscape (Map 7)

The surviving historic landscape character of the zone is of late 18th/19th century origin. However, the Trent valley had probably provided an important resource for local communities throughout the medieval period probably providing meadows; certainly meadow land was recorded in the Meaford entry in Domesday Book.

The landscape by the 18th/19th century was dominated by the two estates of Darlaston Hall, to the west of the Trent, and Meaford Hall to the east. Darlaston Hall was demolished in the second half of the 20th century, but it is known that an earlier hall had been demolished and rebuilt during the 19th

¹² Staffordshire HER: PRN 00601

century. It is possible that the earlier hall had dated to the 17th century or earlier as the estate is recorded as having been sold in 1655¹³. Meaford Hall survives as a Grade II* listed building of c.1830, although elements of the 17th century manor house survive within its fabric¹⁴. It is probably the influence of these estates during the 18th and 19th centuries which accounts for much of the surviving historic landscape character.

Both of the halls were associated with landscape parks; Meaford Hall's park survives well and now forms part of the Meaford Conservation Area¹⁵. The earliest area of parkland identifiable at Darlaston lay to the north of the Hall where the walled kitchen garden survives¹⁶. The form of the parkland is less coherent than that at Meaford Hall, but appears to be under pasture on the 2006 aerial photographs. Woodland survives to the east and west of the parkland. Aerial photographs taken in 1963 reveal that the western woodland, Darlaston Wood, were largely replanted in the 1950s. A map dated to 1817¹⁷ suggests that Darlaston Wood originally covered a smaller area than was present even by the end of the 19th century.

It is possible that at the time that Darlaston Hall known was rebuilt in the 19th century the landscape park was also extended and it may have been at this point that the Home Farm was constructed. The extension to the landscape park certainly took place between the mid 1830s and the 1880s¹⁸. In the area of the surviving Home Farm a small hamlet known as Darlaston Green, clustered around a central green, was marked on Yates' map of 1775¹⁹. It still existed in the mid 1830s, but had been completely removed to form part of Darlaston Park by 1880. The origins of Darlaston Green are currently unclear, but the road passing through it was probably down-graded to an estate road at the same period that the parkland was established.

The Home Farm at Darlaston Hall is of a regular courtyard plan and such farmsteads have been identified nationally as post dating the 1790s²⁰. This particular farmstead plan is the most common form in Staffordshire and is spread widely across the landscape. Regular courtyard forms appear to represent a deliberate development aimed at improving agricultural productivity being taken forward by wealthy landowners. This supports the view that this farmstead was constructed by the owners of Darlaston Grange. A Home Farm is also associated with Meaford Hall, but it appears to have slightly different origins to that in Darlaston Park being of a dispersed plan. This plan-form was generally associated with small farmers whose holdings developed over time rather than being planned in a single phase. To find a Home Farm of this plan form may therefore be considered a rarity and it is

¹³ Staffordshire HER: PRN MST14487; Staffordshire Past-track Donor Ref: SAMS Acc. No., G94.290, img: 1586 (18/2036)

¹⁴ Staffordshire HER: PRN 01356

¹⁵ Staffordshire HER: PRN 40162

¹⁶ Staffordshire HER: PRN MST 14486

¹⁷ Ordnance Survey Drawing dated 1817 held by the British Library

¹⁸ Ordnance Survey 1" Map dated 1834-6 and Ordnance Survey 6" OS map 1880

¹⁹ Staffordshire HER: PRN MST 14485

²⁰ Lake 2009: 19

possible that the owners of Meaford Hall were less concerned with agricultural improvements than were their neighbours at Darlaston Hall.

However, the village of Meaford is testimony to the patronage of the Jervis family who held the Meaford estate from 1655 until c.1943²¹. In the late 19th century the school, public house and workers cottages were all built by the family and these buildings form part of the Conservation Area.

Further evidence for 18th/19th century agricultural improvements are present within the zone in the form of watermeadows. The development of water meadows during this period meant that the landowners could control the flooding of the land and ensure an early crop of grass and subsequent multiple crops for fodder. This enabled them to over-winter larger numbers of animals. The watermeadows line three quarters of the length of the River Trent within the zone and upstanding earthworks survive as well as other structures such as drains and sluices. These features also survive within the 20th century Stone Golf Course to the south of the zone. The earthwork remains of watermeadows also appear to survive within Darlaston Park and the creation of these features within the zone may well be associated with this estate. It is interesting to note that currently no watermeadows have been identified adjacent to the Meaford estate.

The Trent & Mersey Canal, another 18th century innovation, runs along the eastern side of the zone. It was constructed by the engineers' James Brindley and Hugh Henshall and opened in 1771²².

Historic Assets Summary Table

Survival	The zone contains little disturbance and the known assets are generally well preserved.	3
Potential	The zone has seen little impact and consequently there is the potential for unknown historic environment assets (HEAs) to survive, particularly below ground deposits sealed by the alluvium in the river valley and the site of the deserted settlement within Darlaston Park.	3
Documentation	HER data and research for Meaford Conservation Area.	2
Diversity	There are a wide range of assets within the zone, although they are generally of a similar period. These include historic landscape character, historic buildings and earthworks.	3
Group Association	There are strong associations between the HEAs which are of a similar period and as a whole form a good understanding of the development of the landscape within the zone	3
Amenity Value	The historic environment could play a key	3

²¹ Stafford Borough Council nd.

²² Staffordshire HER: PRN 05228

	role in the zones sense of place for local people; particularly the parkland and the conservation village of Meaford. Darlaston Park could be enhanced through the reinstatement of parkland features (particularly parkland trees). The development of this landscape under the patronage of these two estates could be promoted and the zone could be incorporated into the Greenspace Strategy.	
Sensitivity to change (to housing expansion & infrastructure for SBC)	The zone is highly sensitive to medium to largescale development, which would impact upon the components which comprise the surviving 18 th /19 th century character. There is also the potential for below ground archaeological deposits to survive beneath the alluvium within the river valley and for earthworks to survive in areas of pasture, particularly associated with the watermeadow system.	3
Overall Score		20

Bibliography

British Library Online Gallery:

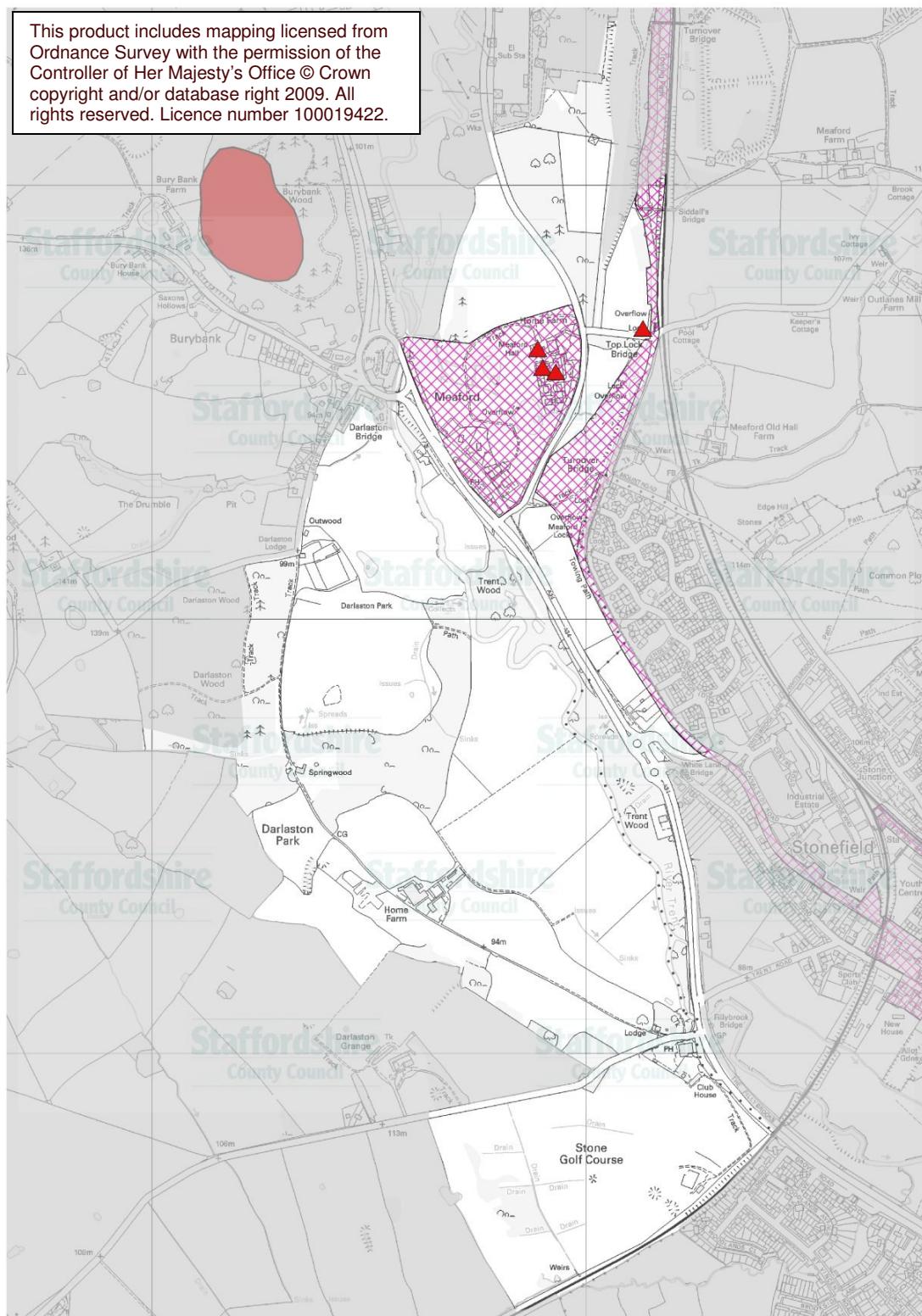
<http://www.bl.uk/onlinegallery/onlineex/ordsurvdraw/index.html>

Lake, J. (2009). 'Historic farmsteads: national context' in B. Edwards *Historic farmsteads & landscape character in Staffordshire*. Unpublished report.

Stafford Borough Council. (nd.) *Meaford Conservation Area*. Unpublished report.

Staffordshire Past-track: <http://www.staffspasttrack.org.uk/>

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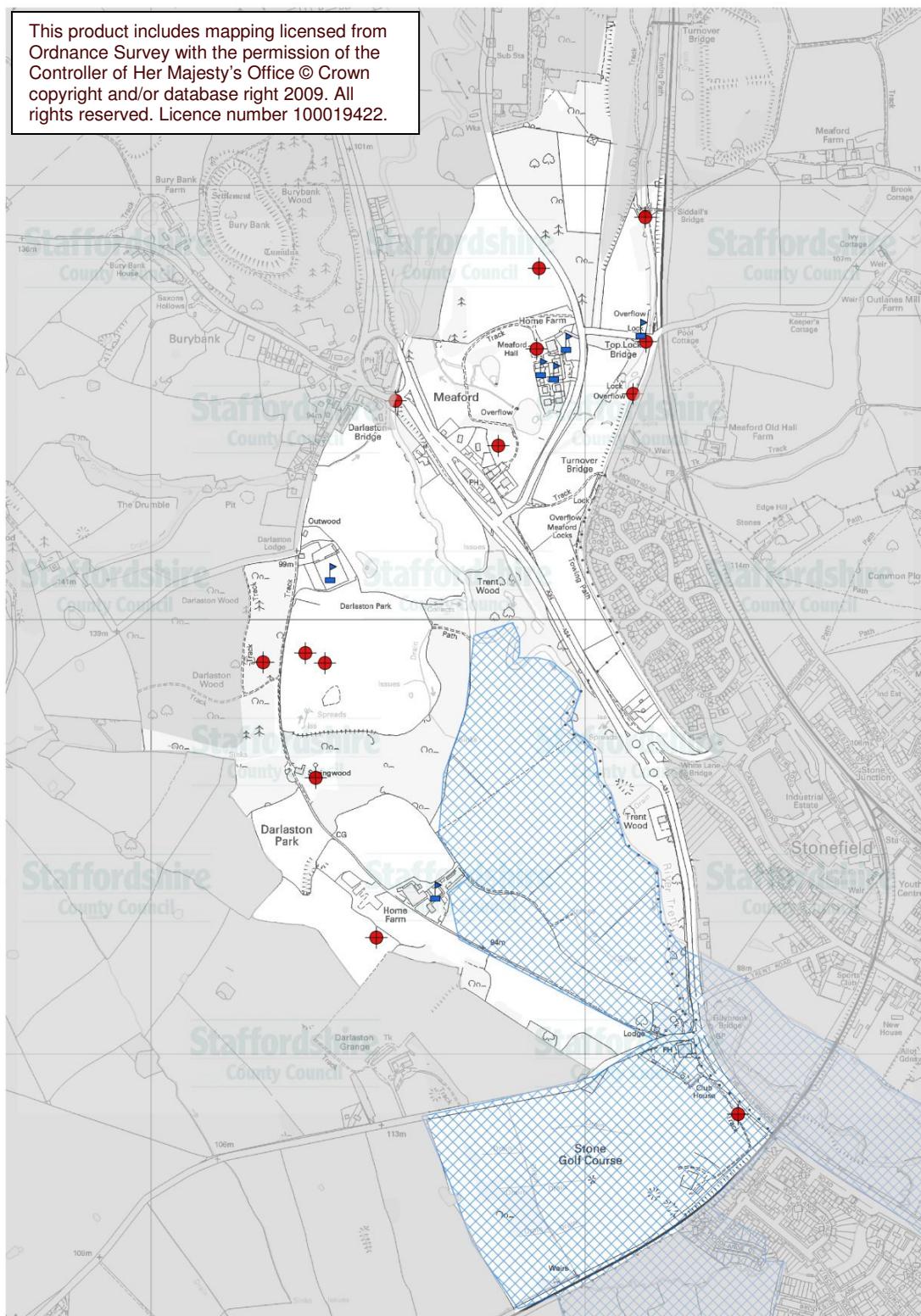


Legend

- ▲ Listed buildings
- Scheduled monuments
- Registered battlefields
- Registered parks & gardens
- Conservation areas

Map 5: Designated sites

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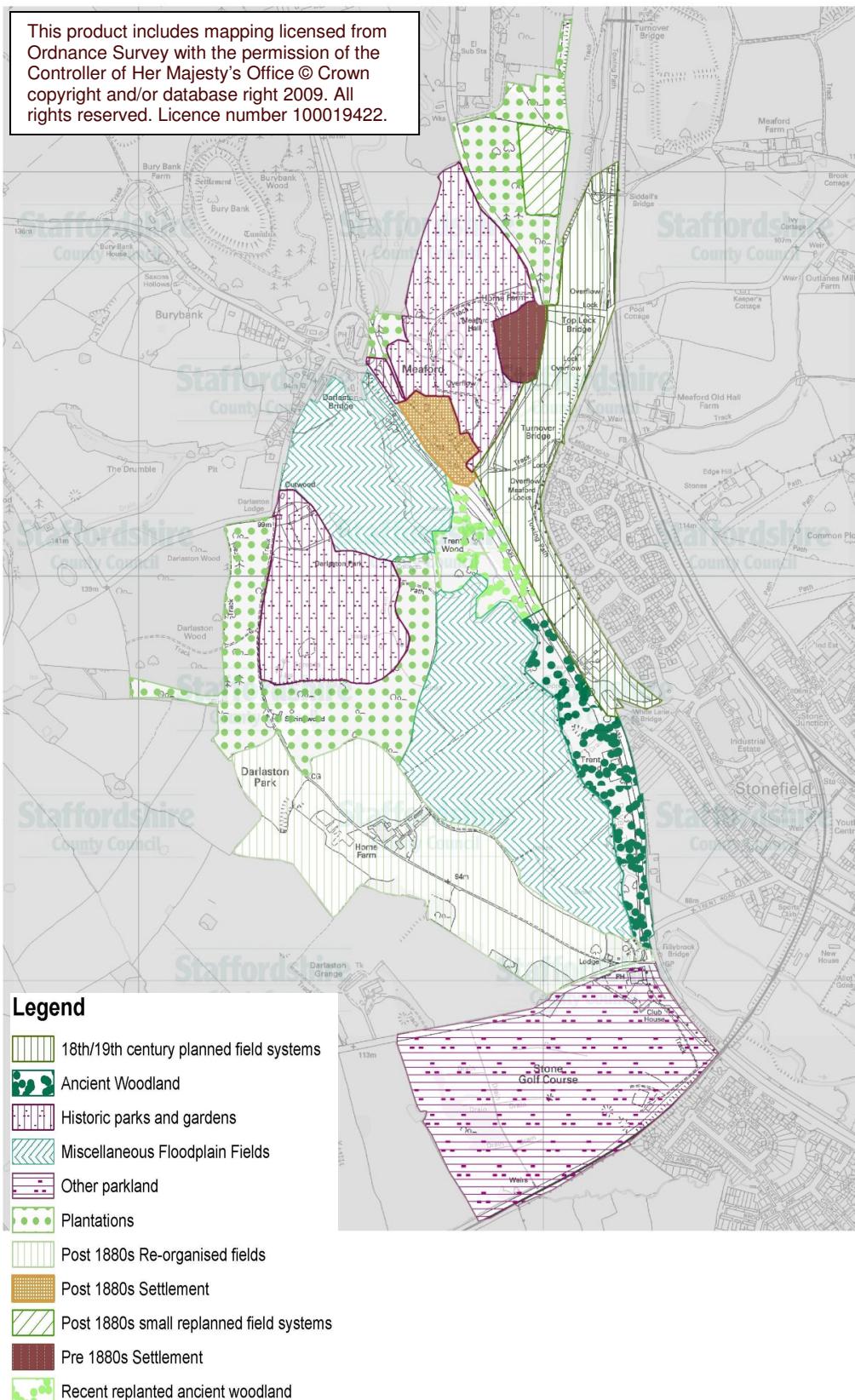


Legend

- Building or Structure
- Monument
- Watermeadows

Map 6: Known historic environment assets from the HER

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Map 7: Refined HLC

STHECZ 4 – Outlanes (HECA 13h)

Summary

The zone is dominated by an early field system whose origins are not fully understood and which has seen some field boundary loss during the second half of the 20th century. Three historic farmsteads lie within the zone, two of which are associated with listed buildings. It is possible that the oldest of these, Meaford Old Hall, was associated with the enclosure of the surrounding field system. Outlanes Mill Farm is recorded as being a watermill in the late 19th century and a possible former watercourse associated with it survives to the north.

Medium to large scale development within the zone would have at least a moderate impact upon the historic environment assets (HEAs). However, should development be planned for the zone there would be a need to address impacts upon and potential mitigation strategies for:

- The impact upon the historic buildings, both listed and unlisted, and their setting
- The impact upon the adjacent Conservation Area and upon the adjacent STHECZ 3.
- The impact upon the legibility of the historic field system and how this could be retained or reflected in the design or layout of any proposed development.
- The potential for unknown below-ground archaeological deposits to survive.

Early consultation with the Cultural Heritage Team at Staffordshire County Council and the Conservation Officer at Stafford Borough Council is advised.

Designations (Map 8)

Two listed buildings lie within the zone and the Trent & Mersey Canal Conservation Area (083) lies adjacent to the west.

Archaeological Character (Map 9)

This zone lies within the Trent Valley and aerial photographic surveys carried out across southern portion of this valley within the county have identified intensive human activity from the Neolithic period onwards. It is therefore likely that there was a degree of human activity within the zone during the prehistoric period, although currently little or no archaeological work has been carried out.

Bury Bank hillfort, a Scheduled Monument, lies just over 1km to the north west of the zone. Within the hillfort are two probable Bronze Age barrows²³, which represent the earliest evidence for human activity in the immediate vicinity. The presence of the barrows would suggest an open landscape upon the hill top at least by the Bronze Age as these monuments were designed to be seen and in this context they may also have functioned as territorial boundary markers.

The hillfort itself has not been closely dated and although these monuments are usually associated with the Iron Age, some are known to have earlier origins. The presence of the hillfort suggests a centralised power base was present within the area from at least the late Bronze Age/Iron Age, which oversaw a dispersed settlement pattern across the landscape and thus supporting the theory of woodland clearance by this period. The hillfort would have provided a cultural and economic focus for the surrounding communities. It is likely that any pattern of human activity which may have existed within the zone was similar in nature from the prehistoric period into at least the Saxon period.

To the east of the zone (in STHECZ 3) lies the settlement of Meaford which was recorded in Domesday Book (1086) as being held by the Earl of Shrewsbury with a portion of the manor having been granted to the abbey St Remy in Normandy, northern France. Between the two landlords there were approximately 14 householders within the manor of Meaford by the late 11th century and it is possible that some settlement may have occurred within this zone.

Historic Landscape (Map 10)

The historic landscape character is dominated by a field system which may have been created in the late medieval or post medieval period of an irregular form. The field system has had several boundaries removed during the later 20th century particularly to the north west of the zone.

Three historic farmsteads are located within the zone. Two display regular courtyard plan forms which nationally have been identified as post dating the 1790s²⁴. This particular farmstead plan is the most common form found in Staffordshire and is spread widely across the landscape. The courtyard plan appears to represent a deliberate development aimed at improving agricultural productivity being taken forward by wealthy landowners at this period. The farmstead of Oldlanes Mill Farm²⁵ is associated with an early 19th century farmhouse which suggests that the whole complex was built in a single phase at this date. However, the first edition 6" OS map (1880) records this site as a watermill (corn) and to the north a possible former watercourse survives as an earthwork. The regular courtyard farmstead at Old Meaford Hall on the other hand is associated with a farmhouse dating from the late 16th

²³ Staffordshire HER: PRN 00601

²⁴ Lake 2009: 19

²⁵ Staffordshire HER: PRN 07797

century²⁶. It is therefore apparent that the owners of this property in the late 18th/early 19th century involved themselves in the agricultural improvement movement but only rebuilt the farm buildings, perhaps as a way of keeping their expenditure down. Old Meaford Hall may have been associated with the enclosure of this landscape, although further research may date the site to the medieval period.

Meaford Farm to the north displays a dispersed plan form which was generally associated with small farmers whose farmstead developed over time rather than being planned in a single phase.

The Trent & Mersey Canal, another 18th century innovation, runs along the eastern side of the zone. It was constructed by the engineers' James Brindley and Hugh Henshall and opened in 1771²⁷.

Historic Assets Summary Table

Survival	There are few known assets, but the zone has seen little disturbance.	3
Potential	There are limited known historic environment assets (HEAs) and the fact that the site lies on the valley sides suggests that there is the potential for unknown archaeological deposits to survive within the zone.	2
Documentation	HER data	1
Diversity	There are a few HEAs of different date and character including historic landscape character; the built environment and earthworks	2
Group Association	There is an association between two of the farmsteads. There is also a possible association between the origins of Old Meaford Hall and the field system although further research would be required to clarify this.	3
Amenity Value	Current knowledge gives limited potential for the historic environment to play a significant role in creating a definable and promotable identity to the zone.	1
Sensitivity to change (to housing expansion & infrastructure for SBC)	Medium to large scale development is likely to have at least a moderate impact upon the historic environment character of the zone; particularly upon the setting of the listed buildings and adjacent Conservation Area.	2
Overall Score		14

²⁶ Staffordshire HER: PRN 07796

²⁷ Staffordshire HER: PRN 05228

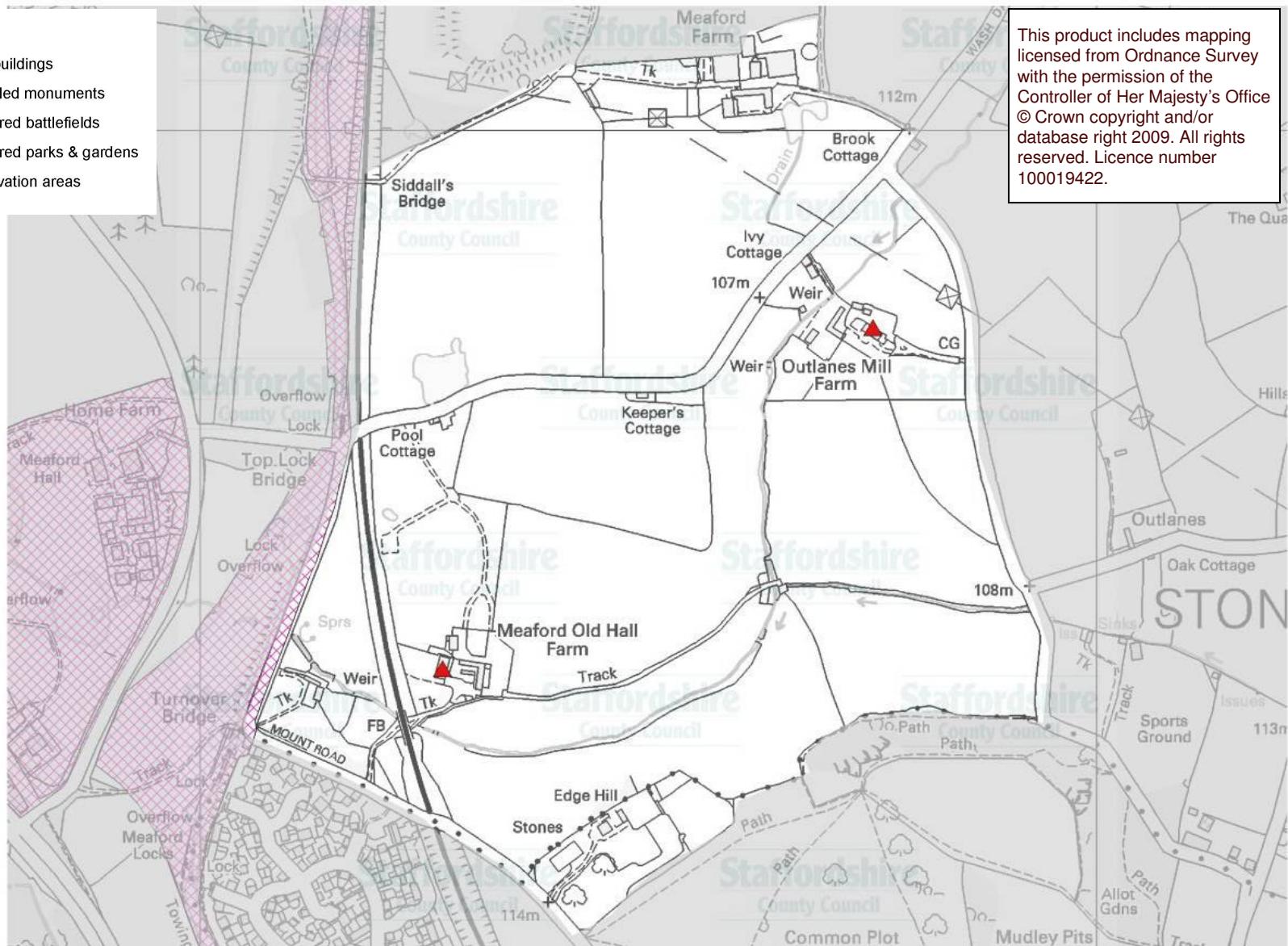
Bibliography

Lake, J. (2009). 'Historic farmsteads: national context' in B. Edwards *Historic farmsteads & landscape character in Staffordshire*. Unpublished report.

Map 8: Designated sites

Legend

- ▲ Listed buildings
- Scheduled monuments
- Registered battlefields
- Registered parks & gardens
- Conservation areas

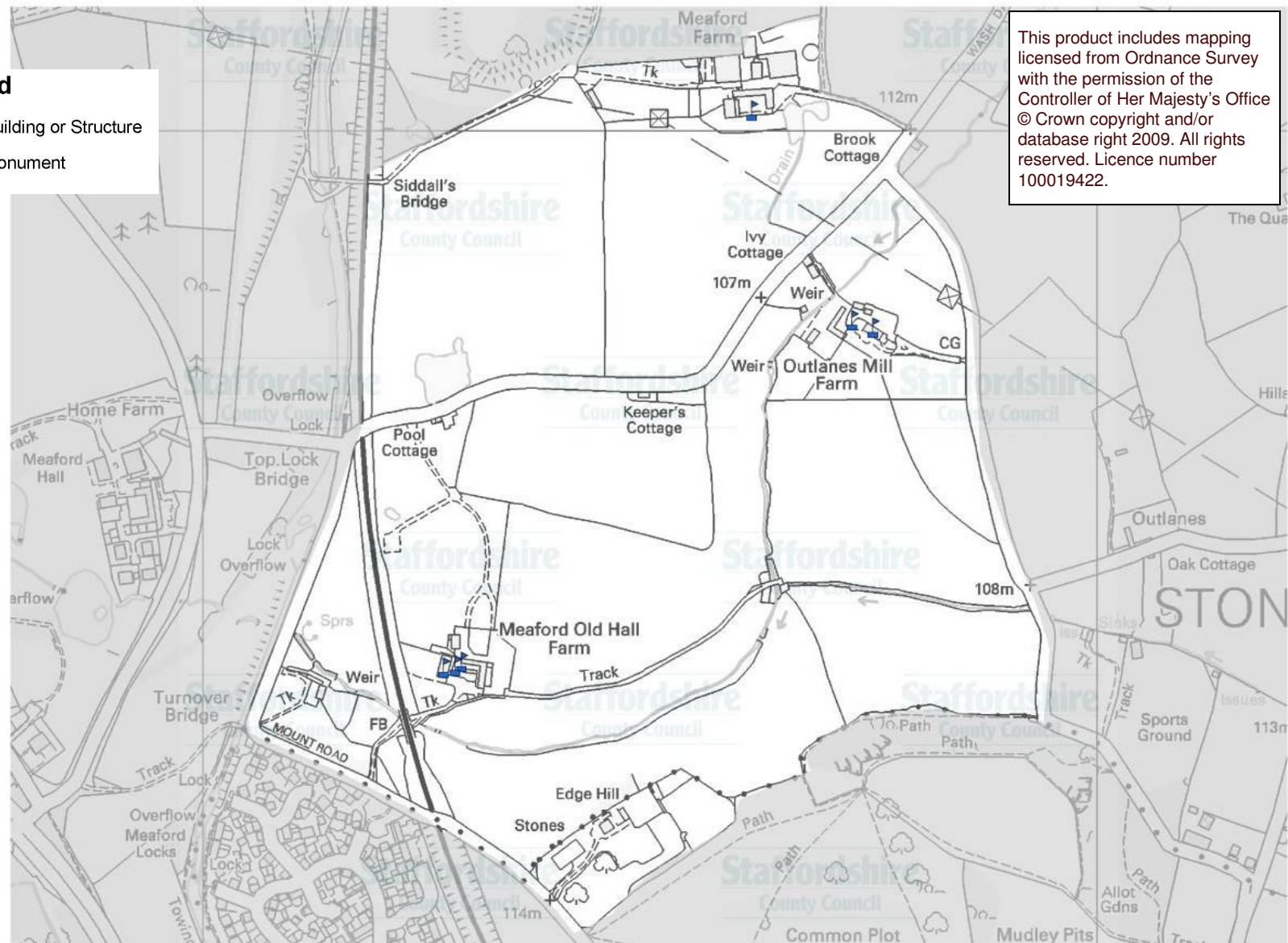


Map 9: Known
historic environment
assets from the HER

27

Legend

- Building or Structure
- Monument

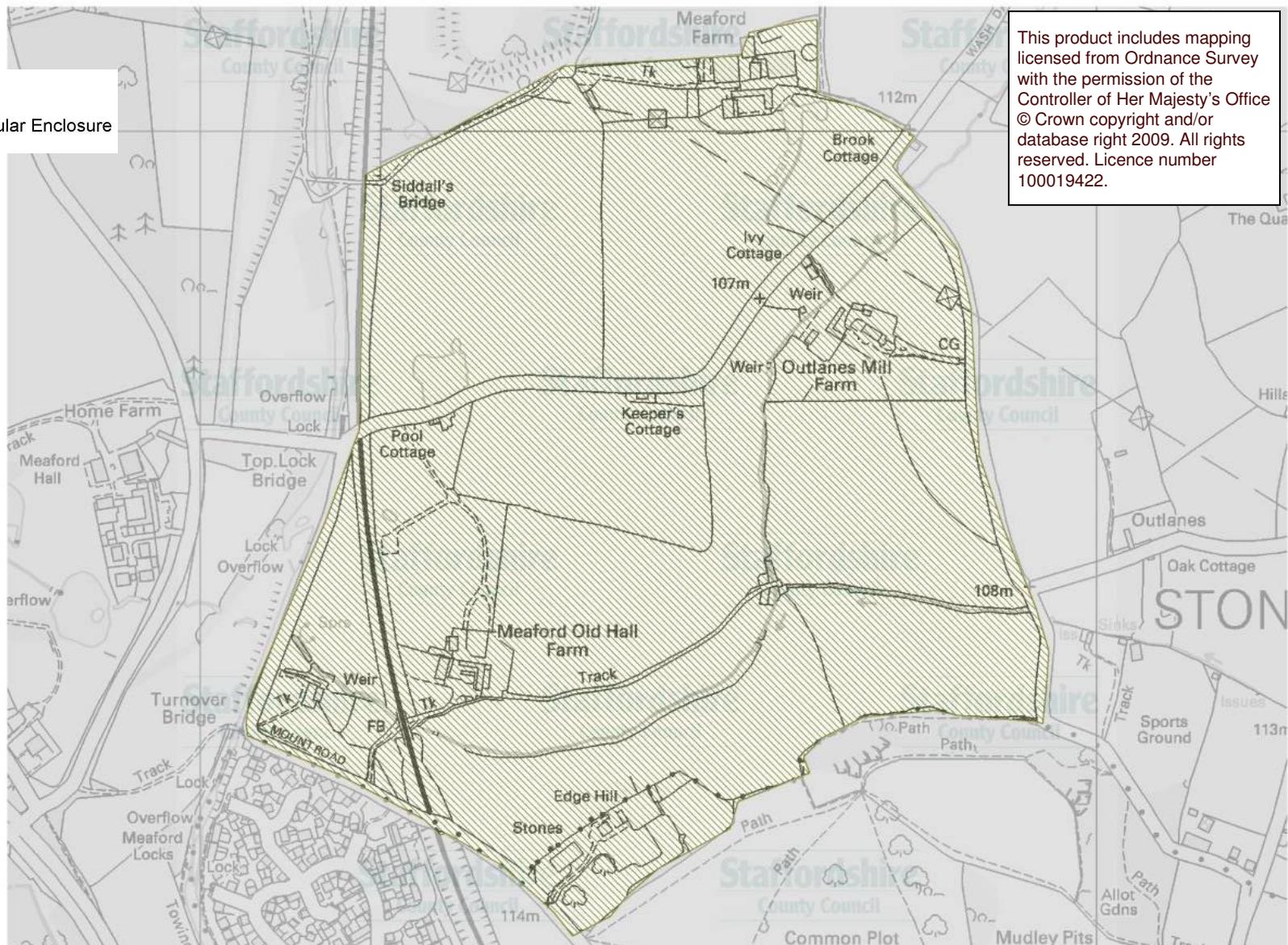


Legend

 Early Irregular Enclosure

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Map 10: Refined HLC



STHECZ 5 – Common Plot (HECA 13h)

Summary

The zone is dominated by parkland in the form of a large unenclosed area known as ‘Common Plot’ whose origins probably date to the early 19th century. There are also post war playing fields and 19th century allotments. Common Plot retains a fossilised medieval landscape in the form of ridge and furrow earthworks²⁸.

Medium to large scale development within the zone would have a significant impact upon the historic environment assets (HEAs). However, should development be planned for the zone there would be a need to address impacts upon and potential mitigation strategies for:

- The unenclosed nature of the zone which has at least medieval origins
- The impact upon the surviving medieval earthworks
- The potential for unknown below-ground archaeological deposits to survive.

Early consultation with the Cultural Heritage Team at Staffordshire County Council is advised.

Designations

No designated sites currently lie within or adjacent to the SHECZ.

Archaeological Character (Map 11)

Little archaeological work has been carried out within the zone to determine evidence of human activity between the prehistoric and early Saxon periods. However, the zone lies within the Trent valley and aerial photographic surveys carried out across the southern portion of this valley within the county have identified intensive human activity from the Neolithic period onwards. It is therefore likely that there was a degree of human activity within the zone during the prehistoric period. Two axeheads were found within Stone date to the Neolithic/Bronze Age, but these probably represent casual loss.

Within the wider area there is evidence for human activity during the prehistoric period. Approximately 3.5km to the south west a collection of six stone tools²⁹ were found which have been dated from the Neolithic to Bronze Age period. Such a collection may suggest more intensive human activity in the vicinity rather than representing casual loss. Other prehistoric sites,

²⁸ Ridge & furrow: A series of long, raised ridges separated by ditches used to prepare the ground for arable cultivation. This was a technique, characteristic of the medieval period. (Scope note reproduced from the Thesaurus of Monument Types by kind permission of English Heritage © 2009)

²⁹ Staffordshire HER: PRN 0069; PRN 02101; PRN 02102; PRN 02103; PRN 02104

enclosures and ring ditches³⁰, of possible Bronze Age date are located to the east and south of Stone having been identified as cropmarks³¹ on aerial photographs³². Approximately 1.5km to the north west of the zone are two probable Bronze Age barrows³³ lying within the Scheduled Bury Bank hillfort. The hillfort itself has not been dated and although these monuments are usually associated with the Iron Age, some are known to have earlier origins. The presence of the hillfort suggests a centralised power base was present within the area from at least the late Bronze Age/Iron Age, which oversaw a dispersed settlement pattern across the landscape. The hillfort would have provided a cultural and economic focus for the surrounding communities.

Historic Landscape (Map 12)

The historic landscape character of the zone is dominated by an area of unenclosed land known as Common Plot, which is currently being managed as parkland. Common Plot had existed since at least the early 19th century and it may have been created as a result of an Act of Parliament (1801) to enclose the former medieval open field³⁴ known as Stone Field. The sense of the medieval open field is retained albeit in a fossilised form as this land does not appear to have been subdivided into fields. The medieval arable system survives as ridge and furrow³⁵ earthworks on Common Plot and several depressions located to the east probably represent the remains of fishponds³⁶ which, it has been suggested, were associated with the medieval field system.

Further parkland exists to the east of Old Road in the form of playing fields and allotments, the latter dating to at least the late 19th century. The area of the playing fields had formed part of a field system by the late 19th century which had probably been created as a result of the 1801 Act of Parliament.

³⁰ Ring Ditch: Circular or near circular ditches, usually seen as cropmarks. Use the term where the function is unknown. Ring ditches may be the remains of ploughed out round barrows, round houses, or of modern features such as searchlight emplacements. (Scope note reproduced from the Thesaurus of Monument Types by kind permission of English Heritage © 2009)

³¹ Cropmarks: Monument visible as a mark in standing crops, parchmarks or soilmarks, but where no subsurface deposits have been proven eg by excavation or other ground disturbance. (Scope note reproduced from the Thesaurus of Monument Types by kind permission of English Heritage © 2009)

³² Staffordshire HER: PRN 04610; PRN 04613; PRN 00669; PRN 04590

³³ Staffordshire HER: PRN 00601

³⁴ Open field: An area of arable land with common rights after harvest or while fallow. Usually without internal divisions (hedges, walls or fences). (Scope note reproduced from the Thesaurus of Monument Types by kind permission of English Heritage © 2009)

³⁵ Staffordshire HER: PRN 00604

³⁶ Staffordshire HER: PRN 00658

Historic Assets Summary Table

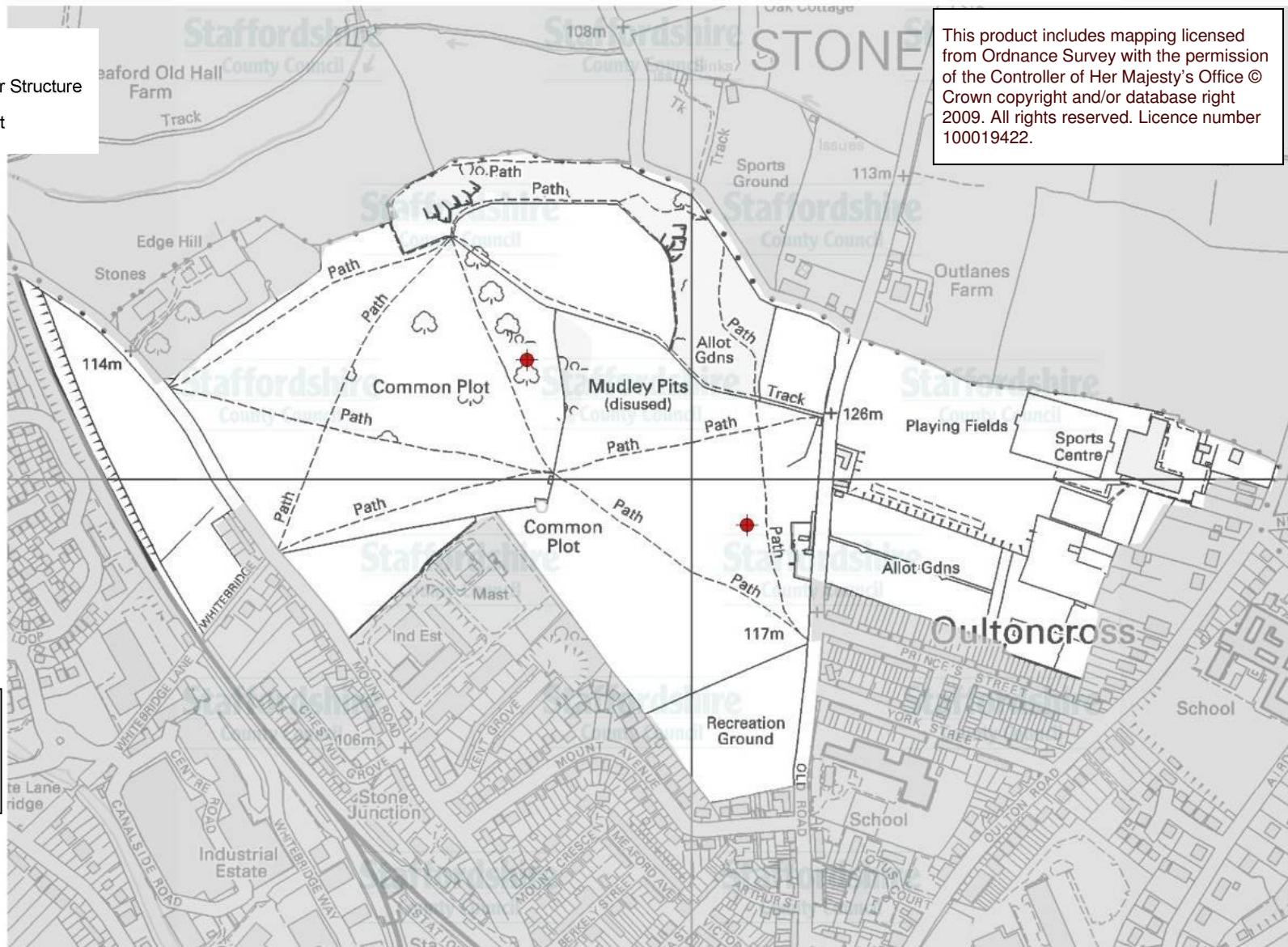
Survival	The zone contains little disturbance and the known assets survive well.	3
Potential	The lack of disturbance suggests that there is the potential for further earthworks or archaeological deposits to survive across the zone.	3
Documentation	HER data	1
Diversity	There are a limited range of historic environment assets which are mostly comprised of earthworks of medieval date.	1
Group Association	There is the potential for the surviving earthworks to be associated in terms of their date of origin and function.	2
Amenity Value	The historic environment could or does help to define a sense of place for the area. The earthworks could be promoted and interpreted as evidence of past human activity.	2
Sensitivity to change (to housing expansion & infrastructure for SBC)	The zone is highly sensitive to medium to large scale development and it retains a strong sense of a fossilised medieval open field system in terms of the survival of the ridge and furrow earthworks. There is also the potential for below ground archaeological deposits to survive.	3
Overall Score		15

Map 11: Known historic environment assets from the HER

Legend

- Building or Structure
- Monument

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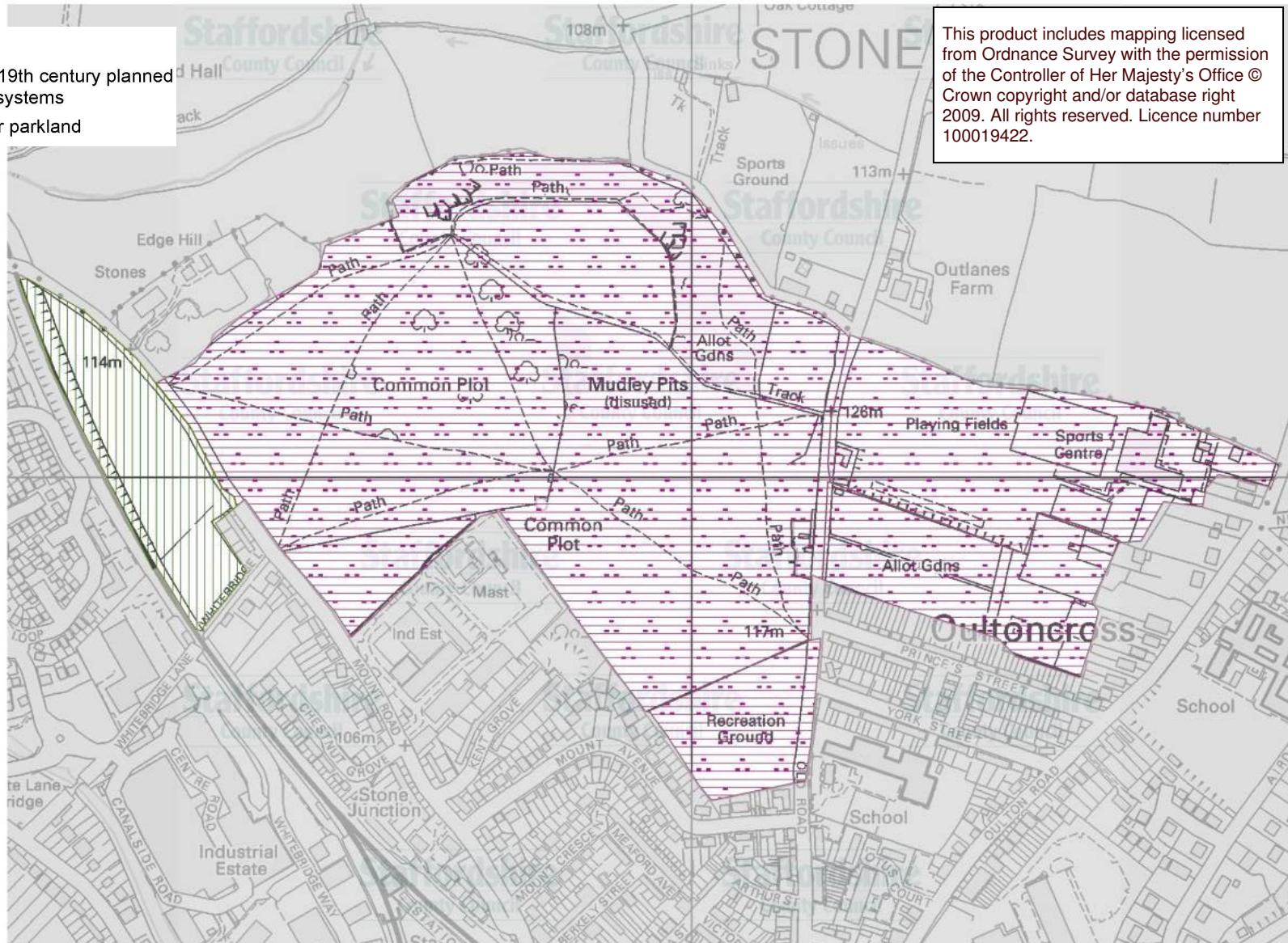


Legend

- 18th/19th century planned field systems
- Other parkland

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Map 12: Refined HLC



STHECZ 6 – West of Oulton (HECA 13h)

Summary

The zone is dominated by an historic rectilinear field system whose origins may date to the post medieval period. However, the possible remains of watermeadows to the west may suggest a later date of origin for the field system.

Two historic parklands associated with Oulton Grange and Oulton Abbey were probably established in the 18th/19th century. The former survives to a greater degree than that at Oulton Abbey.

Medium to large scale development within the zone would have a moderate impact upon the historic environment assets (HEAs). However, should development be planned for the zone there would be a need to address impacts upon and potential mitigation strategies for:

- The surviving historic parkland at Oulton Grange and those features which survive of Oulton Abbey landscape park.
- The impact upon the listed buildings in the adjacent zone (STHECZ 7)
- The impact upon the historic dispersed settlement pattern and the surviving historic farmsteads.
- The rectilinear character of the historic landscape and how this may be retained or reflected in any development plans.
- The potential for earthworks and other structures to survive associated with any watermeadow structures on the western side of the zone.
- The potential for unknown below-ground archaeological deposits to survive.

Early consultation with the Cultural Heritage Team at Staffordshire County Council and the Conservation Officer at Stafford Borough Council is advised.

Designations

No designated sites currently lie within the STHECZ, but several Listed Buildings lie adjacent in the village of Oulton (see STHECZ 7).

Archaeological Character (Map 13)

Little archaeological work has been carried out within the zone to determine evidence of human activity between the prehistoric and early Saxon periods. However, the zone lies within the Trent valley and aerial photographic surveys carried out across the southern portion of this valley within the county have identified intensive human activity from the Neolithic period onwards. It is

therefore likely that there was a degree of human activity within the zone during the prehistoric period. Two axeheads found within Stone date to the Neolithic/Bronze Age, but these probably represent casual loss.

Within the wider area there is evidence for human activity during the prehistoric period. Approximately 4km to the south west, on the opposite side of the Trent Valley, a collection of six stone tools³⁷ were found which have been dated from the Neolithic to Bronze Age period. Such a collection may suggest more intensive human activity in the vicinity rather than representing casual loss. Other prehistoric sites, enclosures and ring ditches³⁸, of possible Bronze Age date are located to the east and south of Stone having been identified as cropmarks³⁹ on aerial photographs⁴⁰. Approximately 2km to the west of the zone are two probable Bronze Age barrows⁴¹ lying within the Scheduled Bury Bank hillfort. The hillfort itself has not been dated and although these monuments are usually associated with the Iron Age, some are known to have earlier origins. The presence of the hillfort suggests a centralised power base was present within the area from at least the late Bronze Age/Iron Age, which oversaw a dispersed settlement pattern across the landscape. The hillfort would have provided a cultural and economic focus for the surrounding communities.

A coin hoard of 11th century coins were found near Oulton, possibly from this zone, which included coins from the reigns of both Edward the Confessor (1042 – 1066) and William I (1066 – 1087)⁴². It is possible that this was deliberately buried during a period of political or economic instability following the years of the Norman Conquest (1066). This provides evidence for a level of human activity in the wider area during the late Saxon/early Norman period.

Historic Landscape (Map 14)

The historic landscape character of the zone is dominated by a rectilinear field pattern which may have its origins in the post medieval period, although details concerning its earlier history are not currently well understood. However, it is possible that there was a close relationship between this landscape and the adjacent medieval settlement of Oulton (see STHECZ 7). An area of ridge and furrow earthworks⁴³, associated with medieval ploughing

³⁷ Staffordshire HER: PRN 0069; PRN 02101; PRN 02102; PRN 02103; PRN 02104

³⁸ Ring Ditch: Circular or near circular ditches, usually seen as cropmarks. Use the term where the function is unknown. Ring ditches may be the remains of ploughed out round barrows, round houses, or of modern features such as searchlight emplacements. (Scope note reproduced from the Thesaurus of Monument Types by kind permission of English Heritage © 2009)

³⁹ Cropmarks: Monument visible as a mark in standing crops, parchmarks or soilmarks, but where no subsurface deposits have been proven eg by excavation or other ground disturbance. (Scope note reproduced from the Thesaurus of Monument Types by kind permission of English Heritage © 2009)

⁴⁰ Staffordshire HER: PRN 04610; PRN 04613; PRN 00669; PRN 04590

⁴¹ Staffordshire HER: PRN 00601

⁴² Staffordshire HER: PRN 01832)

⁴³ Staffordshire HER: PRN 20417 and 20418. Ridge & furrow: A series of long, raised ridges separated by ditches used to prepare the ground for arable cultivation. This was a technique,

techniques, has been identified from aerial photographs taken in 1963 in Oulton Abbey parkland to the east of the zone. This perhaps suggests that at least some of this landscape had been utilised as medieval open fields⁴⁴ worked by the local inhabitants of Oulton prior to enclosure or the formation of a landscape park in the 18th or 19th century.

However, the field system to the far west of the zone, associated with the tributary brook of the Trent, may have been laid out as watermeadows during the 18th/19th century, most notably in the earthworks that survive just to the south of Ford Farm. The development of water meadows during this period meant that the landowners could control the flooding of the land and ensure an early crop of grass and subsequent multiple crops for fodder. This enabled them to over-winter larger numbers of animals.

Three historic farmsteads have been identified within the zone farming this rectilinear landscape, both lying to the south of the zone. Outlanes Farm is of a regular courtyard plan and such farmsteads have been identified nationally as post dating the 1790s⁴⁵. This particular farmstead plan is the most common form in Staffordshire and is spread widely across the landscape. These forms appear to represent a deliberate development aimed at improving agricultural productivity being taken forward by wealthy landowners from the late 18th century and into the 19th century.

The farmstead of Chewick Cottage, however, is of a dispersed cluster plan. This plan-form generally represents small farmsteads comprising one or two farm buildings. Hillside is another small farmstead, but possibly with linear origins although the plan form of the farmstead has altered and been extended during the 20th century.

Two historic landscape parks were established within the zone during the 18th or 19th century. The parkland associated with Oulton Abbey⁴⁶, to the east of the zone, may have been laid out in the early 19th century. The date of the Oulton Grange⁴⁷ parkland to the north is currently unknown. A further parkland associated with Oulton House lies to the north, beyond the STHECZ. The character of the Oulton Grange parkland survives well, whilst only a few features, notably specimen trees, survive at Oulton Abbey.

characteristic of the medieval period. (Scope note reproduced from the Thesaurus of Monument Types by kind permission of English Heritage © 2009)

⁴⁴ Open field: An area of arable land with common rights after harvest or while fallow. Usually without internal divisions (hedges, walls or fences). (Scope note reproduced from the Thesaurus of Monument Types by kind permission of English Heritage © 2009)

⁴⁵ Lake 2009: 19

⁴⁶ Staffordshire HER: PRN 40313

⁴⁷ Staffordshire HER: PRN 40312

Historic Assets Summary Table

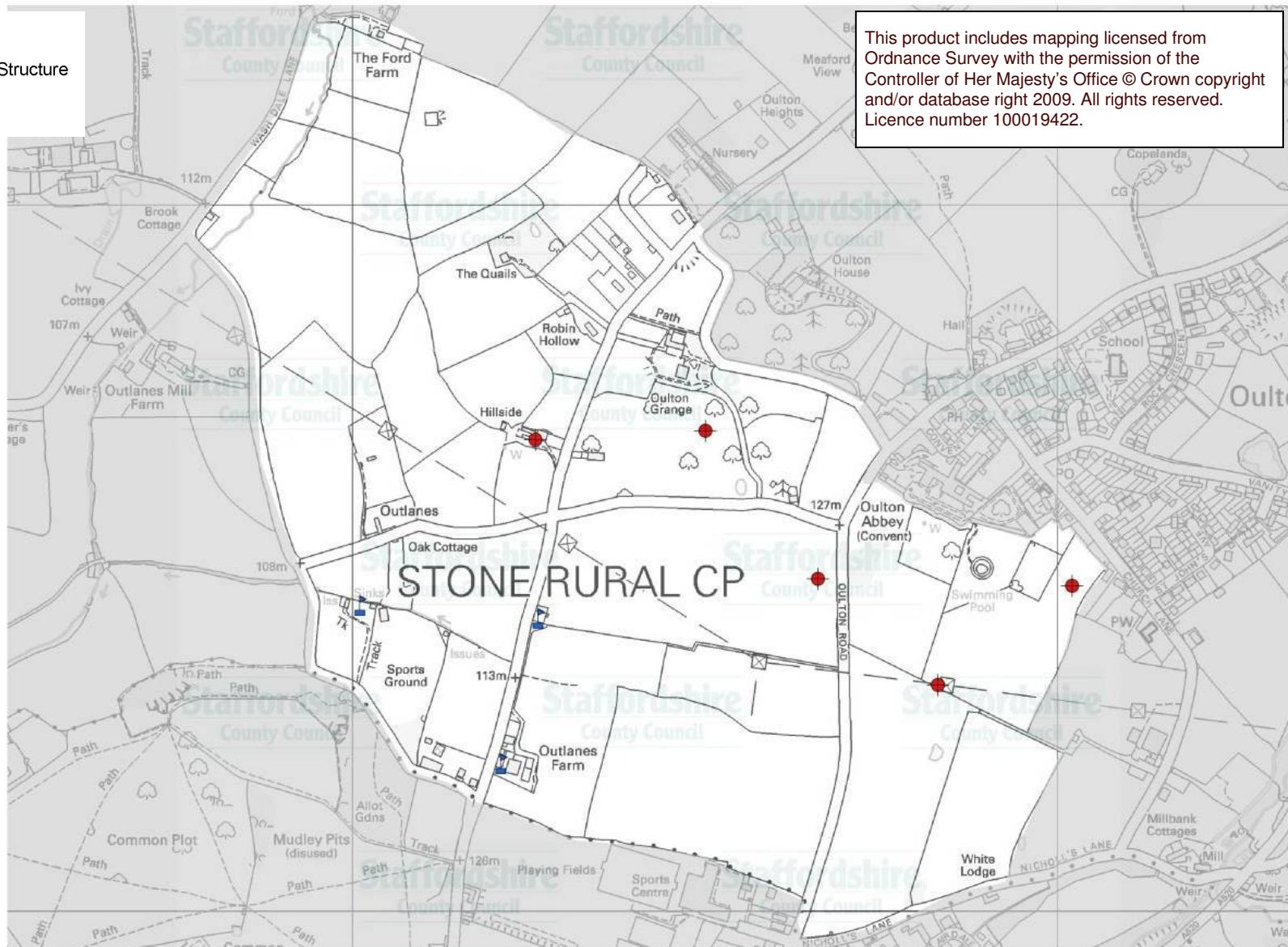
Survival	The zone has seen little disturbance except perhaps by agricultural practices.	2
Potential	There are limited known historic environment assets (HEAs) and this lack of knowledge is probably due to lack of investigation rather than poor preservation.	2
Documentation	HER data	1
Diversity	There are a range of assets of different date and character including earthworks, historic buildings and historic parkland as well as historic landscape character.	2
Group Association	There are a limited range of HEAs which are potentially related notably the rectilinear fields and the establishment of parkland and watermeadows.	2
Amenity Value	The historic environment does not currently lend itself to display or visitor attraction.	1
Sensitivity to change (to housing expansion & infrastructure for SBC)	Medium to large scale development is likely to have at least a moderate impact upon the historic environment character. In particular upon the historic farmsteads and the dispersed settlement pattern as well as upon the form and character of the surviving parkland. There is also a potential impact upon the listed buildings lying within STHECZ 7.	2
Overall Score		12

Legend

- Building or Structure
- Monument

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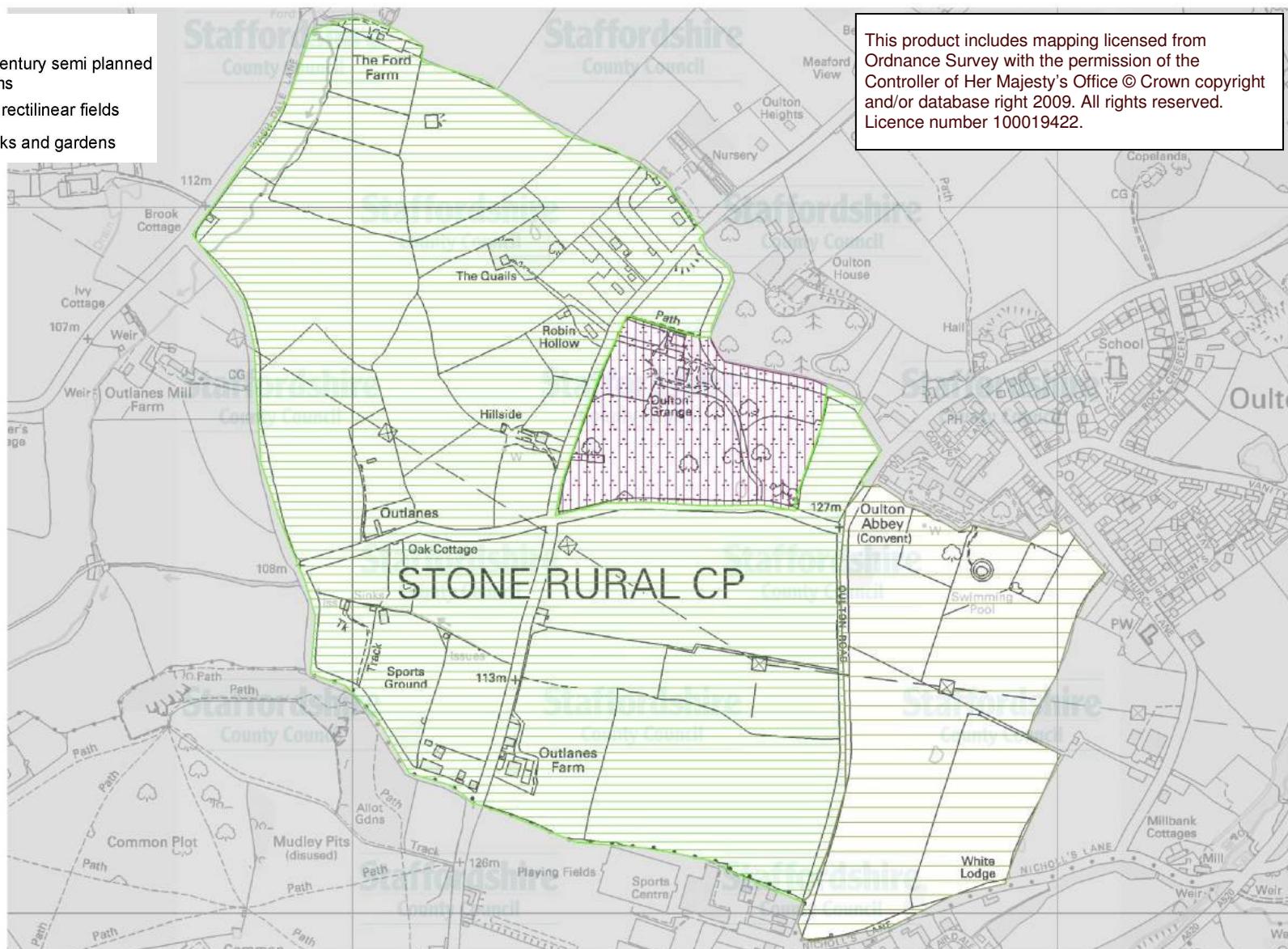
Map 13: Known historic environment assets from the HER



Legend

- 18th/19th century semi planned field systems
- Early small rectilinear fields
- Historic parks and gardens

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Map 14: Refined
HLC

STHECZ 7 – Oulton (HECA 13h)

Summary

The zone comprises the historic core of the settlement of Oulton, where many historic buildings, both listed and unlisted, survive. The adjacent field system retains evidence of its former use as a medieval open field⁴⁸ within at least one surviving characteristic reverse ‘S’ curve boundary and is therefore closely associated with the evolution of the village and its surroundings.

Medium to large scale development within the zone would have at least an overall moderate impact upon the historic environment assets (HEAs). However, should development be planned for the zone there would be a need to address impacts upon and potential mitigation strategies for:

- The impact upon the listed buildings in the zone
- The impact upon the layout of the historic settlement
- The relationship between the settlement and the adjacent field pattern; how this could be retained or reflected.
- The potential for unknown below-ground archaeological deposits to survive.

Early consultation with the Cultural Heritage Team at Staffordshire County Council and the Conservation Officer at Stafford Borough Council is advised.

Designations (Map 15)

There are six Listed Buildings lying within the zone.

Archaeological Character (Map 16)

Little archaeological work has been carried out within the zone to determine evidence of human activity between the prehistoric and early Saxon periods. However, the zone lies within the Trent valley and aerial photographic surveys carried out across the southern portion of this valley within the county have identified intensive human activity from the Neolithic period onwards. It is therefore likely that there was a degree of human activity within the zone during the prehistoric period. Two axeheads found within Stone date to the Neolithic/Bronze Age and a Bronze Age palstave axe⁴⁹ was found near Oulton, but these probably represent casual loss.

⁴⁸ Open field: An area of arable land with common rights after harvest or while fallow. Usually without internal divisions (hedges, walls or fences). (Scope note reproduced from the Thesaurus of Monument Types by kind permission of English Heritage © 2009)

⁴⁹ Palstave: A bronze axehead of middle or late Bronze Age date in which the side flanges and the bar/stop on both faces are connected, forming a single hafting aid. Some types feature a side loop to further assist hafting. (Scope note reproduced from the Thesaurus of Monument Types by kind permission of English Heritage © 2009)

Within the wider area there is evidence for human activity during the prehistoric period. Approximately 4km to the south west, on the opposite side of the Trent Valley, a collection of six stone tools⁵⁰ were found which have been dated from the Neolithic to Bronze Age period. Such a collection may suggest more intensive human activity in the vicinity rather than representing a casual loss. Other prehistoric sites, enclosures and ring ditches⁵¹, of possible Bronze Age date are located to the east and south of Stone having been identified as cropmarks⁵² on aerial photographs⁵³. Approximately 2km to the west of the zone are two probable Bronze Age barrows⁵⁴ lying within the Scheduled Bury Bank hillfort. The hillfort itself has not been dated and although these monuments are usually associated with the Iron Age, some are known to have earlier origins. The presence of the hillfort suggests a centralised power base was present within the area from at least the late Bronze Age/Iron Age, which oversaw a dispersed settlement pattern across the landscape. The hillfort would have provided a cultural, economic and administrative focus for the surrounding communities.

A coin hoard of 11th century coins were found near Oulton, which included coins from the reigns of both Edward the Confessor (1042 – 1066) and William I (1066 – 1087)⁵⁵. It is possible that this was deliberately buried during a period of political or economic instability following the years of the Norman Conquest (1066). This provides evidence for a level of human activity in the area during the late Saxon/early Norman period.

Historic Landscape (Map 17)

The historic landscape is dominated by the small settlement of Oulton which was first recorded in documentary sources in the 13th century. It is currently unknown to what extent this landscape was settled prior to this date, but the field system which lies to the south of the zone has been identified as Piecemeal Enclosure. This form of enclosure fossilises the remains of the earlier open field arable farming proven in the reverse ‘S’ shaped field boundaries, which follow the line of the ox-plough associated with medieval ploughing. This field would have been farmed by the inhabitants of Oulton collectively during the medieval and later period.

⁵⁰ Staffordshire HER: PRN 0069; PRN 02101; PRN 02102; PRN 02103; PRN 02104

⁵¹ Ring Ditch: Circular or near circular ditches, usually seen as cropmarks. Use the term where the function is unknown. Ring ditches may be the remains of ploughed out round barrows, round houses, or of modern features such as searchlight emplacements. (Scope note reproduced from the Thesaurus of Monument Types by kind permission of English Heritage © 2009)

⁵² Cropmarks: Monument visible as a mark in standing crops, parchmarks or soilmarks, but where no subsurface deposits have been proven eg by excavation or other ground disturbance. (Scope note reproduced from the Thesaurus of Monument Types by kind permission of English Heritage © 2009)

⁵³ Staffordshire HER: PRN 04610; PRN 04613; PRN 00669; PRN 04590

⁵⁴ Staffordshire HER: PRN 00601

⁵⁵ Staffordshire HER: PRN 01832)

The Piecemeal Enclosure was probably laid out in the Post Medieval period, although this has not been proven, and was carried out through a means of informal, verbal agreements between farmers who wished to consolidate their holdings into a block rather than being scattered across two or more open fields. There is, therefore, a strong association between the historic core of the village and this field system.

The village itself contains six listed buildings. The earliest of these are a 17th century house on Kibblestone Road⁵⁶ and Oulton Old Hall, which apparently retains a 17th century core although it was considerably altered in the 18th century⁵⁷.

Oulton Abbey, whose parkland falls within STHECZ 6, was established as a country house in the early 19th century. It was converted to a Roman Catholic abbey c.1853 with a chapel being completed by E. W. Pugin in 1854 in the Gothic style. A presbytery to house the priest was completed in 1892.

Other historic buildings survive within the village along Kibblestone Road and Church Lane.

Historic Assets Summary Table

Survival	The zone has been impacted by development, but there is good survival of historic buildings.	2
Potential	There are limited known historic environment assets (HEAs) beyond the historic built environment and the historic field system, but there is the potential for archaeological remains to survive associated in particular with the development of the settlement from the medieval period onwards.	2
Documentation	HER data	1
Diversity	The HEAs with the zone are mostly historic buildings, albeit of a various dates.	1
Group Association	There is a strong association between the settlement and the adjacent field system which has evidence of its open field past fossilised within one of its field boundaries.	2
Amenity Value	The historic environment does help to define a sense of place for the area in the surviving historic buildings.	2
Sensitivity to change (to housing expansion & infrastructure for SBC)	The zone would be highly sensitive to medium to large scale development in particular upon the Listed Buildings.	3
Overall Score		13

⁵⁶ Staffordshire HER: PRN 07789

⁵⁷ Staffordshire HER: PRN 07790

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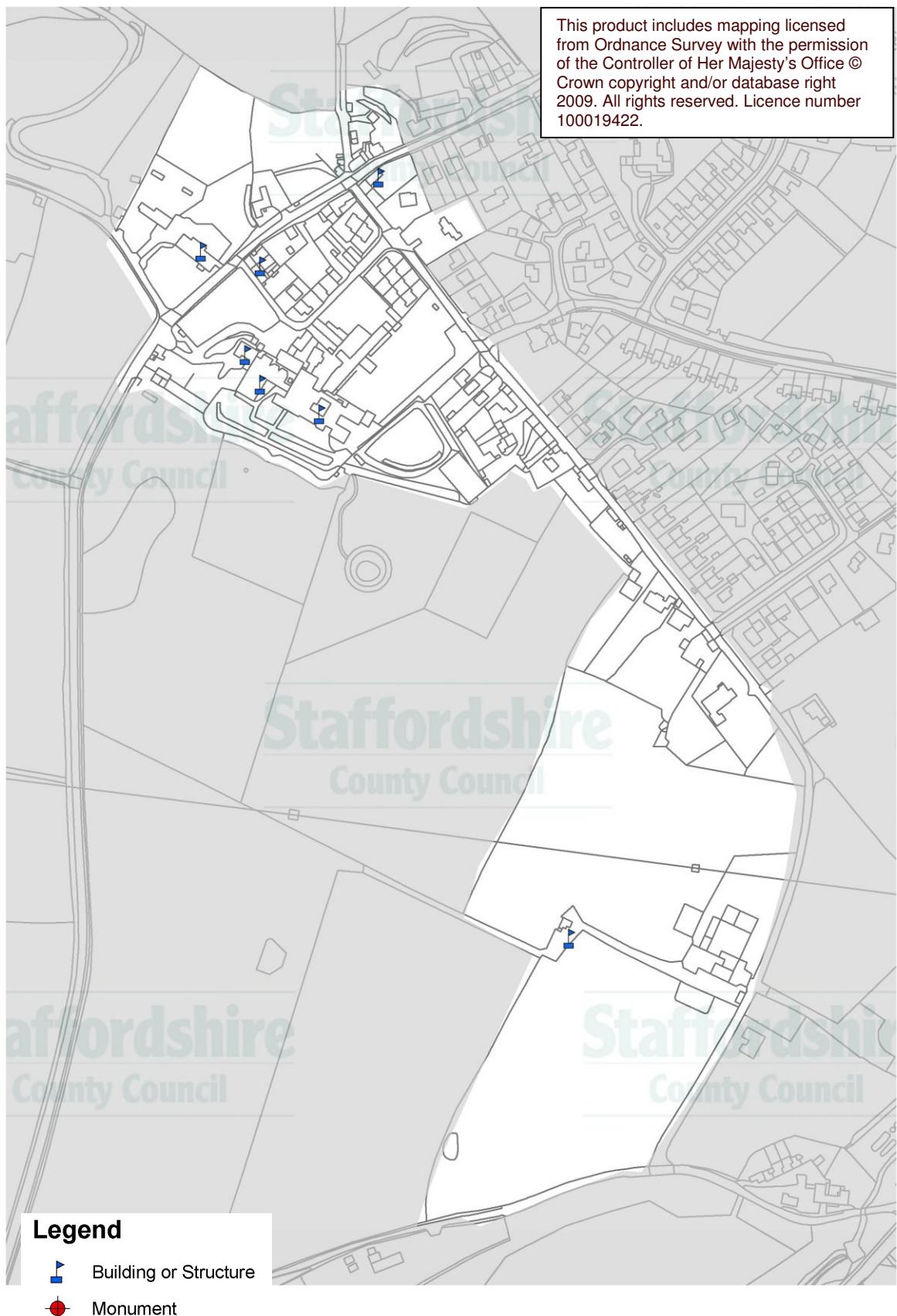


Legend

- ▲ Listed buildings
- Scheduled monuments
- Registered battlefields
- Registered parks & gardens
- Conservation areas

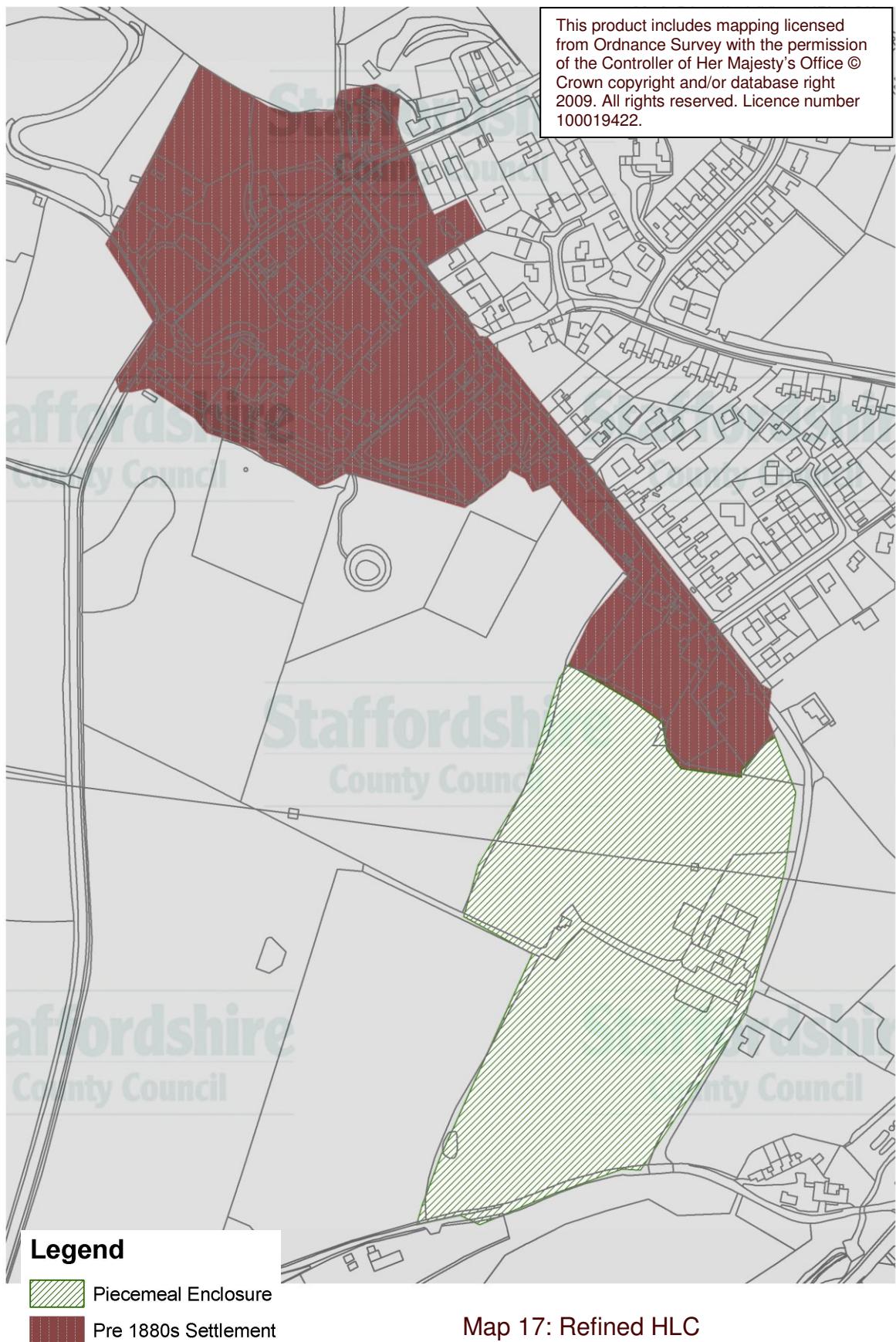
Map 15: Designated sites

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Map 16: Known historic environment assets from the HER

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Map 17: Refined HLC

STHECZ 8 – East of Oulton (HECA 13h)

Summary

The historic character of the zone is dominated by 20th century housing development and parkland. Two historic buildings have been identified as surviving within the zone, both probably of 19th century date.

Medium to large scale development within the zone is unlikely to have an impact upon the historic environment assets (HEAs). However, should development be planned for the zone there would be a need to address impacts upon and potential mitigation strategies for:

- The impact upon the listed buildings in the adjacent STHECZ 7
- The impact upon the unlisted historic buildings
- The potential for unknown below-ground archaeological deposits to survive.

Early consultation with the Cultural Heritage Team at Staffordshire County Council and the Conservation Officer at Stafford Borough Council is advised.

Designations

There are no designated sites currently lying within the zone, although Listed Buildings are present in STHECZ 7 which lies adjacent.

Archaeological Character (Map 18)

Little archaeological work has been carried out within the zone to determine evidence of human activity between the prehistoric and early Saxon periods. However, the zone lies within the Trent valley and aerial photographic surveys carried out across the southern portion of this valley within the county have identified intensive human activity from the Neolithic period onwards. It is therefore likely that there was a degree of human activity within the zone during the prehistoric period. Two axeheads found within Stone date to the Neolithic/Bronze Age and a Bronze Age palstave axe⁵⁸ was found near Oulton, but these probably represent casual loss.

Within the wider area there is evidence for human activity during the prehistoric period. Approximately 4km to the south west, on the opposite side of the Trent Valley, a collection of six stone tools⁵⁹ were found which have been dated from the Neolithic to Bronze Age period. Such a collection may suggest more intensive human activity in the vicinity rather than representing

⁵⁸ Palstave: A bronze axehead of middle or late Bronze Age date in which the side flanges and the bar/stop on both faces are connected, forming a single hafting aid. Some types feature a side loop to further assist hafting. (Scope note reproduced from the Thesaurus of Monument Types by kind permission of English Heritage © 2009)

⁵⁹ Staffordshire HER: PRN 0069; PRN 02101; PRN 02102; PRN 02103; PRN 02104

a casual loss. Other prehistoric sites, enclosures and ring ditches⁶⁰, of possible Bronze Age date are located to the east and south of Stone having been identified as cropmarks⁶¹ on aerial photographs⁶². Approximately 2km to the west of the zone are two probable Bronze Age barrows⁶³ lying within the Scheduled Bury Bank hillfort. The hillfort itself has not been dated and although these monuments are usually associated with the Iron Age, some are known to have earlier origins. The presence of the hillfort suggests a centralised power base was present within the area from at least the late Bronze Age/Iron Age, which oversaw a dispersed settlement pattern across the landscape. The hillfort would have provided a cultural, economic and administrative focus for the surrounding communities.

A coin hoard of 11th century coins were found near Oulton, which included coins from the reigns of both Edward the Confessor (1042 – 1066) and William I (1066 – 1087)⁶⁴. It is possible that this was deliberately buried during a period of political or economic instability following the years of the Norman Conquest (1066). This provides evidence for a level of human activity in the wider area during the late Saxon/early Norman period.

Historic Landscape (Map 19)

The zone is dominated by 20th century housing development and parkland which forms part of the village of Oulton (see STHECZ 7). In the late 19th century there were only a few buildings along Church Lane, of which only a couple of cottages and a detached house survive, whilst Vanity Lane had yet to be developed. One of the properties on the former route was a small shoe manufactory, which survived until the inter war period. The houses which were built upon the site of the factory survive.

One historic building, which was probably present by the mid 19th century, survives on Kibblestone Road. Oultonrocks House was built in the mid to late 19th century, although the landscape park which was associated with it has been largely built over.

The 20th century housing development shown on map 2 was built upon a field system which was identified as Piecemeal Enclosure. This form of enclosure fossilises the remains of the earlier open field arable farming in the reverse 'S' shaped field boundaries, which follow the line of the ox-plough associated

⁶⁰ Ring Ditch: Circular or near circular ditches, usually seen as cropmarks. Use the term where the function is unknown. Ring ditches may be the remains of ploughed out round barrows, round houses, or of modern features such as searchlight emplacements. (Scope note reproduced from the Thesaurus of Monument Types by kind permission of English Heritage © 2009)

⁶¹ Cropmarks: Monument visible as a mark in standing crops, parchmarks or soilmarks, but where no subsurface deposits have been proven eg by excavation or other ground disturbance. (Scope note reproduced from the Thesaurus of Monument Types by kind permission of English Heritage © 2009)

⁶² Staffordshire HER: PRN 04610; PRN 04613; PRN 00669; PRN 04590

⁶³ Staffordshire HER: PRN 00601

⁶⁴ Staffordshire HER: PRN 01832)

with medieval ploughing. This field would have been farmed by the inhabitants of Oulton collectively during the medieval and later period.

The Piecemeal Enclosure was probably created in the Post Medieval period, although this has not been proven, and was carried out through a means of informal, verbal agreements between farmers who wished to consolidate their holdings into a block rather than being scattered across two or more open fields.

Historic Assets Summary Table

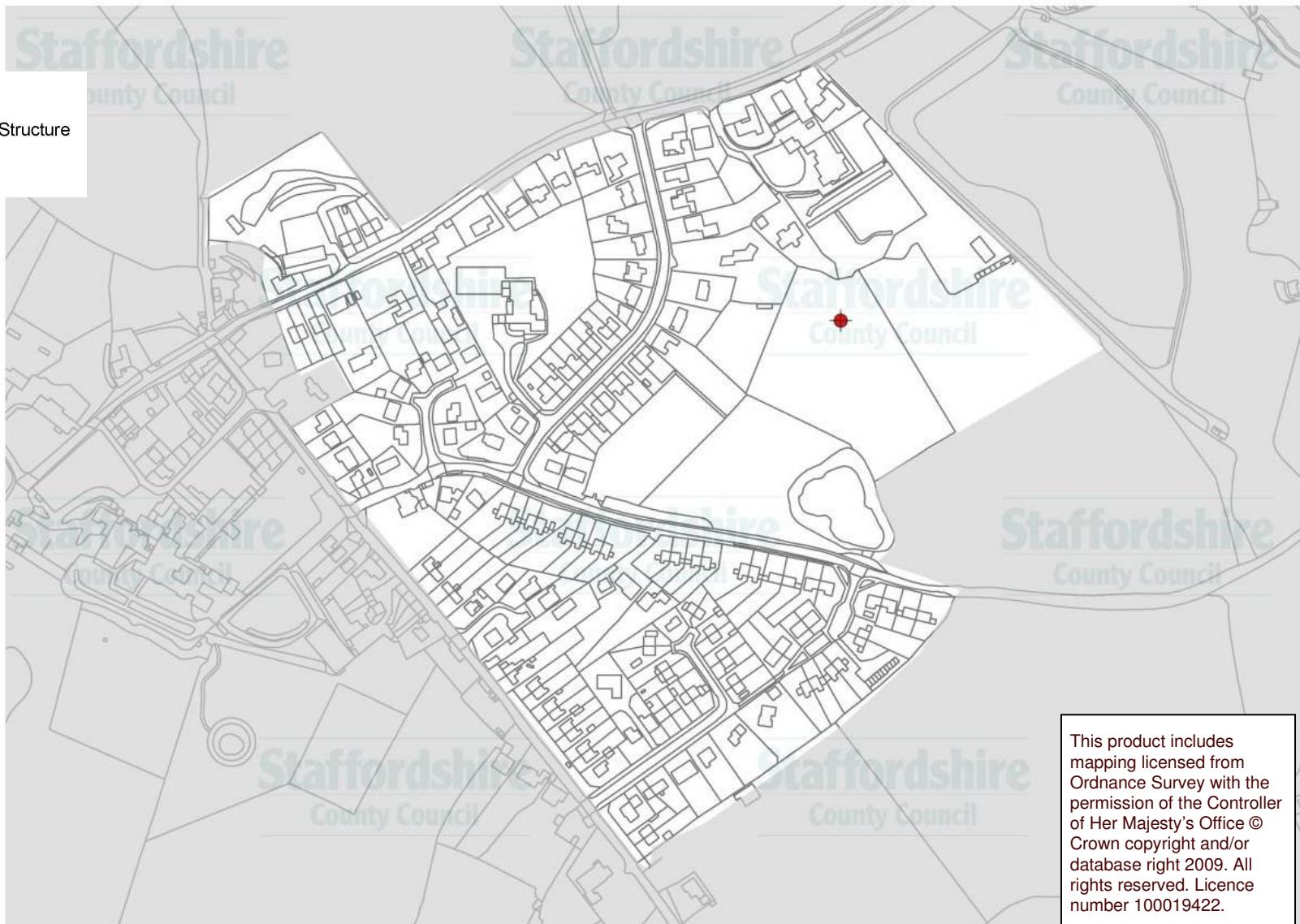
Survival	The zone has been impacted by development and only a few unlisted historic buildings survive.	1
Potential	The potential for unknown historic environment assets (HEAs) to survive has been impacted by development, although the area of parkland may offer opportunities for survival.	2
Documentation	HER data	1
Diversity	There are very few known HEAs except two historic buildings.	1
Group Association	There are too few known HEAs to establish group association.	1
Amenity Value	The historic environment does not lend itself to public display or visitor attraction.	1
Sensitivity to change (to housing expansion & infrastructure for SBC)	The historic environment of the zone is unlikely to be significantly impacted by medium to large scale development. Although there is the potential for impact upon the historic buildings.	1
Overall Score		8

Legend

- Building or Structure
- Monument

Map 18: Known historic environment assets from the HER

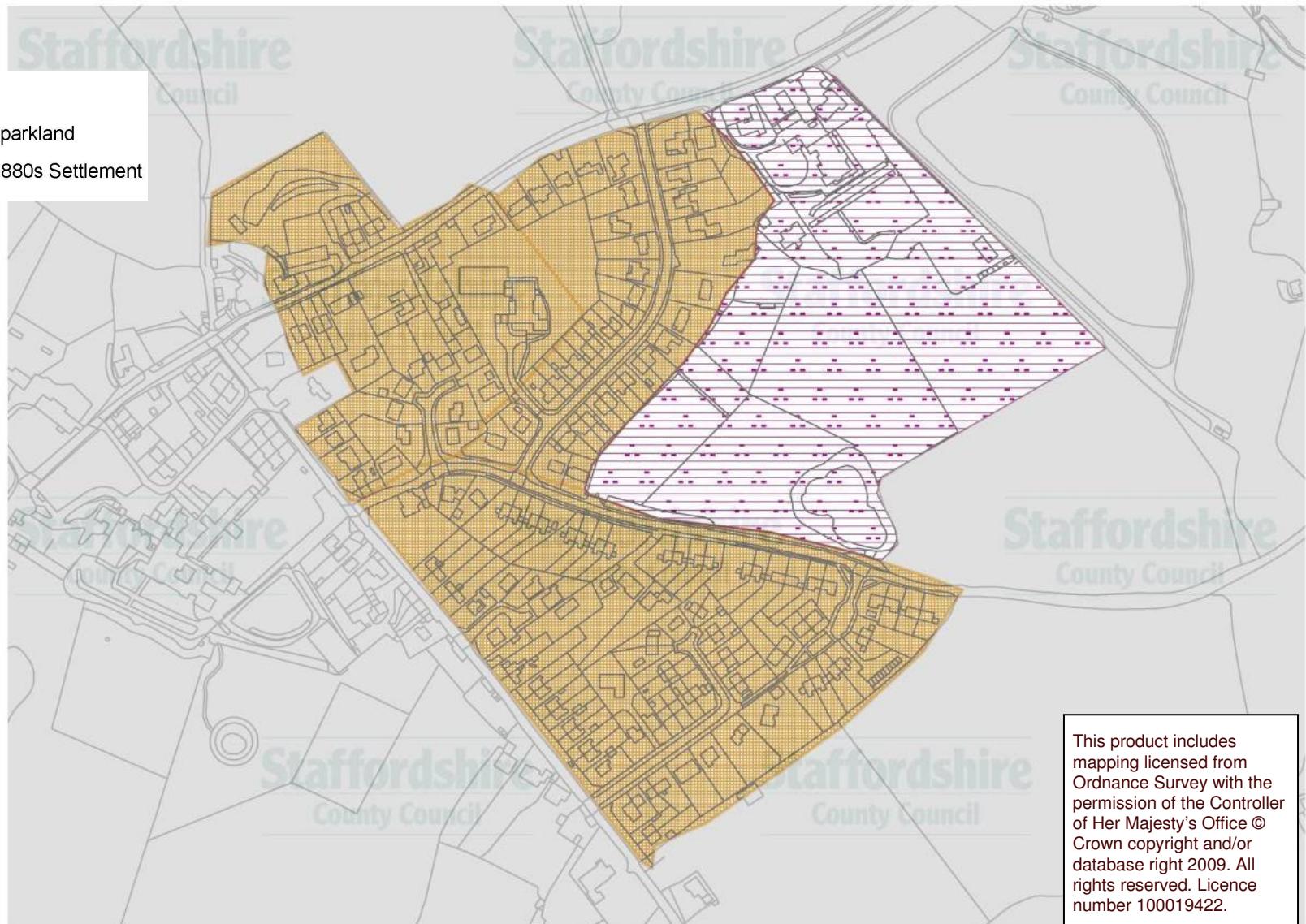
64



Map 19: Refined HLC

Legend

-  Other parkland
-  Post 1880s Settlement



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STHECZ 9 – Moddershall Valley (HECA 13h)

Summary

The historic environment of the zone forms part of a wider understanding of the development and processes of the pottery industry which has been essential to the economy of the county since the late 18th century. The listed watermills within the steep sided valley contributed to this industry from the late 18th century into the 20th century. Of a similar period is The Hayes House and its well surviving landscape park. These features, along with the ancient woodland along the valley, all contribute to provide a unique historic landscape character.

Development within the zone would have a highly significant impact upon the historic environment assets (HEAs). However, should development be planned for the zone there would be a need to address impacts upon and potential mitigation strategies for:

- The surviving historic parkland at The Hayes House
- The impact upon the listed buildings within the zone and upon the Conservation Area.
- The impact upon the relict industrial landscape which potentially contains unknown earthworks and archaeological deposits charting its evolution.
- The nature of the historic landscape character comprised of the ancient woodland along the river valleys with the older field patterns above.
- The relationship between the historic buildings whether listed or unlisted.
- The potential for unknown below-ground archaeological deposits to survive.

Early consultation with the Cultural Heritage Team at Staffordshire County Council and the Conservation Officer at Stafford Borough Council is advised.

Designations (Map 20)

The zone falls within the Moddershall Valley Conservation Area (076) and there are eight listed buildings contained within the zone.

Archaeological Character (Map 21)

Little archaeological work has been carried out within the zone to determine evidence of human activity between the prehistoric and early Saxon periods. Two axeheads found within Stone date to the Neolithic/Bronze Age, but these probably represent casual loss.

Within the wider area there is evidence for human activity during the prehistoric period. Approximately 4.5km to the south west, on the opposite side of the Trent Valley, a collection of six stone tools⁶⁵ were found which have dated from the Neolithic to Bronze Age period. Such a collection may suggest more intensive human activity in the vicinity rather than representing casual loss. Other prehistoric sites, enclosures and ring ditches⁶⁶, of possible Bronze Age date are located to the east and south of Stone having been identified as cropmarks⁶⁷ on aerial photographs⁶⁸. Approximately 2km to the west of the zone are two probable Bronze Age barrows⁶⁹ lying within the Scheduled Bury Bank hillfort. The hillfort itself has not been dated and although these monuments are usually associated with the Iron Age, some are known to have earlier origins. The presence of the hillfort suggests a centralised power base was present within the area from at least the late Bronze Age/Iron Age, which oversaw a dispersed settlement pattern across the landscape. The hillfort would have provided a cultural, economic and administrative focus for the surrounding communities.

A coin hoard of 11th century coins were found near Oulton, which included coins from the reigns of both Edward the Confessor (1042 – 1066) and William I (1066 – 1087)⁷⁰. It is possible that this was deliberately buried during a period of political or economic instability following the years of the Norman Conquest (1066). This provides evidence for a level of human activity in the wider area during the late Saxon/early Norman period.

Historic Landscape (Map 22)

The zone comprises the steep sided Moddershall valley which is dominated by ancient woodland and, further south, probable 19th century plantations. The valley is famed for its contribution to the Staffordshire pottery industry, located to the north around Stoke-on-Trent, from the late 18th century and into the 20th century. A series of watermills were constructed along the valley to grind flint and bone for the industry. Two listed watermills, Hayes Mill and Coppice Mill lie within the zone and another, Ivy Mill, lies just to the north⁷¹. Hayes Mill was first built in the early 19th century as a flint mill, being converted to a bone mill in the early 20th century. Millbank Cottages lie adjacent and may be associated with the mill, perhaps providing cottages for

⁶⁵ Staffordshire HER: PRN 0069; PRN 02101; PRN 02102; PRN 02103; PRN 02104

⁶⁶ Ring Ditch: Circular or near circular ditches, usually seen as cropmarks. Use the term where the function is unknown. Ring ditches may be the remains of ploughed out round barrows, round houses, or of modern features such as searchlight emplacements. (Scope note reproduced from the Thesaurus of Monument Types by kind permission of English Heritage © 2009)

⁶⁷ Cropmarks: Monument visible as a mark in standing crops, parchmarks or soilmarks, but where no subsurface deposits have been proven eg by excavation or other ground disturbance. (Scope note reproduced from the Thesaurus of Monument Types by kind permission of English Heritage © 2009)

⁶⁸ Staffordshire HER: PRN 04610; PRN 04613; PRN 00669; PRN 04590

⁶⁹ Staffordshire HER: PRN 00601

⁷⁰ Staffordshire HER: PRN 01832)

⁷¹ Staffordshire HER: PRN 07778, PRN 07924 and PRN 07779

the workers. Coppice Mill dates to the 18th century and was manufacturing paper by 1798, being converted to a flint mill between 1840 and 1853, when a flint kiln was also constructed nearby. Both of these mills were fed by separate mill races which survive.

The Hayes House⁷² is Grade II listed and dates to the early-mid 19th century and is associated with a landscape park, many features of which appear to survive. A former stable block and gatehouse are also listed and form part of the wider complex. The history of the property is currently unknown as is its relationship to the industry of the Moddershall Valley.

Field systems are also present within the zone, some of which may have originated as assarts⁷³ in the post medieval period. On the northern side of the valley the field systems have a regularity to them suggesting that they were planned possibly at a later date, but prior to the late 19th century.

The earlier history of the valley has currently been little studied but it is possible that watermills had been constructed here in the medieval or earlier post medieval periods.

Historic Assets Summary Table

Survival	The zone has seen little disturbance and the known assets, particularly those associated with the watermills and The Hayes House survive well.	3
Potential	There are a range of high quality historic environment assets (HEAs) within the zone, particularly in the form of the historic built environment. Structures associated with the pottery industry, particularly the mill races, survive. There is a high potential for further earthworks or below ground archaeological deposits associated with the development of the valley as an industrial centre to survive.	3
Documentation	HER data, two surveys on the watermills of the valley and the Conservation Area research	3
Diversity	There are a wide range of assets in terms of the built environment, the landscape park and historic landscape character.	3
Group Association	There is a very strong association between the watermills along the valley. Each watermill would have depended upon the others to ensure a good supply of water down the valley. There is also the potential for Millbank Cottages to be closely associated with the industry of the valley and possibly the construction of The Hayes House at a similar period.	3

⁷² Staffordshire HER: PRN 07774

⁷³ Assart: Where farmland has been enclosed out of a woodland or forest.

Amenity Value	The historic environment plays a key role in the zones sense of place for local people and visitors. The watermills could be promoted or further interpretation could be carried out to fully appreciate the contribution of the zone to the wider pottery industry for which Staffordshire is famous.	3
Sensitivity to change (to housing expansion & infrastructure for SBC)	The zone is highly sensitive to development particularly in terms of the impact upon the well preserved historic landscape character of ancient woodland and historic parkland. Development would also impact upon the understanding of this zone as a relict industrial valley and upon the conservation area more generally. The setting of the individual listed buildings would also be impacted.	3
Overall Score		21

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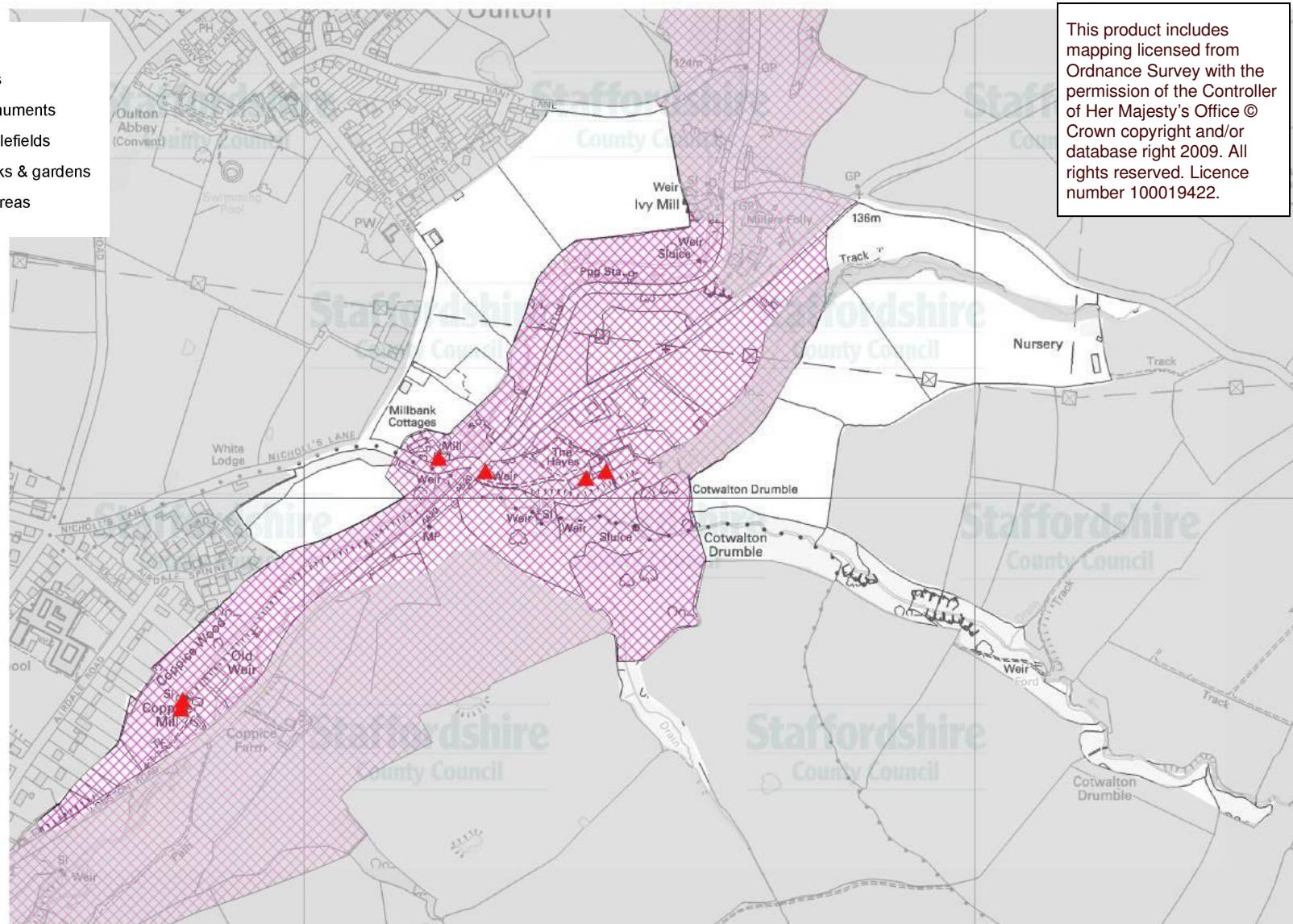
Helsby, L. E., Rushton, A. J. & Legge, D. J. nd. *Water mills of the Moddershall Valley*. Unpublished document

Job, B. nd. *Watermills of Moddershall Valley*. Unpublished document

Staffordshire County Council & Stafford Borough Council. nd. *Moddershall Valley conservation area*. Unpublished document

Legend

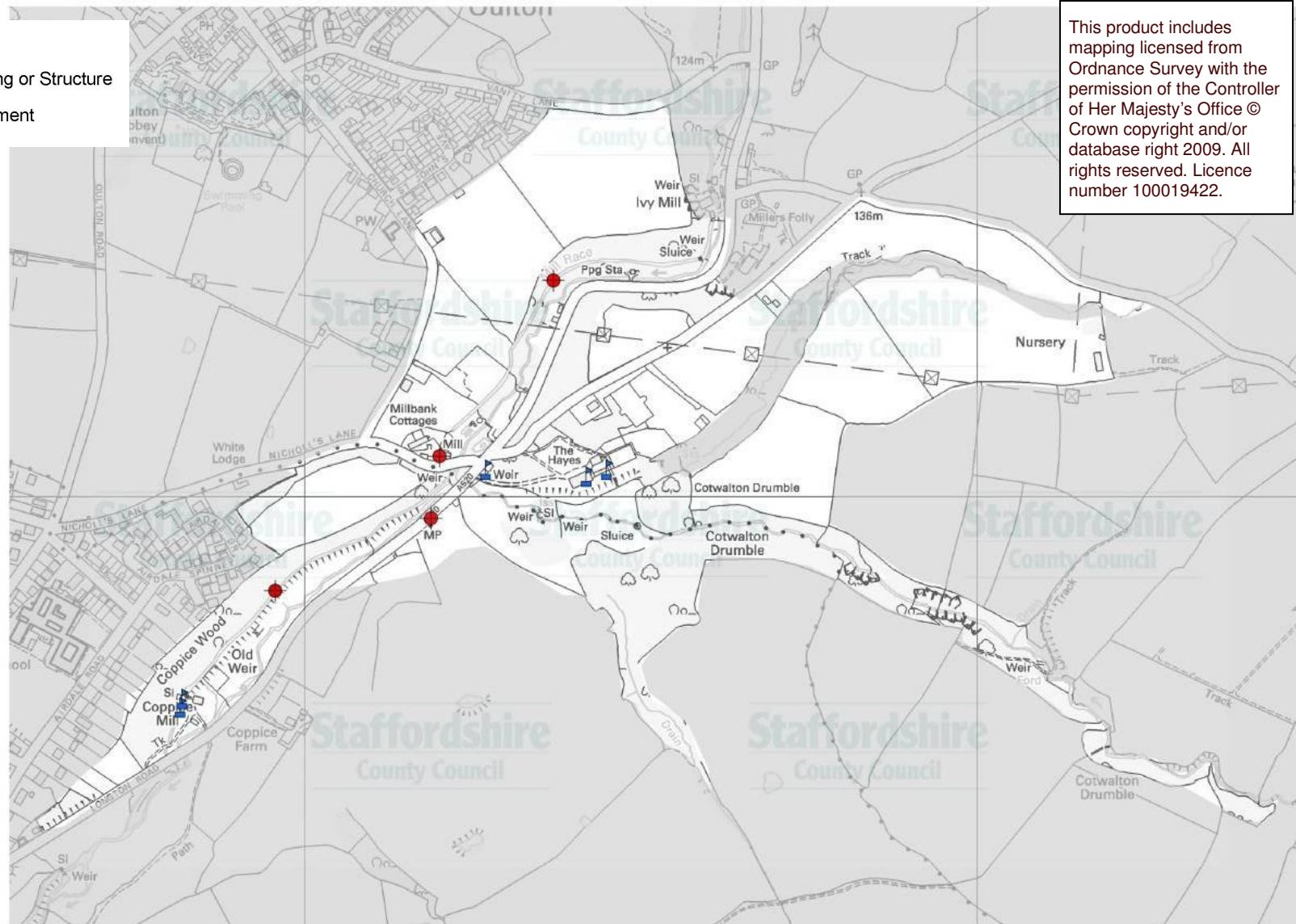
- ▲ Listed buildings
- Scheduled monuments
- Registered battlefields
- Registered parks & gardens
- Conservation areas



Map 20: Designated sites

Legend

- Building or Structure
- Monument



Map 21: Known historic environment assets from the HER

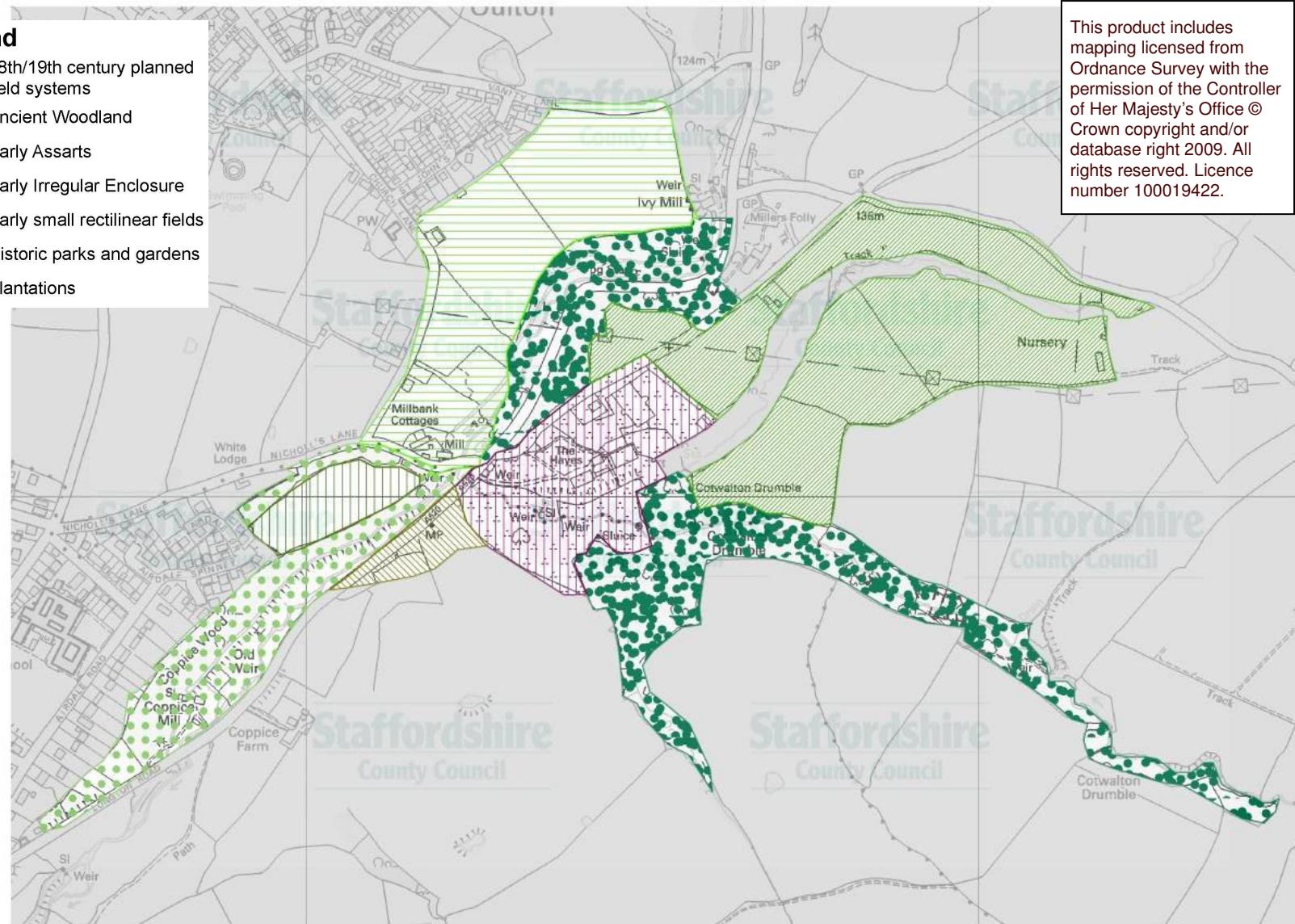
Map 22 Refined HLC

57

Legend

-  18th/19th century planned field systems
 -  Ancient Woodland
 -  Early Assarts
 -  Early Irregular Enclosure
 -  Early small rectilinear fields
 -  Historic parks and gardens
 -  Plantations

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STHECZ 10 – Stone Park (HECA 13h)

Summary

The zone has been impacted by later 20th century agricultural practices which have removed many of the earlier field boundaries. It is possible that the landscape of the zone had its origins as a medieval deer park and that Stone Park farm was a lodge within it, but further research is required to confirm this interpretation.

It is possible that a Bronze Age cremation urn was discovered within the zone in the late 18th century, which suggests the potential for archaeological evidence to survive relating to human activity during the prehistoric period.

Development within the zone would have a moderate impact upon the historic environment assets (HEAs) and upon the setting of the Moddershall Valley Conservation Area. However, should development be planned for the zone there would be a need to address impacts upon and potential mitigation strategies for:

- The impact upon the Conservation Area and the historic environment assets of the adjacent STHECZ 9 more generally.
- The potential for unknown above and below-ground archaeological deposits to survive.

Early consultation with the Cultural Heritage Team at Staffordshire County Council and the Conservation Officer at Stafford Borough Council is advised.

Designations (Map 23)

The western part of the zone falls within the Moddershall Valley Conservation Area (076)

Archaeological Character (Map 24)

Little archaeological work has been carried out within the zone to determine evidence of human activity between the prehistoric and early Saxon periods. Two axeheads found within Stone date to the Neolithic/Bronze Age, but these probably represent casual loss. A cinerary urn⁷⁴ was discovered, possibly within the zone, in the late 18th century, which may have dated to the Bronze Age⁷⁵.

Within the wider area there is evidence for human activity during the prehistoric period. Approximately 4.5km to the south west, on the opposite

⁷⁴ Cinerary urn: A container, in the form of an urn, for keeping the ashes of the dead after cremation. (Scope note reproduced from the Thesaurus of Monument Types by kind permission of English Heritage © 2009)

⁷⁵ Staffordshire HER: PRN 00669

side of the Trent Valley, a collection of six stone tools⁷⁶ were found which have been dated from the Neolithic to Bronze Age period. Such a collection may suggest more intensive human activity in the vicinity rather than representing casual loss. Other prehistoric sites, enclosures and ring ditches⁷⁷, of possible Bronze Age date are located to the east and south of Stone having been identified as cropmarks⁷⁸ on aerial photographs⁷⁹. Approximately 2km to the west of the zone are two probable Bronze Age barrows⁸⁰ lying within the Scheduled Bury Bank hillfort. The hillfort itself has not been dated and although these monuments are usually associated with the Iron Age, some are known to have earlier origins. The presence of the hillfort suggests a centralised power base was present within the area from at least the late Bronze Age/Iron Age, which oversaw a dispersed settlement pattern across the landscape. The hillfort would have provided a cultural, economic and administrative focus for the surrounding communities.

A coin hoard of 11th century coins were found near Oulton, which included coins from the reigns of both Edward the Confessor (1042 – 1066) and William I (1066 – 1087)⁸¹. It is possible that this was deliberately buried during a period of political or economic instability following the years of the Norman Conquest (1066). This provides evidence for a level of human activity in the wider area during the late Saxon/early Norman period.

Historic Landscape (Map 25)

The historic landscape character of the zone is dominated by large irregular fields which have been formed during the second half of the 20th century through the removal of field boundaries to increase agricultural productivity. This has been reflected in the changes which have occurred to Stone Park Farm over a similar period. It has been identified as having a dispersed plan form, which has been significantly altered since the late 19th century and has had several large sheds added. The original plan form of the farmstead suggests that it may have developed incrementally over a period of time and was a large farm with several yards.

It is possible that the farmstead originated as a lodge for a medieval or later deer park in the area which is implied by the placename Stone Park⁸². Further

⁷⁶ Staffordshire HER: PRN 0069; PRN 02101; PRN 02102; PRN 02103; PRN 02104

⁷⁷ Ring Ditch: Circular or near circular ditches, usually seen as cropmarks. Use the term where the function is unknown. Ring ditches may be the remains of ploughed out round barrows, round houses, or of modern features such as searchlight emplacements. (Scope note reproduced from the Thesaurus of Monument Types by kind permission of English Heritage © 2009)

⁷⁸ Cropmarks: Monument visible as a mark in standing crops, parchmarks or soilmarks, but where no subsurface deposits have been proven eg by excavation or other ground disturbance. (Scope note reproduced from the Thesaurus of Monument Types by kind permission of English Heritage © 2009)

⁷⁹ Staffordshire HER: PRN 04610; PRN 04613; PRN 00669; PRN 04590

⁸⁰ Staffordshire HER: PRN 00601

⁸¹ Staffordshire HER: PRN 01832

⁸² Staffordshire HER: PRN 00660

research, on documents and fieldwork, would be required to determine these interpretations.

A further historic farmstead exists within the zone to the north, Coppice Farm, whose regular courtyard plan form suggests that it is no earlier than 1790 in date⁸³. This particular farmstead plan is the most common form in Staffordshire and is spread widely across the landscape. These forms appear to represent a deliberate development aimed at improving agricultural productivity being taken forward by the upper classes during the late 18th and 19th centuries.

Historic Assets Summary Table

Survival	The zone has been impacted by agricultural activities and there is a limited range of known historic environment assets (HEAs).	2
Potential	The lack of evidence for known HEAs is due as much to a lack of investigation as to poor preservation. It is possible that archaeological features, such as earthworks which may relate to a former deer park or archaeological deposits may survive.	2
Documentation	HER data	1
Diversity	There are few known HEAs other than the historic farmsteads.	1
Group Association	There is the potential for an association between the origins of Stone Park farmstead and the potential deer park, but further research is required to confirm this.	2
Amenity Value	The historic environment of the zone does not currently lend itself to display or visitor attraction.	1
Sensitivity to change (to housing expansion & infrastructure for SBC)	There is the potential for medium to large scale development to impact upon the Moddershall Valley Conservation Area which partially falls within the zone and on the Listed Buildings and sensitive historic landscape character of STHECZ 9.	2
Overall Score		11

Bibliography

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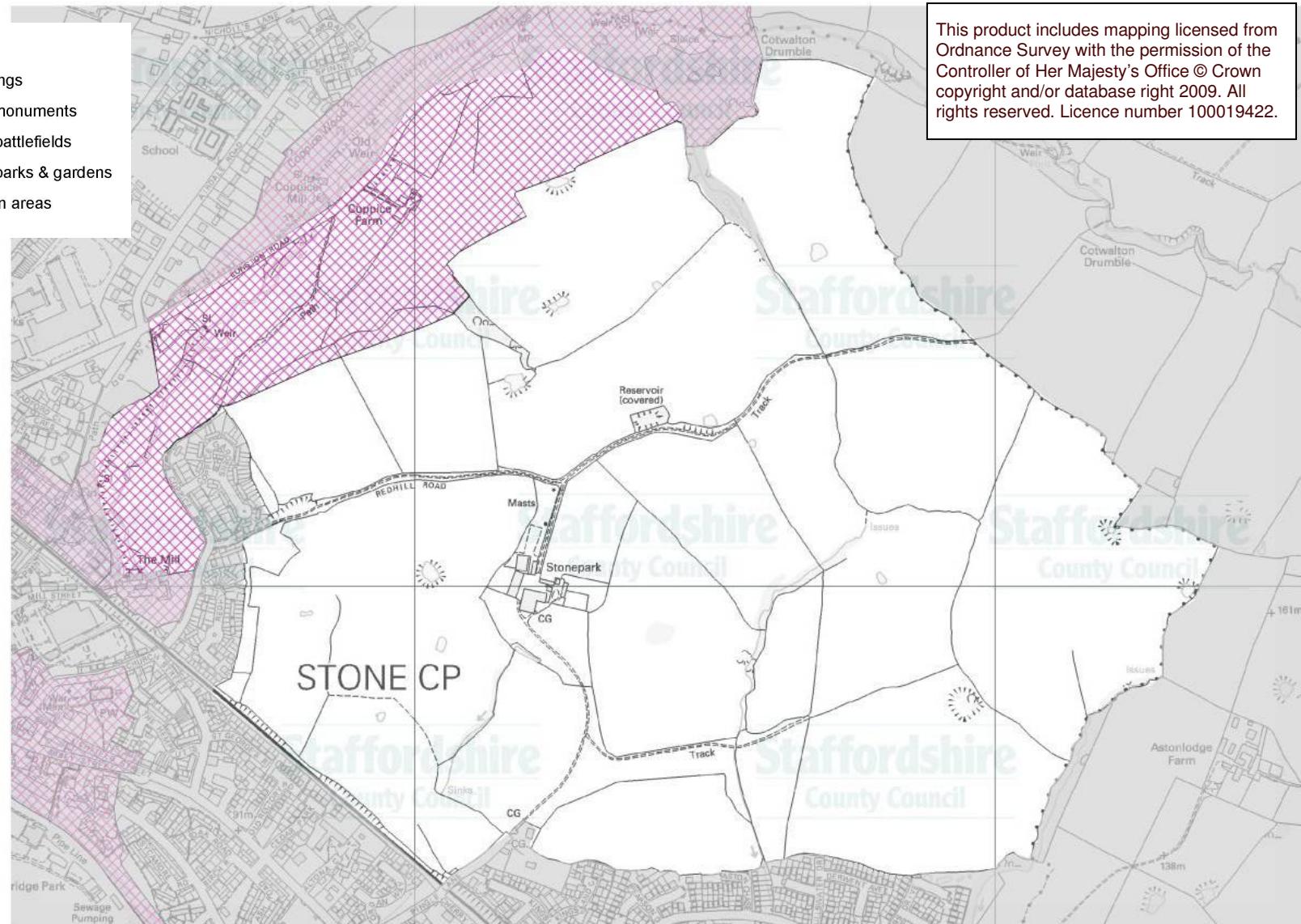
⁸³ Lake 2009: 19

Map 23: Designated sites

61

Legend

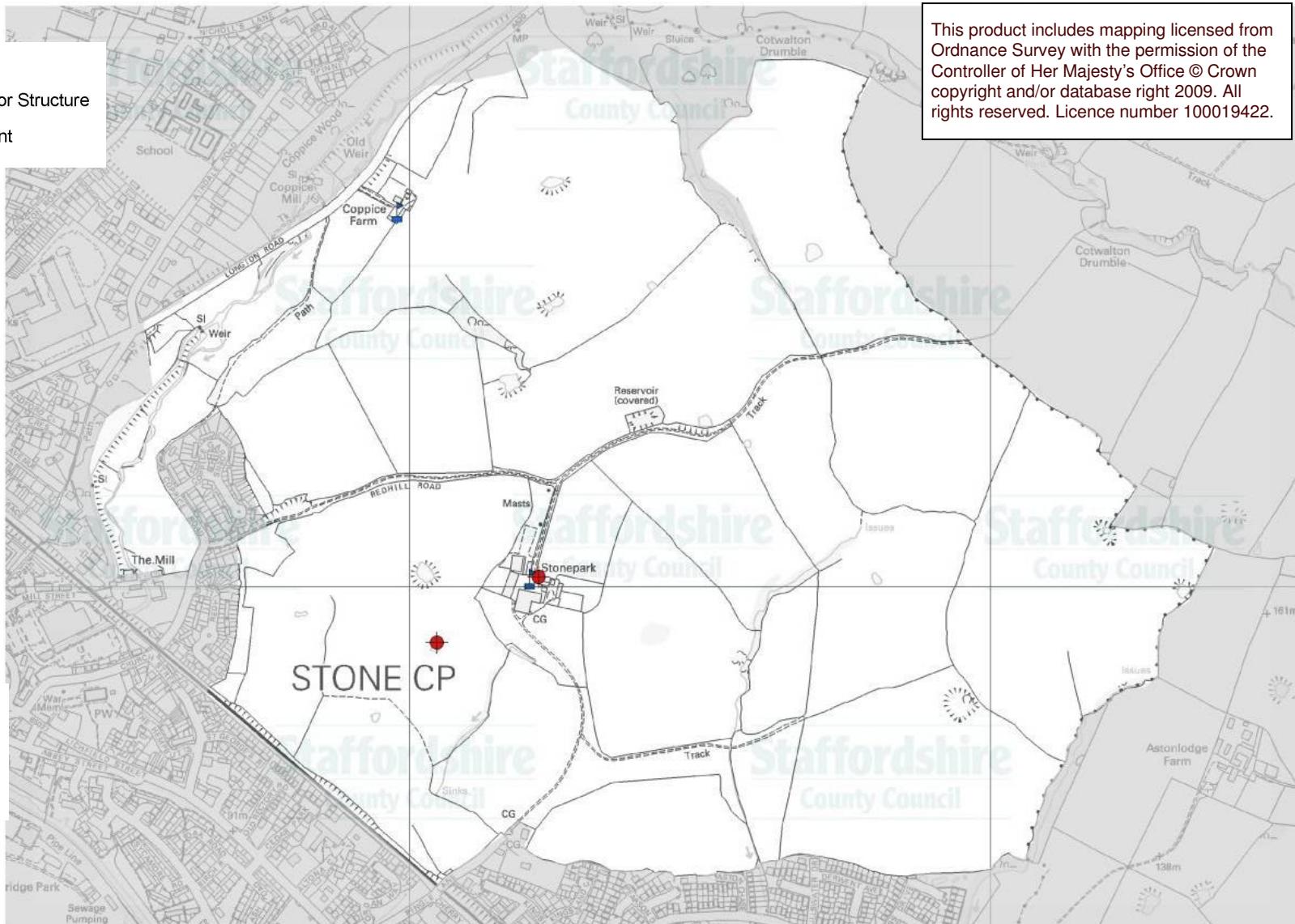
- ▲ Listed buildings
- Scheduled monuments
- Registered battlefields
- Registered parks & gardens
- Conservation areas



Legend

- Building or Structure
- Monument

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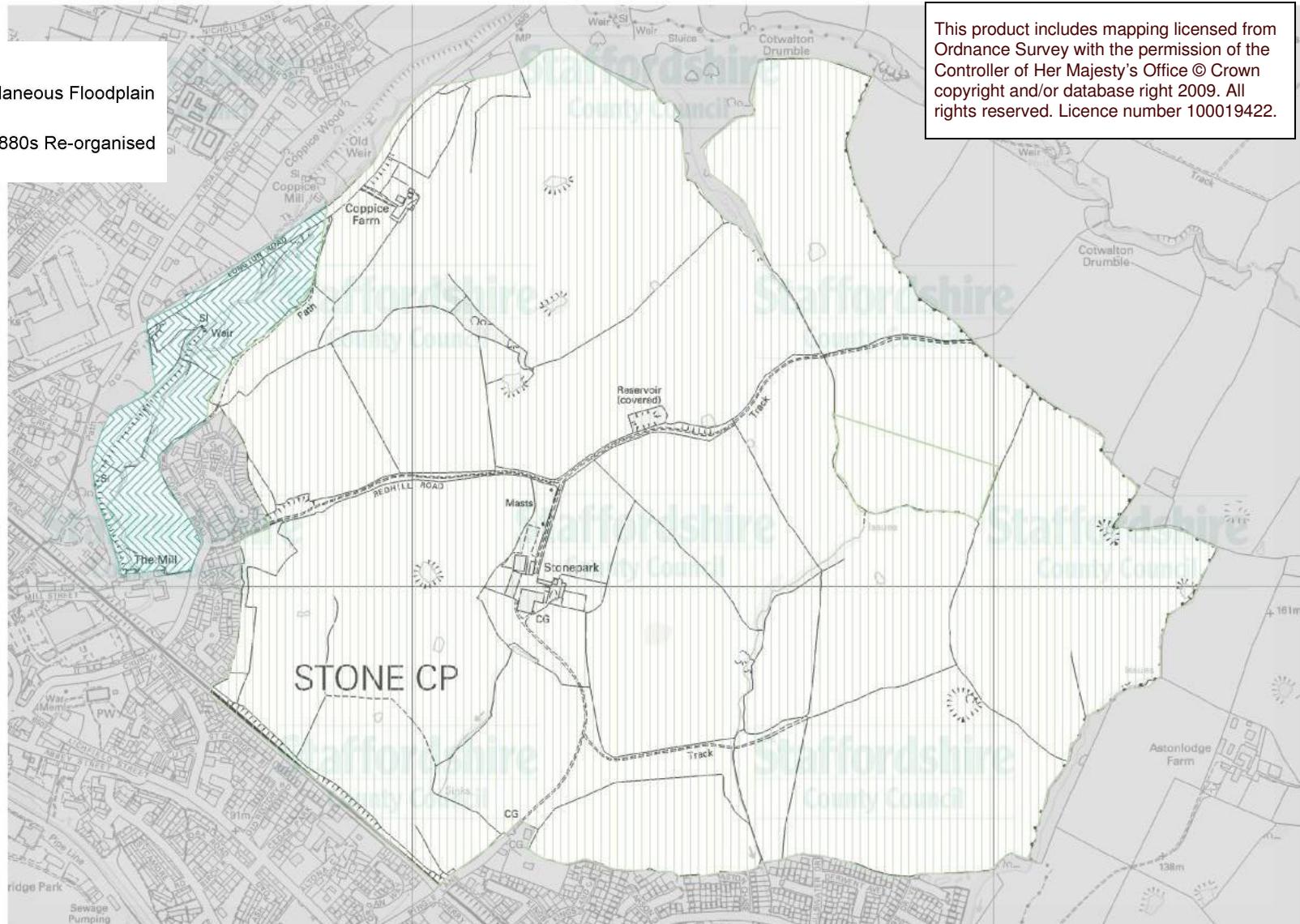


Map 24: Known historic environment assets from the HER

Legend

- Miscellaneous Floodplain Fields
- Post 1880s Re-organised fields

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Map 25: Refined HLC

STHECZ 11 – Aston Lodge (HECA 13f)

Summary

The historic environment comprises a well preserved 18th/19th century field pattern which is probably closely associated with the development of Aston Lodge Farm as a single phase farmstead in the late 18th/ 19th century.

Medium to large scale development within the zone would have a significant impact upon the historic environment assets (HEAs). However, should development be planned for the zone there would be a need to address impacts upon and potential mitigation strategies for:

- the historic farm buildings at Aston Lodge Farm.
- the impact upon the historic landscape character in terms of its regularity and its relationship to the farmstead.
- The impact upon the historic dispersed settlement pattern across the wider landscape, particularly on the eastern side of the zone.
- The potential for unknown above and below-ground archaeological deposits to survive. Such evidence may also identify the earlier origins of Aston Lodge Farm.

Early consultation with the Cultural Heritage Team at Staffordshire County Council and the Conservation Officer at Stafford Borough Council is advised.

Designations

No designated sites currently lie within or adjacent to the STHECZ.

Archaeological Character (Map 26)

Little archaeological work has been carried out within the zone to determine evidence of human activity between the prehistoric and early Saxon periods. Two axeheads were found within Stone date to the Neolithic/Bronze Age, but these probably represent casual loss. A cinerary urn⁸⁴ was discovered in the wider area in the late 18th century, which may also have dated to the Bronze Age⁸⁵.

Within the wider area there is evidence for human activity during the prehistoric period. On the opposite side of the Trent Valley, a collection of six stone tools⁸⁶ were found which have been dated from the Neolithic to Bronze Age period. Such a collection may suggest more intensive human activity in

⁸⁴ Cinerary urn: A container, in the form of an urn, for keeping the ashes of the dead after cremation. (Scope note reproduced from the Thesaurus of Monument Types by kind permission of English Heritage © 2009)

⁸⁵ Staffordshire HER: PRN 00669

⁸⁶ Staffordshire HER: PRN 0069; PRN 02101; PRN 02102; PRN 02103; PRN 02104

the vicinity rather than representing casual loss. Other prehistoric sites, enclosures and ring ditches⁸⁷, of possible Bronze Age date are located to the east and south of Stone having been identified as cropmarks⁸⁸ on aerial photographs⁸⁹. Approximately 5km to the north west of the zone are two probable Bronze Age barrows⁹⁰ lying within the Scheduled Bury Bank hillfort. The hillfort itself has not been dated and although these monuments are usually associated with the Iron Age, some are known to have earlier origins. The presence of the hillfort suggests a centralised power base was present within the area from at least the late Bronze Age/Iron Age, which oversaw a dispersed settlement pattern across the landscape. The hillfort would have provided a cultural, economic and administrative focus for the surrounding communities.

Earthworks at Hollywood, less than 1km beyond the eastern edge of the zone, have been interpreted as a possible Roman fort which forms a Scheduled Monument.

Historic Landscape (Map 27)

The historic landscape of the zone is dominated by field systems which were probably created or re-planned in the late 18th/19th century. This Planned Enclosure was likely to have been enclosed by a surveyor using straight field boundaries creating field systems with strong geometric patterns. The field pattern as it is depicted on late 19th century maps has survived well across the zone.

The historic farmstead of Aston Lodge Farm is probably closely associated with the Planned Enclosure. It is of a regular courtyard plan form which survives, although the farmstead has been enlarged during the 20th century. Regular courtyard farmsteads have been identified nationally as post dating the 1790s⁹¹. This particular farmstead plan is the most common form in Staffordshire and is spread widely across the landscape and they appear to represent a deliberate development aimed at improving agricultural productivity being taken forward by the upper class during the late 18th/19th centuries. However, Aston Lodge is marked upon Yates' map of Staffordshire (1775). It is, therefore, possible that Aston Lodge had originated as a lodge to a warren or deer park with possible medieval origins. Alternatively a pre-existing farmstead was re-developed to improve the overall efficiency of the agricultural concern. This level of planning suggests the landowner was

⁸⁷ Ring Ditch: Circular or near circular ditches, usually seen as cropmarks. Use the term where the function is unknown. Ring ditches may be the remains of ploughed out round barrows, round houses, or of modern features such as searchlight emplacements. (Scope note reproduced from the Thesaurus of Monument Types by kind permission of English Heritage © 2009)

⁸⁸ Cropmarks: Monument visible as a mark in standing crops, parchmarks or soilmarks, but where no subsurface deposits have been proven eg by excavation or other ground disturbance. (Scope note reproduced from the Thesaurus of Monument Types by kind permission of English Heritage © 2009)

⁸⁹ Staffordshire HER: PRN 04610; PRN 04613; PRN 00669; PRN 04590

⁹⁰ Staffordshire HER: PRN 00601

⁹¹ Lake 2009: 19

sufficiently wealthy to implement such wide ranging changes. Further research would clarify these interpretations.

Historic Assets Summary Table

Survival	The zone has seen moderate disturbance through agriculture, but several historic environment assets (HEAs) survive such as the farmstead and the historic landscape character.	2
Potential	There are limited known HEAs, but this lack of knowledge could be due to lack of investigation rather than poor reservation.	2
Documentation	HER data	1
Diversity	The HEAs include the historic landscape character and the historic buildings.	2
Group Association	There is probably a strong association between the farmstead and the well preserved field pattern.	3
Amenity Value	The historic environment could define a sense of place in terms of understanding the development of the surviving 18 th /19 th century landscape – especially when read in conjunction with the wider landscape to the east.	2
Sensitivity to change (to housing expansion & infrastructure for SBC)	The historic environment is highly sensitive to medium to large scale development. Such development would impact upon the relationship between the farmstead and the historic landscape character. The historic pattern of dispersed settlement across the wider landscape would also be impacted.	3
Overall Score		15

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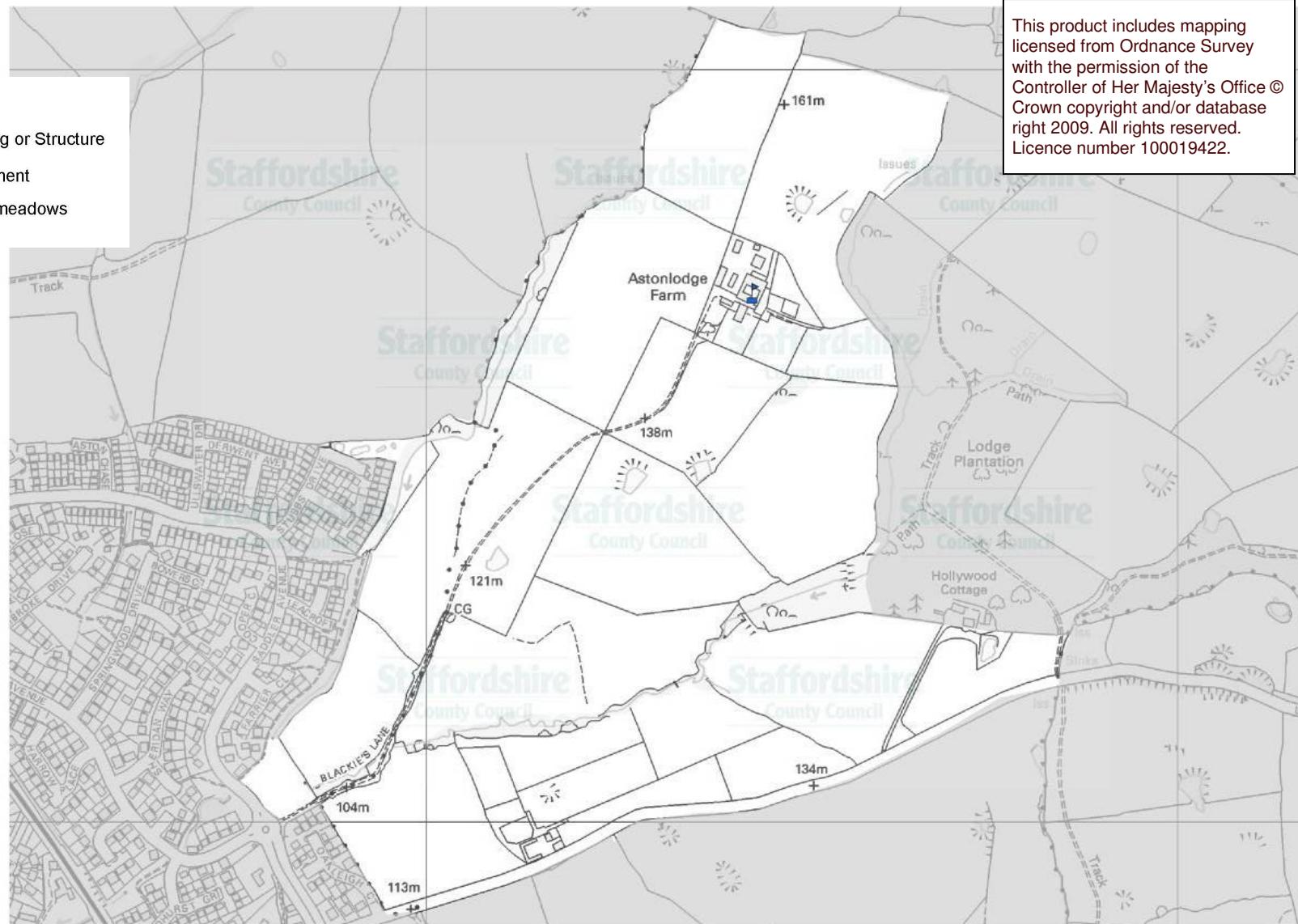
Lake, J. (2009). 'Historic farmsteads: national context' in B. Edwards *Historic farmsteads & landscape character in Staffordshire*. Unpublished report.

Map 26: Known historic environment assets from the HER

29

Legend

- Building or Structure
- Monument
- Watermeadows

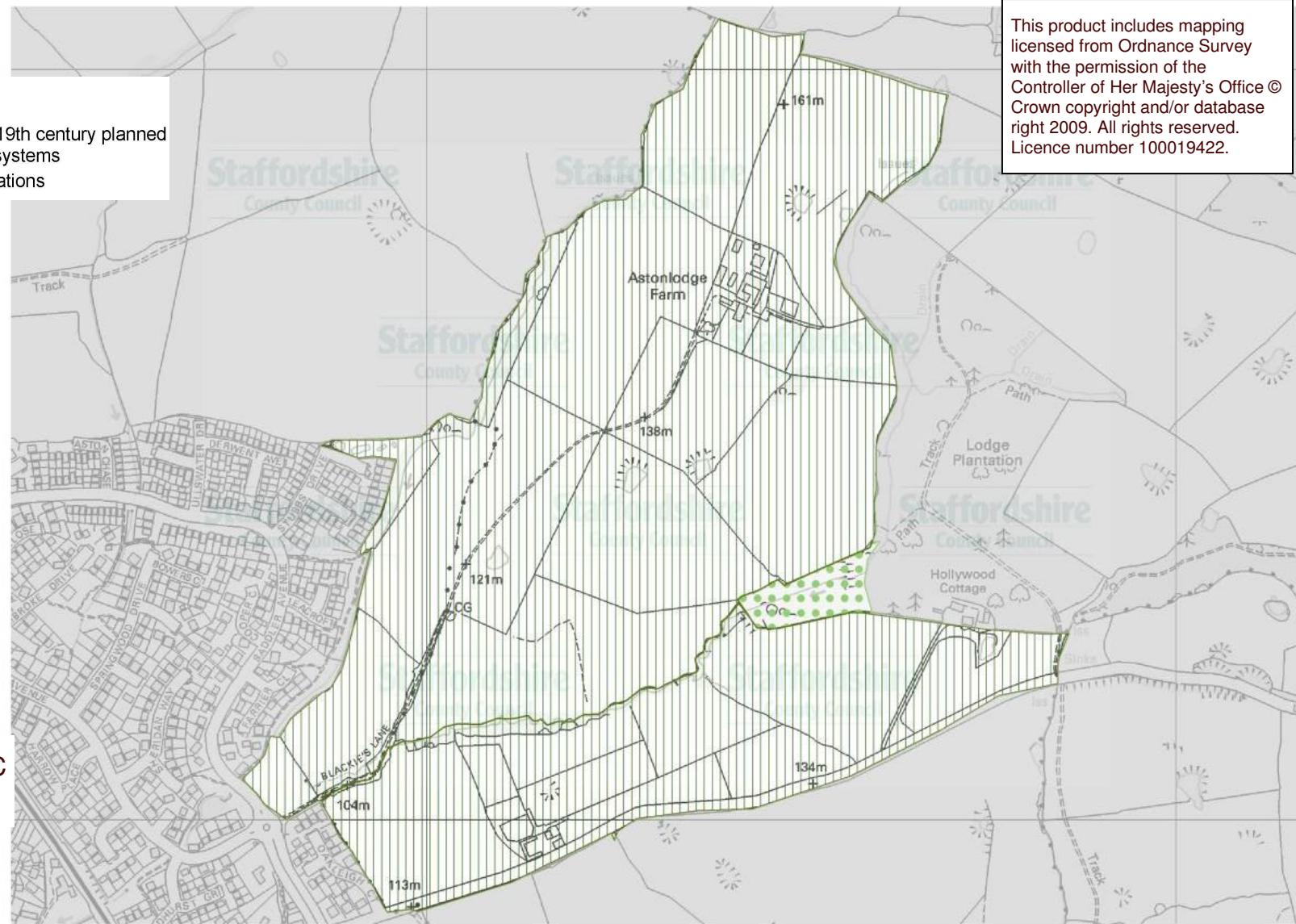


Map 27: Refined HLC

68

Legend

-  18th/19th century planned field systems
-  Plantations



STHECZ 12 – East of Little Stoke (HECA 13f)

Summary

The historic landscape character has been impacted by modern agricultural practices although some field boundaries retain the legibility of the earlier field system and its origins as an open field⁹² in the medieval period.

The Trent and Mersey Canal Conservation Area lies to the south of the zone and any development adjacent would need to take account of its presence.

Medium to large scale development within the zone would have a degree of impact upon the historic environment assets (HEAs). However, should development be planned for the zone there would be a need to address impacts upon and potential mitigation strategies for:

- The impact upon the Trent & Mersey Canal Conservation Area.
- The potential for unknown above and below-ground archaeological deposits to survive.

Early consultation with the Cultural Heritage Team at Staffordshire County Council and the Conservation Officer at Stafford Borough Council is advised.

Designations (Map 28)

The Trent & Mersey Canal Conservation Area (083) lies within and adjacent to the south of the zone.

Archaeological Character (Map 29)

Little archaeological work has been carried out within the zone to determine evidence of human activity between the prehistoric and early Saxon periods. However there is evidence for human activity during the prehistoric and Roman period in the wider area around Stone. To the west, on the opposite side of the Trent Valley, a collection of six stone tools⁹³ were found which have been dated from the Neolithic to Bronze Age period. Such a collection may suggest more intensive human activity in the vicinity rather than representing casual loss. Other prehistoric sites, enclosures and ring ditches⁹⁴, of possible Bronze Age date are located to the east and south of

⁹² Open Field: An area of arable land with common rights after harvest or while fallow. Usually without internal divisions (hedges, walls or fences). (Scope note reproduced from the Thesaurus of Monument Types by kind permission of English Heritage © 2009)

⁹³ Staffordshire HER: PRN 0069; PRN 02101; PRN 02102; PRN 02103; PRN 02104

⁹⁴ Ring Ditch: Circular or near circular ditches, usually seen as cropmarks. Use the term where the function is unknown. Ring ditches may be the remains of ploughed out round barrows, round houses, or of modern features such as searchlight emplacements. (Scope note reproduced from the Thesaurus of Monument Types by kind permission of English Heritage © 2009)

Stone having been identified as cropmarks⁹⁵ on aerial photographs⁹⁶. Approximately 5km to the north west of the zone are two probable Bronze Age barrows⁹⁷ lying within the Scheduled Bury Bank hillfort. The hillfort itself has not been dated and although these monuments are usually associated with the Iron Age, some are known to have earlier origins. The presence of the hillfort suggests a centralised power base was present within the area from at least the late Bronze Age/Iron Age, which oversaw a dispersed settlement pattern across the landscape. The hillfort would have provided a cultural, economic and administrative focus for the surrounding communities.

Scheduled earthworks exist to the north at Hollywood which have been interpreted as a possible Roman fort suggesting human activity at a later period. Little Stoke, which lies adjacent to the west, was recorded in Domesday Book (1086) with Aston and between the two settlements there were 11 heads of household suggesting a degree of activity in the area from at least the late Saxon period.

Historic Landscape (Map 30)

The medieval landscape of the zone was probably dominated by open fields, which are likely to have been farmed by the inhabitants of Little Stoke and possibly Aston, which were recorded together in Domesday Book.

The open fields were probably enclosed, as Piecemeal Enclosure, during the Post Medieval period through a means of informal, verbal agreements between farmers who wished to consolidate their holdings into a block rather than being scattered across two or more open fields.

Since the late 19th century the Piecemeal Enclosure has been impacted by the removal of field boundaries to facilitate increased agricultural productivity, although some earlier field boundaries are fossilised within the landscape. Little Stoke Farm was constructed in the second half of the 20th century.

The Trent and Mersey Canal, constructed by the engineers James Brindley and Hugh Henshall in the late 18th century, lies to the south of the zone.

⁹⁵ Cropmarks: Monument visible as a mark in standing crops, parchmarks or soilmarks, but where no subsurface deposits have been proven eg by excavation or other ground disturbance. (Scope note reproduced from the Thesaurus of Monument Types by kind permission of English Heritage © 2009)

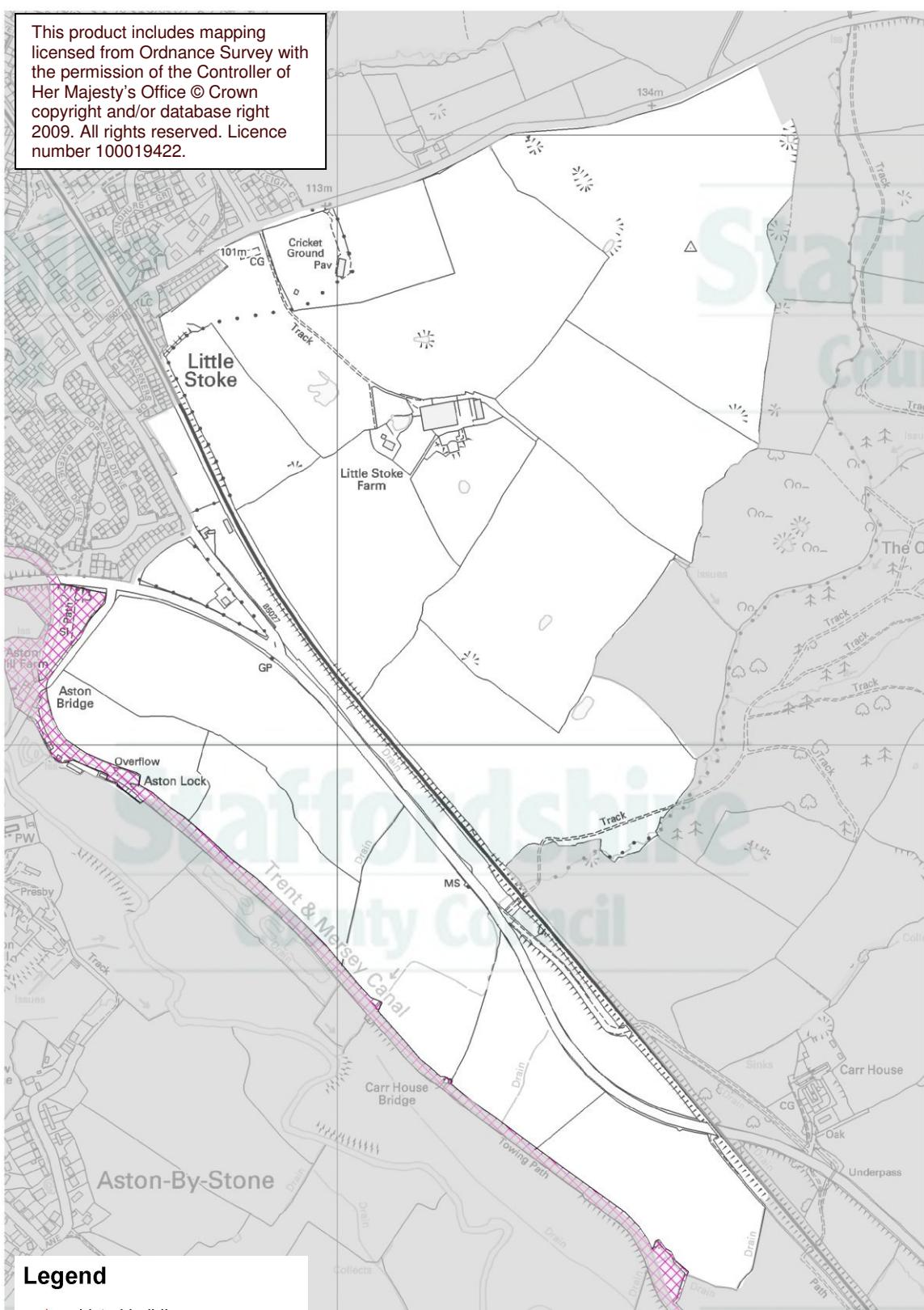
⁹⁶ Staffordshire HER: PRN 04610; PRN 04613; PRN 00669; PRN 04590

⁹⁷ Staffordshire HER: PRN 00601

Historic Assets Summary Table

Survival	The zone has moderate impacts from agricultural activities and there are few known historic environment assets (HEAs).	2
Potential	There are limited known HEAs but this may be due to a lack of investigation rather than poor preservation.	2
Documentation	HER data	1
Diversity	There are very few known HEAs except the Trent and Mersey canal and the associated built features in the form of bridges.	1
Group Association	It is not possible given the current historic environment information of the zone to make a statement on group association.	1
Amenity Value	The historic environment does help to define a sense of place as the canal already provides a public amenity.	2
Sensitivity to change (to housing expansion & infrastructure for SBC)	Medium to large scale development would have at least a moderate impact upon the Trent & Mersey Canal Conservation Area.	2
Overall Score		11

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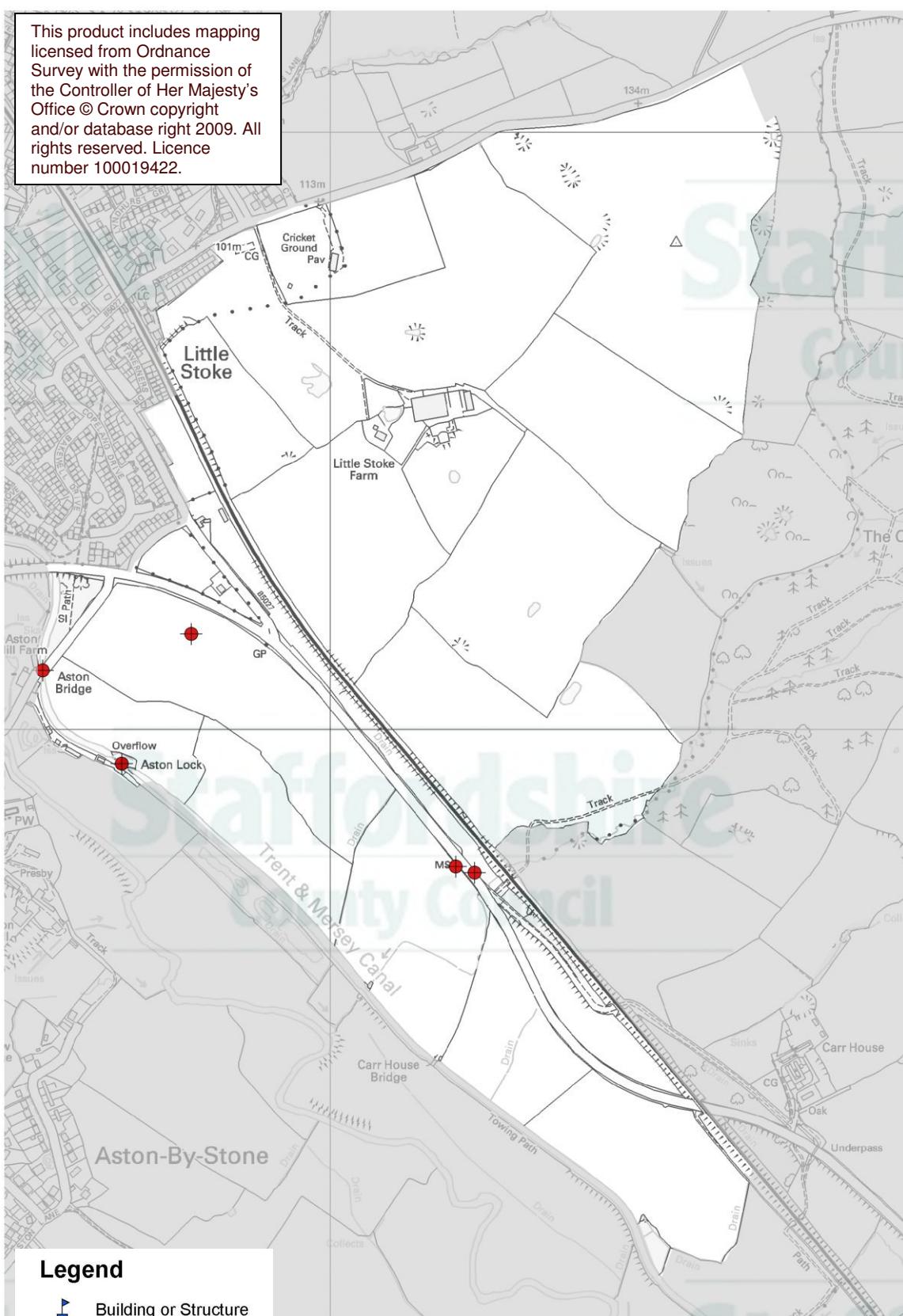


Legend

- ▲ Listed buildings
- Scheduled monuments
- Registered battlefields
- Registered parks & gardens
- Conservation areas

Map 28: Designated sites

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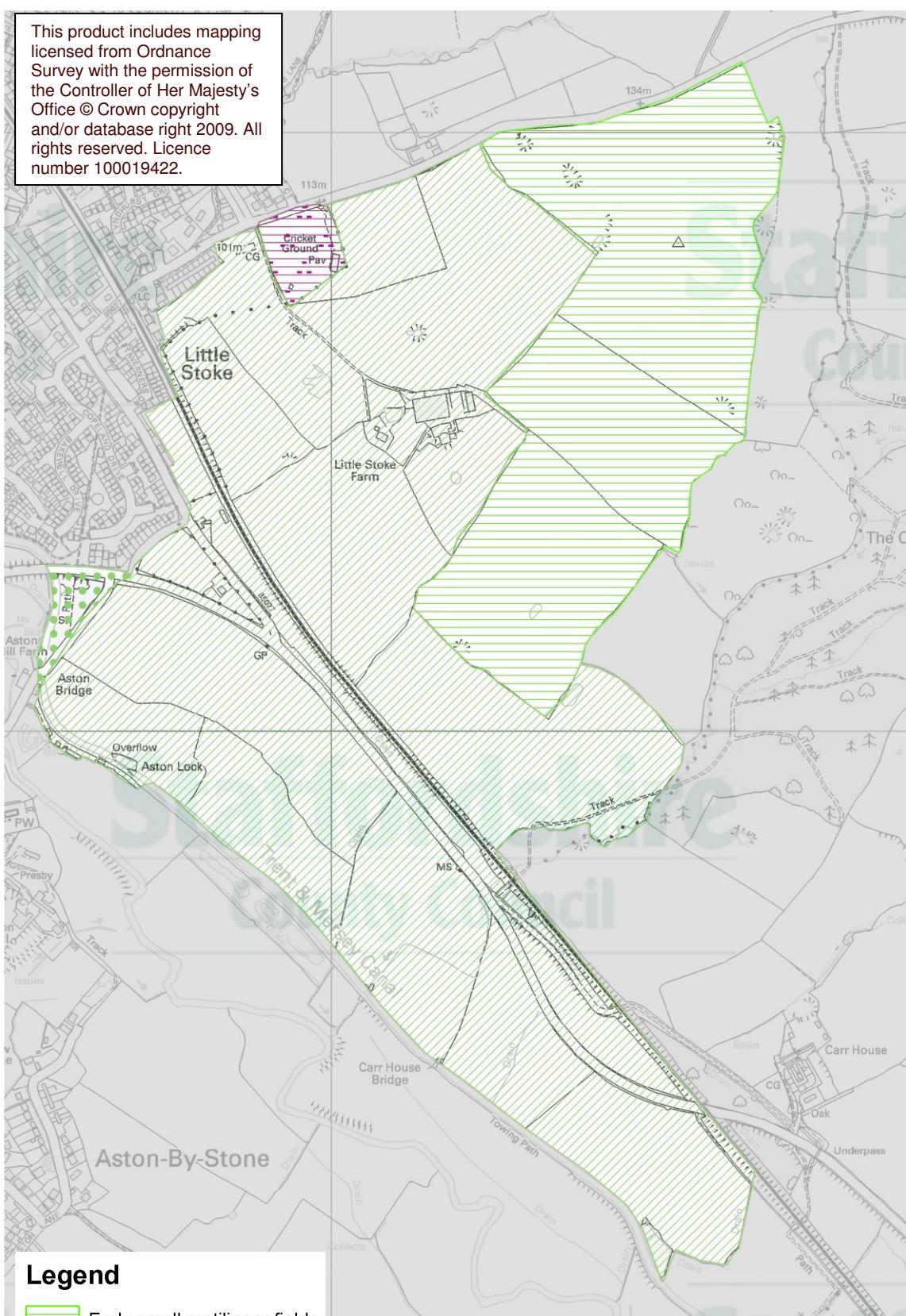


Legend

- Building or Structure
- Monument
- Watermeadows

Map 29: Known historic environment assets from the HER

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Legend

- Early small rectilinear fields
- Other parkland
- Plantations
- Re-organised piecemeal enclosure

Map 30: Refined HLC

STHECZ 13 – Trent Valley (HECA 13f)

Summary

The zone lies within the Trent Valley and may have been utilised as meadow land since the medieval or even the late Saxon period. The earthwork remains of 18th/19th century watermeadows survive in excellent condition all along this section of the River Trent.

Medium to large scale development within the zone would have a significant impact upon the historic landscape character and the potential archaeological deposits which may be sealed beneath the alluvium of the river valleys. Should any development be planned for the zone it would need to address:

- The impact upon the Trent & Mersey Canal Conservation Area.
- Impacts upon the surviving watermeadows, both earthworks and surviving structures, and any potential mitigation strategies which may be required.
- The impact upon potential below ground archaeological deposits sealed beneath the alluvium of the river valleys and any consequent mitigation strategies.

Early consultation with the Cultural Heritage Team at Staffordshire County Council and the Conservation Officer at Stafford Borough Council is advised.

Designations (Map 31)

The Trent & Mersey Canal Conservation Area (083) lies to the north of the zone.

Archaeological Character (Map 32)

Little archaeological work has been carried out within the zone to determine evidence of human activity between the prehistoric and early Saxon periods. However, the zone lies within the Trent valley and aerial photographic surveys carried out across southern portion of this valley within the county have identified intensive human activity from the Neolithic period onwards. It is therefore likely that there was a degree of human activity within the zone during the prehistoric period. This is born out by the degree of sites known in the wider area around Stone. To the north west a collection of six stone tools⁹⁸ were found which have been dated from the Neolithic to Bronze Age period. Such a collection may suggest more intensive human activity in the vicinity rather than representing casual loss. Other prehistoric sites, enclosures and ring ditches⁹⁹, of possible Bronze Age date are located to the

⁹⁸ Staffordshire HER: PRN 0069; PRN 02101; PRN 02102; PRN 02103; PRN 02104

⁹⁹ Ring Ditch: Circular or near circular ditches, usually seen as cropmarks. Use the term where the function is unknown. Ring ditches may be the remains of ploughed out round barrows, round houses, or of modern features such as searchlight emplacements. (Scope

east and south of Stone having been identified as cropmarks¹⁰⁰ on aerial photographs¹⁰¹. Approximately 5km to the north west of the zone are two probable Bronze Age barrows¹⁰² lying within the Scheduled Bury Bank hillfort. The hillfort itself has not been dated and although these monuments are usually associated with the Iron Age, some are known to have earlier origins. The presence of the hillfort suggests a centralised power base was present within the area from at least the late Bronze Age/Iron Age, which oversaw a dispersed settlement pattern across the landscape. The hillfort would have provided a cultural, economic and administrative focus for the surrounding communities.

Scheduled earthworks exist to the north at Hollywood which have been interpreted as a possible Roman fort suggesting human activity at a later period. A further possible Roman fort has been identified at Aston Hall Farm to the west of the zone¹⁰³. Little Stoke and Aston are recorded together in Domesday Book (1086) to which belonged meadow land, suggesting that this zone may have formed meadows since at least the late Saxon period.

Historic Landscape (Map 33)

The zone lies within the Trent Valley and has probably been utilised by local people as meadows since at least the medieval or even late Saxon period. During the 18th/19th century agricultural improvement schemes led to the development of water meadows along the whole length of the River Trent within the zone. The development of water meadows during this period meant that the landowners could control the flooding of the land and ensure an early crop of grass and subsequent multiple crops for fodder. This enabled them to over-winter larger numbers of animals. This water meadow system has been identified as surviving in excellent condition with upstanding earthworks and drains surviving across most of the zone.

The Trent and Mersey Canal, constructed by the engineers James Brindley and Hugh Henshall in the late 18th century, lies to the south of the zone.

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¹⁰⁰ Cropmarks: Monument visible as a mark in standing crops, parchmarks or soilmarks, but where no subsurface deposits have been proven eg by excavation or other ground disturbance. (Scope note reproduced from the Thesaurus of Monument Types by kind permission of English Heritage © 2009)

¹⁰¹ Staffordshire HER: PRN 04610; PRN 04613; PRN 00669; PRN 04590

¹⁰² Staffordshire HER: PRN 00601

¹⁰³ Staffordshire HER: PRN 04606

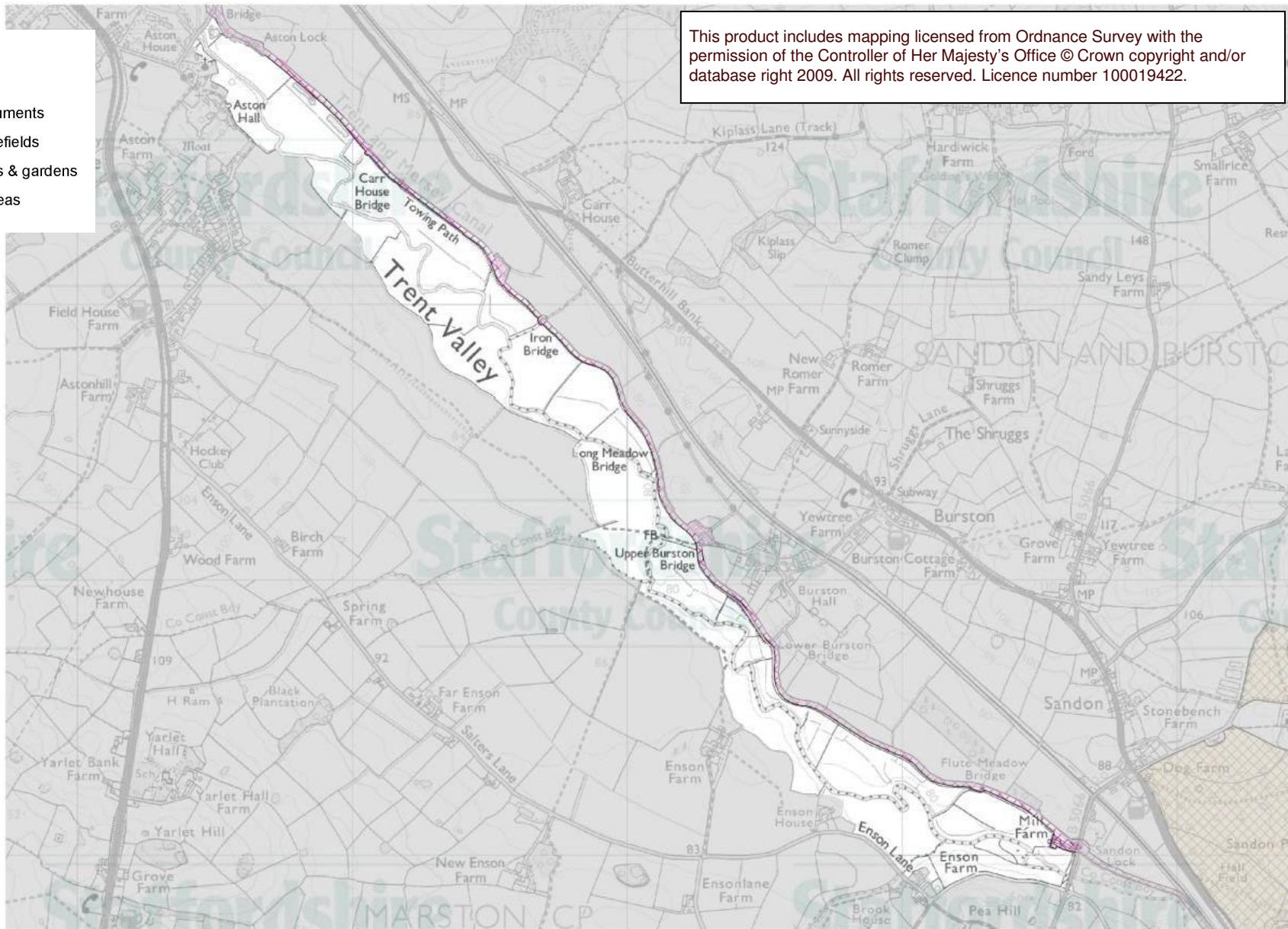
Historic Assets Summary Table

Survival	The zone contains little disturbance and the earthworks and drains associated with the water meadow system have been identified as surviving in excellent condition.	3
Potential	There is the potential for unknown historic environment assets (HEAs) to survive in the form of earthworks, but also as deeply stratified archaeological deposits below the alluvium.	3
Documentation	HER data and watermeadow survey.	2
Diversity	The HEAs include earthwork features associated with the watermeadows and built features associated with the canal.	2
Group Association	The canal and the watermeadows are likely to date to a similar period and there may be an association between them in terms of the ways in which they functioned in the landscape.	2
Amenity Value	The historic environment plays a key role in the zones sense of place where the canal is already an important amenity. An understanding of the historic environment within the zone could be further enhanced through an interpretation of the watermeadows and their wider role within the Trent Valley.	3
Sensitivity to change (to housing expansion & infrastructure for SBC)	The zone's historic environment is highly sensitive to medium to large scale development which would impact upon the watermeadows, the Trent & Mersey Canal Conservation Area and upon the potential for below ground archaeological deposits surviving below the alluvium.	3
Overall Score		18

Legend

- ▲ Listed buildings
- Scheduled monuments
- Registered battlefields
- Registered parks & gardens
- Conservation areas

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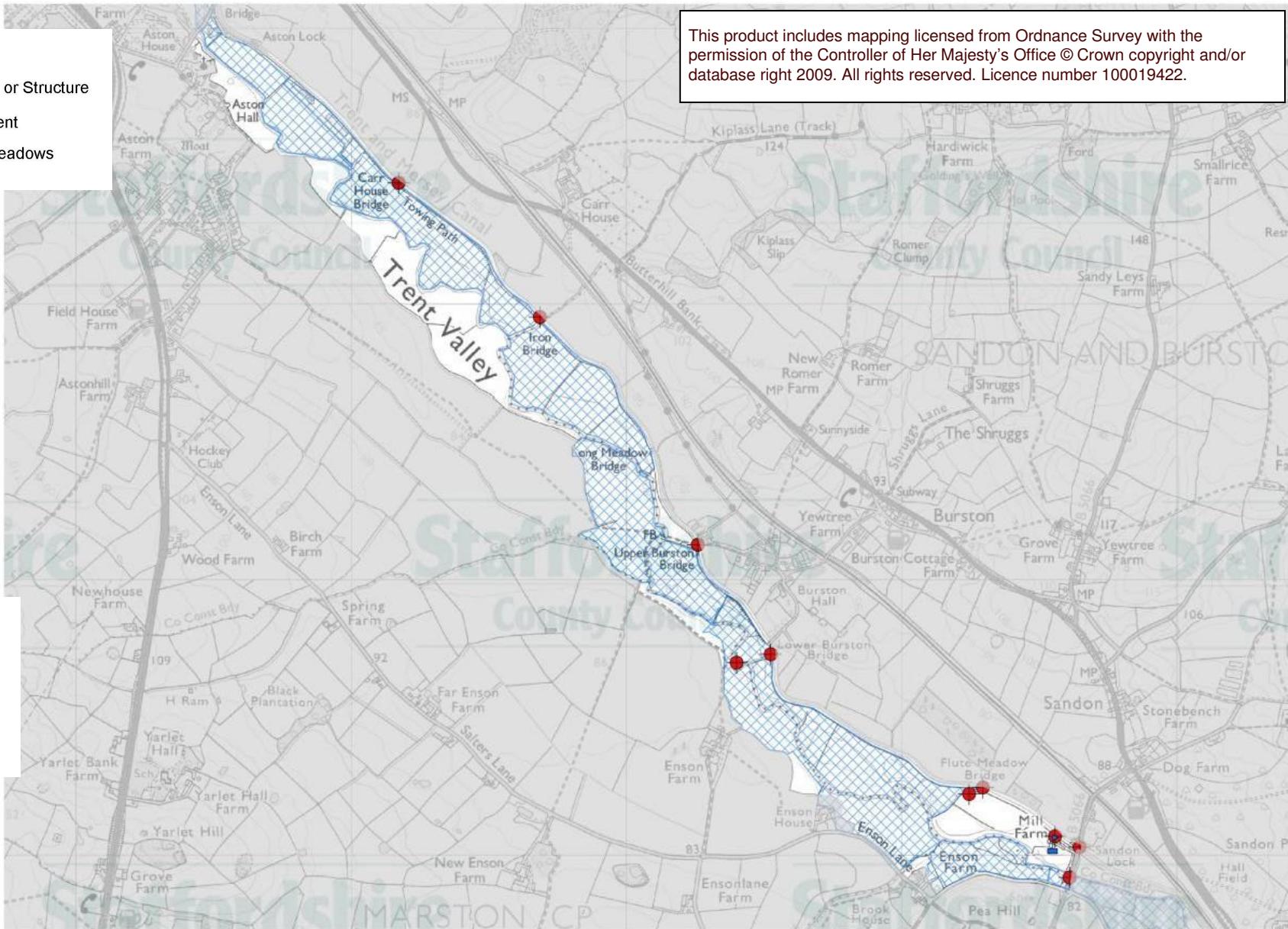


Map 31:
Designated sites

Legend

- Building or Structure
- Monument
- ▨ Watermeadows

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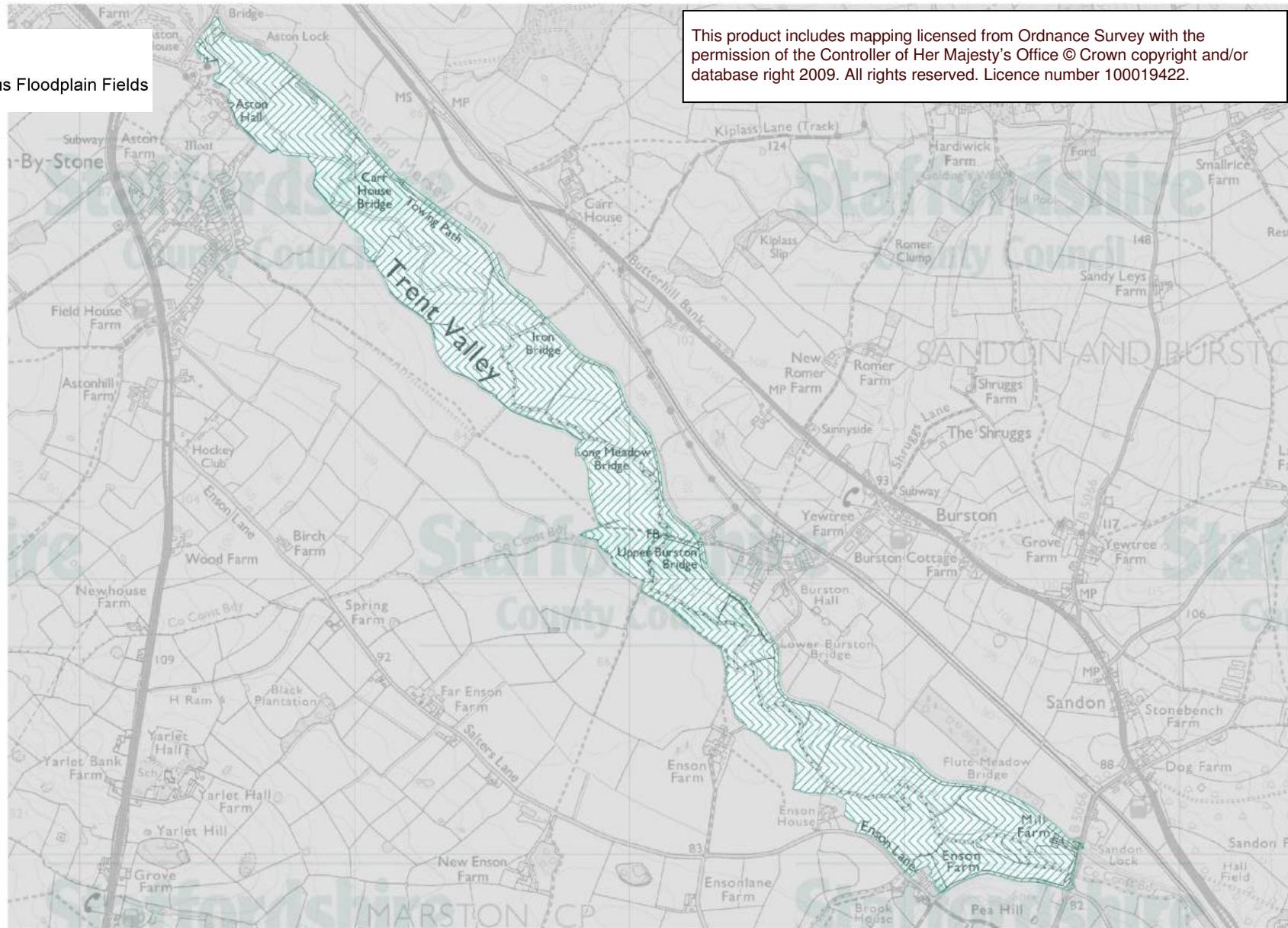
Map 32: Known
historic
environment
assets from the
HER

Legend



Miscellaneous Floodplain Fields

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Map 33: Refined HLC

STHECZ 14 – Aston by Stone (HECA 13h)

Summary

The zone comprises the settlement of Acton by Stone which probably has its origins in the later Saxon period. A medieval moat survives within the zone as do two 17th century listed houses. To the south of the zone 20th century development dominates.

Medium to large scale development within the zone would have at least a moderate impact upon the historic landscape character. Should any development be planned for the zone it would need to address:

- The impact upon the listed buildings.
- Impacts upon the earthworks associated with the moated site and any associated below ground archaeological deposits.
- The impact upon potential below ground archaeological deposits within the historic core relating to the development of the settlement.

Early consultation with the Cultural Heritage Team at Staffordshire County Council and the Conservation Officer at Stafford Borough Council is advised.

Designations (Map 34)

Five listed buildings lie within the zone.

Archaeological Character (Map 35)

Little archaeological work has been carried out within the zone to determine evidence of human activity between the prehistoric and early Saxon periods. However, the zone lies within the Trent valley and aerial photographic surveys carried out across the southern portion of this valley within the county have identified intensive human activity from the Neolithic period onwards. It is therefore likely that there was a degree of human activity within the zone during the prehistoric period and this is born out by the degree of sites known in the wider area around Stone. To the north west a collection of six stone tools¹⁰⁴ were found which have been dated from the Neolithic to Bronze Age period. Such a collection may suggest more intensive human activity in the vicinity rather than representing casual loss. Other prehistoric sites, enclosures and ring ditches¹⁰⁵, of possible Bronze Age date are located to the

¹⁰⁴ Staffordshire HER: PRN 0069; PRN 02101; PRN 02102; PRN 02103; PRN 02104

¹⁰⁵ Ring Ditch: Circular or near circular ditches, usually seen as cropmarks. Use the term where the function is unknown. Ring ditches may be the remains of ploughed out round barrows, round houses, or of modern features such as searchlight emplacements. (Scope note reproduced from the Thesaurus of Monument Types by kind permission of English Heritage © 2009)

east and south of Stone having been identified as cropmarks¹⁰⁶ on aerial photographs¹⁰⁷. Approximately 5km to the north west of the zone are two probable Bronze Age barrows¹⁰⁸ lying within the Scheduled Bury Bank hillfort. The hillfort itself has not been dated and although these monuments are usually associated with the Iron Age, some are known to have earlier origins. The presence of the hillfort suggests a centralised power base was present within the area from at least the late Bronze Age/Iron Age, which oversaw a dispersed settlement pattern across the landscape. The hillfort would have provided a cultural, economic and administrative focus for the surrounding communities.

Scheduled earthworks exist to the north at Hollywood which have been interpreted as a possible Roman fort suggesting human activity at a later period. A further possible Roman fort has been identified as a rectilinear enclosure on aerial photographs to the south of the zone¹⁰⁹.

Aston by Stone was recorded in Domesday Book (1086) with Little Stoke and between the two settlements there were 11 heads of household suggesting a degree of activity within the zone from at least the late Saxon period.

Historic Landscape (Map 36)

The zone consists of the built environment of Aston by Stone. The historic core lies to the north where Aston Hall, surrounded by a, now dry, medieval moat dominates the landscape¹¹⁰. The southern half of the zone is dominated by 20th century housing although a number of historic buildings survive including the two listed buildings of Willow Cottage Farmhouse and Yew Tree Cottage both 17th century timber framed buildings¹¹¹.

The settlement probably had its origins in the medieval period and it is likely that the manorial seat was located within the moat. Aston Hall dates to a later period and probably replaced earlier buildings. Aston appears to have been fairly dispersed, although the character of this settlement type has been impacted by modern development.

Aston Pool Farm has seen extensive re-development during the later 20th century, but it had been of a regular courtyard plan and such farmsteads have been identified nationally as post dating the 1790s¹¹². This particular farmstead plan is the most common form in Staffordshire and is spread widely across the landscape. These forms appear to represent a deliberate development aimed at improving agricultural productivity being taken forward

¹⁰⁶ Cropmarks: Monument visible as a mark in standing crops, parchmarks or soilmarks, but where no subsurface deposits have been proven eg by excavation or other ground disturbance. (Scope note reproduced from the Thesaurus of Monument Types by kind permission of English Heritage © 2009)

¹⁰⁷ Staffordshire HER: PRN 04610; PRN 04613; PRN 00669; PRN 04590

¹⁰⁸ Staffordshire HER: PRN 00601

¹⁰⁹ Staffordshire HER: PRN 04606

¹¹⁰ Staffordshire HER: PRN 00663

¹¹¹ Staffordshire HER: PRN 07773 and PRN 07772

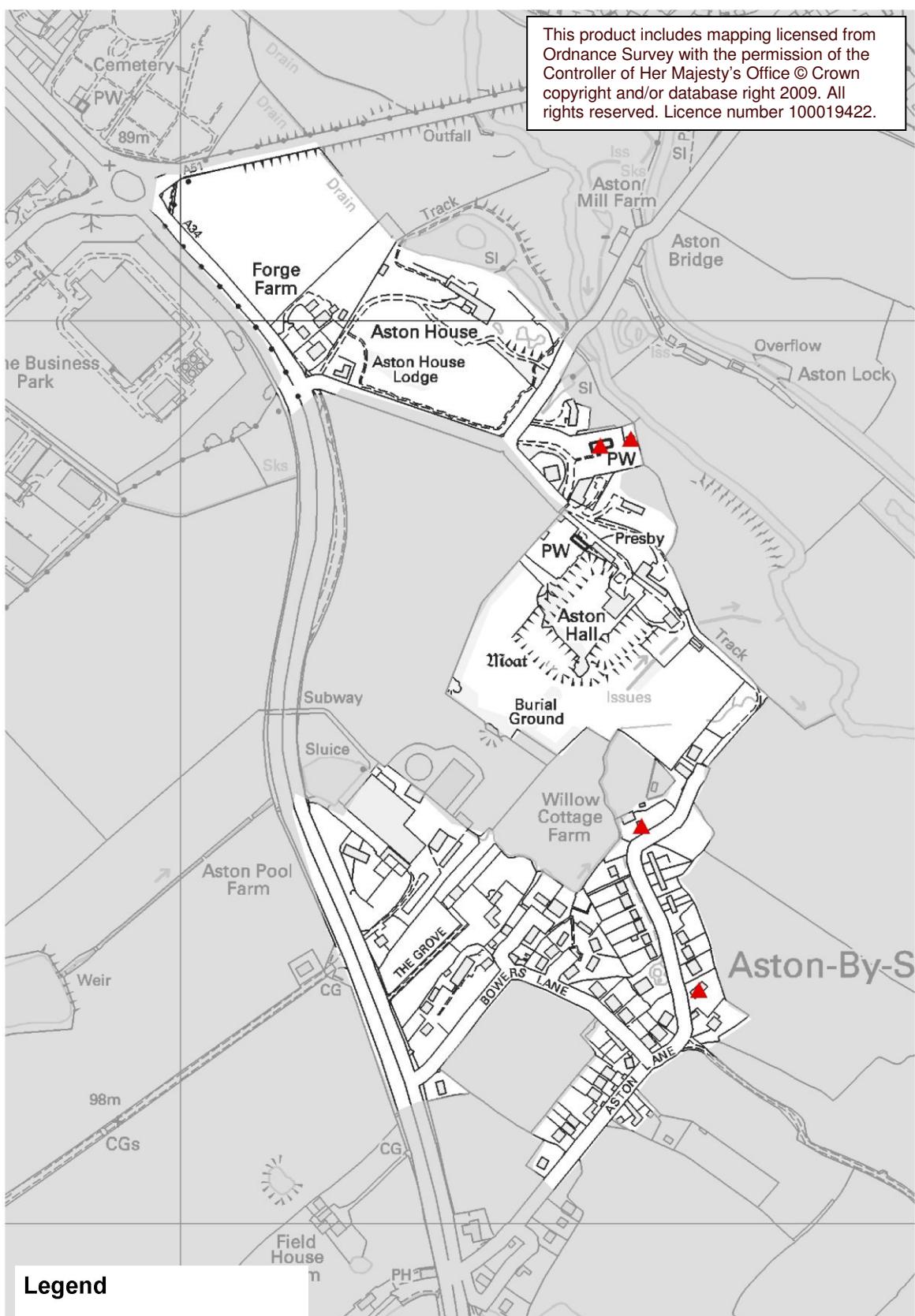
¹¹² Lake 2009: 19

by the upper classes during the late 18th/19th centuries. Further evidence of the industrialisation of agriculture during this period was discovered during the demolition of farm buildings when the remains of a waterwheel pit was found. The waterwheel is likely to have been used to drive farm machinery and was fed by the surviving mill pond¹¹³.

Historic Assets Summary Table

Survival	The zone has been disturbed by development, but there remain large areas of undeveloped land where historic environment assets (HEAs) survive well, notably the moated site around Aston Hall.	2
Potential	There is the potential for unknown HEAs, particularly earthworks and below ground archaeological deposits, to survive in the undeveloped areas and within the historic core of the settlement.	2
Documentation	HER data	1
Diversity	There are a range of assets of different dates and character including the remains of a medieval moat and later historic buildings.	2
Group Association	There is an association between the several surviving historic buildings which contribute to an understanding of the evolution of the settlement.	2
Amenity Value	The historic environment data does not currently lend itself to display or visitor attraction.	1
Sensitivity to change (to housing expansion & infrastructure for SBC)	Medium to large scale development is likely to have a moderate impact upon the historic environment within the zone. There would be particular impacts upon the Listed Buildings and upon the potential for above and below ground archaeology.	2
Overall Score		12

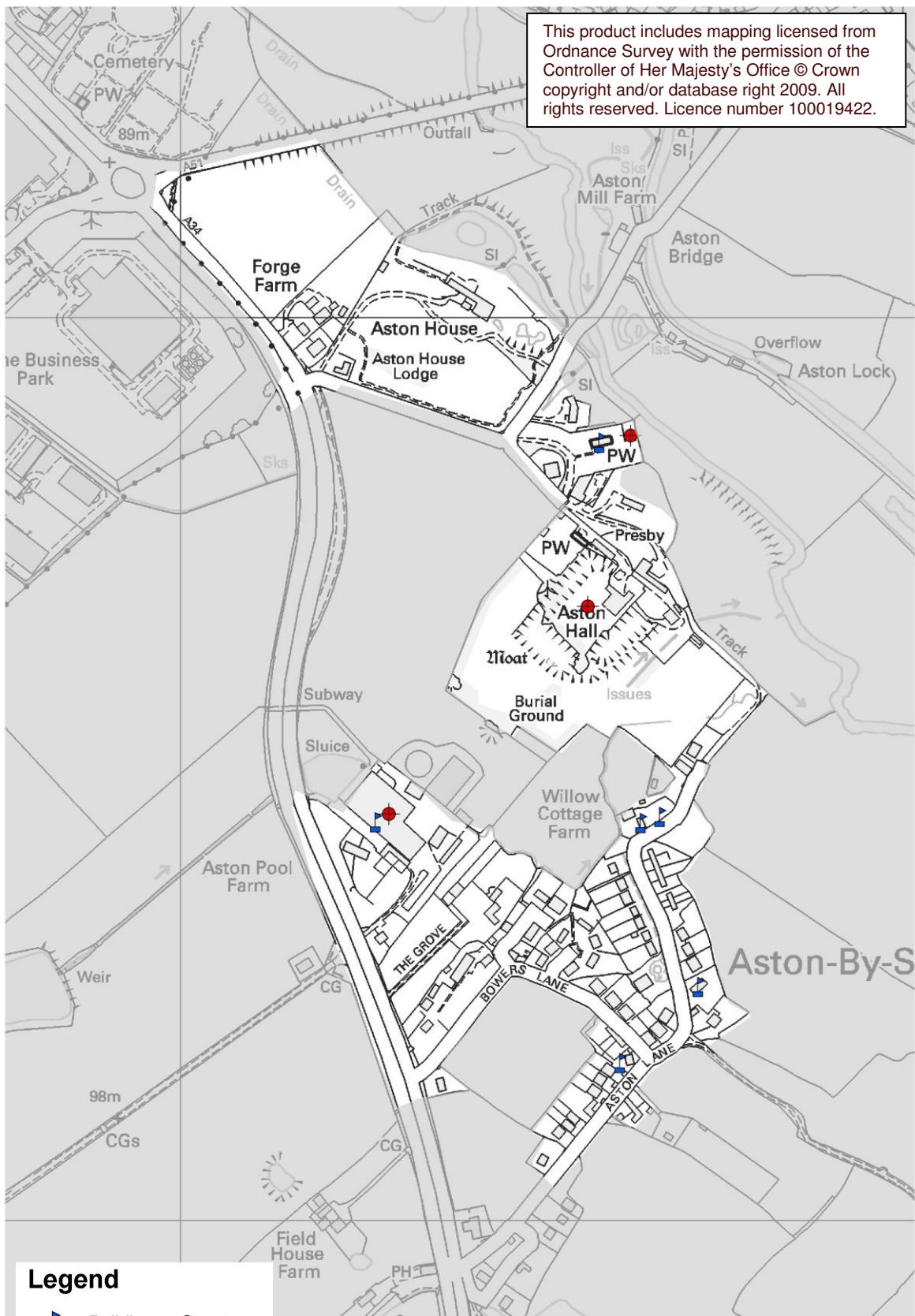
¹¹³ Staffordshire HER: PRN 04987 and PRN 50008



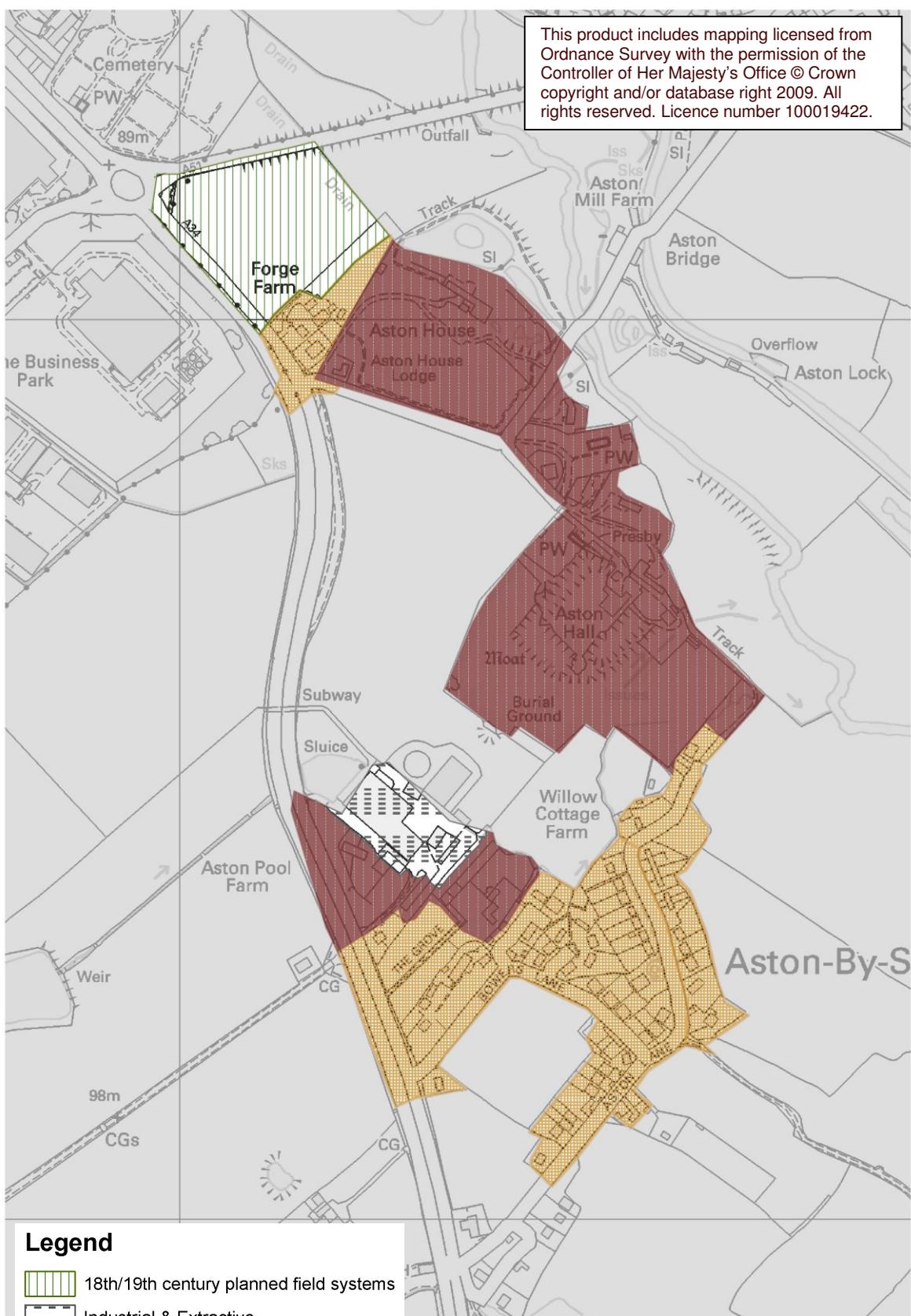
Legend

- ▲ Listed buildings
- Scheduled monuments
- Registered battlefields
- Registered parks & gardens
- Conservation areas

Map 34: Designated sites



Map 35: Known historic environment assets from the HER



Map 36: Refined HLC

STHECZ 15 – North of Pirehill House (HECA 13h)

Summary

The historic environment comprises a well preserved 18th/19th century field pattern which may have been associated with the development of the historic Fieldhouse Farm.

Medium to large scale development within the zone would have at least a moderate impact upon the historic environment of the zone. Should any development be planned for the zone it would need to address:

- Impacts upon the earthworks associated with the water system of pools and leats which had driven the watermill at Aston Pool Farm (see STHECZ 14)
- The impact upon potential below ground archaeological deposits

Early consultation with the Cultural Heritage Team at Staffordshire County Council is advised.

Designations (Map 37)

No designated sites currently lie within or adjacent to the STHECZ.

Archaeological Character (Map 38)

Little archaeological work has been carried out within the zone to determine evidence of human activity between the prehistoric and early Saxon periods. However, the eastern half of the zone lies within the Trent valley and aerial photographic surveys carried out across the southern portion of this valley within the county have identified intensive human activity from the Neolithic period onwards. It is therefore likely that there was a degree of human activity within the zone during the prehistoric period and this is born out by the degree of sites known in the wider area around Stone. To the north west a collection of six stone tools¹¹⁴ were found which have been dated from the Neolithic to Bronze Age period. Such a collection may suggest more intensive human activity in the vicinity rather than representing casual loss. Other prehistoric sites, enclosures and ring ditches¹¹⁵, of possible Bronze Age date are located to the east and south of Stone having been identified as cropmarks¹¹⁶ on

¹¹⁴ Staffordshire HER: PRN 0069; PRN 02101; PRN 02102; PRN 02103; PRN 02104

¹¹⁵ Ring Ditch: Circular or near circular ditches, usually seen as cropmarks. Use the term where the function is unknown. Ring ditches may be the remains of ploughed out round barrows, round houses, or of modern features such as searchlight emplacements. (Scope note reproduced from the Thesaurus of Monument Types by kind permission of English Heritage © 2009)

¹¹⁶ Cropmarks: Monument visible as a mark in standing crops, parchmarks or soilmarks, but where no subsurface deposits have been proven eg by excavation or other ground disturbance. (Scope note reproduced from the Thesaurus of Monument Types by kind permission of English Heritage © 2009)

aerial photographs¹¹⁷. One of these ring ditches, along with a sub-rectangular enclosure lies within the zone¹¹⁸. Approximately 5km to the north of the zone are two probable Bronze Age barrows¹¹⁹ lying within the Scheduled Bury Bank hillfort. The hillfort itself has not been dated and although these monuments are usually associated with the Iron Age, some are known to have earlier origins. The presence of the hillfort suggests a centralised power base was present within the area from at least the late Bronze Age/Iron Age, which oversaw a dispersed settlement pattern across the landscape. The hillfort would have provided a cultural, economic and administrative focus for the surrounding communities.

Scheduled earthworks exist to the north at Hollywood which have been interpreted as a possible Roman fort suggesting human activity at a later period. A further possible Roman fort has been identified as a rectilinear enclosure on aerial photographs to the south of the zone¹²⁰.

Aston by Stone, within STHECZ 14, was recorded in Domesday Book (1086) with Little Stoke and between the two settlements there were 11 heads of household suggesting a degree of activity within the zone from at least the late Saxon period.

Historic Landscape (Map 39)

The historic landscape of the zone is dominated by field systems which were probably created or re-planned in the late 18th/19th century. This Planned Enclosure was likely to have been enclosed by a surveyor using straight field boundaries creating field systems with strong geometric patterns. The field pattern as it is depicted on late 19th century maps has survived well across the zone.

Also lying within the zone is a large pond, probably developed as a mill pond which fed a further mill pond adjacent to Aston Pool Farm¹²¹ (see STHECZ 14). A wheel pit was discovered at the farm which was probably driven by the water supplied from these ponds to power the farm machinery. The ponds and the mill leat all survive. The fact that Aston Pool Farm probably dates to the 18th/19th century suggests that it was developed at a similar period to the re-planning of the field system.

The historic farmstead, Fieldhouse Farm, has been identified as having a loose courtyard plan. It may have developed as part of the re-planning of the wider landscape, but loose courtyard plans are known to have a long history and it may have developed incrementally over time rather than as a single phase development.

¹¹⁷ Staffordshire HER: PRN 04610; PRN 04613; PRN 00669; PRN 04590

¹¹⁸ Staffordshire HER: PRN 04613

¹¹⁹ Staffordshire HER: PRN 00601

¹²⁰ Staffordshire HER: PRN 04606

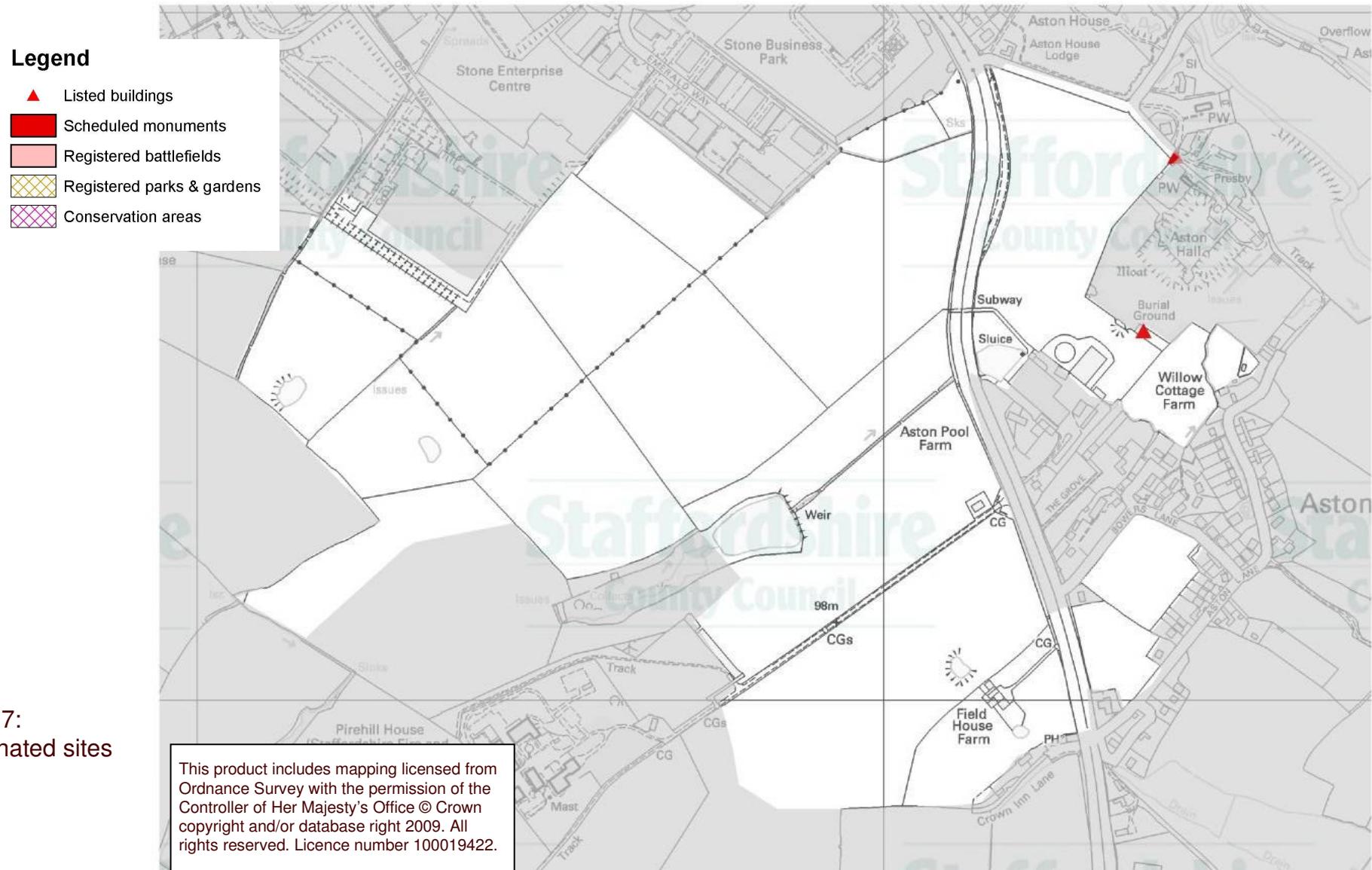
¹²¹ Staffordshire HER: PRN 02040 and PRN 50008

Historic Assets Summary Table

Survival	The zone has been moderately disturbed through agricultural practices, but historic environment assets (HEAs) are known to survive.	2
Potential	There is the potential for below ground archaeological deposits to survive within the zone. The ring ditch and enclosure suggests the potential for evidence from prehistoric and later human activity to survive.	2
Documentation	HER data	1
Diversity	There is a range of HEAs within the zone from historic buildings, historic landscape character, earthworks of mill ponds and leats and below ground archaeological deposits. These range in date from the prehistoric to the 18 th /19 th century.	3
Group Association	There may be strong associations between the origins of the field system and the adjacent farmstead at Aston Pool Farm and the origins of the millponds and mill leat. Fieldhouse Farm may also have developed in association with the field system.	3
Amenity Value	The historic environment does not currently lend itself to display or visitor attraction.	1
Sensitivity to change (to housing expansion & infrastructure for SBC)	Medium to large scale development is likely at least a moderate impact upon the historic environment in terms of the impacts upon the historic landscape character, but also upon the potential for below ground archaeological remains to survive.	2
Overall Score		14

Map 37:
Designated sites

66

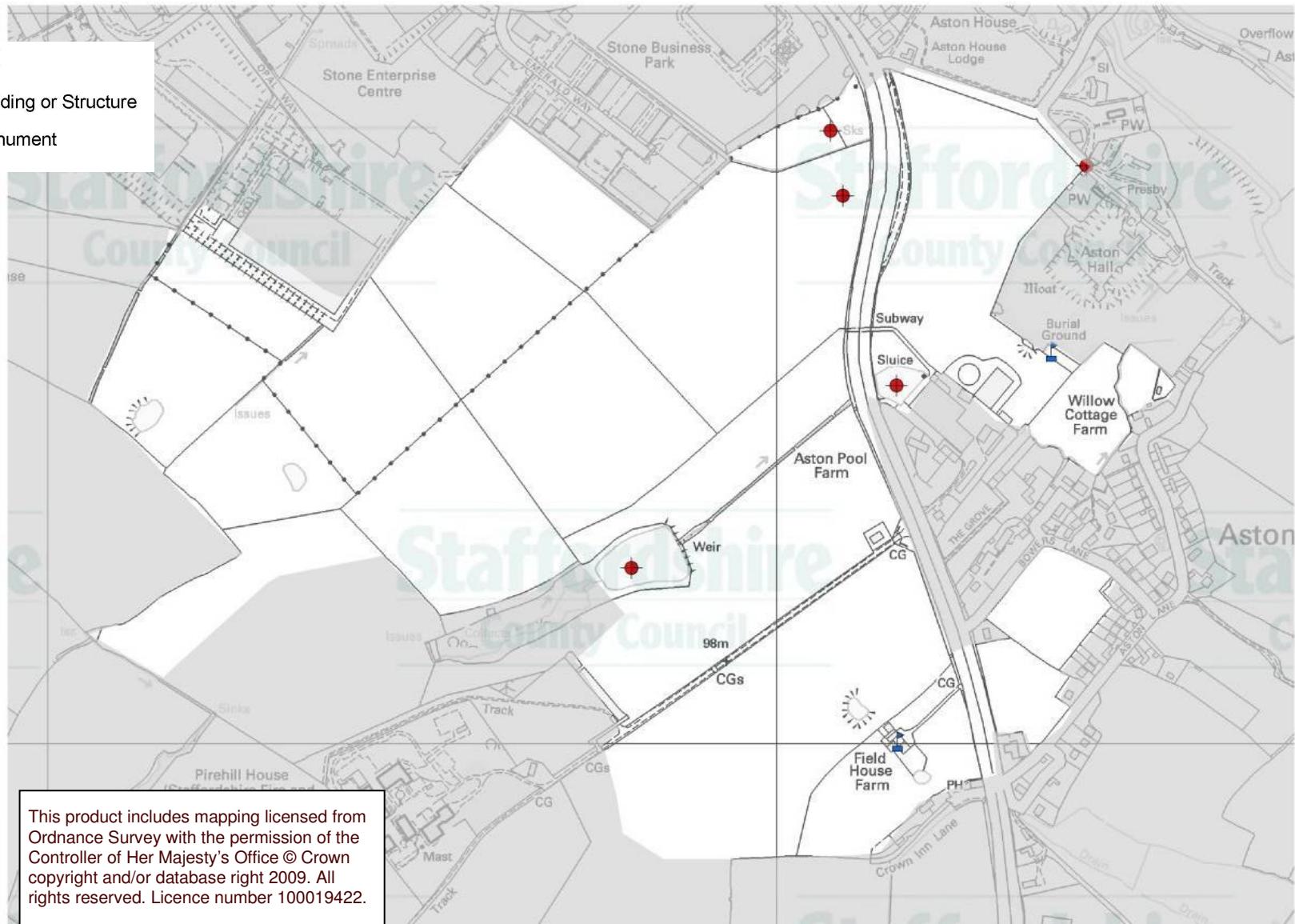


Map 38:
Known historic
environment
assets from the
HER

16

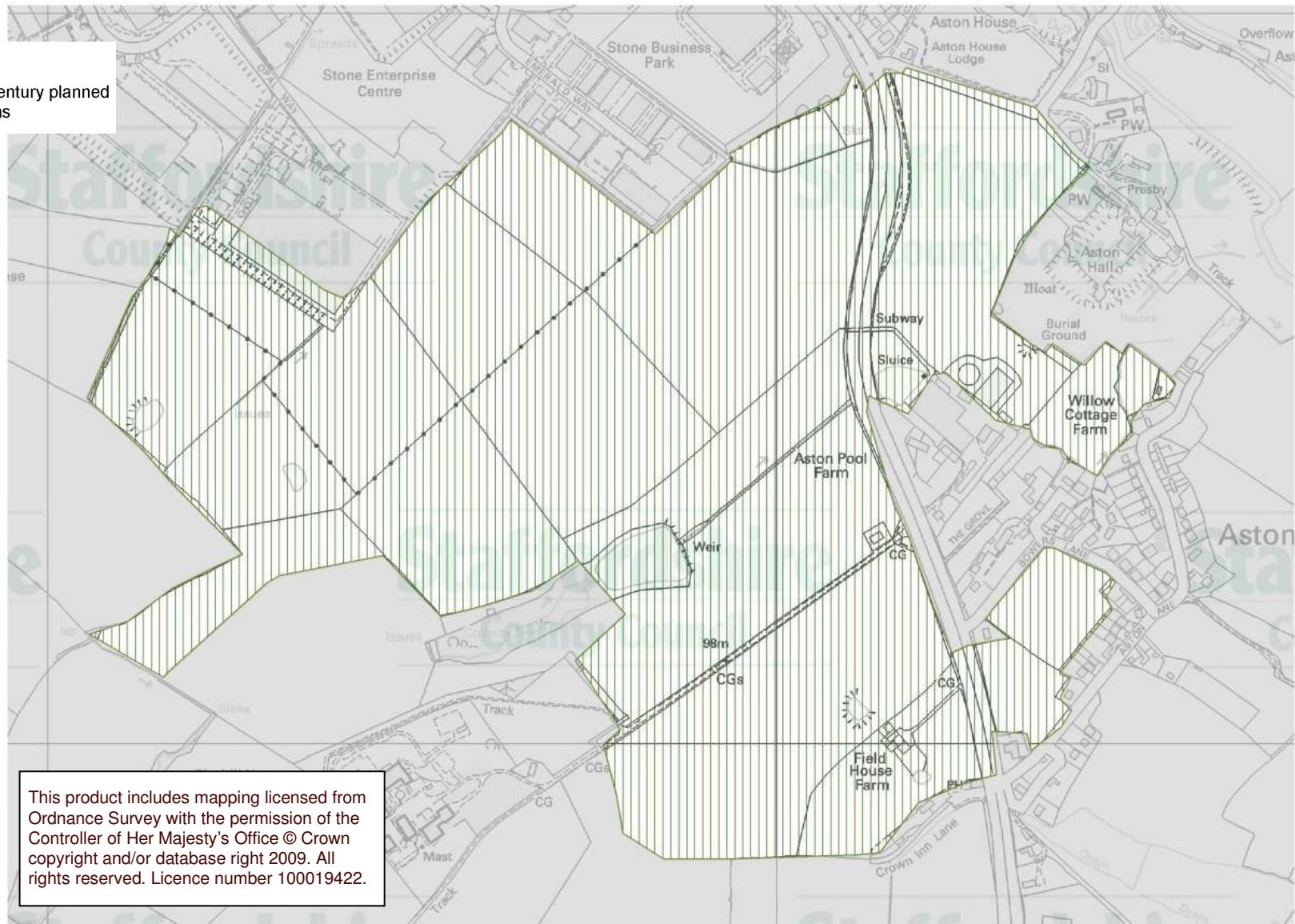
Legend

- Building or Structure
- Monument



Legend

 18th/19th century planned field systems



STHECZ 16 – Pirehill House (HECA 5f)

Summary

The historic character of the zone has been altered during the second half of the 20th century from plantation woodland to a field system. Pirehill House dates to at least the late 19th century, but the site around it has been developed within the late 20th century.

Medium to large scale development within the zone would have little impact upon the historic environment of the zone. Should any development be planned for the zone it would need to address:

- The impact upon potential below ground archaeological deposits

Early consultation with the Cultural Heritage Team at Staffordshire County Council is advised.

Designations

No designated sites currently lie within or adjacent to the STHECZ.

Archaeological Character

Little archaeological work has been carried out within the zone to determine evidence of human activity between the prehistoric and early Saxon periods. Evidence for human activity in the wider area includes a collection of six stone tools¹²² found to the north east which have been dated from the Neolithic to Bronze Age period. Such a collection may suggest more intensive human activity in the vicinity rather than representing a casual loss. Other prehistoric sites, enclosures and ring ditches¹²³, of possible Bronze Age date are located to the east and south of Stone having been identified as cropmarks¹²⁴ on aerial photographs¹²⁵. One of these ring ditches, along with a sub-rectangular enclosure lies within the zone¹²⁶. Approximately 5km to the north of the zone are two probable Bronze Age barrows¹²⁷ lying within the Scheduled Bury Bank hillfort. The hillfort itself has not been dated and although these monuments are usually associated with the Iron Age, some are known to have earlier origins. The presence of the hillfort suggests a centralised power

¹²² Staffordshire HER: PRN 0069; PRN 02101; PRN 02102; PRN 02103; PRN 02104

¹²³ Ring Ditch: Circular or near circular ditches, usually seen as cropmarks. Use the term where the function is unknown. Ring ditches may be the remains of ploughed out round barrows, round houses, or of modern features such as searchlight emplacements. (Scope note reproduced from the Thesaurus of Monument Types by kind permission of English Heritage © 2009)

¹²⁴ Cropmarks: Monument visible as a mark in standing crops, parchmarks or soilmarks, but where no subsurface deposits have been proven eg by excavation or other ground disturbance. (Scope note reproduced from the Thesaurus of Monument Types by kind permission of English Heritage © 2009)

¹²⁵ Staffordshire HER: PRN 04610; PRN 04613; PRN 00669; PRN 04590

¹²⁶ Staffordshire HER: PRN 04613

¹²⁷ Staffordshire HER: PRN 00601

base was present within the area from at least the late Bronze Age/Iron Age, which oversaw a dispersed settlement pattern across the landscape. The hillfort would have provided a cultural, economic and administrative focus for the surrounding communities.

Scheduled earthworks exist to the north at Hollywood which have been interpreted as a possible Roman fort suggesting human activity at a later period. A further possible Roman fort has been identified as a rectilinear enclosure on aerial photographs to the south of the zone¹²⁸.

Historic Landscape (Map 40)

The historic landscape of the zone is dominated by a field system which has been re-planned during the second half of the 20th century. From at least the late 19th century the zone was dominated by plantation woodland.

Pirehill House appears to have originated as a country house which had been built by the late 19th century. During the later 20th century the site has been developed to form the Staffordshire Fire Service Head Quarters and Pirehill House has been retained within the complex.

Historic Assets Summary Table

Survival	The zone has seen little disturbance except through agricultural practices and small scale development.	2
Potential	There are few known historic environment assets (HEAs) and the current lack of knowledge is probably the result of a lack of investigation rather than poor preservation.	2
Documentation	HER data	1
Diversity	There are very few known HEAs except for Pirehill House.	1
Group Association	Too little is known about the zone for any group association to be discerned.	1
Amenity Value	The historic environment does not lend itself to display or visitor attraction.	1
Sensitivity to change (to housing expansion & infrastructure for SBC)	The zone could accommodate medium to large scale development, although specific HEAs may suffer adverse effects.	1
Overall Score		9

¹²⁸ Staffordshire HER: PRN 04606

Legend

- Post 1880s Settlement
- Post 1880s small replanned field systems

Map 40: Refined HLC

56

