

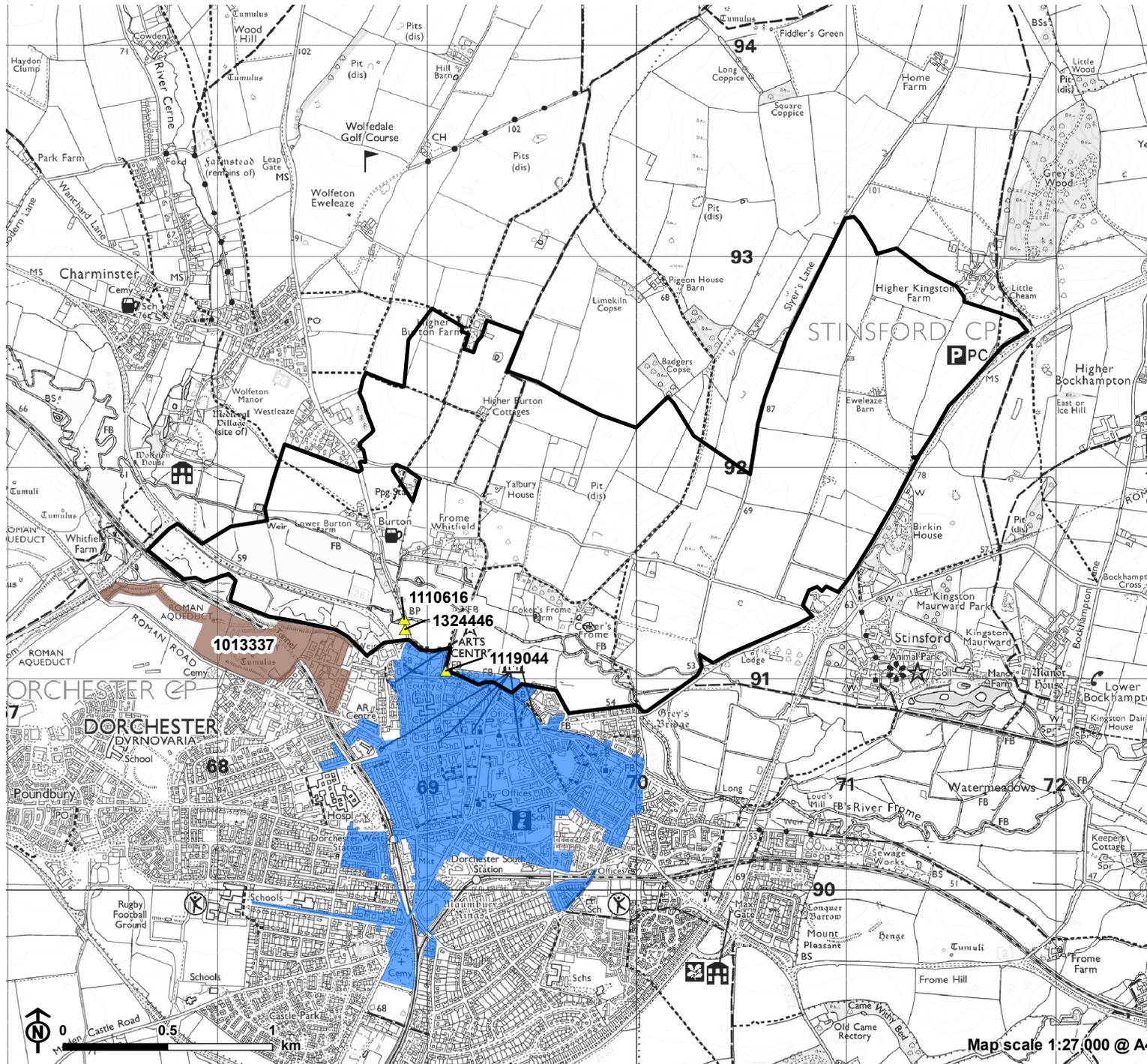
Chapter 4

Assessment of designated assets with the potential for direct and indirect physical change

4.1 This chapter includes the assessment of the six designated heritage assets wholly or partly within the site, and two assets beyond the site that may be indirectly physically affected. Where appropriate (e.g. due to functional or historical relationships), these have been grouped for the purposes of assessment.

4.2 The locations of the assets are shown in Figure 4.1 below.

Figure 2: Designated assets in site



- Site boundary
- Scheduled Monument
- Dorchester Conservation Area
- Listed Building**
 - Grade I
 - Grade II*
 - Grade II

Poundbury Camp, associated monuments and section of Roman aqueduct Scheduled Monument [NHLE: 1013337]

Summary

Significance of asset	Contribution of the site to significance	Risk of harm to asset	Level of effect
High	High	Medium	Medium-High
Scheduled monument	The site makes a high contribution to the significance of the asset and that contribution may be affected by development.	The significance of the heritage asset would be harmed but not substantially.	Asset is of high or medium significance and the magnitude of the change is likely to be of such a scale that the significance of the asset would be harmed but not substantially.

Description

4.3 Poundbury camp is sited on a chalk bluff overlooking the River Frome, immediately adjacent to – and very slightly overlapped by - the southern boundary of the site. The scheduled area includes a variety of archaeological remains, however, it is remains associated with either the hillfort or later settlement/ burials²⁶ that appear to extend into the site – and thereby be at risk of physical change.²⁷ Accordingly, this assessment focuses on the hillfort and other phases of settlement, while the Roman aqueduct is considered separately in relation to potential setting change in Chapter 6.

4.4 The central focus of this monument is the earthwork remains of an Iron Age hillfort with multiple defences. These include double ramparts and an intermediate ditch that can be traced around the west and south sides, as well as an outer ditch that may be traced on the western side. A terrace was once visible to the east, as was a bank to the south-east.

4.5 Together with the nearby, contemporary Maiden Castle, Hod Hill, and other hillforts,²⁸ Poundbury was part of an important network of defensive settlements within the *Durotrigian* tribal area. Poundbury's importance as part of this network may be indicated by the Romans having founded their

own *civitas capital* (*Durnovaria*) alongside it after the invasion.²⁹

4.6 In addition to the Iron Age settlement, the site has yielded evidence for earlier occupation with a Neolithic settlement of the 3rd millennium BC, as well as substantial Bronze Age occupation with huts, pits, and field systems. A section of Roman aqueduct – visible as the earthwork remains of the chalk cut channel and its outer bank – is also incorporated into the northern and eastern parts of Poundbury Camp. A series of discontinuous sections that continue beyond the scheduled area of Poundbury are separately scheduled [NHLE ref: 1002730] (both scheduled sections of the aqueduct are assessed separately in relation to setting change in Chapter 6).

4.7 In addition to the aqueduct, the opposite side of the bluff features an earlier Romano-British farmstead and an extensive later cemetery of some 1450 Roman burials that served *Durnovaria* extends to the south of the hillfort (in the area of the scheduled monument that has now been built over). This cemetery is one of the largest late-Roman examples known and excavated in Britain, if not Europe.³⁰ Geophysical surveys of the site have also identified a square feature that may be a Roman temple, or otherwise the site of a 17th century plague house that is known to have existed on the site.³¹ Overlying the cemetery are further early medieval buildings, enclosures and burials of the 5th - 8th centuries.

4.8 The hillfort would originally have sat in an open landscape, characterised by enclosed fields and woodland. This would have featured occasional farmsteads, trackways, and extant Neolithic and Bronze Age monuments. Clear views would have existed towards the nearby hillfort at Maiden Castle but are no longer possible due to intervening built development. From the Roman period onwards, the setting of Poundbury Hillfort would have been altered by increasing urban development around *Durnovaria* (later *Dornwarcester* and then Dorchester) to the east and the creation of the cemetery. However, on the whole, its setting remained largely rural.

4.9 The hillfort's setting remained largely unchanged until the mid-19th century. Thereafter, Dorchester began to spread further west and the Great Western Railway (GWR) line was constructed adjacent to the site (to the north and southeast), with a tunnel (the entrance to which is listed – NHLE ref: 1110614) running under the main area of earthworks. In the early-20th century the army barracks to the east of the site were extended right up to the eastern and southern

²⁶ The HER data records that the Roman cemetery and subsequent settlement are the features recorded nearest to the part of the scheduled monument that overlaps the site. However, the possibility that the overlapped area is associated with the hillfort defences or a river crossing cannot be discounted without further evidence.

²⁷ HE was contacted for clarification, however, due to Covid-19 restrictions they were unable to access the data on file for the monument.

²⁸ Poundbury is one of 35 hillforts recorded to date in Dorset.

²⁹ <https://historiceengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1013337> [ACCESSED 11.08.2020]

³⁰ <https://historiceengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1013337> [ACCESSED 11.08.2020]

³¹ <https://www.archaeology.co.uk/articles/iron-age-interior-design.htm>

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earthworks and aerial photographs from 1948 show military buildings located between the ramparts of the hillfort itself (DHER ref: MDO20960). Some remnant military features appear to survive today.

4.10 In the 1960s to 70s the military base was gradually replaced with a trading estate, constructed over the eastern half of the scheduled site. In the 1980s work began on the Poundbury development to the south of the monument, eroding the asset's open setting and views towards Maiden Castle. This development is ongoing and is currently being built out along the whole southern edge of the monument, towards the edge of the next section of Roman Aqueduct along the A37.

4.11 Today, the hillfort only retains its open setting to the west and north – the latter falling within the site. However, even this area features not only the GWR line but the B3147/ A37 (which both run close to the site) and the historic settlement of Charminster and its modern additions, which can be seen in the mid-distance to the northwest.

Figure 4.2: Google Earth image (Map data ©2020 Google) of Poundbury Hillfort and aqueduct (looking north)



Figure 4.3: View from Poundbury Camp east towards Dorchester



Figure 4.4: View south from Poundbury Camp showing development along Poundbury Lane



Significance

4.12 The significance of the asset is **high**, as reflected by its scheduling as a nationally important asset. It derives primarily from its wide-ranging archaeological interest as a major multi-period settlement complex, with the extant earthworks also possessing some historic illustrative value.

4.13 The late Neolithic and Bronze Age settlement, and Iron Age multivallate hillfort all have the potential to inform our understanding of prehistoric life, with the fort in particular having considerable potential to yield information about the settlement types use and decline, as well their social, political, and economic significance.

4.14 The Roman aqueduct, within and beyond Poundbury camp, is of national importance too, as one of 60 Roman aqueducts now known in Britain. The sections present at Poundbury Camp add to the monument's archaeological value because they can inform our understanding of Roman construction techniques and technology, the use of aqueducts and their social, political, and economic significance. However, they also appear to have led to some reworking of the hillfort's ramparts.

4.15 The large size and Christian connections of the Roman cemetery at Poundbury also add to the monument's archaeological importance. So too do the early medieval remains, which are generally rare in the archaeological record, and so provide an unusual insight into the continuity of settlement in the area. Overall, therefore, the monument is of exceptional national importance, providing a detailed understanding of more than 4,000 years of human activity and occupation.

4.16 In terms of setting, the hillfort's location on a major chalk bluff overlooking the Frome floodplain is highly strategic with

commanding views over the River Frome and its valley. It was also originally designed to be intervisible with the nearby Maiden Castle, which stands approximately 2.6km to the southwest, but intervisibility between the two hillforts has since been diminished by modern development. Poundbury's siting was therefore deliberately selected due to concerns about both defence and displays of power. Although Poundbury Hillfort lacks the physical size or the height and exposure of other major Dorset hillforts, this strategic design intent is easily appreciable in the contemporary landscape.

4.17 The ability to understand the asset in its landscape context, both in terms of dominating its rural hinterland (including the assessment area) and its relationship to Roman *Durnovaria*, makes an important contribution to its significance. These relationships can currently be appreciated from the asset itself, including views out across the assessment area, as well as from the public roads and rights of way crossing site, with views back to the asset.

4.18 The later Roman cemetery also has an important spatial relationship with *Durnovaria*, but this is not readily appreciable due to the modern industrial estate that now covers this area.

Figure 4.5: View from the site (the eastern end of the Stinsford to Charminster road) looking southwest towards Dorchester, and Poundbury



Contribution of the site to significance

4.19 The contribution of the site to the asset's significance is **high**. The development site extends right up to and just over a small part of the northern boundary of the scheduled hillfort and extends along the length of the aqueduct up to the A37, albeit at a distance of around 90m. This means that the site includes a very small area of the physical remains of the asset – and potentially associated archaeological remains that extend beyond the boundary. In addition, a key part of the asset's remaining open setting lies within the site. This part of

its setting (primarily the adjacent river valley) contributes to the monument's illustrative and evidential value by making legible the hillfort's defensive and authoritative design.

Sensitivity and potential harm

4.20 The sensitivity of and potential for harm to the asset as a result of the proposed development are both judged to be **medium**. The area of site that overlaps and is adjacent to this asset is Open Space South. This means that there would be no physical change to the scheduled monument, which is important as its primary value is archaeological.

4.21 The Link Road will be routed through Open Space South between Westleaze Road and the A35/ B3147, which runs east to west approximately 138m to the south of Poundbury. The road will adjoin the B3147/ A37 towards the eastern end of the scheduled monument. This part has been developed as an industrial park, but the Link Road would still be clearly visible from the rest of the monument, particularly if it is constructed on a causeway like the existing B3147. It is possible that noise from the traffic using the road and light pollution from any roadside lighting/car headlights may also be experienced from Poundbury, and herein this is assumed to be the case to facilitate a maximum case assessment. However, noise and light pollution will already be experienced because of the existing development to the east, south and southwest of the monument, as well as the rail line and road to the north of the site, meaning that the extent to which the proposed road would increase this effect (if at all) will require determination through further assessment.

4.22 The introduction of the Link Road would affect the legibility of the hillfort's design intent by diminishing its strategic relationship with the River Frome and remaining rural hinterland, interrupting views both from within and beyond the monument. Increased noise and light pollution would affect the historical illustrative experience from within the monument.

4.23 Beyond the road, the nearest proposed areas of development would be Housing West, which is sited to the north of Westleaze Road, around 585m from the hillfort at its closest. This would introduce built development into the agricultural landscape surrounding Higher Burton Farm, down to Frome Whitfield and continuing east to the A35. This would essentially leave the area immediately north of the site (e.g. Charminster and Dorchester water meadows) as they are currently, save for the addition of the new Link Road.

4.24 The proposed development would be experienced in longer views to and from the hillfort and aqueduct and would reduce the area from which the hillforts authoritative/ defensive design intent could be understood. Some of the remaining areas from which this understanding would be appreciated would also potentially be affected as the new

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development would be visible in conjunction with the asset. For example, from along the B3143 and Slyer's Lane.

4.25 Importantly, the proposed development and road would not physically impact the scheduled monument or fundamentally affect its primary heritage significance (i.e. archaeological interest). It also will not affect the ability to understand the topography behind the aqueduct's operation,

nor the hillfort and aqueduct's historical/ functional relationships with Dorchester. Moreover, whilst certain aspects of the assets heritage significance – as understood through its setting - will be (further) diminished by the proposals, its key setting relationships will still be legible.

Figure 4.6: Poundbury hillfort and Roman Aqueduct looking southwest from Westleaze Road with Lower Burton Farm in the foreground (the Link Road is proposed to in this area)



Figure 4.7: View northeast towards the site the from southern edge of Poundbury Hillfort (Open Space South in the foreground and Lower Burton Farm visible to left)



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Level of effect

4.26 Taking into account the significance of the asset (high) and the risk of harm to its significance (medium), the overall level of effect of the indicative masterplan proposals on this asset is **medium-high**.

Options for sustainable development

4.27 Physical disturbance of a scheduled monument requires scheduled monument consent and, if not obtained, constitutes a criminal offence. Therefore, no ground works or vehicular movement should be allowed in the area of the scheduled monument, or its immediate vicinity, in order to avoid any possibility of physical harm.

4.28 Options for rerouting the proposed Link Road should be considered in order to avoid/ minimise harm to the asset. Screening of the road is unlikely to be effective and would be inappropriate given that the open form and character of the water meadows means that screening would effectively be another impact to their significance.

4.29 The final level of setting effect will depend on the design, height, and layout of the proposed Housing West and East areas. These will need to be considered carefully and of high-quality design. The potential for strategic landscape screening (in areas of agricultural land beyond the water meadows) may help reduce the visibility of the development in the landscape. However, this would not fundamentally alter the fact that development was present and should not be an excuse for inappropriate development or poor-quality design, and its effects of planting on other heritage assets will need to be assessed.³²

4.30 In the main areas of development, sightlines could be enabled through the development to help reduce the loss of the area for experiencing the asset in a manner that enables appreciation of its heritage significance. Another option might be to retain more open land around the monument by keeping more land to the south of the Stinsford to Charminster road undeveloped.

4.31 Public benefits might be derived from offering interpretation of the site. It may be an option to extend the existing Dorchester heritage trail or Frome Valley trail to include access to and/ or information about the monument.

Road bridges over the River from Backwater on Charminster Road [NHLE no. 1110616] and Road bridge southeast of Lower Burton Mill [NHLE no. 1324446]

Summary (applicable to both assets)

Significance of asset	Contribution of the site to significance	Risk of harm to asset	Level of effect
High	High	High	High
Grade II listed	The site makes a high contribution to the significance of the asset and that contribution may be affected by development.	There is potential for physical damage to the assets due to increased usage as a result of the development.	There is potential for the development to result in physical deterioration / structural damage to assets of high significance.

Description

4.32 There are two grade II listed road bridges located along Westleaze Road, and these are assessed together due to their functional and historical connection to the same road and river. A third listed bridge [NHLE ref: 1110615] lies south of these two on the same road and may also be considered to form part of this functional group, however, it lies outside of the site boundary and so is assessed separately in Chapter 6.

4.33 Westleaze Road was previously part of the Weymouth, Melcombe Regis and Dorchester turnpike (1760-1878). A road that was improved and maintained by a toll paid at a turnpike gate (the Tithe map depicts a Toll House³³ approximately 500m north of the northernmost bridge). It was through the localised development of turnpike roads that a comprehensive and well-maintained network of roads was developed in the UK and both bridges are historically associated with this development.

4.34 The more northern of the two bridges [NHLE no.1324446], is located by Burton Mill. It dates to the late 18th century and carries Westleaze Road over the River Frome. It is constructed of red brick in stretcher bond, with three elliptical stone arches. The central arch, which has two iron ties running through the bridge either side of it, is slightly wider than the two which flank it. All the arches have dressed-stone voussoirs, above which are plain parapet walls with stone copings. The southern end of the bridge's east face terminates in a brick pier; the west side is attached to a stone rubble wall that forms the boundary to Lower Burton Mill. This bridge

³² Strategic landscape screening can in some contexts be as harmful as the effect that it seeks to ameliorate. In this instance some screening may be appropriate given the agricultural character of the area and existing tree cover.

³³ The tollhouse is located at 368673, 92069. It is not marked on the later OS maps, but the building now extant at that location appears to be historic with a thatched roof.