

Chapter 5

Assessment of non-designated assets on site

5.1 This chapter includes the assessment of the 50 non-designated heritage assets on site. Where appropriate (e.g. due to functional or historical relationships), these have been grouped for the purposes of assessment.

5.2 The chapter is structured by chronological period as follows:

- Late prehistoric (4000 BC – 43AD)
- Roman (43 – 410AD)
- Medieval (1066 – 1485)
- Post-medieval (1485 – 1750), Industrial and modern (1750 – present)

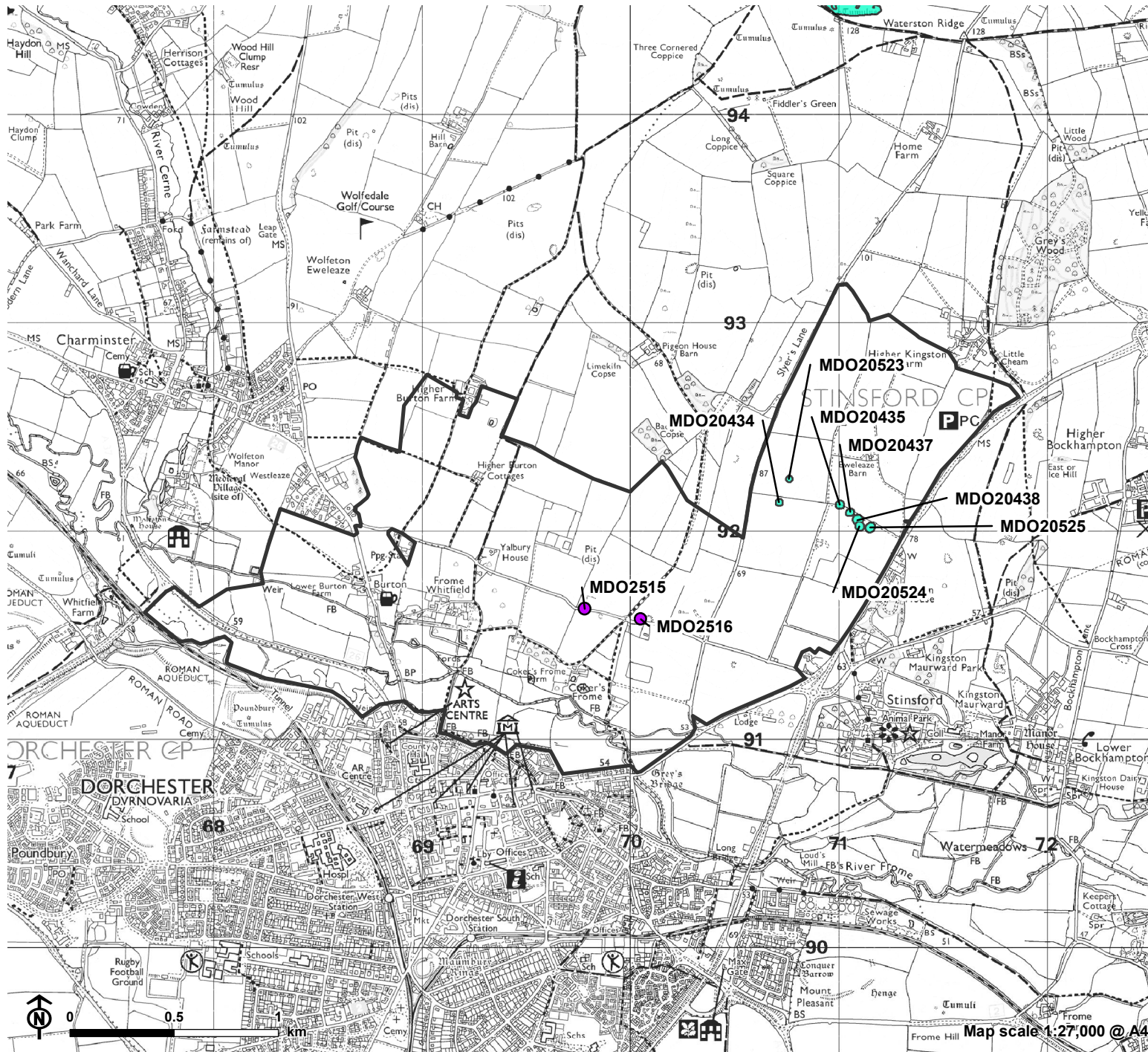
5.3 No assets of early prehistoric (800,000 – 4000 BC) or early medieval (410AD-1066) date are currently known within the site.



Late prehistoric assets (c.4000 - 43AD)

5.4 The location of the non-designated prehistoric assets on site is shown on Figure 5.1 (below).



Figure 5.1: Non-designated prehistoric assets on the site



-  Site boundary
-  HER non-designated asset

Stinsford barrow group; putative Bronze Age (c.2,500 – 800 BC) linear cemetery with outliers [MDO20434-8; MDO205424-25]

Summary

Significance of asset	Contribution of the site to significance	Risk of harm to asset	Level of effect
Medium	High	High	High
Regional importance	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 substantially harmed by the development.	Asset is of medium significance and the magnitude of the change is likely to be of such a scale that the significance of the heritage asset would be substantially harmed.

Description

5.5 Located in an area of post-medieval enclosures is a linear group of six Bronze Age round barrows (funerary monuments). These appear to survive as ring ditches (the ploughed out remains of a barrow), although LiDAR data suggests that at least one barrow may have surviving above ground deposits. This requires confirmation in the field that could not be provided by this project as the monuments are in agricultural land that is not publicly accessible.

5.6 Aerial imagery dated to the late 1990s indicates that there may be an outlying barrow [HER ref: MDO20434] – surviving again as a ring ditch – approximately 260m to the west of the linear group.

5.7 A second subcircular feature [HER ref: MDO20523], interpreted as a possible prehistoric enclosure, lies 100m north of the outlying barrow, in line with the linear barrow group. There is a strong correlation between round barrows and these types of enclosure complexes and although they may not be contemporary, the re-use of the burial mound clearly had a symbolic function.

Significance

5.8 The heritage significance of this group of assets is derived primarily from their evidential value. They will contain important archaeological and environmental evidence that will aid our understanding of the monuments form, function, and

associated social practices, as well as the historical depth of the landscape in which they were constructed (see discussion of NHLE ref:1019416 and 1019415). Often exhibiting regional variation, and therefore being able to address regional research questions, this barrow cemetery will likely be of **medium** significance. However, any barrows with above ground remains may be of high value due to the rare survival of these deposits and their potential to address additional nationally significant research questions.

5.9 The significance of these monuments is enhanced due to their group association, and the historical, functional and visual relationships that can still be understood via their rural setting, which also broadly allows for an appreciation of their highly deliberate visibility. The barrow cemetery also potentially has a historical, functional, and visual relationship with the nearby prehistoric enclosure/ barrow [HER ref: MDO20434].

Contribution of the site to significance

5.10 The contribution that the site makes to the significance of this group of assets is **high**. The site physically includes the ring ditches/ barrows, which derive most of their significance from their physical form, fabric, and age (archaeological value). In its current undeveloped form, the site also allows for an appreciation of the design intent behind these monuments siting (e.g. prominent visibility).

Sensitivity and potential harm

5.11 The sensitivity of the assets to the development of the site is **high**. The barrow group lies within Housing East, the development of which would result in the total removal or severe truncation of these features. It would also change their open setting, but this would only have an effect if the assets were retained in some capacity.

Level of effect

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

Options for sustainable development

5.13 Further staged investigation would be required to clarify the significance of these assets and to form an appropriate mitigation strategy. If found to be of medium significance – and their loss is outweighed by the benefits of the scheme – then, in line with paragraph 199 of the NPPF, a programme of recording may be appropriate and help to offset the loss of their evidential value. The findings from this would need to be made publicly available; typically, this involves submitting the excavation report with the local HER. However, consideration

should also be given to wider outreach and community engagement (e.g. open days) given the value of these assets.

5.14 If any of the assets have above ground remains and they are consequently considered to be of high value, then, as per the NPPF, substantial harm to them should be wholly exceptional (para 194, footnote 63) and they would likely require preservation in situ. In this scenario, the assets would not experience physical change but there would still be the potential to affect their significance through changes to their setting.

Cropmark of possible prehistoric enclosure [DHER ref: MDO20523]

Summary

Significance of asset	Contribution of the site to significance	Risk of harm to asset	Level of effect
Medium	High	High	High
Possibly of regional importance	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 substantially harmed by the development.	Asset is of medium significance and the magnitude of the change is likely to be of such a scale that the significance of the heritage asset would be substantially harmed.

Description

5.15 A small undated sub-circular banked enclosure, 22m across, is visible as cropmarks on aerial photographs dated to 1997. It is located in an area of post-medieval enclosures.

5.16 Small, embanked enclosures are the most common type of enclosed Bronze Age settlement and are typically found on level ground or south facing slopes,⁴⁶ such as the site. Whilst they vary in form markedly, this example's sub-circular form is highly typical.

5.17 These small, embanked enclosures generally feature a single entrance, one large house and ancillary structures. Large quantities of burnt stone and flint can be found in close association with these sites.⁴⁷ They also have strong

functional associations with prehistoric cultivation (including coaxial, regular and irregular accreted field systems) and symbolic associations with monuments, such as round barrows.⁴⁸ It is therefore of note that this example lies 100m north of the probable remains of a prehistoric round barrow [DHER ref: MDO20434]. A further group of six probable round barrows lie approximately 250m to the southeast. Often the round barrows are earlier, but some are contemporary. 700m downhill, numerous worked flints have been found, including more than 50 scraping tools, several cores, and numerous secondary worked flakes [DHER ref: MDO2503]. The distributions of the various categories of flint suggested a 'habitation' focus in the south-west corner of the field (around SY 70459152 – in the School Campus).

Significance

5.18 The significance of this possible prehistoric enclosure is derived primarily from its evidential value and ability to inform our understanding of prehistoric settlement. The monument's landscape setting and association with the round barrows contributes to its importance by adding to our understanding of its function and historical context. However, the contribution that this makes is limited given that the asset comprises subsurface remains.

5.19 Without further investigation there is some uncertainty surrounding the significance of the asset and whether it may contribute to local or regional research questions. However, in a maximum case scenario a **medium** value has been assigned.

Contribution of the site to significance

5.20 The contribution of the site to the heritage significance of this asset is **high**. The site physically includes the asset, which derives most of its significance from its physical form, fabric, and age (archaeological value). As such, the asset would be highly sensitive to physical change in the event of development.

5.21 The site also includes the key elements of its setting that contribute to our understanding the monument's significance, that is, its group association and historical and functional relationships to the barrows. This makes it sensitive to setting change, albeit of much lower consequence than its sensitivity to physical change.

Sensitivity and potential harm

5.22 This asset is at a **high** risk of harm because, like the barrow group, it is in Housing East. Consequently, it is likely

⁴⁶ Historic England 2018 Enclosed Prehistoric Settlements: Introductions to Heritage Assets

⁴⁷ Historic England 2018 Enclosed Prehistoric Settlements: Introductions to Heritage Assets

⁴⁸ Historic England 2018 Enclosed Prehistoric Settlements: Introductions to Heritage Assets

that the enclosure will be lost in its entirety or severely truncated. Development would also result in the loss of its setting/contextual relationships with the ring ditches and barrows.

Level of effect

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

Options for sustainable development

5.24 It will be necessary to undertake a staged investigation to clarify the interpretation and significance of this heritage asset and to inform an appropriate mitigation strategy. If of low or medium significance, then it may be possible to undertake a programme of recording to partially offset the loss of the asset's significance. The findings from the asset's investigation would need to be made publicly available and, typically, this involves the submission of the excavation report to the local HER. However, consideration should also be given to wider outreach and community engagement given the value of these assets.

Prehistoric ditches [DHER ref: MDO2515 and MDO2516]

Summary

Significance of asset	Contribution of the site to significance	Risk of harm to asset	Level of effect
Low	High	High	Medium
Local significance	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 substantially harmed by the development.	Asset is of low significance and the magnitude of the change is likely to be of such a scale that the significance of the heritage asset would be substantially harmed.

Description

5.25 These two ditches were recorded during excavations for a pipeline in 1984. One ditch measured 6m wide and 1.5m deep, while the other was 3m wide and 1m deep. Both run roughly north-east to south-west⁴⁹ along either side of Coker's Coombe, to the south of an old quarry hollow (shown on OS maps). Neither contained any dating evidence but the absence of any Roman or medieval material suggests that they may be of prehistoric date and interpreted as enclosure or property boundaries. Further evidence for prehistoric settlement in this area includes the discovery of a quern stone (DHER ref: MDO2501) 389m to the north. The DHER records that querns of this type were found at Maiden Castle in both Neolithic and Iron Age 'A' horizons.

5.26 Excavation will have removed part of these ditches, but they should survive beyond the investigated area; their full extent, however, is unknown.

Significance

5.27 The significance of the asset is **low**. It derives from the assets' evidential value and ability to inform our understanding of pre-historic land use and division, as well as the social practices involved in creation and maintenance of such boundaries. At this juncture, setting does not appear to contribute to their heritage significance.

Contribution of the site to significance

5.28 The contribution of the site to the heritage significance of the assets is **high**. The site physically includes the asset, which derives most of its significance from its physical form, fabric, and age (archaeological value). As such, the significance of the asset would be highly sensitive to physical change in the event of development.

Sensitivity and potential harm

5.29 The assets - MDO2515 and MDO2516 - lie in Housing West and Housing East, respectively. Their full extent is not known, but given their alignment, a significant length of these ditches may continue within the two housing areas and be removed by the development. Therefore, risk of harm to the asset as a result of development is **high**. This is because the loss of archaeological deposits would have a substantial harmful effect on the evidential heritage value of the asset.

Level of effect

5.30 Taking into account the significance of the asset (low) and the risk of harm to its significance (high), the overall level

⁴⁹ The HER record for these ditches states that the ditches are aligned northeast to southeast, which does not follow. The record also states that they follow the contours of the coombe, which suggests a northeast to southwest alignment.

of effect of the indicative masterplan proposals on these assets is **medium**.

Options for sustainable development

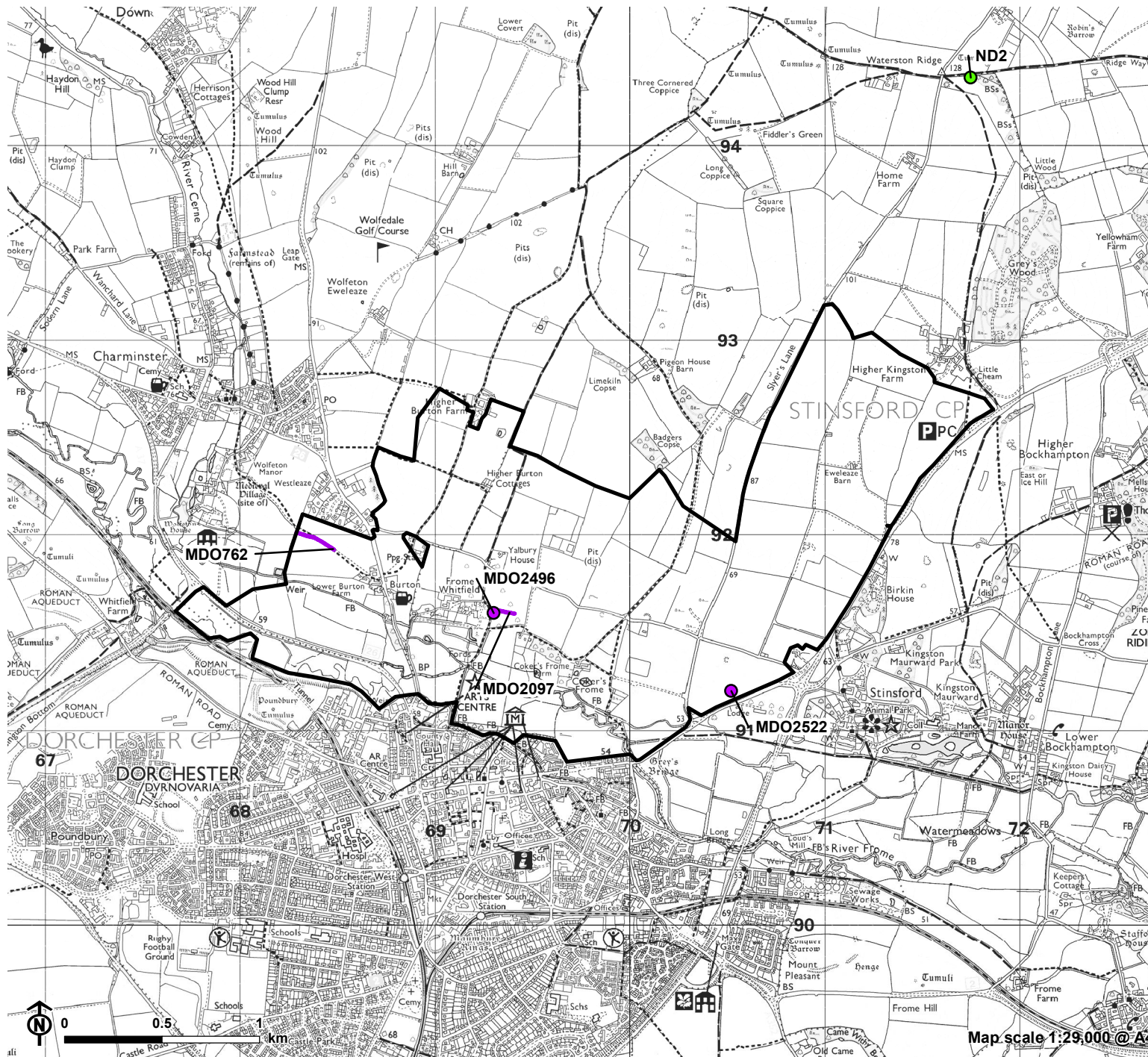
5.31 The loss of these assets' evidential value may be partially off-set by a programme of recording. The assets lie in an area where there is considerable archaeological interest that should be subject to an appropriately staged investigation.

Romano-British assets (43 - 410AD)

5.32 The location of known Romano-British assets within the site is shown on Figure 5.2 below.



Figure 5.2: Non-designated Romano-British assets on the site



- Site boundary
- HER non-designated asset
- HER non-designated asset
- LUC identified non-designated heritage asset

Roman road from Stinsford to Stratton [LUC ref: ND1 aka DHER ref: MDO20977 and MDO762]

Summary

Significance of asset	Contribution of the site to significance	Risk of harm to asset [DHER ref: MDO20977]	Level of effect
Uncertain	High	Medium	Variable
Potentially of regional significance	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 by the development, but not substantially.	See level of effect section below

Description

5.33 The Roman road network in Britain was extensive – although may to some extent have only consolidated many existing prehistoric routes rather than being built wholly anew. It enabled the quick movement of troops and supplies, and in so doing facilitated the conquest and subsequently the administration of the province. As the site of a Roman fort and town, Dorchester lies in an area where several Roman roads meet. One purported road, which bypasses Dorchester to the north, is thought to run east to west through the site, connecting with the road that ran from Badbury Rings to Dorchester (Margary 4E – now partly denoted by the B3150) and the road from Ilchester to Dorchester (Margary 47 – now largely indicated by the A37).

5.34 This minor road (Margary 470) is generally mapped as being largely demarcated by the Stinsford to Charminster Road, which passes through the site. Most Roman roads comprise either widely spaced boundary/drainage ditches and an agger (the embankment on which the road surface was constructed) comprising either a few or several layers of graded materials. They may also be associated with construction pits (flanking the sides of the road), central stone ribs, kerbs, and culverts, not all of which will necessarily be contemporary with the original construction of the road.

5.35 The survival of the road within the site is uncertain. On the one hand, it may have continued in use and been built over by successive roads – including the current one – meaning that its survival is, for the most part, likely to be poor. However, there is some physical evidence which suggests that not only do sections of the road potentially survive well, but that it followed a more southerly route. This evidence includes the possible remains of an agger located (at SY693916) in the field east of Frome Whitfield (referred to on the Tithe Map as Pond Close).⁵⁰ This earthwork measured 2ft high in 1970 and reportedly extended over 200m to the east of From Whitfield's former North Lodge.⁵¹ Review of recent LiDAR suggests that it may still extend this far.

5.36 Part of this linear feature appears to correspond to a ditched earthwork identified at this location from 1948 aerial images [DHER ref: MDO20977]. The DHER interprets this feature as a post-medieval trackway or field boundary as it appears to cross medieval cultivation marks. This is certainly possible, but no boundary is shown in this location on the Tithe (1840) or later maps, and probable Roman burials in Pond Close and further east around Slyer's Lane (which may indicate the line of the road) support the interpretation of the earthwork as the Roman road.

5.37 Further physical evidence for the road may lie to the west of Burton and Westleaze Road, as the 1st edition OS slightly depicts a linear earthwork here that is interpreted as the Roman road. However, this feature is now known to lie in an area of earthworks that have been interpreted as the deserted medieval settlement of Burton [DHER ref: MDO762]. A linear trackway has been identified as running through this settlement and it appears to be this feature that the OS map identified as the Roman road, although the map shows a continuation of the linear form further north than that which is currently mapped by the DHER. Much like the trackway to the east then, the interpretation of this feature remains uncertain.

5.38 Whether the two potential stretches of road are linked directly is unclear. Margary proposed a linking alignment making use of part of a native ridgeway now represented by Westleaze Road, which runs from Dorchester to Charminster.⁵²

Significance

5.39 Roads are highly representative monuments of the Roman period and those that exhibit good survival are often considered worthy of scheduling given their high archaeological interest. The earthworks interpreted as

⁵⁰ Roman Dorchester (Durnovaria), in An Inventory of the Historical Monuments in Dorset, Volume 2, South east (London, 1970), pp. 531-592. British History Online <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/rchme/dorset/vol2/pp531-592> [accessed 3 September 2020].

⁵¹ Roman Dorchester (Durnovaria), in An Inventory of the Historical Monuments in Dorset, Volume 2, South east (London, 1970), pp. 531-592. British History

Online <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/rchme/dorset/vol2/pp531-592> [accessed 3 September 2020].

⁵² Roman Dorchester (Durnovaria), in An Inventory of the Historical Monuments in Dorset, Volume 2, South east (London, 1970), pp. 531-592. British History Online <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/rchme/dorset/vol2/pp531-592> [accessed 3 September 2020].

trackways at Burton deserted medieval settlement and east of Frome Whitfield House [DHER ref: MDO20977] appear to survive well given their surface remains, but their interpretation as a Roman road is far from conclusive at this point and they may prove to be of later date (or to be multi-period). If they do represent the Roman road, then they may potentially be of medium significance. If solely of later date, their archaeological value may be lower. Therefore, for now, the significance of the asset is considered uncertain.

Contribution of the site to significance

5.40 The contribution of the site to the heritage significance of this asset is **high**. The site physically includes the asset, which derives most of its significance from its physical form, fabric, and age (archaeological value). As such, the significance of these assets would be highly sensitive to physical change in the event of development.

Sensitivity and potential harm

5.41 Both earthworks lie in Open Space South. There are currently no proposals that would affect the known extent of the earthwork near Burton [DHER ref: MDO762], but any buried remains could in theory extend south and be crossed by the Link Road.

5.42 Near Frome Whitfield, there are proposals for Strategic Landscaping that would encroach upon the western end of the linear earthwork there [DHER ref: MDO20977] and could remove or damage part of the asset. This earthwork reportedly extends further east than mapped and may extend into Housing West. The effect of these impacts is judged to be medium.

5.43 The purported route of the road (based on these earthworks) would also run through both Housing East and West, as well as be crossed by the Link Road. However, further investigation would be needed to clarify this and the potential for harm.

Level of effect

5.44 The significance of this asset is uncertain, meaning that so too is the level of effect. However, partial loss of an asset of medium value would result in a medium-high effect and that of an asset of low value would result in a low-medium effect.

Options for sustainable development

5.45 It will be necessary to undertake a staged investigation to clarify the further presence, or absence, and significance of this heritage asset. If the asset is of low-medium

archaeological value, then it may be possible to undertake a programme of recording to partially offset the truncation of the asset and its heritage significance (if effects cannot be avoided). However, priority should be given to avoiding effects by design in the first instance. To this end, the proposed Strategic Landscaping should be revised and not taken east of the footpath around Frome Whitfield House [LUC ref: ND3]. The design of Housing West could also seek to preserve the earthwork in-situ if it is found to extend into this area.

5.46 Any future proposals for Open Space South will need to carefully consider the significance of these assets and impacts to them, alongside their broader archaeological context, which in both areas appears significant.

Roman(?) burials, Frome Whitfield [DHER ref: MDO2496, MDO2497 and LUC ref: ND2]

Summary

Significance of asset	Contribution of the site to significance	Risk of harm to asset	Level of effect
Uncertain	None	None	None
Of at least local significance	These assets are no longer present within the site.	The significance of the heritage asset will not be harmed.	Asset of high, medium, or low significance where the development of the site does not interact with the asset or its significance.

Description

5.47 There are three antiquarian reports of burials of probable Roman date being found in Frome Whitfield.⁵³ The earliest discovery of five skeletons lying side-by-side in a stone cist was made in 1779. The burials were reportedly located in the field east of Frome Whitfield House (Pond Close). The HER suggests that the burials are of Roman date; given that they appear to be Christian burials, there is a lack of grave accretions and the fact that they were orientated with their feet to the east, they are presumably of late-Roman date.

5.48 Two other inhumation burials of probable Roman date were found to the east and west of Slyer's Lane. That to the west [DHER ref: MDO2497], found in 1841, was reportedly resting on a block of Portland stone with nails indicating a

⁵³ Royal Commission on Historical Monuments. 1970 An Inventory of Historical Monuments in the County of

Dorset, p. 257

wooden coffin. That to the east [LUC ref: ND2] was found in a limestone coffin (located at SY717943). Stone coffins are not common finds (although they have been found at the nearby Poundbury Roman cemetery) and their manufacture and transport from quarries, often some distance away, would have involved some expense and suggests that the burial is one of some status.

5.49 All the reported burials are thought to highlight the line of an east-west Roman road that by-passed Dorchester to the north (Margary 470). Such roadside burials were common in the Roman period because burials were not permitted inside the sacred bounds of towns and cities. However, it is likely that the burials are associated with the nearby, possible Roman, settlement at Cokers Frome [DHER ref: MDO2502] rather than the settlement at Dorchester. In which case, it is worth noting that burials associated with farmsteads often demarcate the boundaries of the settlement's paddocks and compounds.

5.50 It should also be noted that while unaccompanied burials in extended posture are commonly Roman, some may in fact be early-medieval or Saxon and representative of burial practice before those in churchyards became commonplace. It is therefore equally of note that the burials are close to Frome Whitfield and Cokers Frome deserted medieval settlements, both of which may potentially have earlier origins.

Significance

5.51 The significance of the burials is **uncertain**. They will at least be of local significance because of their evidential value and ability to inform our understanding of past social practices relating to death, gender, religion, and other 'identities', as well as to address questions on diet, health and disease, etc. If the burials are of Roman date, they will add to the understanding of extra-mural burials and settlement around Durnovaria and may potentially be of group value with the possible roadside settlement at Cokers Frome, as well as the purported road itself. Early medieval burials are also typically rarer as they are difficult to identify, so they may be of more significance in themselves. If they are of this date, they would likely be associated with an earlier phase of occupation at Cokers Frome or Frome Whitfield DMVs.

Contribution of the site to significance

5.52 The contribution of the site to the heritage significance of these assets is **none**. The activity that resulted in the discovery of these burials is likely to have destroyed or removed them. It has therefore been assumed that they are no longer present within the site. However, they highlight a potential for further burials that will require investigation.

Sensitivity and potential harm

5.53 The risk of harm to the asset from the development of this site is **none**. This is because the assets, which are recorded in Open Space South [DHER ref: MDO2496], Housing West [DHER ref: MDO2497] and Housing East [LUC ref: ND2] are no longer present. There would, however, be a risk of harm to any hitherto unknown burials, especially around Slyer's Lane (B3143) which is in Housing East.

Level of effect

5.54 Taking into account the significance of the asset (uncertain) and the risk of harm to its significance (none), the overall level of effect of the indicative masterplan proposals on these assets is **none**.

Options for sustainable development

5.55 The known burials may not be present anymore, but they highlight the site's potential for further similar assets (see discussion of archaeological potential in Chapter 8). Therefore, a staged investigation will be required to identify the presence or absence of any further burials, their significance, potential impacts to them and an appropriate means of mitigation (if required). The manner of such investigation would depend on the final scale of works proposed and would be outlined as part of the additional desk-based assessment.

Roman ditches [DHER ref: MDO2522]

Summary

Significance of asset	Contribution of the site to significance	Risk of harm to asset	Level of effect
Low	High	Low	Low
Local significance	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 may be harmed but that harm would be minor.	Asset is of low significance and the magnitude of change is likely to be of such a minor scale that the significance of the asset will only be marginally affected.

Description

5.56 Two ditches were identified during work on the Dorchester Ring Main in 1992, just west of Stinsford Hill (the

B3150). One ditch was orientated east to west and measured 2m in width by 0.8m in depth. This ditch was cut by a later deeper ditch, the orientation of which is not included in the DHER information. Pottery recovered from the ditch suggested a Roman date, however, it is unclear if the later ditch was also Roman or not.

5.57 It seems likely that the ditch(es) represent land division and use beyond the town and may have been associated with the possible settlement at Cokers Frome. It is of note that the adjacent road (the B3150) reportedly follows – or lies just north of – the route the Roman road from Dorchester (east gate) to Badbury Rings, through Kingston Maurward RPG, where part of it is scheduled [NHLE ref: 1002691].

5.58 Part of these ditches will have been destroyed by their excavation and the development of the road but, as linear features, further remains are likely to still be present.

Significance of asset

5.59 The significance of the asset is **low**. It derives from the archaeological interest of the asset and its ability to inform our understanding of Roman land use and division, as well as the social practices involved in creation and maintenance of such boundaries.

Contribution of the site to significance

5.60 The contribution of the site to the heritage significance of this asset is **high**. The site physically includes the asset, which derives most of its significance from its physical form, fabric, and age (archaeological value). As such, it would be highly sensitive to physical change in the event of development.

Sensitivity and potential harm

5.61 The risk of harm to the asset from the development of this site is **low**. This is because the asset is in Open Space South and there are currently no proposals in this area that would affect the ditches. The low risk of harm is therefore derived from the maximum case assumption that they may extend into Housing East, which is approximately 100m to the north of the ditches. As such, the ditches may be sensitive to further partial loss/truncation.

Level of effect

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

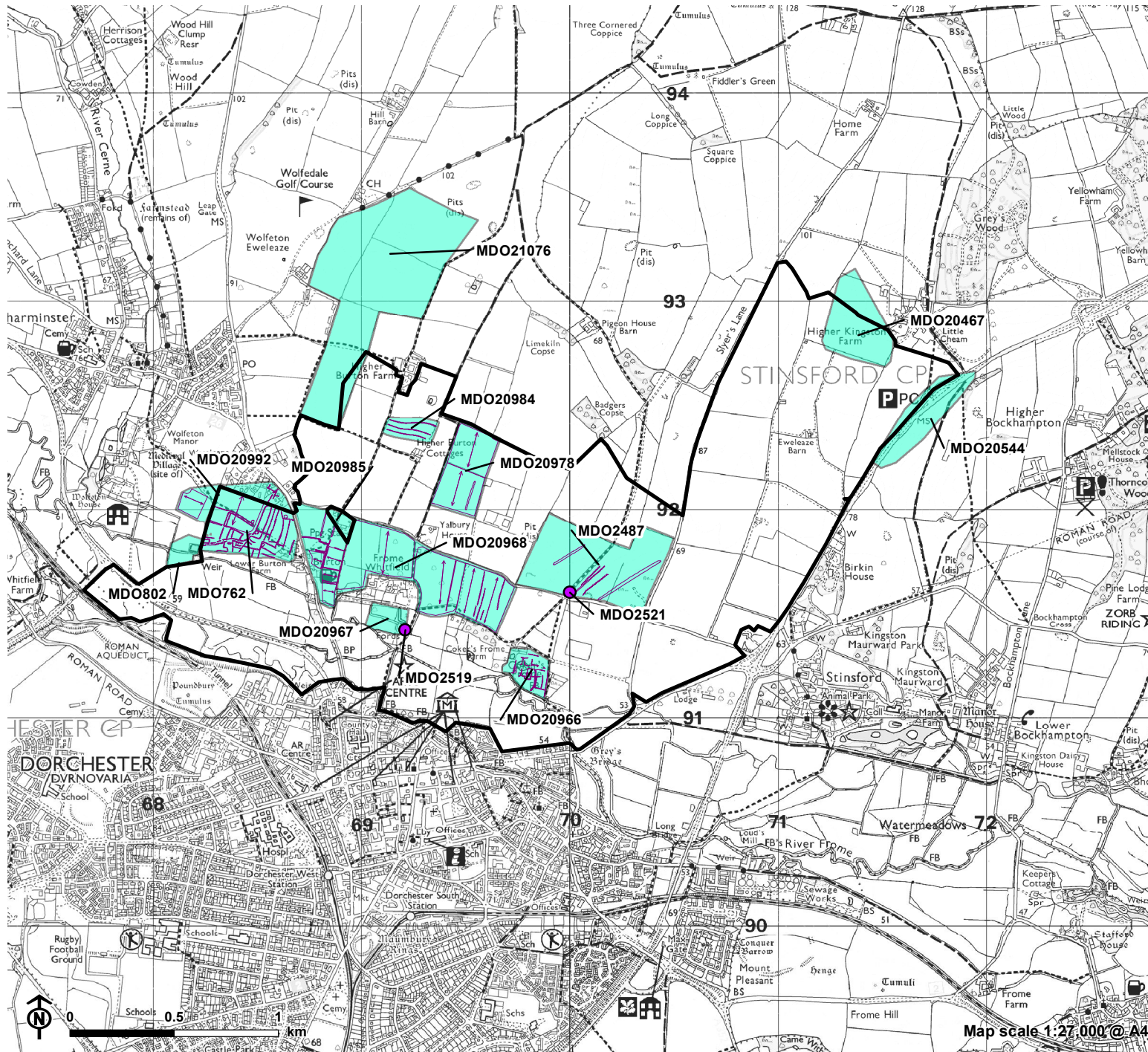
Options for sustainable development

5.63 Any ground works in this area would require a staged approach to identify the presence or absence of archaeological remains and their significance. Following further desk-based assessment, field investigation would probably be required. The manner of this investigation would depend on the scale of works proposed and would be outlined as part of the additional desk-based assessment.

Medieval assets (c. 1066-1485)

5.64 The location of medieval date assets recorded within the site is shown on Figure 5.3 below.

Figure 5.3: Non-designated medieval assets on the site



- Site boundary
- HER non-designated asset
- HER non-designated asset

Medieval settlement remains [DHER refs: MDO762/MDO802, MDO20967/MDO2485/MDO2519, and MDO20966]

Summary

Significance of asset	Contribution of the site to significance	Risk of harm to asset	Level of effect
Medium	High	Medium	Medium -High
At least regional importance	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 by the development, but not substantially	Asset is of medium significance and the magnitude of the change is likely to be of such a scale that the significance of the heritage asset would not be substantially harmed.

Description

5.65 Three deserted medieval settlements (DMVs) are recorded within the study area at Burton, Frome Whitfield and Cokers Frome. All three have been evidenced by earthworks, visible on aerial photography and LiDAR imagery. Deserted medieval settlements vary in size and form, but the majority are small hamlets containing between two and six farmhouses.⁵⁴ Documentary evidence indicates that generally such settlements were established between the 11th and mid-14th centuries. Many were deserted by the close of the medieval period, possibly because of economic viability, changes in land use (e.g. enclosure), or disease (e.g. the Black Death).

5.66 All three settlements in the site appear to have been part of a chain of villages that formerly lay along the northern bank of the River Frome, each sat within a strip of land running back from the river. Evidence for deliberate planning of estates (and, on a larger scale, parishes) that were set out at right-angles to a natural feature – such as a river as is the case here – is a peculiarity common to the chalklands of Dorset, Wiltshire, Berkshire and Cambridgeshire.⁵⁵ This pattern may have been to allow a share in land types of all kinds.⁵⁶ Often such divisions are of great age as they do not

respect key historic landscape features in the way that later parishes do.⁵⁷

Burton [DHER ref: MDO762 and MDO802]

5.67 The settlement at Burton, west of Westleaze Road, lies just northeast of Lower Burton Farm. In Old English the name Burton (burh + tūn) means ‘farmstead near the fortification’, in this case Poundbury hillfort. This is the site for which the largest area of features is recorded. These include a double-banked trackway flanked to either side by enclosures and probable house platforms plus an associated banked field system [DHER ref: MDO762].

5.68 To the southwest of this main area of earthworks is a moated site [DHER ref: DO802]. These are relatively common site types in some areas like East Anglia but are less so in the southwest of England. No information is given about it by the DHER, but moats typically enclosed islands of dry ground on which stood domestic or religious buildings. In some cases, the islands were used for horticulture. However, most moated sites served as high-status residences, with the moat being a symbol of status rather than defensive feature.

5.69 A hollow way ran from this settlement west towards another now deserted settlement at Wolfeton, just beyond the site boundary. This – and the trackway through the settlement – may be representative of an earlier Roman Road that bypassed Dorchester [LUC ref: ND1]. This raises the possibility that it developed as a Roman or later roadside settlement. It was likely in existence by the 11th century and may be recorded as one of the Cernes in the Domesday Book.

5.70 Cartographic evidence indicates that the settlement was largely deserted prior to 1772, although the Sun Inn, Burton Mill and Burton Farm are evident on the Tithe (1830) and later OS maps and remain extant today.

5.71 Reportedly, the settlement remains at Burton, which originally comprised 15 acres that have largely been destroyed by the area's subsequent agricultural use. Post-medieval gravel quarrying [DHER ref: MDO20990] and modern development along Westleaze Road have also affected their survival.

Frome Whitfield [DHER ref: MDO20967 and MDO2485]

5.72 This settlement is located to the south of Frome Whitfield House. Sometimes known as West Frome, it is the only one of the three DMVs to be securely identified in the Domesday book. This reports that it had a population of 13 households and comprised 30 acres of meadow and two furlongs of pasture. A mill, most likely a water mill (windmills are much rarer) located along the River Frome or one of its channels

⁵⁴ Historic England 2018 Medieval Settlements: Introductions to Heritage Assets. Swindon. Historic England.

⁵⁵ Rackham, O. 2020. The History of the Countryside p. 19

⁵⁶ Rackham, O. 2020. The History of the Countryside p. 19

⁵⁷ Rackham, O. 2020. The History of the Countryside p. 19

(possibly at some distance from the settlement), is documented but no church. However, the settlement reportedly includes the remains of the Church of St Nicholas (in a field known as Chapel Close), destroyed in 1549. The remains of the church are thought to be evidenced by a roughly L-shaped platform measuring 23 metres by 0.3-0.6m high. In 1992 a small-scale excavation was undertaken within the site ahead of the construction of a cesspit. This identified medieval and post-medieval pottery giving a date range of 12th to 19th centuries, although the reference in the Domesday book points to an earlier origin. A linear feature [DHER ref: MDO2519], probably a ditch, containing medieval pottery was also identified. Field walking has identified further finds in this area [DHER ref: MDO2505] including pottery and tile fragments, a Purbeck stone mortar, and several iron items (a key, part of a single-edge knife, two horseshoes, and a sponcer).

5.73 The village is recorded as being entirely depopulated by 1610, when the parish was joined with that of Holy Trinity Dorchester. However, the Frome Whitfield Tithe Map (1840) indicates that there was an earlier farmstead and house and garden in the area occupied by the extant Frome Whitfield House and grounds. Unfortunately, the area's conversion to water meadows in the post-medieval period and subsequent landscape gardening associated with the gentrification of Frome Whitfield House has resulted in the truncation of the site. Conversely though, waterlogging may have been beneficial for the survival of organic materials and environmental remains.

Figure 5.4: One of the fields containing earthwork remains of Frome Whitfield deserted settlement (looking west)



Cokers Frome [DHER ref: MDO20966]

5.74 The settlement at Cokers Frome is to the southeast of the present farm buildings. The earthworks here are thought to comprise a street or hollow way, running east to west with

enclosures either side. This settlement was almost certainly in existence by 1086, although not mentioned in the Domesday Book, and an earlier origin may be hinted at by the presence of a nearby Roman roadside settlement [DHER ref: MDO2502]. The reasons and date of this settlement's decline is unknown but, like that at Frome Whitfield, it appears to have shrunk to a single surviving farm. The site has also been affected in the same way as that at Frome Whitfield by its subsequent conversion to water meadows.

Setting

5.75 In terms of setting, all three DMVs lie in an agricultural landscape, close to the River Frome. The settlement at Burton has a small area of modern development to the north. It also lies near to an area of medieval ridge and furrow [DHER ref: MDO20992 and MDO20985] and the post-medieval Lower Burton Farm and Burton Mill. The ridge and furrow attest the village's contemporary agricultural activity, whilst the buildings demonstrate the later stages of the settlement's evolution and may mark the location of medieval predecessors. Consequently, they have an important functional and spatial relationship to the earthworks, one which appears to be appreciable visually between the farm and settlement area.

5.76 The Frome Whitfield settlement site is similarly associated with the post-medieval Frome Whitfield House, a small former country estate with a parkland and home farm, and an area of ridge and furrow [DHER ref: MDO20968 and MDO20985] that are important to the setting of the earthworks there for the same reason. However, it is unclear to what extent the spatial relationship may be appreciated on the ground as the site is privately owned and could not be accessed. Review of Google earth imagery suggests that there is tree cover limiting visibility between the two.

5.77 At Cokers Frome the current farm buildings appear to be modern, although they are in the same area as their post-medieval predecessors and so still have a contextual and spatial relationship with the earthworks. There is also an area of medieval strip lynchets (terraces created by the ploughing of hillsides) [DHER ref: MDO2487] that are likely to be functionally and historically related to the settlement, and which are inter-visible.

Figure 5.5: Area of earthworks at Cokers Frome (looking west) with extant Cokers Farm buildings and ornamental planting visible



Significance

5.78 There are over 2000 deserted medieval villages recorded nationally within England and these demonstrate great regional and local variation in form, size and type. They often include mills, roads and tracks, houses, and evidence for agricultural and part-time or seasonal industrial activity (e.g. potting, iron making, the extractive industries, woodland exploitation). As a consequence of their abandonment, these villages are frequently undisturbed by later occupation and contain well-preserved archaeological deposits that can inform our understanding on the diversity of medieval settlement patterns, farming economies, and their landscape contexts – both between regions and over time. Where these sites are well-preserved and regionally rare, they may be of national importance.

5.79 DMVs in Dorset are characterised by great local diversity, but their distribution is most noticeable along river valleys and the chalk land, as indicated within the site and study area; additional deserted medieval settlements are evident along the Frome Valley at Wolfeton, just west of the site, as well as near West Stafford [DHER ref: MDO20874] and Lower Lewell Farm [DHER ref: MDO2863], further east. There are also similar patterns of deserted settlements evident along the Piddle, Cerne and Winterborne valleys.⁵⁸ These include at least two nationally important scheduled examples at Winterborne Farringdon [NHLE ref: 1020550] and Charleston [NHLE ref: 1020183].

5.80 The three examples within the site are part of a broader local and regional trend of deserted medieval settlements

along river valleys. However, they have all been disturbed to some extent, reducing their archaeological value. Accordingly, on present evidence, these assets are judged to be of **medium** heritage significance, although further investigation may change this. Especially at Burton, which may be of greater value, as the settlement there also includes a moated site, another significant class of medieval monument that is important for understanding the distribution of wealth and status in the countryside.

5.81 The significance of these DMVs is derived primarily from their archaeological interest and ability to inform our understanding of the region's settlements in terms of their construction, development, social organisation, layout, trade, agricultural practices, domestic arrangements, abandonment, and overall landscape and environmental context, as well as the variation between these over time.

5.82 The settlements' spatial relationship to each other is a very important element of their setting that contributes to their significance. The settlements' spatial relationship to their successor buildings is also important and aids our understanding of the evolution of the sites. The remains of contemporary agricultural practices (e.g. ridge and furrow and field boundaries) also contribute to their significance as they illustrate the sites' function and history and add to their archaeological value.

Contribution of the site to significance

5.83 The contribution of the site to the heritage significance of these assets is **high**. The site physically includes the assets, which derive most of their significance from their physical form, fabric, and age (archaeological value). As such, they would be highly sensitive to physical change in the event of development.

5.84 The site also includes the key elements of the setting of these assets that contribute to their significance e.g. associated agricultural features. This makes them sensitive to setting change, albeit of much lower consequence than their sensitivity to physical change.

Sensitivity and potential harm

5.85 All three settlement sites are in Open Space South. However, there is the potential for physical impacts to all three sites as both the settlements at Frome Whitfield and Cokers Frome are encroached upon by areas earmarked for Strategic Landscaping, and tree planting, heavy vehicular movement, etc., that would result in the truncation or partial loss of these settlement sites. Most notably, at Frome Whitfield where the Strategic Landscaping coincides with the site of the Church of St Nicolas. Development immediately east of the settlement

⁵⁸ <https://dorset-ancestors.com/?p=1922> [accessed 31.03.2020]

site at Cokers Frome may also affect the settlement given that the earthworks and extent mapped by the DHER may not represent the full site. Additionally, the site proposals indicate that the Link Road would cross the southwestern corner of the Burton settlement earthwork, meaning that these too would be subject to partial loss/truncation.

5.86 The risk of harm to these sites also includes potential setting change. At Frome Whitfield, housing development would remove some of the ridge and furrow earthworks that are historically and functionally associated with the settlement, although these cannot currently be seen from or in conjunction with the site due to intervening vegetation. This would diminish the evidential value of the site and its legibility as a historic rural settlement.

5.87 At Cokers Frome, the strip lynchets similarly associated with the settlement would also be lost to housing development. Here the new development would also be experienced from and in conjunction with the asset, changing its rural setting and diminishing the ability to appreciate it in a near historic context.

5.88 At Burton, the introduction of a road would result in the loss of part of the asset's rural setting. It would also change the asset's spatial relationship with the settlement's extant buildings at Lower Burton Farm, by separating the two.

5.89 In all cases, the harm arising from the impacts outlined above would be less than substantial, which according to the criteria used in this study means that there is a **medium** risk of harm to the assets.

Level of effect

5.90 Taking into account the significance of these assets (medium) and the risk of harm to their significance (medium), the overall level of effect of the indicative masterplan proposals on these assets is **medium-high**.

Options for sustainable development

5.91 In the first instance, any proposals should seek to avoid harm to the settlement sites by design (e.g. redesigning of the areas of strategic landscaping and rerouting of the road to preserve the remains in-situ). To inform any redesign and ensure avoidance of harm, non-invasive surveys should be undertaken to confirm the extent of the settlements. Alongside further documentary research, this should inform a management strategy for their conservation and identify opportunities for public interpretation. Where harm cannot be avoided by design, it may be possible to develop an appropriate mitigation strategy to help compensate for the loss of heritage significance. There is little that can be done to avoid or reduce the effects of setting change to the assets, as

it is the principle of development of the site that is the cause of harm and this cannot be avoided by design.

Medieval/ medieval to post-medieval agricultural features
[DHER refs: MDO2519, MDO2521, MDO20968, MDO20978, MDO20984, MDO20985, MDO20992, MDO2487, MDO20467, MDO20544, MDO21076]

Description

Significance of asset	Contribution of the site to significance	Risk of harm to asset	Level of effect
Low	High	Variable	Variable
Local importance	The site makes a high contribution to the significance of the asset and that contribution may be affected by development.	See level of effect section below	See level of effect section below

Description

5.92 This group of eleven records relate to the remains of medieval or medieval to post-medieval cultivation and land division remains. The assets in this group, which are all located in agricultural land, include:

- 1. MDO2519:** In 1992 an evaluation at Frome Whitfield identified an east – west linear feature, probably a **ditch**, containing medieval pottery. This asset is located in **Open Space South**, in an area of **Strategic Landscaping**.
- 2. MDO2521:** Excavations in 1992 attested **two ditches**, probably field boundaries, running parallel to each other approximately 30m apart. Orientation is not stated. One ditch contained a single sherd of medieval pottery, suggesting that they may be of this date. These assets are recorded in **Open Space South, between Housing East and Housing West**. As linear features it is possible that they may extend into the areas allocated for housing, or where the attenuation ponds are proposed.
- 3. MDO20968:** Ridge and furrow (earthworks created by past ploughing activity) and field banks of probable medieval origin, visible as earthworks on aerial photographs taken in 1948. This asset surrounds the northern half of Frome Whitfield House, and is likely associated with the deserted medieval settlement at this location [DHER ref: MDO20967] partly within **Open Space South and partly within Housing West**.

4. **MDO20978:** Parallel cultivation ridges and field banks of probable medieval origin, visible as earthworks on LiDAR imagery dating to 2006. This asset lies to the east of Higher Burton Farm Cottages, in Open Space South, but its north-eastern corner extends into **Housing West**.
5. **MDO20984: Three parallel field boundaries** approx. 25m apart are visible as earthworks on aerial photographs taken in 1971. They are slightly curving suggesting that they represent medieval strip fields. Located between Higher Burton Farm and Higher Burton Farm Cottages, the field boundaries fall within **Housing West**.
6. **MDO20985: Ridge and furrow** (earthworks created by past ploughing activity) of probable medieval origin is visible on aerial photographs taken in 1948. Located directly to the east of Westleaze Road, at Burton they are likely associated with the medieval deserted settlement [DHER ref: MDO762] at this location. In terms of site masterplanning, this ridge and furrow lies within **Open Space South**, adjacent to Housing West.
7. **MDO20992: Ridge and furrow** of probable medieval origin visible as earthworks on aerial photographs taken in 1948 and LiDAR imagery dating to 2007. These overlap and extend beyond the north-eastern quarter of the deserted medieval settlement of Burton [DHER ref: MDO762], with which they are probably functionally and historically associated. In terms of the site masterplanning they lie within **Open Space South**.
8. **MDO2487:** A series of five parallel **strip lynchets** (terraces formed by ploughing a hillside) or field boundaries of probable medieval date visible as earthworks on aerial photographs taken in 1948. These lie north of Cokers Frome Farm and likely to be associated with the deserted medieval settlement there [DHER ref: MDO20966]. These lynchets extend across **Housing West, Open Space South and Housing East**.
9. **MDO20467:** Three parallel **field boundaries** of medieval or post medieval date, visible as cropmarks on aerial photographs taken in 1971. These lie to the southwest of the listed Higher Kingston Farm (and conservation area) in **Open Space North**. They are likely related to the settlement at Stinsford, to the south, which like Burton etc, was one of a several linear medieval parishes along the River Frome.
10. **MDO20544: Parallel ditches**, interpreted as trackways or hollow ways, **and lynchets** visible as earthworks on aerial photographs taken in 1948 and 1989. These features are located to the south of Higher Kingston Farm (and conservation area) and appear to have been

truncated by the A35 and otherwise lie **within Open Space North (and Kingston Maurward RPG)**.

11. **MDO21076:** A medieval or post medieval **field system** visible as cropmarks and earthworks on aerial photographs taken in 1971. Located to the northwest of Higher Burton Farm, it is most likely associated with the former settlement/ parish of Burton. Most of this complex lies beyond the site, but the southernmost section is clipped by **Housing West**.

5.93 Review of LiDAR data suggests that some of the ridge and furrow (e.g. DHER ref: MDO20968) has been lost through the erosive effects of agricultural activity.

Significance

5.94 Medieval and post-medieval open field systems, characterised by cultivation remains, such as ridge and furrow earthworks or lynchets, are typical of much of lowland Britain. Later, piecemeal (and then widespread) enclosure led to the creation of field boundaries. Those attested archaeologically must predate the extant field boundaries within the site, which are predominantly planned field enclosures of post-medieval date (e.g. 1500-1799). However, given that the long linear parish boundaries may be of some antiquity (see discussion above) the possibility that some of these boundaries are also earlier than medieval cannot be ruled out.

5.95 This group of assets has a **low** heritage significance derived primarily from their archaeological value – or for those that are visible above ground (e.g. the lynchets and some ridge and furrow) their historical illustrative value, both of which provide information on, or illustrate, past local agricultural practices, particularly landscape division and management.

5.96 Some of the ridge and furrow (e.g. DHER ref: MDO20992, MDO20985, MDO20968 and MDO20985) and lynchets (e.g. DHER ref: MDO2487) have additional significance due to their historical/functional relationship with the three deserted medieval settlements in the site, and the contribution that they make to the heritage significance of these.

Contribution of the site to significance

5.97 The contribution of the site to the heritage significance of these assets is **high**. The site physically includes the assets, which derive most of their significance from their physical form, fabric, and age. As such, they would be highly sensitive to physical change in the event of development.

5.98 In some cases, the site also includes elements of the setting of these assets that contribute to their significance e.g. the DMVs. This makes them sensitive to setting change, albeit

of much lower consequence than their sensitivity to physical change.

Sensitivity and potential harm

5.99 These assets are all highly sensitive to physical change. Five of the eleven records pertain to assets that either partially lie within, or may extend into, Housing East and Housing West (DHER ref: **MDO21076**, **MDO20968**, **MDO20978**, **MDO2487**, **MDO21076** and **MDO2521**). The field boundaries and ridge and furrow recorded under DHER ref: **MDO20968** are also in an area of Open Space South where strategic landscaping is proposed, and the strip lynchets recorded under DHER ref: **MDO2487** would also be impacted by the construction of the proposed attenuation ponds in this area. The field boundary/track recorded under DHER ref: **MDO20544** lies within Open Space North and an area of strategic landscaping. In the event of development, the heritage significance of these assets would be partially lost. The risk of harm to these assets is therefore **medium**.

5.100 The remaining records (DHER ref: **MDO2519**, **MDO20984**, **MDO20985**, and **MDO20467**) relate to assets within Open Space South where there are currently no proposals. The risk of harm to these assets is therefore none.

Level of effect

5.101 Taking into account the significance of these assets (low) and the risk of harm to their significance (medium), the overall level of effect of the indicative masterplan proposals on these assets is **medium**.

Options for sustainable development

5.102 Further investigation is required to confirm the presence or absence and significance of these assets. A staged approach would be required. This would most likely involve further desk-based research, evaluation, and a programme of recording commensurate with the asset's significance.

5.103 Potentially, these landscape features could be drawn upon to inform the layout of the site to help reflect the historical character of the area and create a unique sense of place. However, such designs would need to be carefully thought through.

Post-medieval (1485 – 1750) and Industrial and modern (1750 – present)

5.104 The location of the post-medieval assets on site are shown on Figures 5.6 and 5.7 (below).