

Heritage Assessment



**Rectory Farm
Ashfield Park
Ross-On-Wye
Herefordshire
HR9 5AS**

On behalf of

Paul Williams Esq

January 2023

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Cover: View looking west from the proposed development site towards the River Wye and Wilton Bridge and Castle

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1 Executive Summary

Border Archaeology was commissioned to carry out a Heritage Assessment relating to the proposed development of Rectory Farm Ashfield Park Ross-On-Wye HR9 5AS.

The Church of St Mary the Virgin: The overall impact of the proposed development in heritage terms on the Grade I listed building of the Church of St Mary the Virgin can be assessed as **Slight**. This assessment reflects the **High** significance of the church, cross-referenced against the magnitude of impact, assessed as **Negligible to Minor**. The main body of the asset, that being the church itself, has extremely limited intervisibility with the site due to dense tree cover and intervening landform, with the similar buildings near the proposed site not being visible and the existing buildings around the asset adding to all other views. The associated graveyard and churchyards are similarly screened by vegetation and topography. The wall around the 20th century extension to the graveyard interacts directly with the site but also acts in combination with the dense treeline to shield the graveyard itself. The development is therefore unlikely to impact the setting of the asset, with any impact likely being less than that already created by the nearby similar buildings.

Ross-on-Wye Conservation Area: The overall impact of the proposed development in heritage terms on the Ross-on-Wye Conservation Area can be assessed as **Slight**. This assessment reflects the **High** significance of the conservation area, cross-referenced against the magnitude of impact, assessed as **Negligible**. The proposed development will alter the historic plan of the area only minimally, when viewed in the context of other similar developments having set a precedent in this respect. Additionally, the dense treeline interacts and contributes more to the character of the surrounding area and the assets included in the conservation area than the open land itself and, given that the treeline will not be subject to change, the impact of the proposed development is further limited.

The overall impact of the proposed work in heritage terms on the **Churchyard Wall of St Mary the Virgin, Churchyard Wall between North West End of Church Row and The Prospect (Grade II), Gate in the South Wall of The Prospect (Grade II*), Gate Piers in East Wall of The Prospect (Grade II*), Wall around The Prospect (Grade II), Royal Hotel (Grade II) and Palace Pound (Grade II)** can be assessed as **Neutral**. This assessment reflects the **High** significance of the structures and buildings, cross-referenced against the magnitude of impact, assessed as **No Change**. Views to and from these assets and the proposed site are largely obscured by tree-cover, distance or other built structures, meaning the development is unlikely to impact these assets. The other, similar built structures in the vicinity of the site are not visible from these assets, which evidences and reinforces the likelihood that the proposed development will similarly not be visible.

The overall impact of the proposed work in heritage terms on **Wilton Bridge (Scheduled Monument), Wilton Bridge (that Part In Ross on Wye Urban District) (Grade I), Wilton Bridge and Sundial (those parts Bridstow Civil Parish) (Grade I), Wilton Castle (Scheduled Ancient Monument) and Ruins of Wilton Castle and House attached to South (Grade I)** can be assessed as **Neutral**. This assessment reflects the **High** significance of the structures, cross-referenced against the magnitude of impact, assessed as **No Change**. Although the spire of the Church of St

Mary the Virgin is visible, intervisibility between the assets and the proposed development site are largely obscured by farmland and dense tree cover bordering the river and by distance and difference in elevation, as well as the buildings of Rectory Farm indicating that the proposed development is unlikely to have any impact on these assets.

Conclusion: The overall impact of the proposed development in heritage terms can be assessed as Slight. Based on the above assessment, it is considered that the proposed works will result in some small changes to the setting of two assets but no real further nor more impactful change than those created by previous, similar developments in the area. It is also considered that the setting of all assets will be impacted to a minimal extent or not at all due the proposed site's dense treeline and other intervening factors, with the treeline, which is to be maintained, being the aspect of the site that contributes more to the setting of surrounding assets.

2 Introduction

Border Archaeology (BA) has been instructed by Mr Charles James on behalf of Paul Williams Esq to undertake a Heritage Assessment relating to the proposed development of Rectory Farm Ashfield Park Ross-On-Wye HR9 5AS.

In brief, the proposed works comprise the building of a two-storey family dwelling and associated driveway and access extending from the existing access to Rectory Farm.

3 Site Location

The site lies within the Wye Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty on a rocky outcrop above Wilton Road on the approach into Ross-on-Wye. With commanding views across the River Wye to the NW and W, the site overlooks a large loop in the river and the settlement of Wilton beyond.

The site itself is open land, with a dense treeline and a wall to the N and E, and stands at an elevation of c.63m--an elevation similar to that of the land to the N and E of the site, but higher than that of the land to the S and W (elevation of c.30-40m).

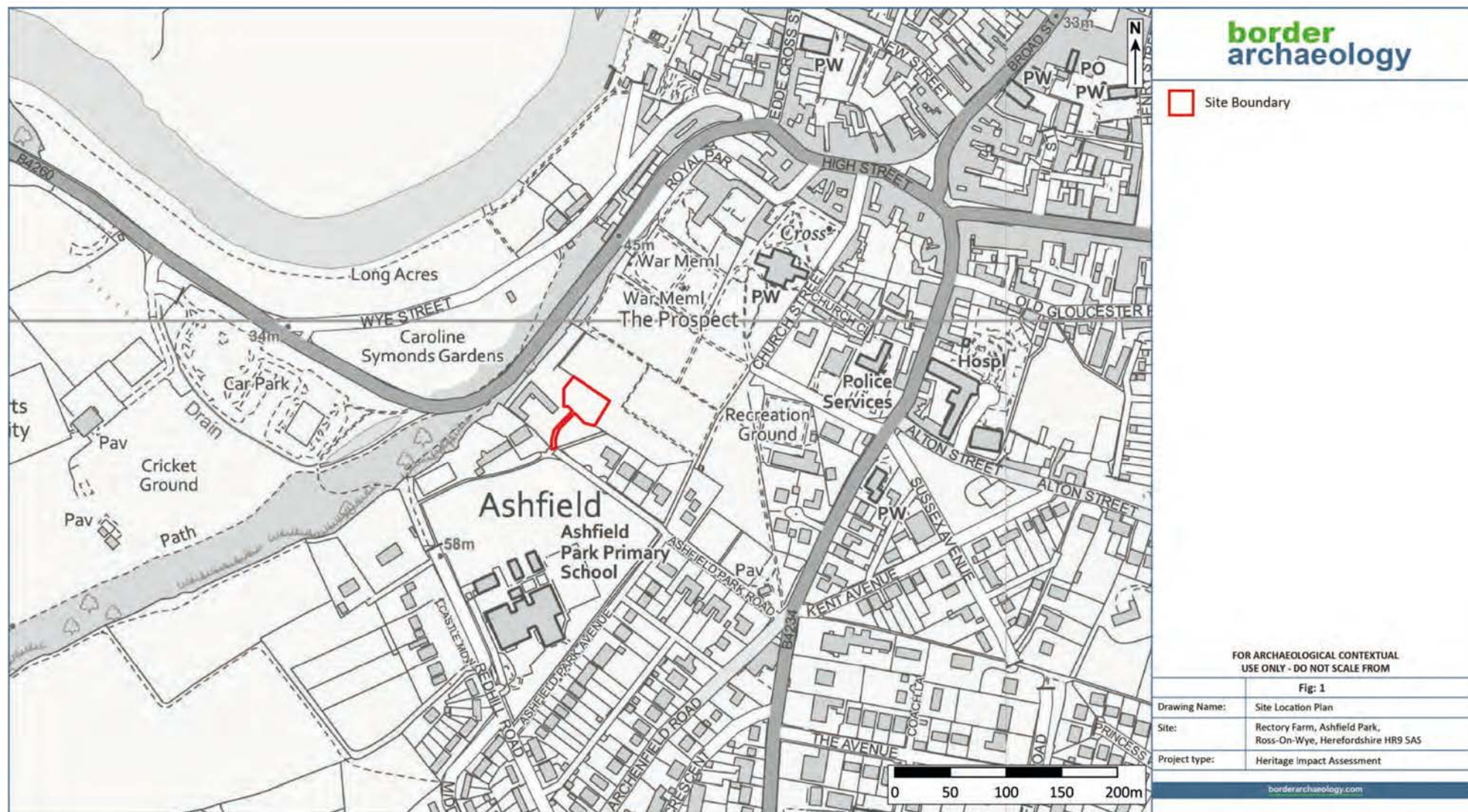
The site is within the land of the complex of Rectory Farm (c.40m NW), an early 19th century farmstead previously known as Parsonage Barn (48404). To the immediate E and NE there is the aforementioned treeline and then a graveyard and Remembrance Garden associated with the Church of St. Mary, which is itself c.200m NE, along with The Prospect (c.123m N) and the Royal Hotel (c.215m N).

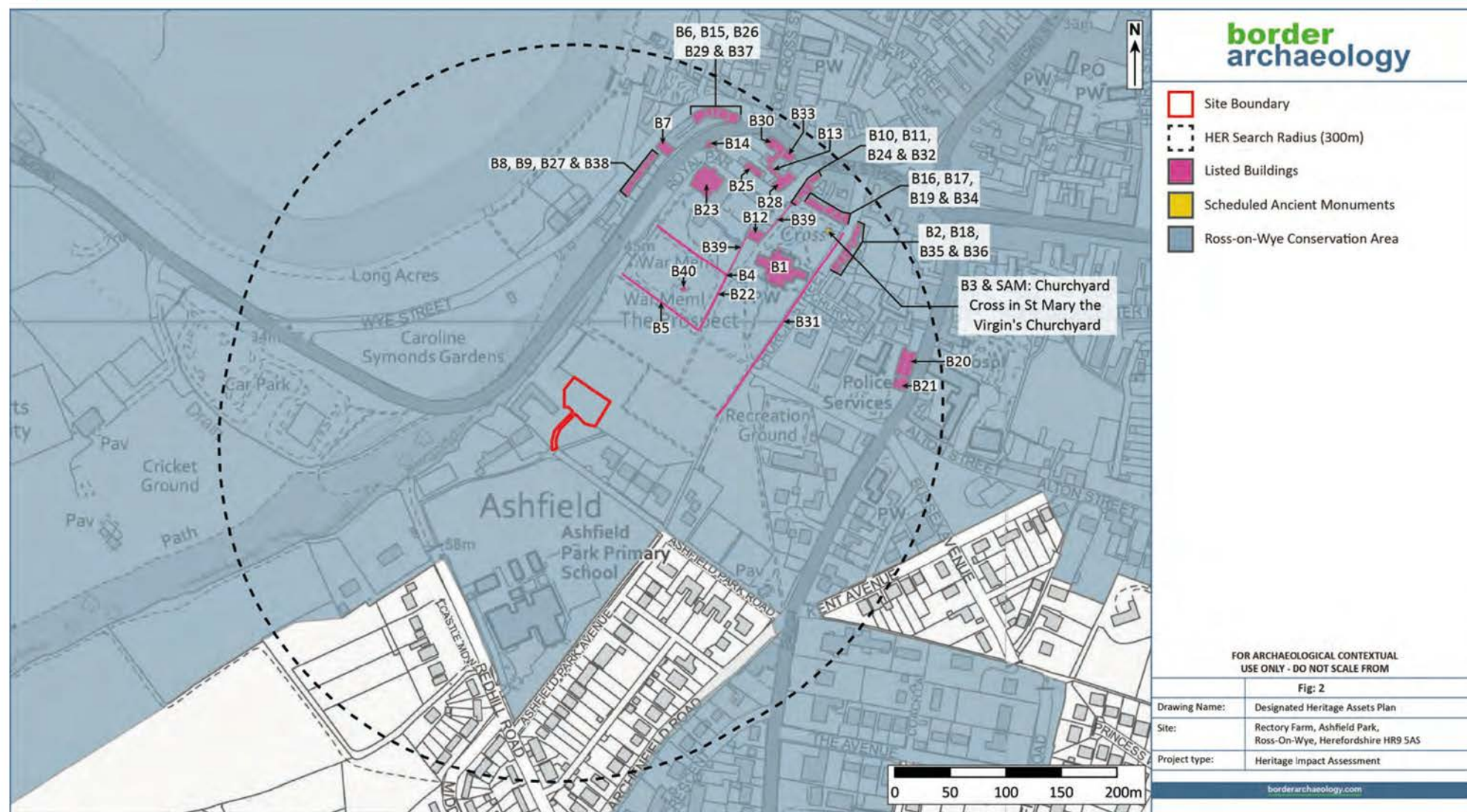
The town centre lies further to the NE and there is a pre-school, four sizeable residential homes, and two tennis courts to the E. There is a swathe of open space to the SE of the site, followed by the settlement of Ashfield, which is heavily populated with built structures. To the W and S there is more open space, with the only notable structures to the SW being the Scheduled Ancient Monuments of Wilton Bridge and Wilton Castle. The surrounding area is largely farmland bisected by the B4234 and A40 which runs around the NE and NW of the area.

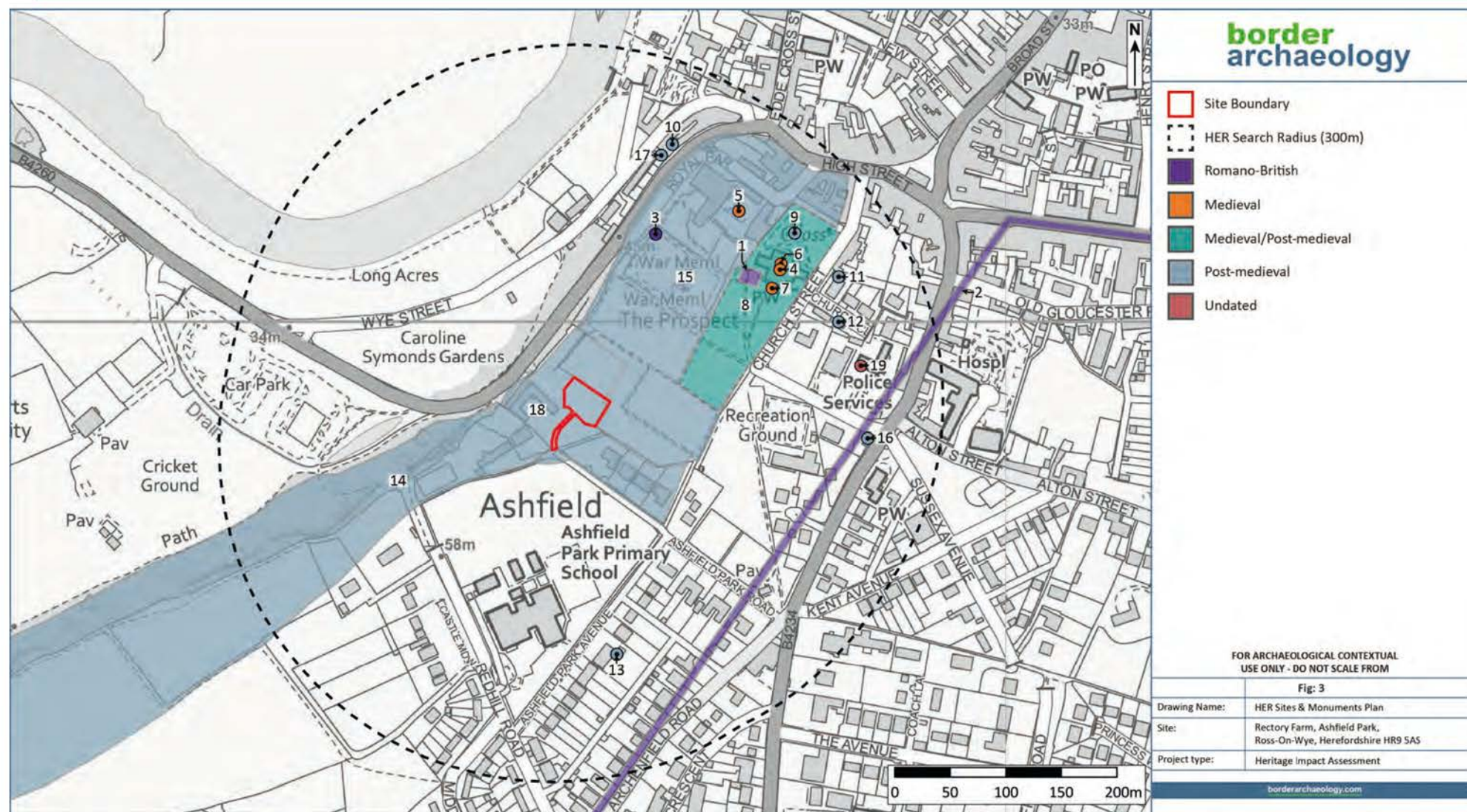
3.1 Soils & Geology

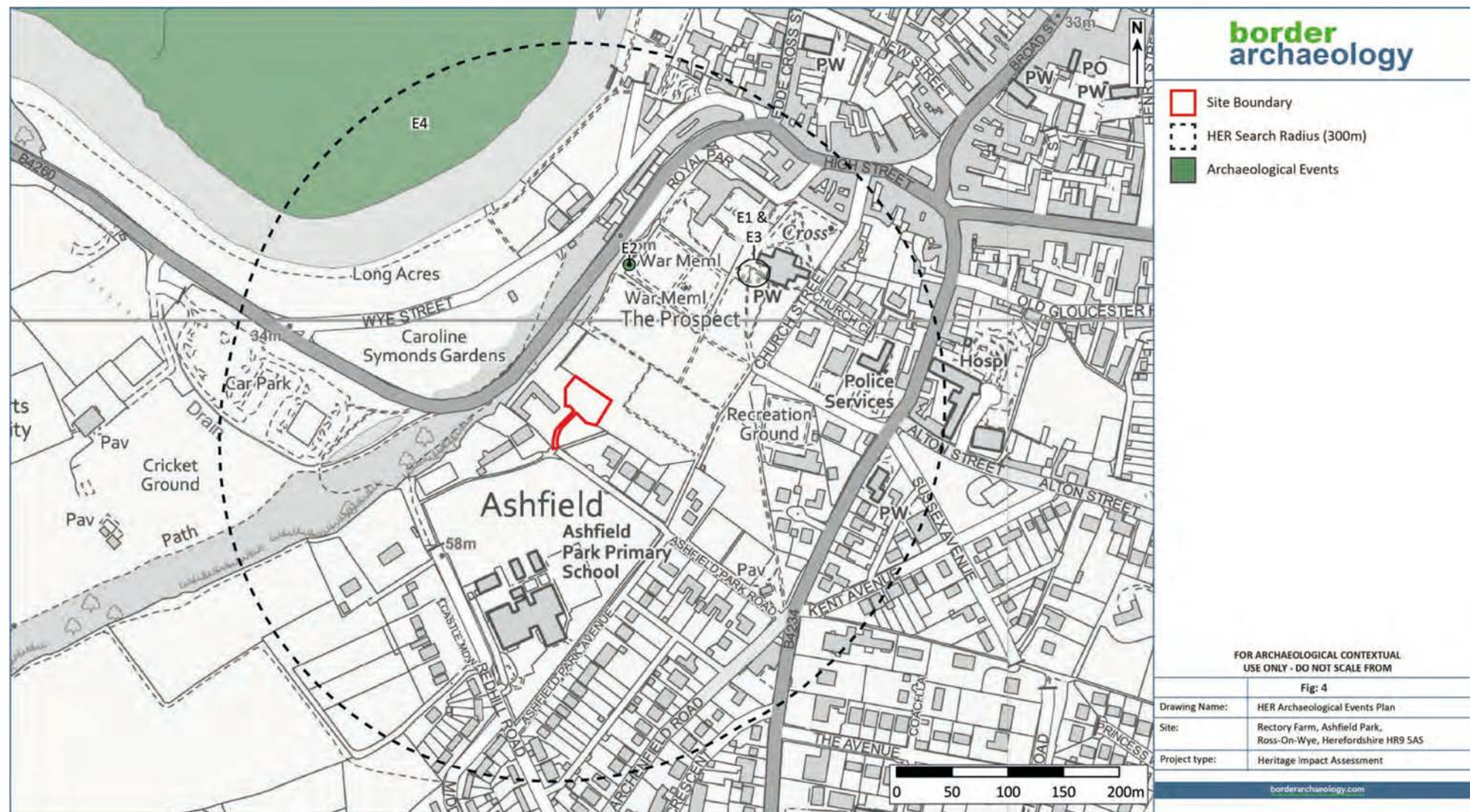
The British Geological Survey (BGS) records the solid geology in the vicinity of the site as consisting of Brownstones Formation Sandstone (micaceous), a sedimentary bedrock formed between 419.2 and 393.3 million years ago during the Devonian period. It does not record the overlying geology of the site itself, but records that of the nearby Wilton as Alluvium clay, silt, sand and gravel, a sedimentary superficial deposit formed between 11.8 thousand years ago and the present during the Quaternary period.

There are no borehole data available within c.300m of the site.









4 Methodology

This Heritage Assessment identifies and describes those designated and undesignated heritage assets that may be affected by the proposed development and assesses their significance, followed by a description of the application proposals and an assessment of their potential impact on these heritage assets, in order to reach an overall assessment of the significance of impact upon the built heritage resource in the vicinity of the proposed development.

4.1 Legislative Framework

BA are cognisant of the following national and local planning policy guidance and legislative information relating to the status of designated and non-designated built heritage assets and the preparation of Heritage Impact Assessments. Listed Buildings are referred to as 'designated heritage assets' at national planning policy level and under the current National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) published in July 2021, the following policies are of specific relevance to the assessment of these assets.

Chapter 16 para. 194 states that: *'In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary'.*

Chapter 16 para. 195-196 state that: *'(195) Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise any conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.*

(196) Where there is evidence of deliberate neglect of, or damage to, a heritage asset, the deteriorated state of the heritage asset should not be taken into account in any decision.'

With regard to non-designated heritage assets, the following sections in the NPPF are of relevance. Chapter 16 para. 203 states that *'the effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset'.*

Chapter 16 para. 204 states that *'local planning authorities should not permit the loss of the whole or part of a heritage asset without taking all reasonable steps to ensure the new development will proceed after the loss has occurred'.*

BA is also fully cognisant of local planning policies regarding the conservation of heritage assets contained in the Ross-On-Wye Town Council *Neighbourhood Development Plan: 2019-2031* (adopted February 2020), especially policies EN1, EN4, and EN7, and section 4.9.

4.2 Criteria

This Heritage Assessment is informed by relevant Historic England guidance for assessing impact on heritage assets, their significance and respective settings, namely, *Conservation Principles Policies and Guidance for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment* (Historic England 2015), *The Setting of Heritage Assets: Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning 3 - Second Edition* (Historic England 2017a), *Understanding Place: Historic Area Assessments: Principles and Practice* (Historic England 2017b) and *Statements of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets Historic England Advice Note 12* (Historic England 2019).

It also acknowledges local and regional planning policy guidance regarding the conservation of heritage assets contained in the Ross-On-Wye Town Council *Neighbourhood Development Plan: 2019-2031* (adopted February 2020), especially policies EN1, EN4, and EN7, and section 4.9.

‘Setting’ is herein defined as “the surroundings in which [the asset] is experienced”. It is acknowledged that these surroundings may evolve and that elements of a setting may 1) make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, 2) affect the ability to appreciate that significance or 3) be neutral (Historic England 2017a).

In more detail, the assessment process can be described as comprising the following elements:

1/ Identification of the Heritage Assets and their Associated Settings

Baseline information regarding the heritage assets in the vicinity of the proposed development was obtained from the Herefordshire Historic Environment Record, and the National Heritage List for England.

2/ Assessment of the Significance of the Heritage Assets and the extent to which their Settings respectively contribute to their Significance

The significance of the heritage assets was assessed with reference to criteria in Section 2.6 of *Understanding Place: Historic Area Assessments: Principles and Practice* (HE 2017b) which are briefly outlined below:

Rarity: Does it exemplify a pattern or type seldom or never encountered elsewhere? It is often assumed that rarity is synonymous with historical importance and therefore high value, but it is important not to exaggerate rarity by magnifying differences and downplaying common characteristics.

Representativeness: Is its character or type representative of important historical or architectural trends? Representativeness may be contrasted with rarity.

Aesthetic appeal: Does it (or could it) evoke positive feelings of worth by virtue of the quality (whether designed or artless) of its architecture, design or layout, the harmony or diversity of its forms and materials or through its attractive physical condition?

Integrity: Does it retain a sense of completeness and coherence? In a historic landscape with a high degree of integrity the functional and hierarchical relationships between different elements of the landscape remain intelligible and nuanced, greatly enhancing its evidential value and often its aesthetic appeal. Integrity is most often used as a measure of single-phase survival, but some buildings and landscapes are valuable precisely because of their multiple layers, which can have considerable evidential value.

Associations: Is it associated with important historic events or people? Can those associations be verified? If they cannot, they may still be of some significance, as many places and buildings are valued for associations that are traditional rather than historically proven.

Consideration was given as to whether the setting of the heritage assets contributes or detracts from its significance, with reference to the following attributes, namely:

- 1/ Topography;
- 2/ Presence of other heritage assets;
- 3/ Formal design;
- 4/ Historic materials and surfaces;
- 5/ Land use;
- 6/ Trees and vegetation;
- 7/ Openness, enclosure and boundaries;
- 8/ History and degree of change over time;
- 9/ Integrity;
- 10/ Surrounding townscape character;
- 11/ Views from, towards and across the asset (to including the asset itself);
- 12/ Visual prominence & role as focal point;
- 13/ Intentional inter-visibility with other historic and natural features;
- 14/ Sense of enclosure, seclusion, intimacy or privacy;
- 15/ Accessibility, permeability and patterns of movement;
- 16/ The rarity of comparable survivals of setting;
- 17/ Associative relationships between heritage assets;
- 18/ Cultural associations.

3/ Assessment of the Magnitude of Impact of the Proposed Development on Heritage Assets and their Settings

The magnitude of physical and visual impact resulting from the proposed development on the setting of the heritage assets was then assessed, supported by a photographic survey of the area from key vantage points. Consideration was given to key attributes of the proposed development in terms of:

- 1/ Location and siting, eg. proximity to asset, extent, degree to which location will physically or visually isolate the asset & position in relation to key views;
 - 2/ Form and appearance, eg. prominence/conspicuousness, competition with or distraction from the asset, scale and massing, proportions, materials, architectural style or design;
-

3/ Additional effects e.g. change to built surroundings and spaces, change to general character and tree-cover;
4/ Permanence.

The assessment of magnitude of impact was based on the following criteria:

High: The development will result in substantial changes to key historic building elements, such that the resource is totally altered. The development will result in comprehensive changes to the setting of the heritage asset.

Moderate: The development will result in changes to many key building elements, such that the resource is significantly modified. The development will result in changes to the setting of an historic building, such that it is significantly modified.

Minor: The development will result in changes to key historic building elements, such that the asset is slightly different. The development will result in changes to the setting of an historic building, such that it is noticeably changed.

Negligible: The development will result in very slight changes to key historic building elements that hardly affect it. The development will result in very slight changes to the setting of an historic building.

No change: There is no discernible impact upon historic fabric or to the setting of the Heritage Asset as a result of the development.

4/ Overall Assessment of the Significance of Impact on the Heritage Assets

A conclusion is then drawn integrating both the assessment of the significance of the heritage assets and their associated settings and the magnitude of impact of the proposals to produce an overall assessment of the implications of the development proposals.

Table 1: Overall Significance of impact on heritage assets					
<u>Magnitude of impact.</u>	<u>Importance of heritage asset.</u>				
	Very High	High	Medium	Low	Negligible
No change	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
Negligible	Slight	Slight	Neutral/Slight	Neutral/Slight	Neutral
Minor	Moderate/Large	Moderate/Slight	Slight	Neutral/Slight	Neutral/Slight
Moderate	Large/Very Large	Moderate/Large	Moderate	Slight	Neutral/Slight
Major	Very Large	Large/Very Large	Moderate/Large	Slight/Moderate	Slight

4.3 Consultation of Records Relating to Archaeological & Built Heritage Assets

In order to fully appreciate the significance of the heritage assets and their respective settings that may be affected by the proposed development, information was collected on designated and undesignated built heritage assets within a 300m study area of the proposed development. The research carried out for the Heritage Impact Assessment consisted of the following elements:

- Consultation of the Herefordshire Historic Environment Record (HER). The HER includes details of the historical and archaeological background of the site. A total of 19 archaeological monuments, four events and 41 built heritage assets (comprising 40 listed buildings and one Scheduled Ancient Monument) were identified within a 300m radius of the site (*figs. 2-4; Tables 2-4*);
- Historic England – information on statutory designations including scheduled monuments, registered parks and gardens and Listed Buildings along with identified Heritage at Risk;
- Online collections of documentary records, census returns, trade directories and historic maps and photographs were consulted using records held by the National Archives and the British Library;
- Photographs of the site were taken on January 13th 2023 to assess the potential impact of the proposed development on designated and undesignated heritage assets in the vicinity and their respective settings.

Following a site visit, it was determined that the only designated or undesignated heritage assets which may be affected by the proposed development are as follows:

- 1/ Church of St Mary the Virgin (all relevant related listings);
- 2/ The Prospect (all relevant related listings);
- 3/ Royal Hotel;
- 4/ Palace Pound;
- 5/ Wilton Bridge (all related listings);
- 6/ Wilton Castle (all related listings);
- 7/ Ross-on-Wye Conservation Area.

The following section will thus describe the abovementioned heritage assets and their respective settings, followed by an assessment of their relative importance in heritage terms.

#	MonUID	Name	Date	NGR
1	MHE4989	Possible RB Occupation (RB Pottery), St Mary's Churchyard	Romano-British	SO 5977 2404
2	MHE10467	Route of Roman Road, Ariconium-Monmouth	Romano-British	SO 5870 1960
3	MHE23227	Excavated RB Remains, The Prospect Gardens	Romano-British	SO 5960 2400
4	MHE1274	Church of St Mary	Medieval	SO 5979 2404
5	MHE1292	Site of Bishops Palace, Royal Hotel/The Prospect Gardens	Medieval	SO 5976 2410
6	MHE11017	C11 Church Precinct	Medieval	SO 5979 2405

#	MonUID	Name	Date	NGR
7	MHE11024	C13 Stone Coffin & C13/C14 Coffin Lids	Medieval	SO 5978 2403
8	MHE11019	Churchyard Cemetery, St. Mary's	Med./PM	SO 5977 2401
9	MHE10995	Plague Pit, St. Mary's Churchyard	Post-med.	SO 5981 2407
10	MHE11004	School House, Weton Road	Post-med.	SO 5969 2416
11	MHE10149	Tenement Plots to the E of Church Street	Post-med.	SO 5984 2403
12	MHE10155	Open Space, Church Street	Post-med.	SO 5984 2399
13	MHE7493	Gun Flint, Ashmead	Post-med.	SO 5964 2369
14	MHE16369	John Kyrle's Walk Landscape Park	Post-med.	SO 5906 2359
15	MHE16382	The Prospect	Post-med.	SO 5973 2401
16	MHE16013	Toll House, The Toll Cottage on B4228	Post-med.	SO 5987 2389
17	MHE16137	The Ross & Archenfield Royal Victoria British School	Post-med.	SO 5969 2414
18	MHE20847	Rectory Farm	Post-med.	SO 5958 2391
19	MHE7716	Negative Evidence, Ross-on-Wye Police Station	Undated	SO 5987 2396

Table 2: Gazetteer of Archaeological Monuments within a 300m radius of the site, based on consultation of the Herefordshire Historic Environment Record.

#	EvUID	Name	Date	NGR
E1	EHE11793	Eval.: St Mary's Church	1991	SO 5977 2404
E2	EHE2015	WB & Excavation: The Prospect Gardens	2009	SO 5965 2404
E3	EHE11784	Eval.: St Mary's Church	2009	SO 5976 2403
E4	EHE80020	DBA: Bridstow Parish Audit	2012	SO 5790 2471

Table 3: Gazetteer of Archaeological Events within a 300m radius of the site, based on consultation of the Herefordshire Historic Environment Record.

#	NationalRef	Name	Grade	NGR
B1	1098720	Church of St Mary the Virgin	I	SO 5979 2404
B2	1098698	Rudhall Almshouses	II*	SO 5986 2407
B3	1098721	Cross in Churchyard of St Mary the Virgin	II*	SO 5984 2408
B4	1098722	Gate Piers in E Wall of The Prospect	II*	SO 5974 2403
B5	1349264	Gate in S Wall of The Prospect	II*	SO 5968 2401
B6	1098650	2 & 3 Wye Street	II	SO 5974 2418
B7	1098651	Masonic Hall	II	SO 5969 2415
B8	1098652	11 Wye Street	II	SO 5968 2414
B9	1098653	14 Wye Street	II	SO 5966 2412
B10	1098687	1 St Marys Street	II	SO 5982 2412
B11	1098688	4 St Mary's Street	II	SO 5981 2411
B12	1098689	Palace Pound	II	SO 5977 2407
B13	1098690	Palace Pound Cottage	II	SO 5978 2413
B14	1098691	Saddle Tower (Gazebo) & Wall Adjoining	II	SO 5973 2415

#	NationalRef	Name	Grade	NGR
B15	1098692	Former Castle Vaults	II	SO 5975 2418
B16	1098696	House Occupied as Offices, Messers Okell & Okell, Solicitors	II	SO 5984 2409
B17	1098697	St Mary's Cottage	II	SO 5984 2410
B18	1098699	13 Church Street	II	SO 5985 2405
B19	1098700	16 Church Street	II	SO 5985 2409
B20	1098701	Webb's Almshouses	II	SO 5991 2396
B21	1098703	Clairville House	II	SO 5990 2394
B22	1098723	Wall Around The Prospect	II	SO 5970 2403
B23	1098724	Royal Hotel	II	SO 5973 2412
B24	1179593	2 St Mary's Street	II	SO 5982 2412
B25	1179604	Palace Close	II	SO 5977 2413
B26	1179615	6 & 7 Wye Street	II	SO 5972 2418
B27	1179620	12 Wye Street	II	SO 5967 2414
B28	1301877	6 & 7 St Mary's Street	II	SO 5980 2412
B29	1301886	4 Wye Street	II	SO 5973 2418
B30	1301907	53 & 54 High Street	II	SO 5979 2415
B31	1349263	Churchyard Wall of St Mary the Virgin	II	SO 5979 2399
B32	1349265	Gate Piers at NW End of Church Row	II	SO 5981 2410
B33	1349282	51 & 52 High Street	II	SO 5980 2414
B34	1349290	St Mary's Hall	II	SO 5982 2410
B35	1349291	10-12 Church Street	II	SO 5985 2406
B36	1349292	Linden House	II	SO 5984 2405
B37	1349306	5 Wye Street	II	SO 5973 2418
B38	1349307	13 Wye Street	II	SO 5966 2413
B39	1349310	Churchyard Wall Between NW End of Church Row & The Prospect	II	SO 5977 2407
B40	1439203	Ross District War Memorial	II	SO 5971 2402

Table 4: Gazetteer of Designated Heritage Assets within a 300m radius of the site, based on consultation of the Herefordshire Historic Environment Record.

5 Heritage Assessment

5.1 Summary Archaeological and Historical Background

This summary archaeological and historical background is based primarily on consultation of the Herefordshire Historic Environment Record, supplemented by historic mapping (Ordnance Survey) and other readily available published sources of historical information.

There is some, limited, evidence of prehistoric activity in the vicinity of the site, with some features and flints found in the area of The Prospect that may date to this period (HER 52331).

There is significant evidence for Romano-British activity near the site, with 2-3 phases of occupation being evidenced by excavations at The Prospect (HER 52331). These excavations principally uncovered at least two built structures of Romano-British/Saxon date, one built later than the other, with coins indicating an initial occupation period around the 1st century AD, spanning into the early 2nd century AD. The first of these built structures had burnt timber slats, and there were also multiple horse skeletons and metal horse fittings found during excavations, which may indicate that the site was ritually abandoned in the 2nd century, with the excavation area turning up few mid-2nd to 3rd century finds. The occupation of this period was perhaps military in nature. The second structure comprised of a square structure with a circular inner chamber, and a central feature, presumably a posthole, within said chamber. This was dated to around the 3rd/4th century, and is speculated to have been a temple site or part of a villa complex (Border Archaeology, 2011). There were also Romano-British pottery sherds found in the churchyard of St. Mary's, alongside a human skeleton that may date to this period (HER 11793), and the identified site of the Roman Road from Ariconium towards Monmouth is in the vicinity (HER 21384).

There is also significant evidence of medieval activity near the site, including documentary records, extant buildings, and archaeological finds. The Domesday Book records the manor of Ross belonging to the Canons of Hereford and comprised at least one village settlement of 28 households, as well as 25 plough lands, 16 acres of meadow, a mill and possibly a church. There is evidence of an 11th century church precinct that may be that of the priest mentioned in Domesday, with the boundaries of this precinct including the land of St. Mary's, Bishop's Palace and the Rectory, and potentially defining the settlement patterns of the area (HER 19931).

Ross was granted the right to hold weekly markets by King Stephen in c.1138 (List and Index Society, Kew, 2005) and the medieval palace of the Bishops of Hereford is first being documented around 1166. Archaeological findings of wall foundations on The Prospect suggest the Bishop's Palace may have been located there (HER 52331), although earlier records and findings suggested a location further to the N (HER 4060, 1098689, 1098724). The area continued to grow into the 13th century and the right to hold a three-day fair granted in 1241, the town gaining borough status in c.1285 when it supported 96 burgesses and nine other tenants, including a fuller and a goldsmith. In the neighbouring settlement of Wilton to the N of the river, Wilton Castle was built around this time (late 13th century) (HER 1005523).

In the 14th century, Ross suffered a decline, possibly due to the plague and instability caused by cross-border raiding, the palace of the Bishops of Hereford being abandoned in the middle of the century. The town retains elements of the medieval street system, with burgage plots spreading out from an initial, probably 12th century, occupation focus around the market place.

The extant buildings of this period have largely undergone minor or more substantial later additions or changes, and include the 14th century Palace Pound, said to have been a part of the Bishops' Palace but most of building being 17th century (HER 153579), Rudhall Almshouse (a 14th century foundations, rebuilt in 1575) (HER 153500), a 14th century stone cross in the churchyard of St. Mary, which has later alterations, the base inscription referring to 1637 plague burials (HER 153456), and the 12th century Church of St. Mary itself, rebuilt in 13th century and subject to further alterations and additions the 14th to 19th centuries (HER 153454).

The evidence for post-medieval occupation of the area is also abundant. The earliest extant buildings and features are the two almshouses, Rudhall and Webbe's (c.1575 and c.1613, respectively) (HER 153579 and 153506) and the churchyard cross (HER 153456) to the S of the Chancel the base of which bears the inscription *Plague. Ano Dom 1637. Burials 315. Libera nos Domine* recording the interment of 315 plague victims. Wilton Bridge was also built around this period, dating to c.1597 (HER 1001769), with a house being built on the site of Wilton Castle in the 16th century also (HER 1005523).

The majority of the extant buildings and features date from the 18th to the early 19th century, including the Royal Hotel of c.1837 (HER 153461), the walls and gates of The Prospect (1700) (HER 153458, 153460, 153457 and 31254), and the 19th century Saddle Tower (HER 153582). It was also around this time that Ross became associated with the emergent Picturesque Movement forming part of the 'Wye Tour', a more modest version of the European Grand Tour, which could be enjoyed by the middle class.

Christopher Saxton's 1577 Map of Hereford indicates the presence of Wilton Castle NW of the River Wye, what is likely the earlier ford across the river (as presently marked by a 14th century wayside cross) and Rudhall in the SE. The large built structure on the E side of the river, opposite Wilton Castle, is not labelled but seems likely to represent either the abandoned Bishop's Palace or the Church of St. Mary the Virgin. The map is not sufficiently detailed to indicate anything further about the lands occupation but it does depict the characteristic rise of the landscape in the S which is reflected in the name *Ross(e)* which derives from the Welsh or Celtic for 'promontory'.

The 1815 Ordnance Survey Drawing of Hereford (*fig. 5*) indicates a concentration of settlement around the area of St. Mary's Church and the market, with a street plan similar to that of the present. Rectory Farm is not indicated on this map, although its pre-19th century date suggests this may be because the land was not included in the survey.

The 1843 tithe map (*fig. 6*) indicates the footprint of Rectory Farm as two rectangular buildings, creating a disconnected L-shape, and notes the land as Glebe Land, occupied by Daniel Dew.

The 1887 Ordnance Survey 6-inch map (*fig. 7*) indicates the footprint of Rectory Farm as an L-shaped building, with several smaller associated buildings, not dissimilar to its present plan. No evidence of occupation is shown on the

proposed development site but there is a built structure to the S of Rectory Farm, associated with the farm and near the site, which is no longer extant but appears on all subsequent available mapping. The land immediately surrounding the site is otherwise divided into fields. The Church of St. Mary is identified to the NE, with an associated graveyard occupying the land immediately to the S. A concentration of built structures to the N and NE of St. Mary's includes the hotel to the immediate N and the few buildings to S, W, or SE include Rectory Farm and a scatter of hostelrys and dwelling in the Ashfield area, the majority of land being fields. Wilton Bridge and Wilton Castle and are again identified crossing and to the NW of the River Wye, respectively, and a moat is indicated in association with the castle.

The 1905 Ordnance Survey 6-inch map (*fig. 8*) shows more buildings to the S and E of the proposed site, including two structures at the S end of Ashfield Park Road (on the SW side of the road). The immediate area and surroundings of the site remain unchanged, however, largely comprising field enclosures, with the exception of Rectory Farm.

The 1929 Ordnance Survey 25-inch map (*fig. 9*) again shows no change affecting the site itself and the surrounding area is little changed. The Prospect Gardens is shown to the N, and a war memorial is indicated in the SW corner, while Webbe's Almshouse are labelled to the immediate SE of the Church of St. Mary. There is also an additional building now seen to the immediate SW of Rectory Farm and slightly more dense development in the Ashfield area, but otherwise and use is unchanged.

The 1938 Ordnance Survey 25-inch map (*fig. 10*) shows no change to the site itself and very little to the surrounding area. The S end of Ashfield Park Road now has several, very small, built structures to its NE side. Otherwise, there is no change. The 1968 Ordnance Survey 1-10,000 (*fig. 11*) shows no change to the site itself, and little to no change to the immediate surrounding area.

5.2 Description of Heritage Assets

This section of the Heritage Assessment comprises an identification and description of the listed and locally listed buildings in the vicinity of the proposed development and an assessment of their significance in heritage terms. The assessment of significance is based on criteria for the assessment of heritage assets contained in *Conservation Principles Policies and Guidance for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment* (Historic England 2015), which considers their significance in terms of their evidential, historical, aesthetic and communal values.

Evidential value derives from the potential of a place to yield evidence about past human activity, which tends to be to be diminished in proportion to the extent of its removal or replacement.

Historical value derives from the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present and tends to be either illustrative or associative.

Aesthetic value may be said to be derived from the ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place, which can be the result of formal design or gradual, organic changes over time.

Communal value is derived from the meanings of a place for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience or memory. Communal values are closely bound up with historical (particularly associative) and aesthetic values but tend to have additional and specific aspects.

A total of 42 designated built heritage assets (including the Ross-on-Wye Conservation Area) were identified within a 300m radius of the proposed development, based on consultation of the Herefordshire HER and the National Heritage List for England. Of these, eight designated heritage assets were determined to be potentially affected by the proposed development, and a further five designated heritage assets outside this radius were considered on the basis of their lower elevation relative to that of the proposed site. These are described below, and comprise of 11 listed buildings/structures, as well as two Scheduled Ancient Monuments and the Ross-on-Wye Conservation Areas (Table /).

The following descriptions of designated and non-designated heritage assets are primarily based on the listings contained in the National Heritage List and the Herefordshire HER.

5.2.1 Church of St Mary the Virgin – Grade I (List entry no. 1098720)

The Church of St Mary the Virgin (*Plate 1*) is a Grade I listed building built in the 12th century and subsequently rebuilt in the 13th century with alterations and additions made between the 14th and 19th centuries. The building is largely constructed of local sandstone and ashlar, with slate roof tiles, and the presence of tufa in the walls indicates probable reuse of 12th century materials. The Chancel, Nave and North and South Aisle were constructed in the 13th century and the early 14th century saw the addition of a three-stage West Tower, with its a stone spire, and two-storey South Porch with two-centred outer archway of two continuous orders with a moulded label. The recessed spire was rebuilt by Thomas or Nathaniel Wilkinson in 1721, their work including much of the top stage and, according to Pevsner (2012, 569), ‘oversized pinnacles’. The North Porch has a two-centred outer archway of two continuous moulded orders with trefoiled ogee light above is a late 14th century addition, the Chancel being extended E around the same time.

Although its precise extent is not known, it would appear that the medieval churchyard was possibly larger than the post-medieval churchyard, as defined by the tithe map, extending E as far as Copse Cross with this eastern part being separated off for development by the 17th century although the land remained largely in church ownership until the 19th century (Buteux 1995).

The Markye Chapel is of early 16th century date and was refitted in 1895 by A. H. Pearson. Restoration in the latter half of the 19th century included the installation of the organ chamber while the reredos was installed in 1874 and the pews and floor tiles in the Nave and Aisle belong to the restoration of 1861-2 by J. C. Buckler of Oxford, the tiles having been produced by the local firm of Godwin & Co. The church possesses mainly two to three light windows, with these tending to be modern, but for 13th-15th century splays, rear-arches, internal labels with head-stops, and moulded jambs. There are exceptions to this tendency, which adds value to the asset.

The listing description reads as follows:

A fine church with nave, North and South aisles square tower with pinnacles at corners and graceful spire. Local red sandstone with ashlar dressings. Some C12 material re-used. Church was rebuilt in C13 and dedicated in 1316. Heavily restored in 1878. Window tracery mainly C19. Nave, part of chancel, North and South aisles are C13. Tower, spire, 2-storey South porch North porch, part of chancel and sanctuary are C14. Also roof of South aisle are C15. East window has C15 glass. Many fine C16 and C17 monuments to the Rudhall family in alabaster; other good monuments. C17 Communion rails; left C17 or East C18 font; left C17 gates of scrolled ironwork in North porch. C13 coffin and lid. Inside are the dead trunks of some elm suckers that were once green in the church.

An Inventory of the Historical Monuments in Herefordshire (Crawford and Balcarres 1932), states the church itself holds 'no great architectural interest', the internal 16th and 17th century monuments and fittings and the 15th century glass being considered the features of note, although conversely, Pevsner (2012, 569) describes St Mary's as 'a very interesting town church, with an impressive early 14th century tower, of Tinter sandstone'.

Among the monuments noted by Pevsner include memorials to the prominent Rudhall family of Brampton Abbots, some 2km N of Ross-on-Wye, the earliest being the alabaster chest tomb of the, William Rudhale or Rudhall, attorney general to Henry VIII, who died in 1530, and his wife Anne. A second altar tomb singled out for comment is the 'sumptuous tomb-chest with black marble top' of John Rudhall MP, died 1636, and his wife Mary and a statue in Roman armour of Colonel William Rudhall, a cavalier in the Royalist army and last of the family's male line, who died in 1651. Other notable figures commemorated include local benefactor John Kyrle, the Man of Ross, who has a marble memorial by Marsh of Bristol an Ross, erected in 1776 in the Chancel comprising a broken scrolly pediment with urns and an obelisk above with portrait head in oval medallion with two Virtues. The monument commemorates the important historic association of Kyrle with the improvement of the town.

5.2.2 Churchyard Wall of St Mary the Virgin – Grade II (List entry no. 1349263)

The National Heritage List description is as follows (Plate 7):

1. 1560 Churchyard Wall of St Mary the Virgin...
2. Low stone rubble wall around graveyard. Stone coping.

5.2.2.1 Churchyard Wall between North West End of Church Row and The Prospect – Grade II. (List entry no. 1349310)

The National Heritage List description is as follows (Plate 8):

Wall. Probably C18. Coursed sand stone rubble. Stone coping. Begins at NW end of Church Row as a high partly retaining wall, borders the churchyard and then separates it from the garden of the Royal Hotel (q.v.). At this point it is approximately 2m high. The wall terminates at the gate piers in east wall of the Prospect (q.v.). Included for group value only.

5.2.3 The Prospect

The Prospect was established on the clifftop as a public amenity in 1698-70 by local philanthropist John Kyrle, the Man of Ross', who obtained a lease from Lord Weymouh in 1696 with the provision that he maintain the three towers which were extant in good repair (Pevsner & Brooks 2012, 575). In 1705-6, Kyrle had a water engine installed to pump water from the river up to the Prospect to create a fountain and reservoir. However, the land was turned over to livestock pasture in the early 18th century and the original layout lost, although it resumed its intended purpose with the influx of tourists inspired by the Picturesque movement of the later 18th century and Wye Valley tour. Decline once again set in in the early 19th century before the gardens came under the ownership of John Barret, who in the 1830s established them in their present form, the N part becoming the private garden of the Royal Hotel while the remainder is now in the care of Ross Town Council.

It may be noted that Kyrle was of some renown as a philanthropist and his life was celebrated by Alexander Pope in one of his Moral Essays, entitled *Of the use of riches* which was published in 1734, and also by Samuel Taylor Coleridge in a poem of 1794.

Of the four listed structures associated with The Prospect, three relate to walls and gates and one to a memorial within the grounds

5.2.3.1 Gate in the South Wall of The Prospect – Grade II* (List entry no. 1349264)

The gateway marks a point on the John Kyrle Circular Walk, which runs SW towards Ashfield, and comprises Corinthian pilasters, carved foliage frieze and pediment. On the N side of the lintel is inscribed date '1700' and on the S an intertwined cipher of the initials 'J K' and 'C R'.

The National Heritage List description is as follows (*Plate 10*):

Plain square-headed doorway with the date 1700 on the lintel, flanked on the inner side by Corinthian pilasters supporting an entablature and pediment with cartouche and the arms of Kyrle on the inner side. On the outer side are the letters J K and C R interlaced on the tympanum.

5.2.3.2 Gate Piers in East Wall of The Prospect – Grade II* (List entry no. 1098722)

The large square gate piers with side scrolls support a pair of wrought iron gates hung in 2000 and are surmounted by tall vases with carved volutes on their outer sides (Brooks & Pevsner 2012, 576).

The National Heritage List description is as follows (*Plate 8*):

Erected at the expense of John Kyrle, the Man of Ross. 2 square piers, with moulded bases and cappings each with large vase supporting a pine apple. Carved upright voluted brackets support the piers on the outer side and stand on an enclosing wall.

5.2.3.3 Wall Around the Prospect – Grade II (List entry no. 1098723)

A rubble masonry wall of roughly seven courses with flat coping stone above and evidence of later repairs but in good condition.

The National Heritage List description is as follows (*Plate 9*):

Low stone rubble wall. Coping.

5.2.4 Royal Hotel – Grade II (List entry no. 1098724)

The Royal Hotel (*Plates 12 & 13*) is a Grade II listed building erected in 1836-7 by John Plowman Jnr of Oxford. It is built on the documented site of the Bishop's Palace, but archaeological evidence has suggested the Bishop's Palace may actually have been further to the W. It is a large three-storey building, with stucco render, three diagonal set chimneystacks, gabled wings and variably scalloped bargeboards and is 'typical of the Picturesque-minded style of that time' (Brooks & Pevsner 2012, 576). On all sides of the building, it seems windows on the outer edge of the first floor have a tiled gable wings with scalloped bargeboards overhanging, with these being sash windows atop corbels. The windows on the outer edge of the ground floor have hipped overhangs with a scalloped bargeboard, with similar running across the centre of the N face of the building. Across the centre of the W face of the building there is, at ground floor level, an overhanging gabled porch with six columns supporting, above which there is an iron railed balcony with the royal coat of arms in the centre. Extensions and outbuildings for a courtyard to the E, and the building as a whole is elevated as such that it sits atop the surrounding landscape, with only Saddle Tower interrupting the views to the N.

The National Heritage List description is as follows:

1837. On site of old Bishop's Palace A large stucco building with gabled wings and barge boards. 3 storeys. Chimneys set diagonally. Sash windows on corbels. Balcony with iron railings. Painted white and occupies a dominating position. Extensions and outbuildings form court yard.

5.2.5 Palace Pound – Grade II (List entry no.1098689)

Palace Pound is a 17th century dwelling with stuccoed Tudor Gothic detail and four-centred doorway the basement of which represents a possible survival of the outbuildings belonging to the Bishop's Palace and is therefore of some historical significance.

The National Heritage List descriptions is as follows:

Said to have been part of the Bishop's Palace that stood on the site of the Royal Hotel. C17, 3 storeys. Stucco. Flanking 2-storeyed bays on high bases with moulded cornices. Gothic stone doorway with 4-centred arch etc. Gable to South return has heavy ornamental barge board. There are said to be 3 original 2-light windows and a blocked doorway in basement. Inside is a late C17 staircase and some fragments of C14-C16 glass. rchm 24. Nos 6 and 7. Palace pound and Palace Pound Cottage form a group.

5.2.6 Wilton Bridge

Constructed of local sandstone under an Act of Parliament in 1597, Wilton Bridge (*Plate 14*) was completed by 1600 on or near the site of a 14th century ford with six round arches and massive cutwaters. In the 18th century, the bridge carried the Hereford-Gloucester toll road and in 1914 it was strengthened. The bridge was widened in 1939 and now carries the B4260 on the western approach to Ross on Wye, with restoration undertaken in 1993.

5.2.6.1 Wilton Bridge – Scheduled Ancient Monument (List entry no. 1001769)

Wilton Bridge is listed as a Scheduled Monument but was not reviewed under the Monuments Protection Programme, and is one of the oldest designation records. As such, the details of this designation are not complete.

5.2.6.2 Wilton Bridge (That Part in Ross on Wye Urban District) – Grade I (list entry no.1349266)

The National Heritage List description is as follows:

An exceptionally fine stone bridge. In 1597 an Act was passed authorising its construction. It was completed within the next 2 years. 5 semi-circular arches each with 3 ribs. Massive cutwaters on each side carried up and splayed back from the outer angle at parapet level forming semi-hexagonal refuges. At the point where the splay dies out is a moulded string which is mitred and carried up to the angle against the spandrels of the arches and then mitred and carried across to form a label above the arches. The voussoirs of the arches are chamfered and joggled and have various masons' marks. On upstream side the bridge has been widened but now the parapet has gone and been replaced by a wooden handrail. South East approach to bridge has been rebuilt in ashlar with 2 flights of stone steps to the river bank. The sundial, formerly in one of the refuges has gone and only the base of the pedestal remains.

5.2.6.3 Wilton Bridge and Sundial (those parts Bridstow Civil Parish) – Grade I (List entry no. is: 1288736)

The National Heritage List description is as follows:

Bridge. 1597, altered 1914. Sandstone ashlar and concrete reinforcement. Six spans aligned north-west/south-east, widened to north. Segmental arches, all but the northernmost with three chamfered ribs, cut waters to each side, those to south rising with battered tops to refuges, chamfered parapet, that to north replaced by steel crash-barrier. Sundial. Early C18. Sandstone ashlar and limestone. Diagonally set in central refuge on south side. Square pedestal with moulded and fielded side panels supports bulbous fluted baluster- shaped shaft with moulded cornice above which is a square limestone pillar, bearing a gnomon to each face, topped by a ball-finial. Eroded inscription beneath north gnomon reported by RCHM as:

"Esteem they precious time Which pass so swift away Prepare thee for eternity And do not make delay"

RCHM plan has sundial positioned wrongly on north side of the bridge.

5.2.7 Wilton Castle

Wilton Castle is the earliest surviving structure in Wilton, dating to the late 13th century, which was rebuilt in 1308 for Reginald de Grey to an oblong plan with angle towers. It is built of local sandstone and there are surviving towers, although these are much reduced in height, but the S range, possibly containing the gatehouse, was replaced with a dwelling c. 1578 by the owner Charles Brydges. The site was partly destroyed in 1645 and the house, now ruinous, was reduced and altered in the 19th century with rendered brick and slate roof tiles.

5.2.7.1 Wilton Castle – Scheduled Ancient Monument (List entry no. 1005523)

Wilton Castle is listed as a Scheduled Monument but was not reviewed under the Monuments Protection Programme, and is one of the oldest designation records. As such, the details of this designation are not complete. Its.

5.2.7.2 Ruins of Wilton Castle and House attached to South – Grade I (List entry no. 1214349)

The National Heritage List description is as follows:

Castle and house, part now house. Circa 1300, partly demolished for C16 house which in turn became ruinous and was adapted into reduced house in early C19. Sandstone rubble ashlar, tufa, rendered brick and Welsh slate roofs. Roughly rectangular curtain plan oriented north-north- east/south- south-west originally with corner towers and interval tower to east, north- east and south-east towers, largely demolished, large south-west tower probably formerly gatehouse, south-east corner tower and south curtain demolished for C16 house the west end of which was adapted into C19 house. Surviving curtains and towers remain up to about 25 to 30 feet. C16 house is shell of two storeys with remains of mullioned and transomed windows. C19 part of house has rendered brick, Welsh slate roofs, brick end stacks; east elevation has two storeys, two windows, sashes with angled glazing bars, C19 panelled door to south side of crenellated projection on right-hand side, single-storey C19 extension to left with one large glazing bar sash.

5.2.8 Ross-on-Wye Conservation Area

The Ross-on-Wye Conservation Area comprises the area of Ross-on-Wye (urban area), the hamlet of Wilton, and an area of open land on the river floodplain. The special interest of the area relates to its early origins, the first recorded of which is as a manor held by the Bishops of Hereford (though the site's importance as a crossing point on the River Wye and archaeological evidence support earlier occupation/activity), as well as its ecclesiastical precinct and market place in the medieval period, economic growth in the 16th and 17th centuries, and later flourishing into a tourist spot, and desirable residential area, into the 18th century and on. The surviving structures in the town are mainly Victorian in character. Also of note is that the area and layout of the streets has changed little since the medieval period.

The Conservation Area includes four Scheduled Monuments and a total of 154 Listed Buildings (three Grade I, eight Grade II* and 143 Grade II).

5.3 Assessment of Significance

This assessment of significance is based on the criteria for the assessment of heritage assets contained in *Conservation Principles Policies and Guidance for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment* (Historic England 2015), which considers their significance in terms of their evidential, historical, aesthetic and communal values.

5.3.1 Church of St Mary the Virgin – Grade I

The Church of St Mary the Virgin may be regarded as a heritage asset of **High** significance, owing to its status as Grade I listed church which has been in use from the 13th century on. It retains a great number of its original 13th to 16th century features, with later alterations keeping within the aesthetic of the older portion of the church. While its architecture is not particularly unique, it holds vast visual appeal, and the W tower's domination of views of Ross-On-Wye make it a key element of the town's character.

5.3.2 Churchyard Wall of St Mary the Virgin – Grade II

This wall may be regarded as a heritage asset of **High** significance, owing to its status as Grade II listed structure. It is a c.16th century structure, whose importance mainly lies in its group value as an asset associated with the medieval Church of St Mary the Virgin.

5.3.3 Churchyard Wall between North West End of Church Row and The Prospect – Grade II.

The wall may be regarded as a heritage asset of **High** significance, owing to its status as Grade II listed structure. It is a c.18th century wall, whose importance mainly lies in its group value as an asset associated with the medieval church of St Mary, and demarking and separating the church land from the Royal Hotel and The Prospect.

5.3.4 Gate in the South Wall of The Prospect – Grade II*

The monument may be regarded as a heritage asset of **High** significance, owing to its Grade II* status. Its importance may be attributed to its historical association with the philanthropist John Kyrle, the date inscription of 1700 on the lintel and the Kyrle coat of arms it bears, The Prospect's relation to the town's social history, given its changing use as the town's draw fluctuated over the 18th and 19th centuries, and its general visual appeal as a gate with classical elements in early 18th century fashion.

5.3.5 Gate Piers in East Wall of The Prospect – Grade II*

These structures may be regarded as a heritage asset of **High** significance, owing to its status as Grade II* listed feature. Its importance stems from its originator, the philanthropist, 'Man of Ross', John Kyrle, The Prospect's relation to the town's social history, given its changing use as the town's draw fluctuated over the 18th and 19th centuries, and its general visual appeal, with its moulded decoration of pineapples in large vases.

5.3.5.1 Wall Around The Prospect – Grade II

This section of wall may be regarded as a heritage asset of **High** significance, owing to its status as Grade II listed structure. Its importance stems from its originator, the philanthropist, 'Man of Ross', John Kyrle, and The Prospect's

relation to the town's social history, given its changing use as the town's draw fluctuated over the 18th and 19th centuries. In addition to this, the area remains a notable area for public recreation, and the wall is a large feature that adds to the area's character.

5.3.6 Royal Hotel – Grade II

The Royal Hotel may be regarded as a heritage asset of **High** significance, owing to its status as Grade II listed building. Its elevated position and 19th century architecture, which holds many visually stimulating elements, and is a striking visual presence which makes a positive contribution to the character of the Conservation Area.

5.3.7 Palace Pound – Grade II

The house may be regarded as a heritage asset of **High** significance, owing to its status as a Grade II listed building. It is largely of 17th century origin but contains fragmentary glass elements of around 14th century date and it is thought the basement may represent part of an outbuilding associated with the Bishop's Palace.

5.3.8 Wilton Bridge – Scheduled Monument

Wilton Bridge may be regarded as a heritage asset of **High** significance, owing to its status as scheduled monument. Built in the late 16th century (with 20th century alterations), this feature has functioned, as an earlier ford did before it, as a key crossing point on the River Wye for over 400 years, likely allowing the surrounding area to grow into the town it is today. It is a key visual element in the landscape of the Ross-On-Wye and Wilton area, and an 18th century sundial with an inscription adds to the minutiae of its appeal and importance.

5.3.9 Wilton Bridge (That Part In Ross On Wye Urban District) – Grade I

This listing relates to the same asset as above and shares its assessment of significance.

5.3.10 Wilton Bridge and Sundial (those parts Bridstow Civil Parish) – Grade I

This listing relates to the same asset as above and shares its assessment of significance.

5.3.11 Wilton Castle – Scheduled Ancient Monument

Wilton Castle may be regarded as a heritage asset of **High** significance, owing to its status as scheduled monument. The ruins of the castle itself date to the 13th century, demonstrating the area's importance during this period, while the re-use of the site for a house in the 16th century, and alteration of this in the 19th century, indicate the continued appeal and changing prosperity of the area over hundreds of years. The sand stone ruins stand as a vast visual element that intrigues and catches the eye, while the surviving 19th century redbrick structure stands within, and yet in contrast to, these ruins, making it a rather unique combination of appealing visual elements.

5.3.12 Ruins of Wilton Castle and House Attached to South – Grade I

This listing relates to the same asset as above and shares its assessment of significance.

5.3.13 Ross-on-Wye Conservation Area

The Ross-on-Wye Conservation Area may be regarded as a heritage asset of **High** significance. It contains at least four Scheduled Monuments and three Grade I, eight Grade II* and 143 Grade II Listed Buildings and preserves much of the medieval street pattern converging on the marketplace which formed the axis of the planned borough and which remained largely intact when new streets were added after c. 1800. A considerable number of, largely Victorian, extant buildings exert a significant influence on the town's present character. This palimpsest of components both archaeological and extant documents the development of the area from prehistory to the present and underpins the significance of the Conservation Area.

6 Description of Proposals & Magnitude of Impact

6.1 Summary Description of Proposals

The following summary description of the development is based on a proposed site plan supplied by the client in December 2022. Subsequent publication of revised proposals and specifications for the proposed development, together with updated plans and elevation drawings, may necessitate revisions to this report and the conclusions reached.

The proposed works involve the following:

- 1/ Construction of a two-storey domestic accommodation;
- 2/ Associated driveway and access.

6.2 Assessment of Magnitude of Impact

6.2.1 Church of St Mary the Virgin – Grade I

It is considered that the impact of the proposed works on the fabric and setting of The Church of St Mary the Virgin can be assessed as **Negligible to Minor**. This reflects the fact that views to and from this asset and the proposed site are heavily screened by the mature trees that contribute markedly to the character of the church and the land to the SW.

The walls associated with the 20th century graveyard expansion have direct interaction with the site but these, in combination with the tree-cover, also inhibit any intervisibility between the graveyard itself and the proposed development. Additionally, given the proximity of buildings broadly similar in form to the design proposal, and taking into account the minor loss of green space entailed, the proposed development is unlikely to have a significant impact on the setting of the asset.



Plate 1: View looking SW, towards the Church of St. Mary and the proposed site.



Plate 2: View looking SW, towards the proposed site from the SE side of the Church of St. Mary.

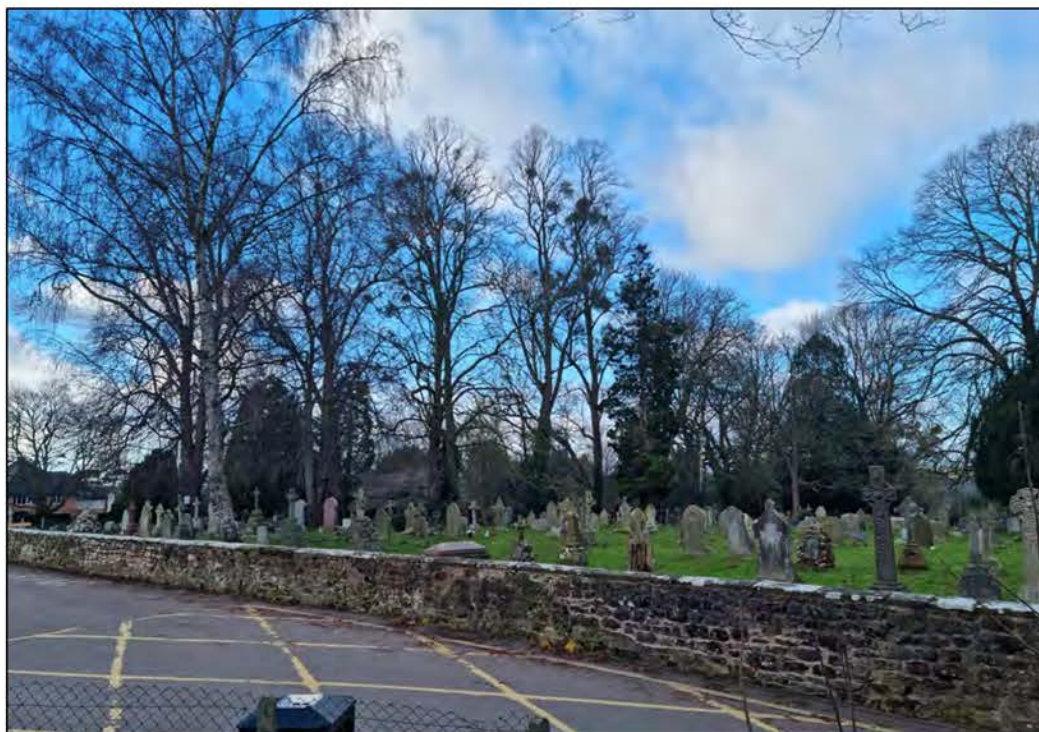


Plate 3: View looking SW, towards the proposed site, across graveyards and from the N end of Church Street.



Plate 4: View looking W, towards the proposed site and across graveyards.



Plate 5: View looking N, from the proposed site towards graveyards associated with the Church of St. Mary and The Prospect.



Plate 6: View looking NE, from the proposed site and towards the Church of St. Mary (and associated graveyards).

6.2.1.1 Churchyard Wall of St Mary the Virgin – Grade II

It is considered that the impact of the proposed works on the fabric and setting of the wall can be assessed as **No Change**. This reflects the fact that views to and from this asset and the proposed site are heavily, if not entirely, screened by the existing treeline and by intervening space principally comprising mature trees and graveyard furniture and pathways.



Plate 7: View looking SW, towards the churchyard wall, the Church of St. Mary, and the proposed site.

6.2.1.2 Churchyard Wall between North West End of Church Row and The Prospect – Grade II.

It is considered that the impact of the proposed works on the fabric and setting of the wall can be assessed as **No Change**. This reflects the fact that views to and from this asset and the proposed site are densely, if not entirely, screened by the proposed site's treeline and the intervening space. In short, the proposed development is highly unlikely to impact the asset's setting.



Plate 8: View looking SW, from the W side of the Church of St. Mary and towards the proposed site and showing the Grade II listed gate piers in the E wall of the Prospect*

6.2.2 Gate in the South Wall of The Prospect – Grade II*

It is considered that the impact of the proposed works on the fabric and setting of Gate in the South Wall of The Prospect can be assessed as **No Change**. This reflects the fact that views to and from this asset and the proposed site are thickly, if not entirely, veiled by the proposed site's treeline and the intervening landscape of mature trees and graves.



Plate 9: View looking S, towards the Gate in the South Wall of The Prospect (from inside The Prospect) and the proposed site.



Plate 10: View looking SW towards the proposed site through the Gate in the South Wall of The Prospect across the graveyard and which clearly shows the construction date.

6.2.3 Gate Piers in East Wall of The Prospect – Grade II*

It is considered that the impact of the proposed works on the fabric and setting of Gate Piers in East Wall of The Prospect can be assessed as **No Change**. This reflects the fact that views to and from this asset and the proposed site are thickly, if not entirely, veiled by the proposed site's treeline and the intervening space. In short, the proposed development is highly unlikely to impact the asset's setting (*Plate 8*).

6.2.4 Wall Around the Prospect – Grade II

It is considered that the impact of the proposed works on the fabric and setting of Wall around the Prospect can be assessed as **No Change**. This reflects the fact that views to and from this asset and the proposed site are densely screened by the existing treeline bordering the proposed development site to the NE and the intervening space characterised by pathways, fences, hedgerows and graves.

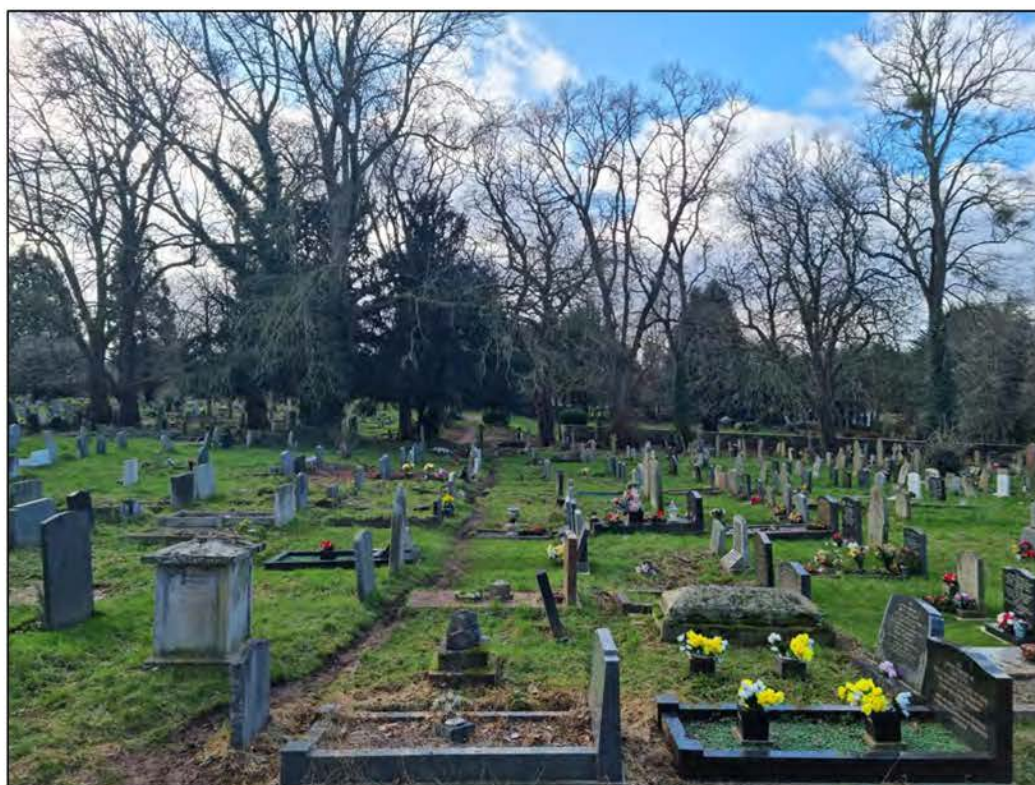


Plate 11: View looking SW from the Prospect gate across the graveyard toward the proposed development site

6.2.5 Royal Hotel – Grade II

It is considered that the impact of the proposed works on the fabric and setting of The Royal Hotel can be assessed as **No Change**. This reflects the fact that views to and from this asset and the proposed site are thickly, if not entirely, veiled by the proposed site's treeline, as well as the intervening space characterised by pathways, fences, hedgerows and graves and by buildings. In short, the proposed development is highly unlikely to impact the asset's setting.



Plate 12: View looking S, towards the proposed site, from the W side of the Royal Hotel.



Plate 13: View looking S, towards the proposed site and St. Mary's, across the Royal Hotel.

6.2.6 Palace Pound – Grade II

It is considered that the impact of the proposed works on the fabric and setting of Palace Pound can be assessed as **No Change**. This reflects the fact that views to and from this asset and the proposed site are thickly, if not entirely, veiled by the proposed site's treeline, as well as the intervening graves, walls, fences, hedgerows and buildings.

6.2.7 Wilton Bridge – Scheduled Monument

It is considered that the impact of the proposed works on the fabric and setting of Wilton Bridge can be assessed as **No Change**. This reflects the fact that views to and from this asset and the proposed site are by and large blocked by the buildings of Rectory Farm, as well as vegetation in the surrounding area, and the vast intervening distance that includes the River Wye. In short, the proposed development is highly unlikely to impact the asset's setting despite the difference in elevation.



Plate 14: View looking SE across Wilton Bridge, towards the proposed site.

6.2.8 Wilton Bridge (That Part in Ross On Wye Urban District) – Grade I

This listing relates to the same asset as above, so please refer to the above magnitude of impact.

6.2.9 Wilton Bridge and Sundial (those parts Bridstow Civil Parish) – Grade I

This listing relates to the same asset as above, so please refer to the above magnitude of impact.

6.2.9.1 Wilton Castle – Scheduled Ancient Monument

It is considered that the impact of the proposed works on the fabric and setting of Wilton Castle can be assessed as **No Change**. This reflects the fact that views to and from this asset and the proposed site are by and large blocked by the buildings of Rectory Farm, as well as vegetation in the surrounding area, and the vast intervening distance that includes the River Wye. In short, the proposed development is highly unlikely to impact the asset's setting, despite the difference in elevation.



Plate 15: View looking NW, towards Wilton Castle and Wilton Bridge from the proposed site.

6.2.10 Ruins of Wilton Castle and House Attached to South – Grade I

This listing relates to the same asset as above, so please refer to the above magnitude of impact.

6.2.11 Ross-on-Wye Conservation Area

It is considered that the impact of the proposed works on the fabric and setting of The Ross-on-Wye Conservation Area can be assessed as **Negligible**. This reflects the fact that the majority of the views to and from the proposed site are thickly veiled by trees, with the trees contributing more to the surrounding assets' settings than the parcel of unoccupied land, whilst acknowledging that the historic land use pattern will be slightly altered, thus impacting this asset's setting. Further, it is also considered that there are similar buildings/developments to the near SE of the site (similar in use and design) that have already altered this asset's setting, and that, as such, the proposed development is unlikely to additionally alter or impact the amount of traffic and noise in the area.

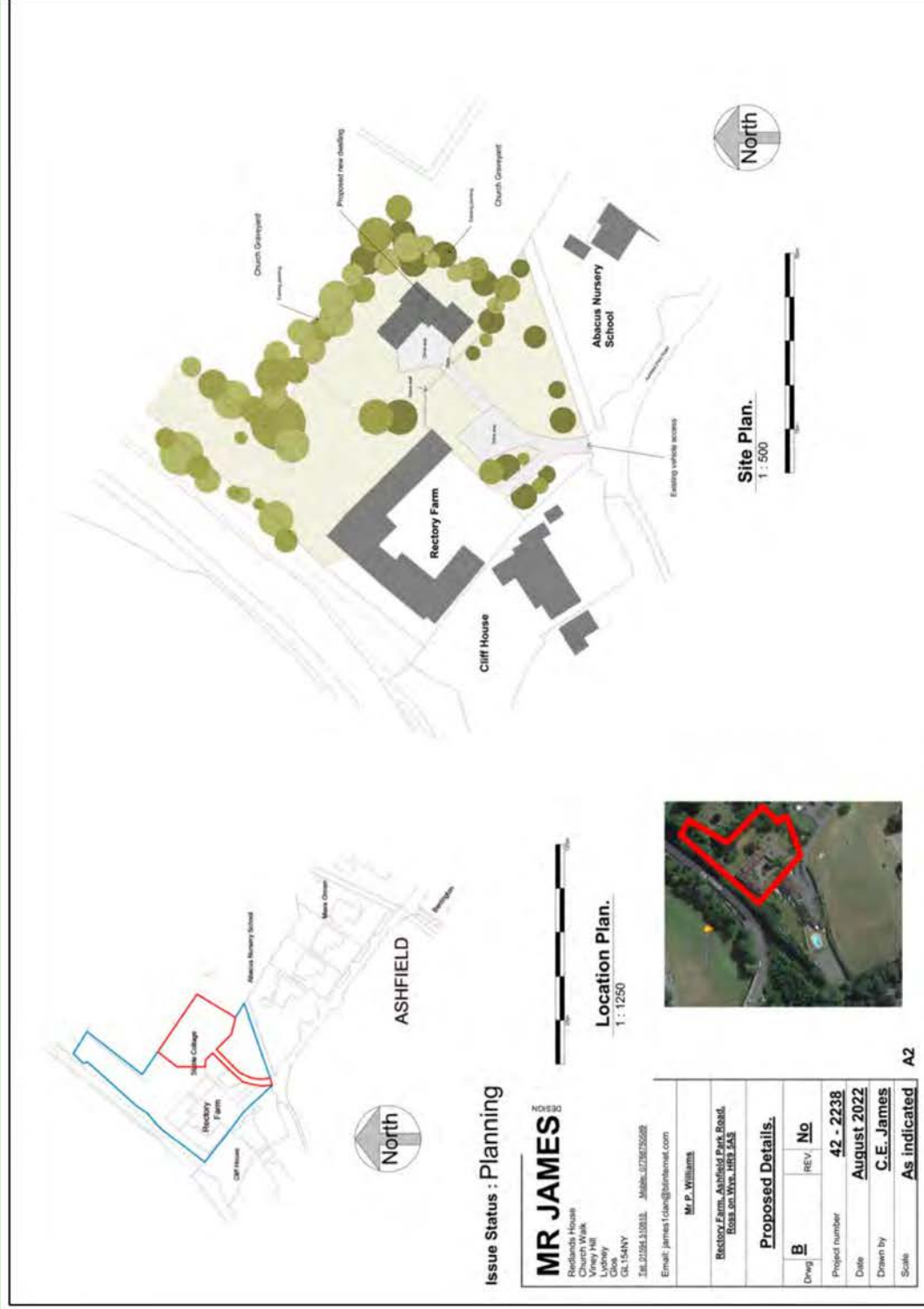


Fig.5: Location & site plans

7 Overall Significance of Impact & Conclusion

Having determined the intrinsic significance of the specific heritage assets considered for the purposes of this study and the potential magnitude of impact of the proposed development on these assets, it is now possible to reach an informed overall appraisal of the implications of the proposals by means of cross-referencing the significance of the heritage assets against the magnitude of impact.

The Church of St Mary the Virgin: The overall impact of the proposed work in heritage terms on the Grade I listed building of The Church of St Mary the Virgin, can be assessed as **Slight**. This assessment reflects the **High** significance of the church, cross-referenced against the magnitude of impact, assessed as **Negligible to Minor**. The main body of the asset, that being the church itself, has extremely limited sightlines with the site due to intervening vegetation and paths/roadways. It should be noted that similar buildings located close to the proposed development are not visible in these sightlines. The associated graveyard and churchyards are similarly screened by vegetation and distance, with only one of the pre-existing modern buildings along Ashfield Park Road being to some degree visible. The wall around the 20th century extension of the graveyard interacts directly with the site, but also acts in combination with the dense treeline to shield the graveyard itself, so the development is unlikely to impact the setting of the asset, and any impact will likely be less than that created by the nearby similar buildings.

Ross-on-Wye Conservation Area: The overall impact of the proposed work in heritage terms on the Ross-on-Wye Conservation Area can be assessed as **Slight**. This assessment reflects the **High** significance of the conservation area, cross-referenced against the magnitude of impact, assessed as **Negligible**. The proposed development is very unlikely to affect the historic plan as it is broadly consistent with existing development. Additionally, the established mature tree-cover exerts a significant influence on the character of this part of the Conservation Area and is likely to remain in place for the foreseeable future.

The overall impact of the proposed work in heritage terms on **Churchyard Wall of St Mary The Virgin, Churchyard Wall between North West End of Church Row and The Prospect (Grade II), Gate in the South Wall of The Prospect (Grade II*), Gate Piers in East Wall of The Prospect (Grade II*), and Wall around The Prospect (Grade II)**, can be assessed as **Neutral**. This assessment reflects the **High** significance of the structures, cross-referenced against the magnitude of impact, assessed as **No Change**. Views to and from these assets and the proposed site are largely obscured either by mature tree-cover, topography or built structures and the development is therefore unlikely to impact these assets. It should be note that other similar buildings in the vicinity of the site are not visible from the assets.

The overall impact of the proposed work in heritage terms on **Royal Hotel (Grade II)** and **Palace Pound (Grade II)** can be assessed as **Neutral**. This assessment reflects the **High** significance of the buildings, cross-referenced against the magnitude of impact, assessed as **No Change**. Views between these assets and the proposed site are largely obscured either by trees or built structures and the development is therefore unlikely to impact the assets. The other, similar built structures in the vicinity of the site are not visible from these assets, which corroborates the view that the proposed developed will similarly not be visible.

The overall impact of the proposed work in heritage terms on Wilton Bridge (Scheduled Monument), Wilton Bridge (that part in Ross on Wye Urban District) (Grade I), Wilton Bridge and Sundial (those parts Bridstow Civil Parish) (Grade I), Wilton Castle (Scheduled Ancient Monument), and Ruins of Wilton Castle and House attached to South (Grade I) can be assessed as **Neutral**. This assessment reflects the **High** significance of the structures, cross-referenced against the magnitude of impact, assessed as **No Change**. Views to and from these assets and the proposed site are largely obscured by the intervening vegetation, topographic features such as the River Wye and by distance and elevation, as well as by the buildings of Rectory Farm. The development is therefore unlikely to impact these assets. Furthermore, it should be noted that due to distance and elevation Rectory Farm itself is not visible from these assets.

Conclusion: The overall impact of the proposed development in heritage terms can be assessed as **Slight**. Based on the above assessment, it is considered that the proposed works will result in a slight change to the setting of two assets but no more impactful change than those of similar developments in the area. It is additionally considered that the setting of all assets will be impacted only slightly or not at all due primarily the dense tree-cover which includes a number of mature and to all intents and purposes permanent evergreen specimens.

8 Copyright

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10 Cartography

(All maps were obtained from the National Archives unless otherwise stated)

1577: Christopher Saxton's Map of Hereford (*Herefordiae Comitatus* f.95) (not included in historic map figures);

1659: Janssonium's Map of Hereford (*Herefordia Comitatus vernacule Hereford Shire*) (not included in historic map figures);

1815: Ordnance Survey Drawing of Hereford;

1840: Tithe Map & Apportionment;

1887: Ordnance Survey 1st Edition Six-inch Map;

1903/5: Ordnance Survey 2nd Edition Six-inch Map;

1927/9: Ordnance Survey 3rd Edition 25-inch Map;

1937/8: Ordnance Survey 4th Edition 25-inch Map.

11 Appendix 1: Historic Maps



Fig. 5: Extract from Ordnance Survey drawing of 1813 (with site circled in red)
(Reproduced by courtesy of the British Library)

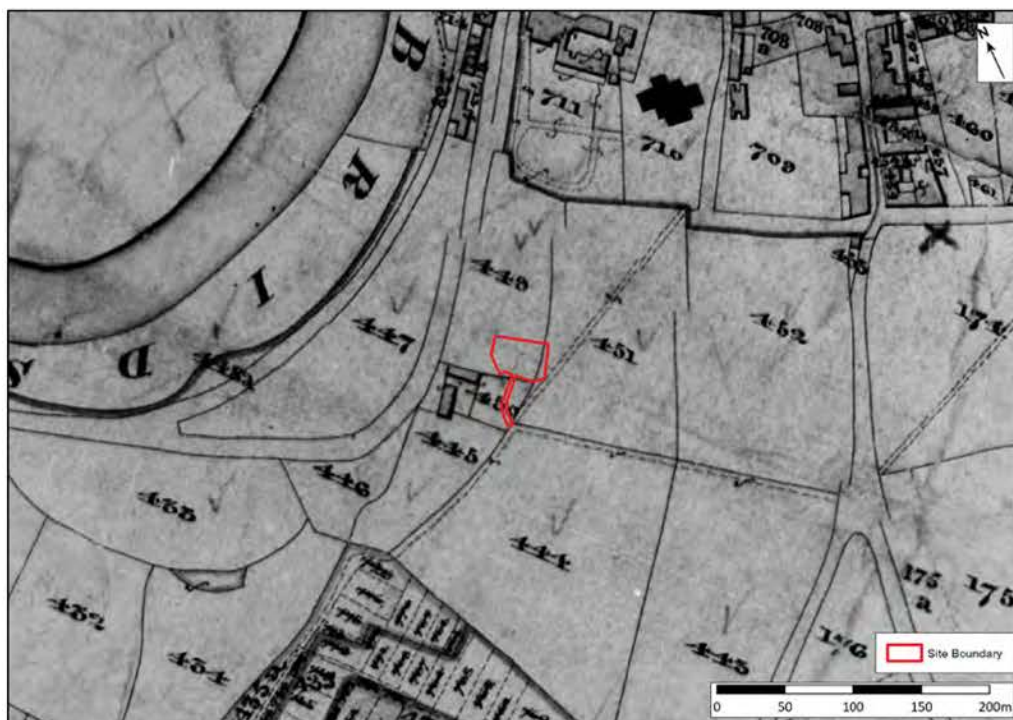


Fig. 6: Extract from the Ross tithe map of 1843 showing ??
(Reproduced by courtesy of the National Archives)

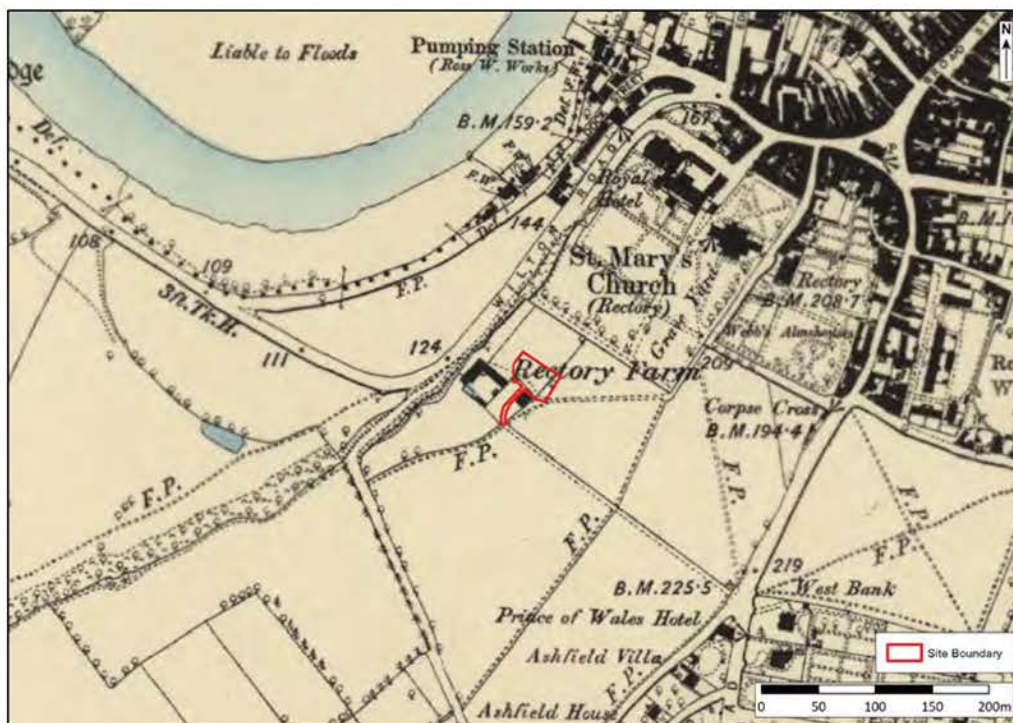


Fig. 7: Extract from Ordnance Survey 6-inch map of 1887 (with site circled in red)
(Reproduced by courtesy of the National Archives)



Fig. 8: Extract from the Extract from Ordnance Survey 6-inch map of 1905 (with site circled in red)
(Reproduced by courtesy of the National Archives)



Fig. 9: Extract from the Extract from Ordnance Survey 25-inch map of 1927/9 (with site circled in red)
(Reproduced by courtesy of the National Archives)

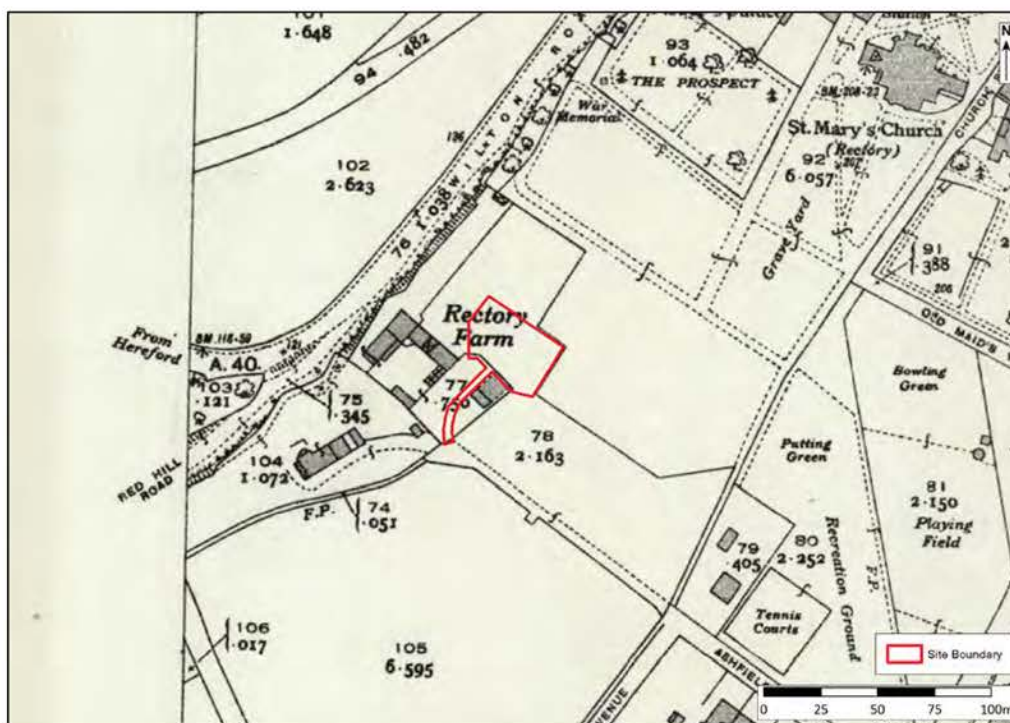


Fig. 10: Extract from the Extract from Ordnance Survey 25-inch map of 1938 (with site circled in red)
(Reproduced by courtesy of the National Archives)

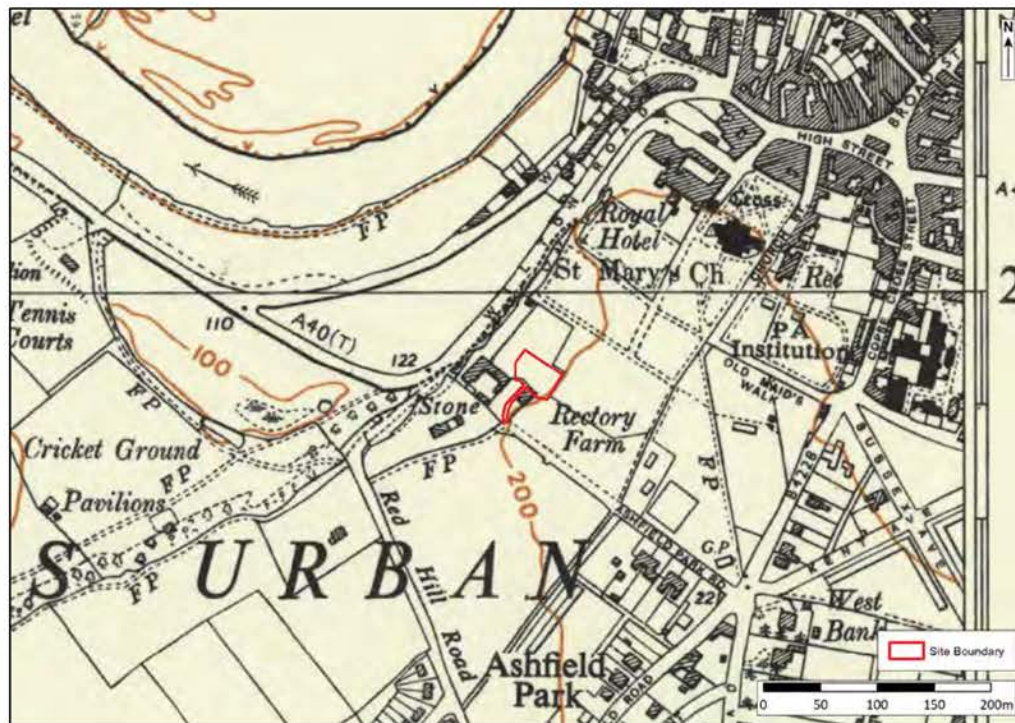


Fig. 11: Extract from the Extract from Ordnance Survey 1-10,000 map of 1968 (with site circled in red)
(Reproduced by courtesy of the National Archives)

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