

# Land Adjacent to Barn Cottage, Ansty, West Sussex, RH17 5AG

## Archaeological Appraisal

Rebecca Mansfield  
BA (Hons) MA ACIfA

On behalf of Mr Adam Hollingdale  
May 2025

## Introduction

1. This Archaeological Appraisal has been prepared by HCUK Group on behalf of Mr Adam Hollingdale via Places Architects Ltd. for a planning application relating to land adjacent to Barn Cottage, Ansty, West Sussex, RH17 5AG (NGR: TQ 29079 23219), hereafter referred to as the 'Site' (Figures 1 and 2).
2. This document draws upon the results of a search of the West Sussex Historic Environment Record (WSHER; search ref. 202526-016) data, available National Heritage List for England (NHLE) data, a review of historic mapping available online and other online resources. This appraisal provides a synthesis of the WSHER data derived from a search area extending up to 1km from the Site boundary, hereafter known as the 'study area' and considers only designated and non-designated heritage assets of archaeological interest, but not the settings of built heritage that are beyond the scope of this report.
3. The Site comprises land adjacent to Barn Cottage, on B2036 Harvest Hill. The Site is laid out as a garden with a greenhouse and small timber outbuildings at its western end. The Site is laid with grass with a path along the southern side which consists of hardstanding. The Site is bounded by The Ancient Farm and Barn Cottage to the north, both of which are in separate ownership to the Site. The west boundary of the Site comprises a car parking area for 3 Upton Drive and the rear garden of 13 Upton Drive. The southern boundary of the Site is comprised of 8 Crouch Fields and a grass verge north of Crouch Fields. The Site is accessed via an entrance from B2036 Harvest Hill from the east which is shared with Barn Cottage.
4. The proposals entail the construction of a single two-storey, four bedroom detached house (Plate 1). The proposals also include a new bound gravel access road from the gated shared entrance to Barn Cottage and extensive landscaping.
5. This document does not represent a full archaeological desk-based assessment of the Site, but is an initial appraisal of the likely archaeological risks associated with the Site.
6. The WSHER contains 26 archaeological monument records and three event/activity records within a 1km radius of the Site, none of which are located within the Site (Figures 3 and 4; Tables 1 and 2).
7. There are three Archaeological Notification Areas (ANAs) within the 1km study area, none of which are located within the Site boundary (Figure 5). These areas are used by some local government bodies to draw archaeological attention to particular

mapped areas. The northern boundary of the Site borders the *Medieval Hamlet of Ansty, Ansty and Staplefield ANA* which covers a very sensitive area for archaeology (DWS9075).

8. There is one Scheduled Monument located c.950m west of the Site which covers a moated site in Ragget's Wood (NHLE 1012310). There are 12 Listed Buildings within the 1km study area. Listed Building are considered in a separate Heritage Statement.<sup>1</sup>
9. The British Geological Survey identifies the underlying solid geology across the Site as being sandstone and siltstone, interbedded of the Upper Tunbridge Wells Sand.<sup>2</sup> This is a sedimentary bedrock formed between 139.4 and 133.9 million years ago during the Cretaceous period when Britain had a warm climate with lagoonal, lake and fluvial environments. There are no overlying superficial geological deposits recorded across the Site.

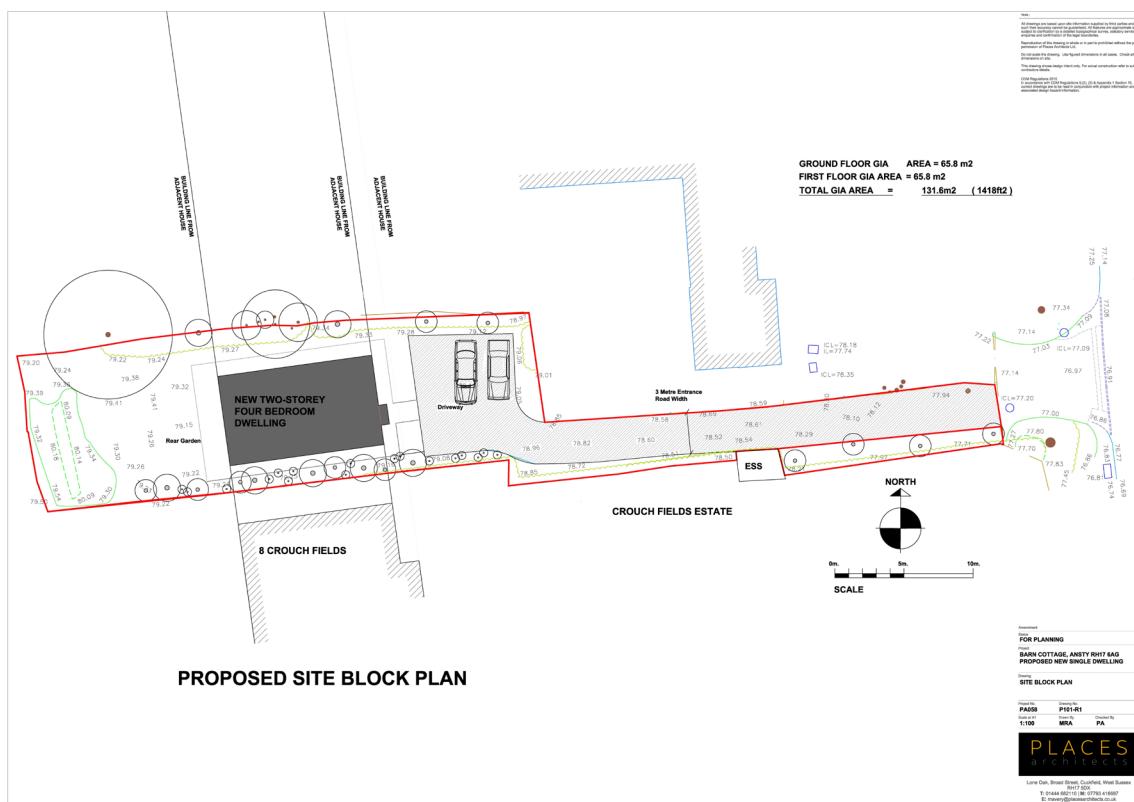


Plate 1: Proposed site block plan (Places Architects)

<sup>1</sup> HCUK Group 2025

<sup>2</sup> British Geological Society Online Viewer [Accessed 21.05.2025]

## Period based review of potential

10. The following timeline is used in this Appraisal to date archaeological sites (and used in the WSHER):

Table 1: Timescales

Period	Approximate date	
Palaeolithic –	c.450,000 – 12,000 BC	Prehistoric
Mesolithic –	c. 12,000 – 4000 BC	
Neolithic –	c.4000 – 1800 BC	
Bronze Age –	c.1800 – 600 BC	
Iron Age –	c.600 BC – AD 43	
Roman (Romano-British) –	AD 43 – c. AD 410	Historic
Saxon / Early Medieval –	c. AD 410 – AD 1066	
Medieval –	1066 – 1485	
Post-medieval –	1485 – 1900	
Modern –	1901 – Present	

### Prehistoric

11. The earliest phase of the prehistoric to be represented is the Palaeolithic. This is considered the earliest known period human culture and evidence from this period often consists of lithic scatters, found within river gravels and terraces. In approximately 46,000 BC, during the Anglian Glaciation, there were major variations in climate which affected where people settled. During the beginning of the Upper Palaeolithic (30,000-10,000 BC) Britain was still connected to Europe. No Palaeolithic remains have been recorded on the WSHER within a 1km radius of the Site.

12. During the Mesolithic period the ice sheets had receded, temperatures and sea-levels were rising, and Britain was still connected to the continent by land bridge. The hunter-gatherers who utilised the area were highly mobile, and due to the changing conditions often only settled seasonally. Finds from this period tend to come in the form of stray finds within disturbed deposits, and *in situ* settlement sites are a rare find. Following topsoil stripping ahead of the construction of Cuckfield Bypass in 1988, Mesolithic worked flints were recovered along the route (MWS3692, EWS39).

13. The Neolithic and Bronze Age periods are characterised by increasingly permanent settlements and subsequent woodland clearance around settlement sites. It was during

the Neolithic period that arable farming practices began and the utilisation of clay deposits to create pottery. Neolithic to Bronze Age flintwork was also recovered following topsoil stripping for the construction of the Cuckfield Bypass, including waste flakes and an arrowhead (MWS3693, EWS39). A Middle Bronze Age palstave, a type of axe, was recovered from an allotment in Copyhold Lane (MWS782).

14. The Iron Age saw more technological advancement with the use of iron to create weapons and tools. This period is also characterized by the large defensive hillforts, and evidence of ritual offerings of military equipment, suggesting a shift in culture with an emphasis of the warrior aristocracy and the emergence of tribal territories. No Iron Age finds or features have been recorded within the study area.

### *Roman*

15. Following the successful Roman invasion of AD 43, the Romans set about creating a system of roads linking their newly conquered territories. The Site is situated c.3.5km west of the road linking the Roman town at London to the Brighton area, passing through Haywards Heath. The road passed through some strategically important iron-producing areas of the Weald.
16. A Roman cremation burial was recorded 'in the high road at Highbridge Hill' near Ansty, c.500m north-east of the Site, in 1703 (MWS1053). The burial comprised a cinerary urn and Samian Ware vases.

### *Early Medieval*

17. No early medieval remains have been recorded within 1km of the Site. The area was likely rural during this period, with early development focused around the present-day village centre north-east of the Site.

### *Medieval*

18. The hamlet of Ansty is located at the top of a hill and its name may have been originally applied to a track leading up to the settlement.<sup>3</sup> The settlement is first mentioned as *Anstigh* in 1313, *Annstie* in 1603 and by 1617 it was known as *Anstie's Crosse*.<sup>4</sup> The settlement is not mentioned in the Domesday Book of 1086.

---

<sup>3</sup> The English Place-Name Society [Accessed 22.05.2025]

<sup>4</sup> *ibid*

19. The parkland of Cuckfield Manor was located from c.815m north-east of the Site (MWS662). The manor is not mentioned in the Domesday Book of 1086, however the parish church of Cuckfield was in the possession of the Warennes in the 1090s, so it is thought that the manor was also in their possession. Although there is no known location of the manor house, it is thought to have been located south of the church, c.1.6km north-east of the Site. The park is recorded as containing 229 acres in 1439, before it was disparked in the late 16<sup>th</sup> century.
20. Most of the medieval WSHER entries within the 1km study area relate to historic farmsteads recorded through the Historic Farmsteads and Landscape Character in West Sussex Project. This includes The Ancient Farm, the present-day boundary of which lies immediately north of the Site (MWS12944). The medieval farm there was previously known as Crouchlands Farm. The Ancient Farm comprises a U-Plan regular courtyard farmstead with additional detached elements. The present-day farmhouse dates to the 17<sup>th</sup> century, possibly earlier.
21. Other medieval farmsteads in the study area include Butlers Farm c.400m south-west of the Site (MWS9619), Hoadsherf Farm c.600m north-west of the Site (MWS11534) and Ridden's Farm c.600m south-east of the Site (MWS12885).
22. Two WSHER entries relate to medieval findspots. This includes late medieval pottery recovered following topsoil stripping for the construction of the Cuckfield Bypass (MWS3694, EWS39). A clay plum-bob, a weight used to find the center of gravity, was recovered from the garden behind the farmhouse of The Ancient Farm adjacent to the Site (MWS656).
23. The Site was likely agricultural land associated with The Ancient Farm during the medieval period. The Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) identifies the Site as the Broad Type 'Fieldscapes' of medieval to post-medieval date.

#### *Post-medieval and Modern*

24. Ansty remained a rural village throughout the post-medieval period, with its historic core concentrated north-east of the Site. The road through Ansty became a turnpike in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, with a possible toll house located at The Old House, c.70m north of the Site (MWS664).
25. The Site is located within the 'Fieldscapes' HLC Broad Type, which is further defined as 'regular piecemeal enclosure'.

26. Legh Manor was built in the mid-16<sup>th</sup> century *c.*1km south-west of the Site (MWS4256). During landscaping at the manor, sandstone blocks were revealed which formed masonry footings (MWS4413). A historic farmstead was built nearby in the 18<sup>th</sup> century at Leigh Place (MWS11957).
27. Two post-medieval watermills are recorded in the study area. An earlier watermill shown on late 18<sup>th</sup> century maps *c.*950m north of the Site (MWS663), which was likely replaced by a watermill at Highbridge *c.*760m north-east of the Site (MWS659).
28. Two post-medieval bloomeries, iron working sites, are recorded in the study area. One located at Highbridge *c.*680m north-east of the Site (MWS951) and one thought to be associated with Cuckfield forge and furnace *c.*1km east of the Site (MWS5378).
29. The 1901 Census Transcript lists two families under Barnes Cottage. The occupation of the heads of these families were a cowman and a carter on the farm.
30. Most of the post-medieval WSHER entries within the study area relate to farmsteads or outfarms spread out across the area (MWS9291, MWS11186, MWS11957, MWS13325, MWS13012, MWS13114, MWS14071).

### **Cartographic Sources**

31. The Tithe map of the parish of Cuckfield and its accompanying Apportionment detail the landowners and occupiers at this time (Plate 2). The Site was located within Plot 1653 which was owned by Henry Alfred Noble and occupied by Mrs Noble. This plot was a meadow known as 'Little Mead'. Henry Noble also owned many of the surrounding fields to the west and south, as well as the buildings, yards and gardens to the north. These landholdings likely represent The Ancient Farm at this time.
32. The Ordnance Survey map published in 1879 (Plate 3) shows the farm buildings of The Ancient Farm, or Crouchfields Farm as it was known until the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century. The Site is located within a field to the south of the farm buildings, presumably still forming part of the agricultural land.
33. By the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Plate 4) the field in which the Site was located had been divided into smaller plots north of the Site, with a field boundary running along the northern boundary of the Site. The remainder of the field appears to have been open and undeveloped.
34. The early and mid-20<sup>th</sup> century Ordnance Survey maps (Plate 5 and 6) depict the Site and the surrounding area in a similar way to the late 19<sup>th</sup> century map (Plate 4).

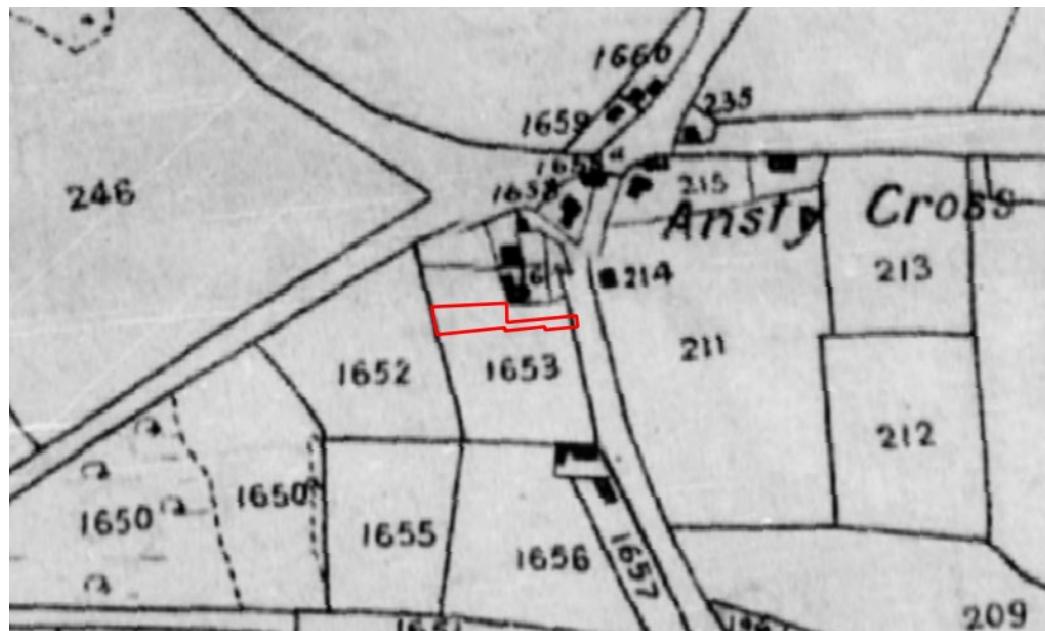


Plate 2: Extract from the Cuckfield Parish Tithe Map, 1843 (The Genealogist)

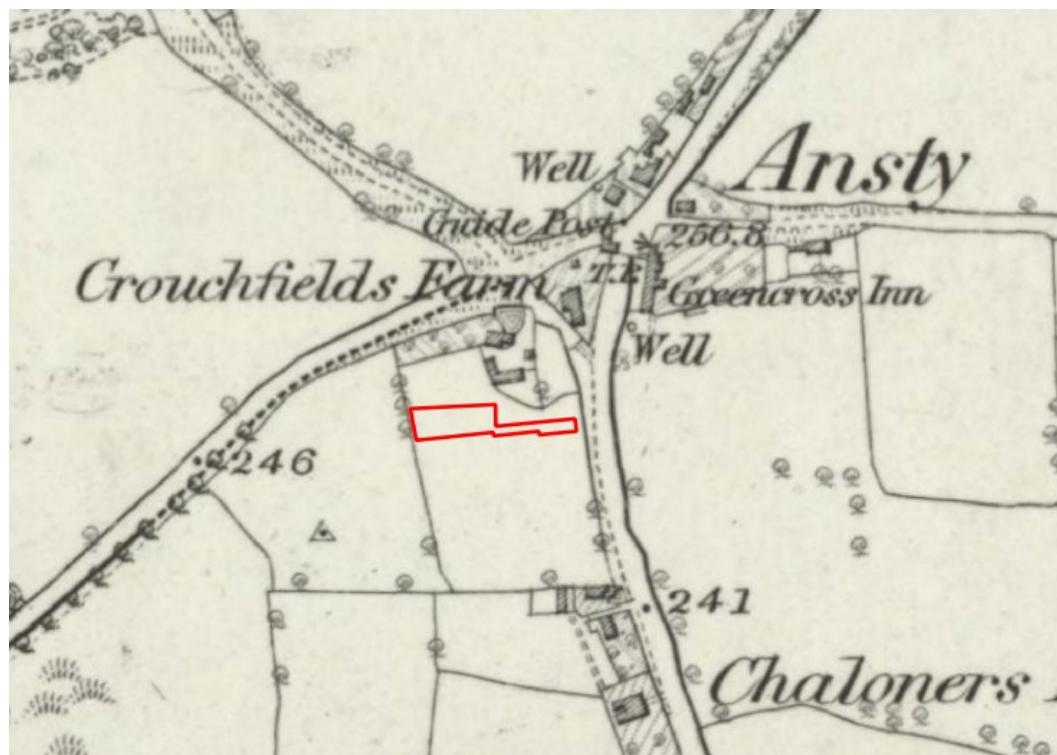


Plate 3: Extract from the Ordnance Survey Sussex Sheet XXVI 6-inch map, 1879 (National Library of Scotland)



Plate 4: Extract from the Ordnance Survey Sussex Sheet XXVI.SW 6-inch map, 1899 (National Library of Scotland)

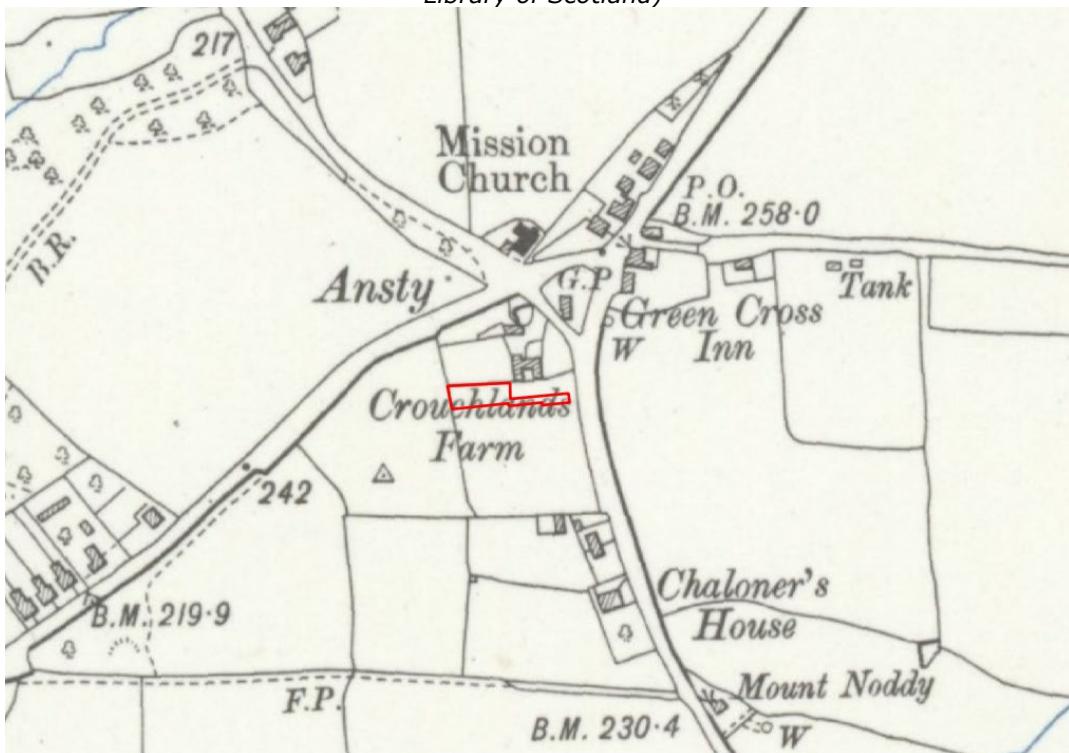


Plate 5: Extract from the Ordnance Survey Sussex Sheet XXVI.SW 6-inch map, 1912 (National Library of Scotland)

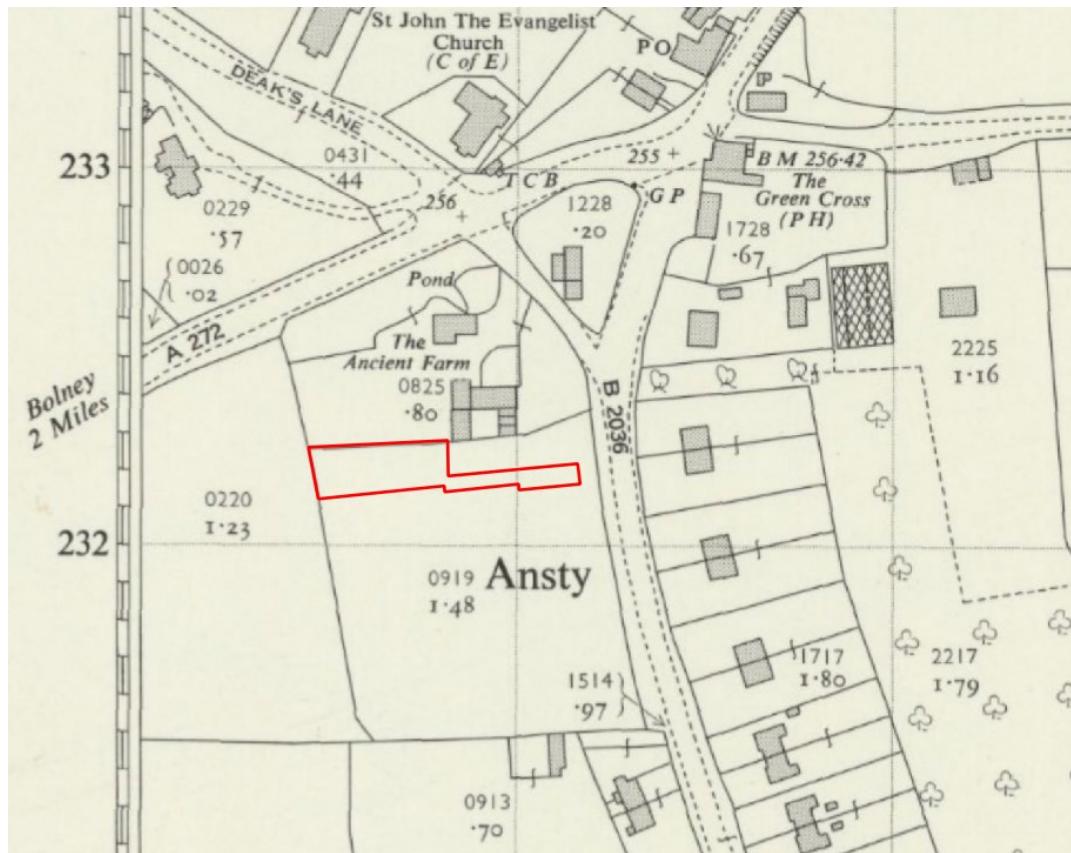


Plate 6: Extract from the Ordnance Survey National Grid Map TQ2923-A, 1958 (National Library of Scotland)

## Conclusion

35. The information gathered for this Archaeological Appraisal indicates that there is a low potential for prehistoric, Roman, and early medieval remains. The Site is likely to have been used as agricultural land since the medieval period, forming part of Crouchlands Farm (The Ancient Farm). The potential for archaeological remains of medieval or later date that would be considered of archaeological importance, is considered to be low.
36. The Site has been under agricultural and horticultural use since at least the 18<sup>th</sup> century, which can result in the truncation or disturbance of below ground archaeological remains. However, the degree of such disturbance is presently unknown. Despite this, it is considered likely that the Site may contain archaeological remains, which are likely to be associated with the agricultural activity and therefore, be of no more than low archaeological importance.
37. Although this appraisal does not represent a full archaeological desk-based assessment of the Site, it is considered that it provides enough information on which a planning determination can be made in respect of archaeology by the Environment and Heritage Team at West Sussex County Council as the nominated archaeological advisors to the local planning authority.

## References

(1901). *Census Transcript Household Sussex*. (The Genealogist).

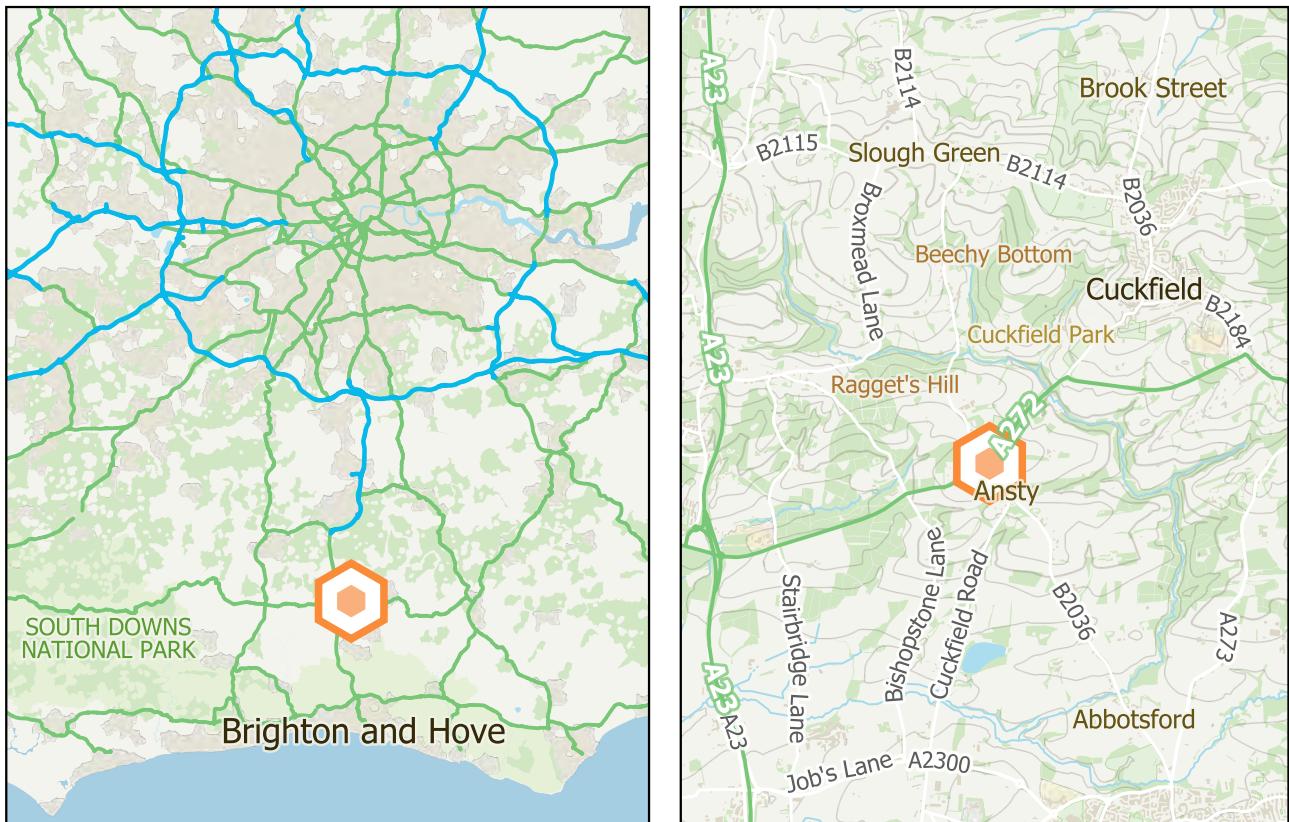
HCUK Group. (2025). *Heritage Statement. Barn Cottage, Ansty*.

National Library of Scotland.

The British Geological Survey.

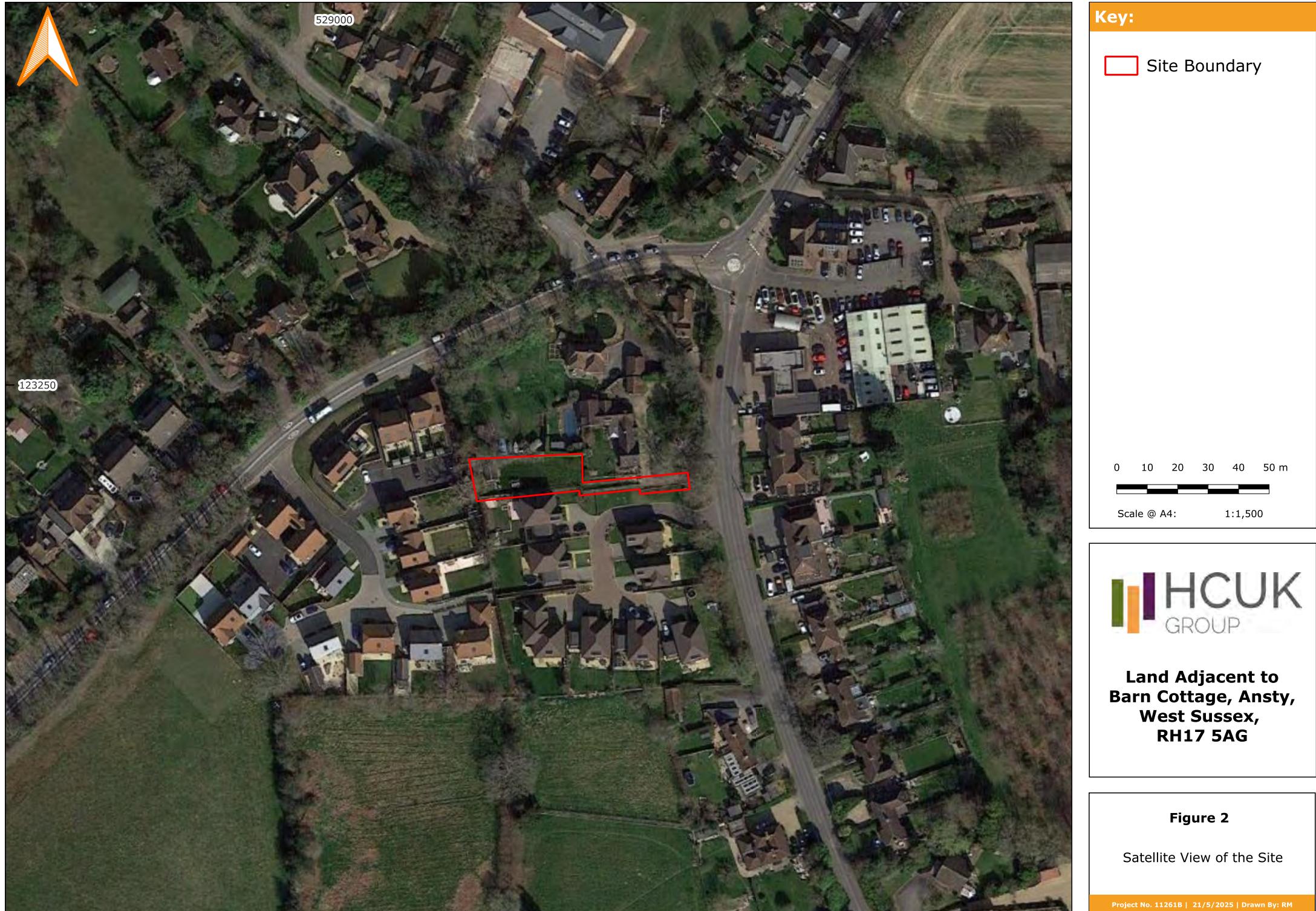
The English Place-Name Society. *Survey of English Place-Names. Ansty*. <https://epns.nottingham.ac.uk/browse/Sussex/Cuckfield/5328722db47fc40c36000249-Ansty> [Accessed 22.05.2025].

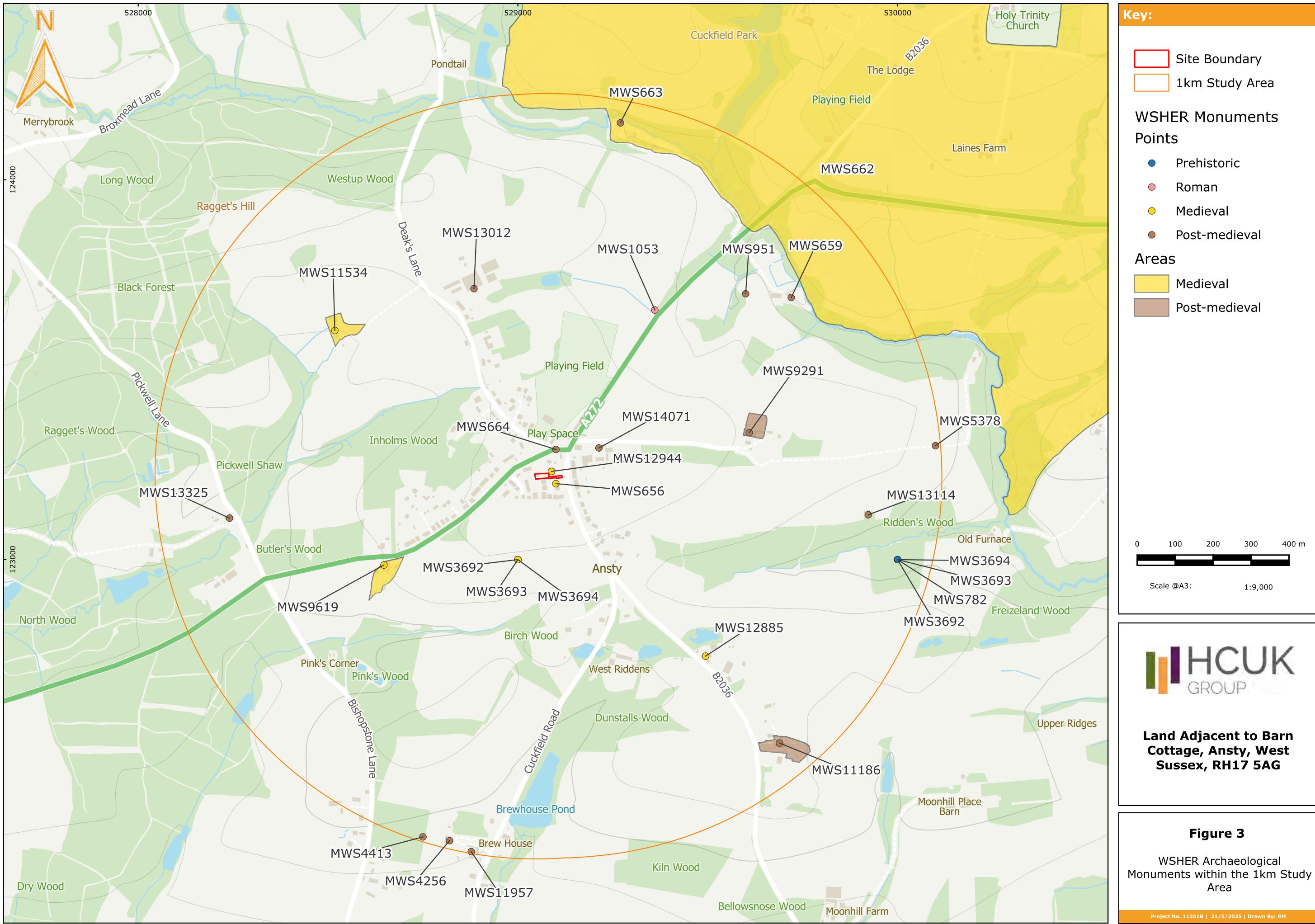
*No text or imagery within this report has been generated by Artificial Intelligence (AI).*

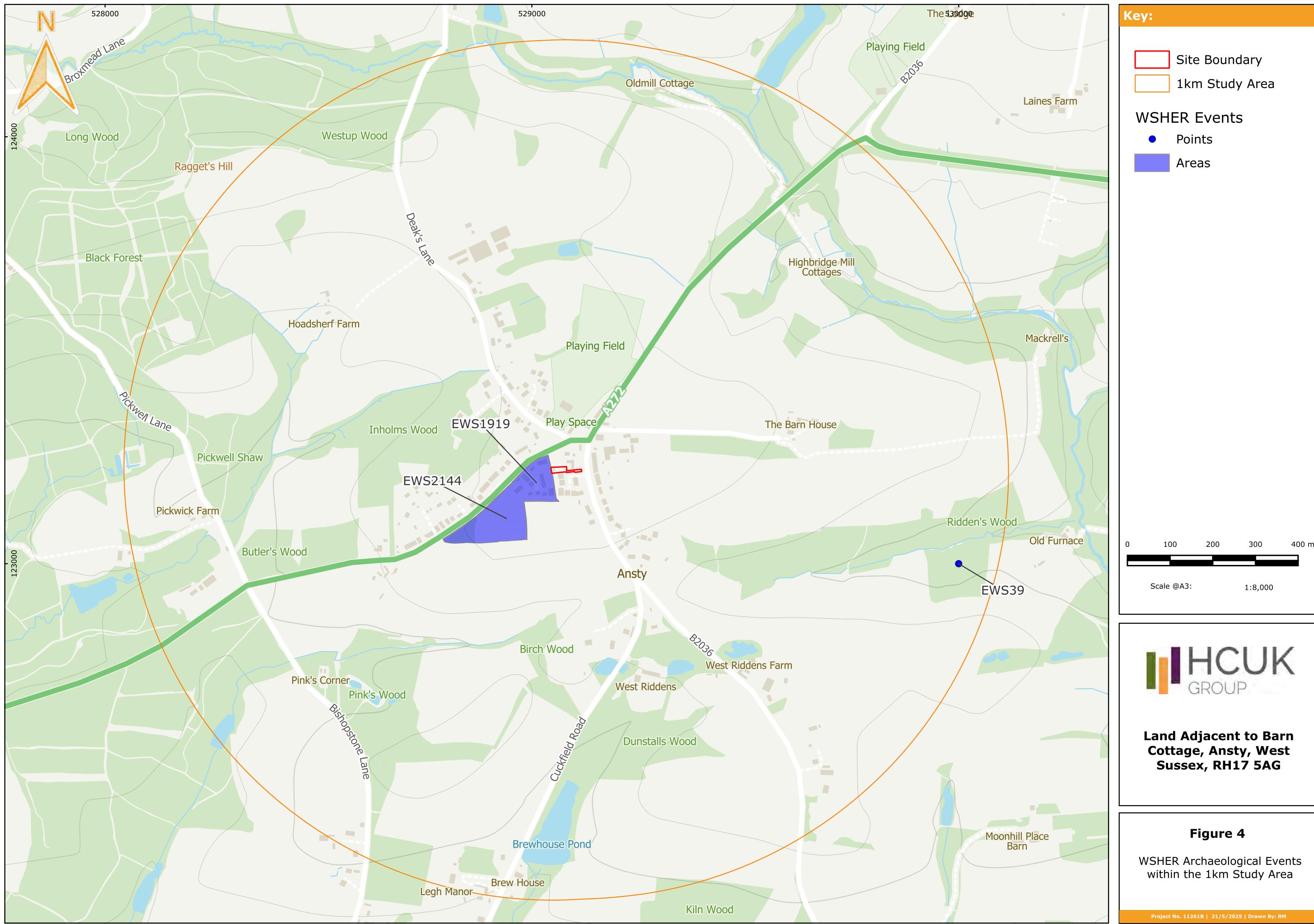


**Figure 1: Site Location**

Contains OS data © Crown Copyright. All rights reserved. Licence no. LAN1001351







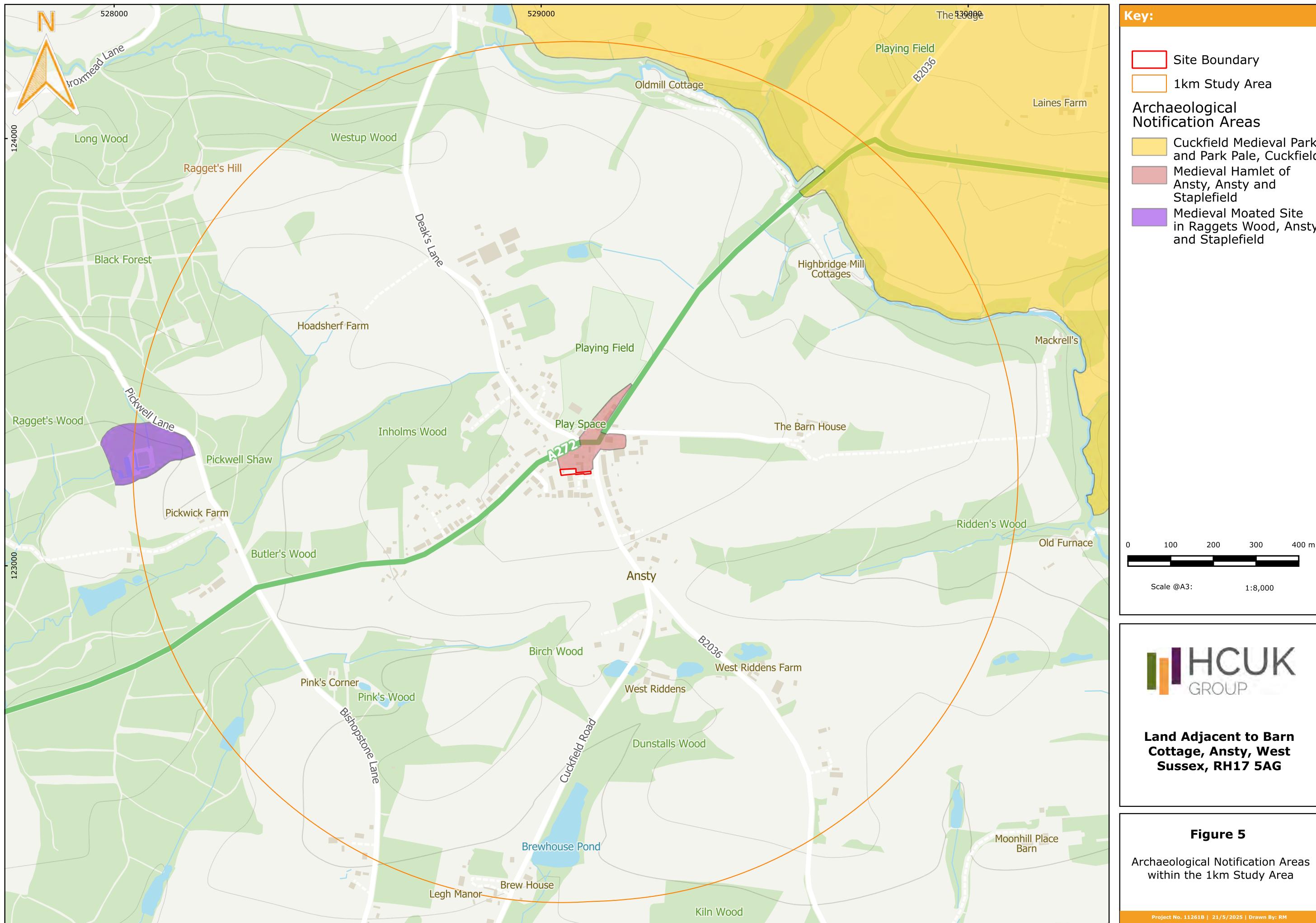


Table 2: West Sussex Historic Environment Record Archaeological Monuments within the 1km Study Area

HER No.	Name/Description	MonType	Period	Dates
MWS3692	Mesolithic flintwork - Cuckfield By-pass. Following topsoil stripping for construction of the Cuckfield By-pass in 1988. No archaeological features were identified but Mesolithic blades and bladelets were recovered along the route.	Findspot	Prehistoric - Mesolithic	10,000 BC to 4,001 BC
MWS3693	Neolithic/Bronze Age flintwork - Cuckfield Bypass. Following topsoil stripping for construction of the Cuckfield By-pass in 1988. No archaeological features were identified but Neolithic-Bronze Age flintwork, mostly waste flakes but including a hollow- based arrowhead, was recovered.	Findspot	Prehistoric - Neolithic to Bronze Age	4,000 BC to 2,351 BC
MWS782	Bronze Age axe – Cuckfield. Bronze palstave - type 'D' dug up on an allotment in Copyhold Lane, Cuckfield in 1942.	Findspot	Prehistoric – Bronze Age	2,350 BC to 701 BC
MWS1053	Roman cremation burial - High Bridge Road, Ansty. Roman cremation burial consisting of a cinerary urn and samian ware vases and platters found near Ansty, Cuckfield in 1703.	Cremation	Roman	AD 43 to AD 409
MWS656	Medieval Clay Plumb-Bob – Ansty. Possible Medieval clay plumb-bob found in the garden soil behind an old timbered farmhouse called 'The Ancient Farm'.	Findspot	Medieval	1066? to 1539?
MWS662	Cuckfield Medieval Park, Cuckfield and Ansty and Staplefield. Medieval park at Cuckfield mentioned in 1241 onwards, owned by the Earl of Warenne. The medieval park formed part of the manor of Cuckfield. The park was disparked in the later 16 <sup>th</sup> century and half of the park was acquired by Henry Bowyer in 1575 who built Cuckfield Place, renamed Cuckfield Park in the 19 <sup>th</sup> century.	Park	Medieval	1066 to 1539
MWS3694	Late medieval pottery - Cuckfield By-pass. Following topsoil stripping for construction of the Cuckfield By-pass in 1988. No archaeological features were identified but a few sherds of late medieval pottery were recovered from the western end of the route.	Findspot	Medieval	1066 to 1539
MWS9619	Butlers Farm Historic Farmstead, Cuckfield Rural. Butlers Farm is a medieval double sided loose courtyard farmstead with a detached farmhouse set side on to the yard. It is in an isolated location and is extant (no apparent alteration).	Farmstead	Medieval	1066 to 1539
MWS11534	Hoadsherf Farm Historic Farmstead, Ansty and Staplefield. Hoadsherf Farm is	Farmstead	Medieval	1066 to 1539

	a medieval 4 sided loose courtyard farmstead with a detached farmhouse set away from the yard. It is in an isolated location and has suffered partial loss (less than 50% loss).			
MWS12885	Ridden's Farm Historic Farmstead, Ansty and Staplefield. Ridden's Farm is a medieval 3 sided L-Plan loose courtyard farmstead with additional detached elements to the main plan. The farmhouse is detached and set away from the yard. It is in an isolated location and is extant (no apparent alteration).	Farmstead	Medieval	1066 to 1539
MWS12944	The Ancient Farm (Crouchlands Farm) Historic Farmstead, Ansty and Staplefield. The Ancient Farm (Crouchlands Farm) is a medieval U-Plan regular courtyard farmstead with additional detached elements to the main plan. The farmhouse is detached and set away from the yard. It is located within a Hamlet and has suffered partial loss (less than 50% loss).	Farmstead	Medieval	1066 to 1539
MWS4256	Legh Manor, Cuckfield Rural. Legh Manor is a modified H-shaped timber framed building (now tile hung), built by John and Mary Hussey, probably between 1540 and 1550.	House	Post-medieval to modern	1500 to 1999
MWS663	Watermill - Oldmill Cottages, Cuckfield Rural. A watermill is shown at this location on maps of 1795 and 1813, but not on later maps. Presumably replaced by High Bridge Mill downstream. The cottages are timber framed but to the north-west are the remains of a stone sluice which probably marks the site of the mill.	Watermill	Post-medieval	1540? to 1900?
MWS659	Highbridge Watermill, Ansty and Staplefield. 18 <sup>th</sup> century brick overshot mill built on the scarp of an immense dam.	Watermill	Post-medieval	1700 to 1799
MWS664	Toll House - Ansty and Staplefield. Turnpike shown on map of 1795. No obvious remains of a custom-built turnpike toll house but a timber framed house, with brick infill, which has a brick extension to the south ('The Old House'), may have served the purpose.	Toll House	Post-medieval	1700 to 1799
MWS951	Iron working site - High Bridge, Cuckfield Rural. Site of a bloomery. Undated. Noted during fieldwalking in field adjacent to Mill.	Ironstone Workings	Post-medieval	1540? to 1900?
MWS5378	Bloomery slag - Cuckfield Forge & Furnace. An area of bloomery slag was found in a field to the south-west of Mackrell's Farm, it is thought to be	Slag Heap	Post-medieval	1540 to 1900

	associated with Cuckfield forge and furnace.			
MWS9291	Ansty Farm Historic Farmstead, Cuckfield Rural. Ansty Farm is a 19 <sup>th</sup> century dispersed regular multi-yard farmstead. It is in an isolated location and has suffered partial loss (less than 50% loss).	Farmstead	Post-medieval	1800 to 1899
MWS11186	Harvest Hill House Historic Farmstead, Cuckfield. Harvest Hill House (Harvesthill) is a 19 <sup>th</sup> century Row plan farmstead with additional detached elements to the main plan. The farmhouse is detached and set away from the yard. It is in an isolated location and is extant (no apparent alteration).	Farmstead	Post-medieval	1800 to 1899
MWS11957	Leigh Place Historic Farmstead, Ansty and Staplefield. Leigh Place is an 18 <sup>th</sup> century 3 sided L-Plan loose courtyard farmstead with additional detached elements to the main plan. The farmhouse is detached and set away from the yard. It is in an isolated location and has suffered partial loss (less than 50% loss).	Farmstead	Post-medieval	1700 to 1799
MWS13325	Pickwell Farm Historic Farmstead, Ansty and Staplefield. Pickwell Farm is a 19 <sup>th</sup> century L-Plan regular courtyard farmstead; the farmhouse location is uncertain. It is in an isolated location and is extant (no apparent alteration). Although it is named as a farmstead it appears to be an outfarm rather than an L-Plan with a farmhouse.	Farmstead	Post-medieval	1800 to 1899
MWS13012	Historic Outfarm North East of Hoardsherf Farm, Ansty and Staplefield. Outfarm North East of Hoadscherf Farm is a 19 <sup>th</sup> century double sided loose courtyard outfarm or field barn. It is in an isolated location but the outfarm has undergone total change (the farmstead survives but complete alteration to the plan). Large modern sheds are on the site of the historic outfarm and may have destroyed or obscure historic buildings.	Outfarm	Post-medieval	1800 to 1899
MWS13114	Site of Historic Outfarm South East of Ansty Farm, Ansty and Staplefield. Outfarm South East of Ansty Farm was a single sided loose courtyard outfarm or field barn. It was in an isolated location but the outfarm has been totally demolished/lost.	Outfarm	Post-medieval	1800 to 1899
MWS14071	Yard East of Anstey Cross, Ansty and Staplefield. Yard East of Anstey Cross Inn is a 19 <sup>th</sup> century single sided loose courtyard outfarm or field barn. It is located within a Hamlet and has suffered partial loss (less than 50% loss).	Outfarm	Post-medieval	1800 to 1899

MWS4413	Masonry footings - Legh Manor. Landscaping at Legh Manor revealed some sandstone blocks.	Stone Alignment	Post-medieval	Unknown
MWS14894	Land at Bolney Road, Ansty – Evaluation. An archaeological evaluation was carried out at Bolney Road, Ansty, in advance of residential development. Despite the fact that the site does not appear to have been disturbed in the past, no archaeological finds or features were identified during the evaluation.	Negative Evidence	-	-

Table 3: West Sussex Historic Environment Record Archaeological Events within the 1km Study Area

Event ID	Name	Description	Date
EWS39	Cuckfield By-Pass Route - Archaeological Survey	An archaeological survey was carried out after the topsoil had been removed during the construction of the Cuckfield Bypass. No archaeological features were found during the survey, although finds were recovered from the surface after the removal of the topsoil.	1988
EWS2144	Land at Bolney Road, Ansty and Staplefield - Desk-Based Assessment	Overall, the assessment has identified that the site has a moderate potential for evidence of medieval and post-medieval agricultural activity, and a generally low archaeological potential for all remaining past periods.	2016
EWS1919	Land at Bolney Road, Ansty - Evaluation	Thirteen trenches were dug across the site, targeting those parts of the site which would be most affected by new buildings. Despite the fact that the site does not appear to have been disturbed in the past, no archaeological finds or features were identified during the evaluation.	2019