University of Salford MANCHESTER

Historic Environment Assessment

GMSF Land Allocations, Trafford

GMA46 Timperley Wedge

Appendix 4 (Historic Landscape)

Client:
Trafford Council

Technical Report:
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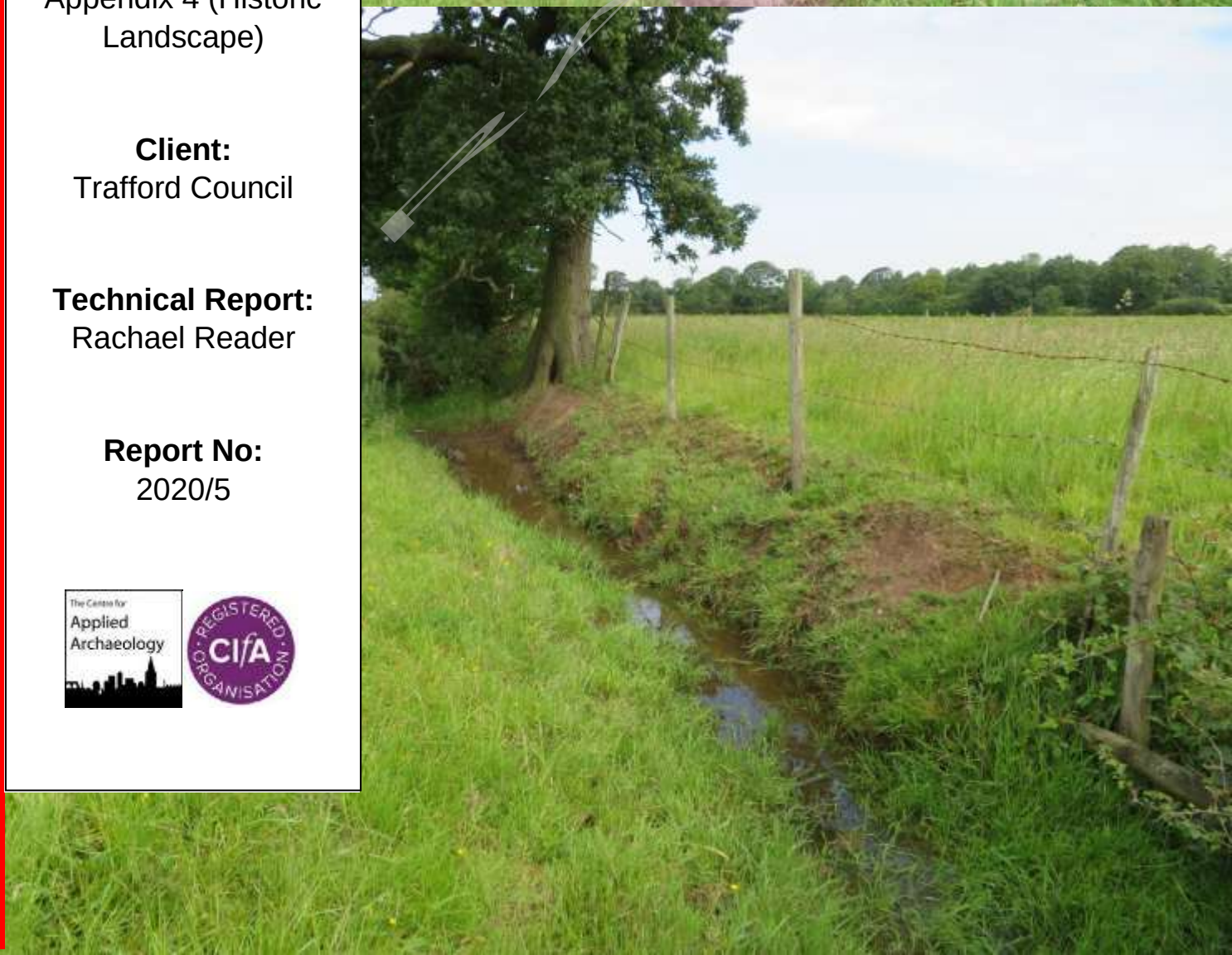
The Centre for Applied Archaeology

CIfA REGISTERED ORGANISATION



Contents

1. Introduction

1.1 Introduction

This Appendix contains the detailed evidence base for the historic landscape resource within the Timperley Wedge Land Allocation area (herein referred to as 'the Site').

The rural landscape is a treasured resource and its form and character reflects past human activity as well as topographical and geographical influences. The landscape of an area has many qualities and values including visual character, biodiversity, recreation and economic value. The Site has a varied historic landscape which reflect different influences and patterns of use.

1.2 Approach to Analysis

The methodology is outlined in Appendix 1 and the following is split into several Chapters, focusing on the different aspects of historic landscape:

- Overall characterisation: the sensitivity of the historic landscape to change has been assessed and is shown in Figure 1. From this assessment, a number of significant landscape features have been highlighted for further analysis, outlined below;
- Historic field boundaries: a rapid assessment has been carried out to identify those boundaries depicted on historic mapping and which add historic character to the Site. These have been digitised and are presented within Figures 2 and 3;
- Historic roads: a rapid assessment has been carried out to identify roads which have survived, either as main roads or tracks/footpaths in the modern landscape;
- Sunderland deer park: this has been discussed in more detail within Appendix 2, however those elements that are visible above ground are also highlighted here;
- Other Features: a number of other features were identified that also contribute to the historic character of the Site. This includes former marl pits, ancient/semi-natural woodlands (as defined by Natural England) and other areas of long-standing woodland identified on the ground as well as on historic mapping;

- All Figures are presented in Chapter 5.

2. Overall Characterisation

2.1 Description of the Timperley Wedge Landscape

Trafford's Landscape Character Assessment (Trafford Council 2004) identified seven different landscape types within the local authority area that define the predominantly rural areas. The Site consists of the wooded claylands and is characterised by gently rolling topography, with minor watercourses. Timperley Brook is the main watercourse across the Site and is a shallow stream with relatively steep sides. This landscape is predominantly pastoral, is largely enclosed and its historic landscape character is predominantly Post-Medieval in origins (see below). The settlement is dispersed across the landscape, with scattered farmsteads and small centres of population around Davenport Green and towards Timperley within the north- west part of the Site.

The historic landscape character has been retained across a large part of the Site, with a well preserved Post-Medieval field system, which in turn respects the Medieval deer park. The development of Brooks Drive in the 19th century also adds a dimension to the historic landscape character and contrasts with the more organically developed field system. However, parts of the historic landscape have been eroded because of later residential development, as well as the growth of market gardening which led to the development of large nurseries.

Figure 1 shows the sensitivity of the different Historic Environment Character Areas (HECAs) in terms of their historic landscape character and the features that survive within. The sensitivity of each area is summarised below.

HECA No.	HECA Name	Sensitivity of Historic Landscape
1	Clay and Wood Lane Nurseries	Medium
2	Thorley Lane	Low
3	Ridgeway, Southway and Lane Nurseries	Medium
4	Clay Lane	Medium
5	Thorley Lane (North)	Low
6	Ridgeway Road (West)	Low
7	Hale Country Club and Bowdon Rugby Club	Low
8	Fairfield/Ridgeway Lane	Low
9	Manor Farm	Low

10	Brooks Drive	High
11	Davenport Green	Low
12	Whitecarr/Dobinetts Lane	High
13	Shay/Clay Lanes (Sunderland deer park)	High
14	Davenport Green Wood	High
15	Fields around Davenport Green Wood	Medium
16	Fields south of Thorley Lane	Medium
17	East of Brooks Drive	Medium
18	Davenport Green Farm	Medium

Table 1 Summary of historic landscape sensitivity

2.2 Historic Field Boundaries

Figures 2 and 3 show the field boundaries identified that can be seen on tithe maps for Timperley (published 1838), Baguley (published 1839) and Hale (published 1842) townships and/or the first edition Ordnance Survey map (published 1882). Field boundaries running along roads and natural features such as rivers were hard to define and it is not clear whether these would have been present historically. The analysis shows that a large number of historic field boundaries survive across the Site and probably reflect piecemeal enclosure of the landscape after the deer park had been disimparked. Many of these retain banks and ditches as well as mature trees (Plate 1, see also Figure 3 for location). Survival east of Roaring Gate Lane and Brooks Drive, as well as north of Whitecarr Lane is not as prevalent, although despite later development, there are remnants of boundaries particularly within HECA17.

Plate 1 Example of a historic field boundary within the Site. The remnants of the bank and outline of the ditch shows that this boundary has barely altered since the Post-Medieval period. (See Figure 3 for location)

2.3 Historic Roads

Figure 4 shows the survival of historic routeways, which are shown on tithe map and still in use today. The majority of the existing roads are likely to have been in existence since the Medieval period and possibly earlier; there is a reference to Roaring Gate Lane from in the 18th century although roads almost always pre-date their earliest recorded references. Ash Lane is probably Medieval in origins and the course it follows, respects the Sunderland deer park boundary on the western side. Most of the roads still used today were in existence by the early 19th century, with the exception of Brooks Drive. Their courses have changed little, with no evidence for straightening, widening or re-diverting which reflects the lack of development across the landscape (see also Appendix 3).

3. The Landscape Features of Timperley Wedge

3.1 Introduction

A number of features that form part of the historic landscape have been recorded, including those still surviving relating to Sunderland deer park (also see Appendix 2), Brooks Drive and woodland identified by Natural England as ancient/semi-natural as well as woodland identified on tithe maps. These are all displayed on Figures 5-7.

3.2 Sunderland deer park

3.2.1 Introduction

The historic background is covered within Appendix 1, with a more detailed section on the deer park included within Appendix 2. This section presents a summary of the features that still survive as prominent features within the landscape. Figure 8 shows the location of the plates, below.

3.2.2 Park pale

The upstanding remains of the park pale are represented by a small bank with an interior ditch running from the south side of Whitecarr Lane, with a number of mature trees and multiple plant species and has been traced over a distance of around 450m from NW-SE (NGR 379994, 387203 to 380216, 386880). The feature probably had a fence atop the bank originally and the interior ditch was also dug to prevent deer from leaping out of the park. Its condition varies along its course, with the ditch not present all along the interior of the bank and signs of erosion along the bank itself. Nevertheless, the bank does not appear to be a continuous feature and where it does survive, it is only slight in nature.

Plate 2 The surviving park pale boundary, looking north. Note the presence of mature trees and remains of a bank. Also shown is the possible remains of a fish pond to the left (see Figure 8 for location)

Plate 3 Looking north along the bank and the interior ditch, which survive in places along the park pale (see Figure 8 for location)

It is not clear where the park boundary would have been beyond its confirmed course to the south. There is a break in the boundary where the path from Roaring Gate Farm comes in from the east and it seems likely that it would have continued south along here. The hedgerow along this section is more broken, however there is a slight bank surviving in places (see Plate 4 and Figure 8 for location), as well as indications of a ditch elsewhere (see Plate 5 and Figure 8 for location). Its course beyond this, to the east of Buttery House Farm, cannot be confirmed although there are historic field boundaries within this area. However, the exact course of the boundary could be revealed through archaeological investigation.

Plate 4 This is thought to be the continuation of the deer park boundary beyond its confirmed course. A slight bank can be seen where the boundary is fenced (see Figure 8 for location)

Plate 5 Possible continuation of the deer park boundary. Here the waterlogging along the hedgerow could indicate the presence of a ditch although there is little trace of a bank (see Figure 8 for location)

3.2.3 Buttery House Farm Moated Site

The archaeological detail on the moated site is detailed within Appendix 2. It consists of a relatively flat platform and the northern, and parts of the eastern and western arms of the moat, still survive as substantial water filled features. A public footpath/track crosses the moated site and appears to have been levelled up at some stage, possibly with demolition material from the farm. It has been ascertained from the site visits that the track does not form the southern part of the moat as had been previously thought. The western arm can be seen continuing southwards as a shallow depression which when visited in January 2020, had become waterlogged. In addition, the continuation of the eastern arm is hinted at by the presence of water, however it cannot be traced as a visible feature in the landscape. Other features that still survive, related to the later use of the farm, include stone gateposts which can be seen, currently obscured by hedgerows.

Plate 6 The northern arm of the moat at Buttery House Farm survives and is water-filled, looking north-east

When the site was first visited in June 2019, much of the site was covered with scrub woodland and was heavily overgrown. Demolition material was still visible across some parts of the platform. However the site visit in January 2020 showed that some of the scrub had been cleared and there is evidence for vehicles being driven across the moat platform, which could have damaged any surviving archaeological remains (see Plate 7). Google Earth also shows that the site had regenerated scrub woodland on it, some of which has been recently cleared. This could cause erosion and means that the site is at risk from further damage.

Plate 7 Vehicle tracks at Buttery House Farm, over building foundations shown in the foreground

Other features relating to Buttery House Farm, is the survival of stone gateposts and also the track which leads to the former farm from Shay Lane. There is a possibility that this has always formed a routeway and could have originally served the moated site and the deer park.

Plate 8 Buttery House Lane, looking south-east. This track may have some antiquity as it appears to have always served Buttery House Farm

3.2.4 Fishponds

The evidence for potential Medieval fishponds has been outlined in Appendix 2 and of the three sets defined, only one is located within the park boundary and has had previous archaeological work carried out to date these features. Those within the park have been identified just to the west of the upstanding park pale and consist of up to 8 ponds arranged in a line, broadly orientated NW-SE (centred at 380098, 386961). Five of these still survive within the landscape, two have been identified on LiDAR and a further one was excavated as part of the pipeline scheme (Feature 54).

Those that still survive appear to be seasonally filled, with lower water levels observed during the site visits in June 2019 then higher in January 2020. There is no surface remains of any interconnecting channels and the ponds are located between 40 and 100m distance from each other.

The other two clusters of ponds that survive outside the park boundary could not be accessed during the recent site visit. The possible fish pond complex identified to the east of the park boundary was visited in January 2020, the ponds appear to have merged together, probably due to the high water levels at the time of the site visit. It

remains to be definitively established whether the features do indeed represent former Medieval or Post-Medieval fish ponds.

3.3 Brooks Drive

3.3.1 Historical Background: Brooks Family

A brief overview of the Brooks family history and their connection with the Site was discussed within Appendix 1, however a more detailed background is provided below. The Drive was created by Samuel Brooks (b.1793 d.1863) in the 1860s, who was a banker and property speculator who bought vast tracts of land across North Cheshire. The Brooks family were originally from Great Harwood near Whalley in Lancashire and Samuel's father, William, created his wealth in raw cotton dealing. In partnership with his friend Roger Cunliffe, William established the firm Cunliffe-Brooks & Co in Blackburn in 1792. They set up a calico business and began to offer banking services for their patrons, which in turn led them to establish a banking arm of the business. His son Samuel became a partner in 1815 at the age of 22 and he then established a branch in Manchester in 1822. When William died in 1846, the bank moved its head office to Manchester to capitalise on the growing wealth and increased business here during the Industrial Revolution. The bank was eventually absorbed within the Lloyds Group in 1900.

It is not clear when Samuel began property speculating, however one of his earliest recorded major purchases was around a quarter of the Sale township in 1829. In the early 1830s, he purchased land around Jackson's Moss (near Chorlton-cum-Hardy) as well as what was to become Whalley Range, named after his place of birth. By 1856 he had purchased large swathes of land across Baguley, Partington, Hale, Timperley, Ashton-on-Mersey and Carrington. He had also bought more land in Sale, around what was to become Brooklands and set out on a large programme of improvement of the generally unproductive and boggy farmland by draining large areas and clearing woodland. He invested in new roads and developed villa residences across the landscape as well as a train station at Brooklands, which opened in 1859.

Brooks later developed Brooks Drive, which connected his residence in Hale Barns over 4 miles away to Brooklands station. This road is lauded as an ambitious project, however it was never completed; it reached Hale Road in Hale Barns at its most southerly point. Part of this followed the existing Roaring Gate Lane and it appears

little was done to modify existing roads; the parts that were constructed were hedge and tree lined with plantations around 7m wide either side. Originally it had a path around 2.5m wide with a double line of hawthorn hedges and the plantations had species such as Scots pine, oak and beech trees. Although the path fell into disrepair, a group of volunteers have been working to restore the path for a number of years. Today, only one line of hedge survives along most of its course however this allows for a wider path and better usage for pedestrians and cyclist.

3.3.2 The Road within the Site

Two parts of the road run through the Site in a broadly north-south direction; the first part runs from Ridgeway Road in the north, towards Dobbinetts Lane, where it slightly changes angle and runs southwards to meet Whitecarr Lane and Roaring Gate Lane. This part is still fully open as a public footpath and still retains a hedge and tree line, although only a single hedge still remains with a compacted earth surface. The southern part of the Drive runs southwards from close to the junction of Roaring Gate Lane, Shay Lane and Thorley Lane and continues beyond the Site boundary towards Hale Barns to the south-west. It lies just outside the Site boundary, however it does have an integral relationship with it; the condition of the Drive has also been discussed within Appendix 3, in terms of its relationship with the listed Davenport Green Hall. The hedge no longer survives along this part of the Drive and a number of trees have been removed, thinning the plantation (Plate 11). In addition, a metal fence has been erected along the boundary between the Hall and the Drive (Plate 9) and a gate erected by the Brooks family is in poor condition (Plate 10).

Plate 9 Looking south-west along Brooks Drive, showing the thin plantation, lack of hedge and inappropriate use of fencing materials

Plate 10 The private gateway created by Samuel or William Cunliffe Brooks to lead onto Brooks Drive. It is currently in poor condition.

Plate 11 The screening along the south-eastern side of the Drive is in poor condition and the original hedges no longer survive.

3.4 Woodland

Davenport Green Wood, within the southern part of the Site, is designated as an area of Ancient/Semi-Natural woodland. There are also smaller, non-designated areas of woodland, especially along the eastern part of the Site which are shown on the tithe map (see Figure 6).

3.5 Marl Pits

A number of isolated ponds can be seen scattered across the Site and are shown on the tithe map; some still survive in the landscape (those surviving can be seen on Figure 7). These have been interpreted as marl pits, which were dug to access lower geological deposits which could then be spread on agricultural land to improve the soil. The underlying geology of till is generally dominated by heavier soils which are not conducive to arable farming which is why they are prevalent across the landscape.

A typical marl pit on plan has a shallow square end and a steep rounded end, the shallow end was used to drag the marl out of the pit which could reach up to 2m in depth. They would often be abandoned after less than 12 months due to water filling

them, therefore several could be dug in a small area. This is why there is difficulty distinguishing these from potential fish ponds related to Sunderland deer park. Marling is a practice recorded in Roman times, however they are particularly prevalent from the Medieval period onwards. The practice declined during the 19th century due to increasing availability of alternative fertilisers and because most of the area has predominantly been used for pastoral farming since, very few have been filled in, but were rather seen as useful for providing water for farm animals.

4. Recommendations

4.1 Introduction

The analysis of the historic landscape character has found that there are a number of surviving features which could be incorporated into any future development to help create a sense of place and maintain a visual and tactile link with the Site's past.

4.2 Historic Field Boundaries and Roads

4.2.1 Enhancements

Those field boundaries are recommended for retention and incorporation as part of the green infrastructure of the area. The rapid assessment has shown that in some areas of the Site, particularly the former deer park, there appears to be a high species diversity and trees were noted in several hedgerows. Many also have surviving banks and ditches and reflect the piecemeal enclosure of the landscape after the deer park had been disimparked. This means that a number of the hedgerows in this area are likely to have pre-Inclosure Act origins, and may thus have the potential to be considered as 'Important' under the Hedgerows Regulations 1997. It should be noted however that consideration of 'Importance' under the Hedgerow Regulations 1997 falls outside the scope of this assessment and so if clarity on this matter is needed than a detailed hedgerow analysis should be commissioned.

Many of the roads within the Site are narrow country lanes with no pedestrian walkways. Their character has changed little and these roads contribute to the wider rural landscape setting.

4.3 Sunderland deer park

4.3.1 Enhancements

The potential for scheduling surviving features of the deer park have already been discussed in Appendix 2. The moated site, possible fishponds and the surviving park pale should be subject to conservation management plans to identify ways to protect them and prevent future damage and erosion. This could involve archaeological excavation and the opportunities to involve the local community have already been highlighted in Appendix 2. They should be preserved and presented as part of future development. A buffer should also be applied along the eastern side of the surviving part of the boundary and development should be avoided close to the boundary.

4.3.2 Opportunities

The history and features of deer park should be presented within heritage trails to allow people to move across the landscape and appreciate the surviving features and potential archaeological remains. There is also an opportunity to produce a Greater Manchester Past Revealed booklet on deer parks, particularly in light of the features identified at Warburton (see GMA45).

4.4 Brooks Drive

4.4.1 Enhancements

The northern part of Brooks Drive is in good condition although the surface could be upgraded to allow more people to walk and ride along it. However there are poor connections with the wider road network within the Site as these are not pedestrian friendly. This should be looked at as part of a wider transport network whilst also respecting the contribution the roads make to the rural character of the landscape.

The southern part of the Drive, although outside of the area, could form a vital public transport link with the Site and Hale Barns to the south. Any enhancements could also help reduce the impact of any development on the setting of Davenport Green Hall (see Appendix 3). This should include discussions with the owner of Davenport Green Hall to remove inappropriate fencing, restore the gate and enhance the screening on this side. The tree screening should also be enhanced on the eastern side and hedges reinstated to match the northern section. Fencing has also been erected across the Drive near Davenport Green wood, blocking access onto Ashley Road and towards Hale Barns. This should, if appropriate, be removed and public access reinstated.

4.4.2 Opportunities

There are opportunities to incorporate Brooks Drive into a wider heritage trail and interpretation boards/points could be used to detail the history of the Brooks family and how they helped transform the landscape in south Manchester and north Cheshire. There is/was a Friends of Brooks Drive group, although it is not clear whether this group still exists. Nevertheless, a community group could be re/established to identify how to maintain the Drive and identify opportunities to engage the community in bringing the Drive back into full use and re-establishing its link with Brooklands.

5.4 Other Features

5.4.1 Enhancements

The historic woodlands and marl pits identified within this assessment are recommended for retention. Any further assessment should also bring in the input of ecologists to help determine their condition and significance from an ecological perspective.

5.4.2 Opportunities

There is an opportunity to preserve the surviving marl pits within green infrastructure. The Royal Horticulture Society estimates that around 70% of ponds have been lost from the UK countryside, therefore those that survive have increased importance for wildlife (RHS 2020). There is an opportunity to contribute to the ecological heritage and there is also educational potential. Larger ones have the potential as well to be used for fishing purposes. There are examples of projects specifically targeting marl pits within the countryside, such as the Great Twin Pond Dig and others in Norfolk (Sayer *et al* 2013).

Research by the Woodland Trust has shown the benefits of preserving natural greenspace, like woodlands (2010, 3). There are opportunities to find ways to manage these woodlands sustainably and maximise public benefits through identifying their ecological potential and how to involve the community in managing and using woodland. Creating community woodlands is one possible way forward and there are a number of examples of these, such as Vert Woods and Monkton Community Woodland.

The area around Timperley became well known for its market gardening from the 18th century onwards and evidenced by the establishment of nurseries within the Site during the early 20th century. The heritage of food production around this area was celebrated within the Forgotten Fields project which ran between 2009 and 2012. This looked at the history and memories of growing some of the celebrated local crops such as Timperley Early rhubarb and Bowdon Down potatoes. However the website is no longer accessible and there is an opportunity to reinstate this website and incorporate the research generated into enhanced projects to engage the local community with local food production, with a starting focus point being the local heritage fruits and vegetables named above.

5. Figures

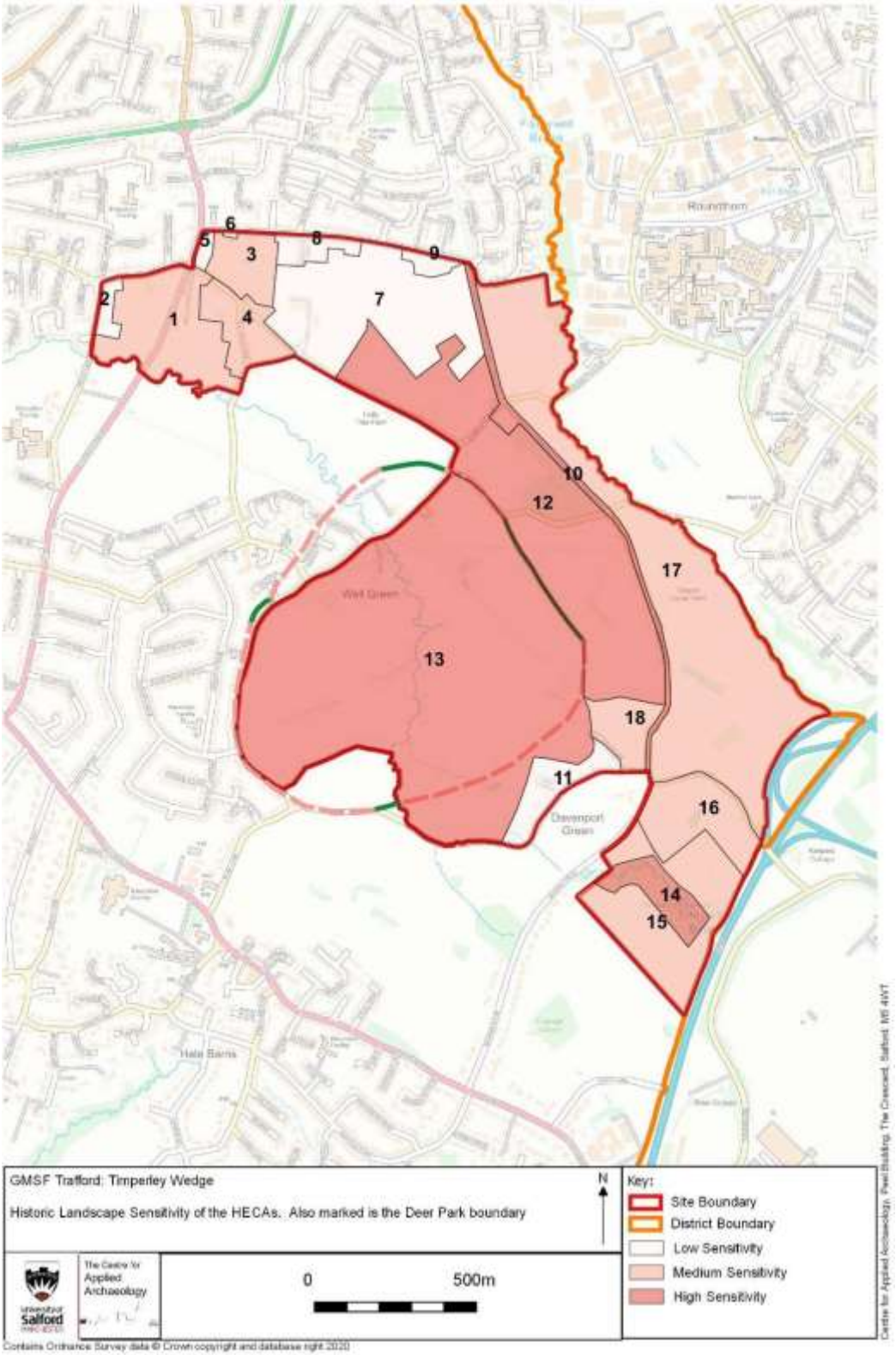


Figure 1 Map of Historic Landscape Sensitivity

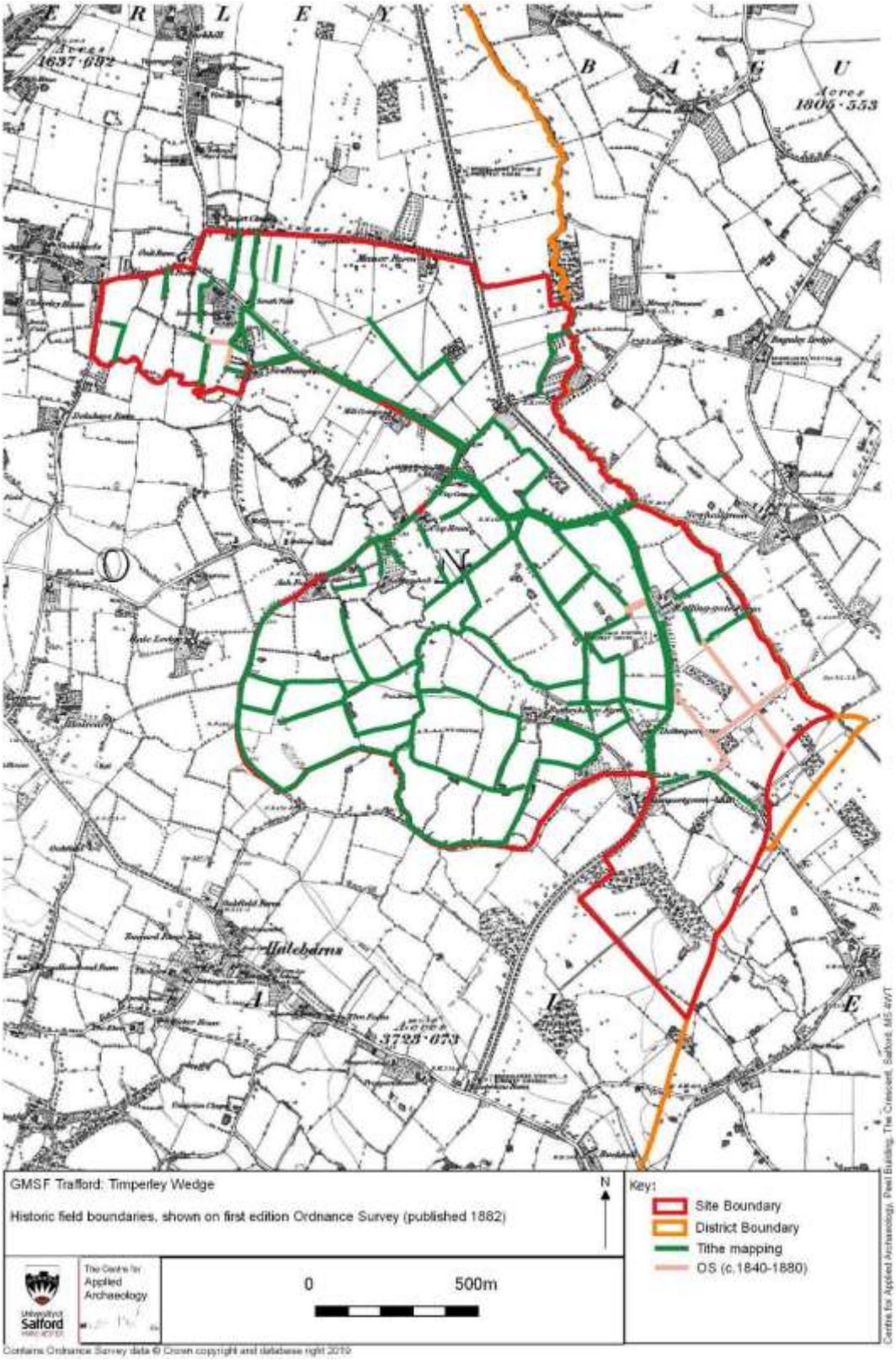


Figure 2 Map of surviving historic field boundaries, shown on the first edition OS map

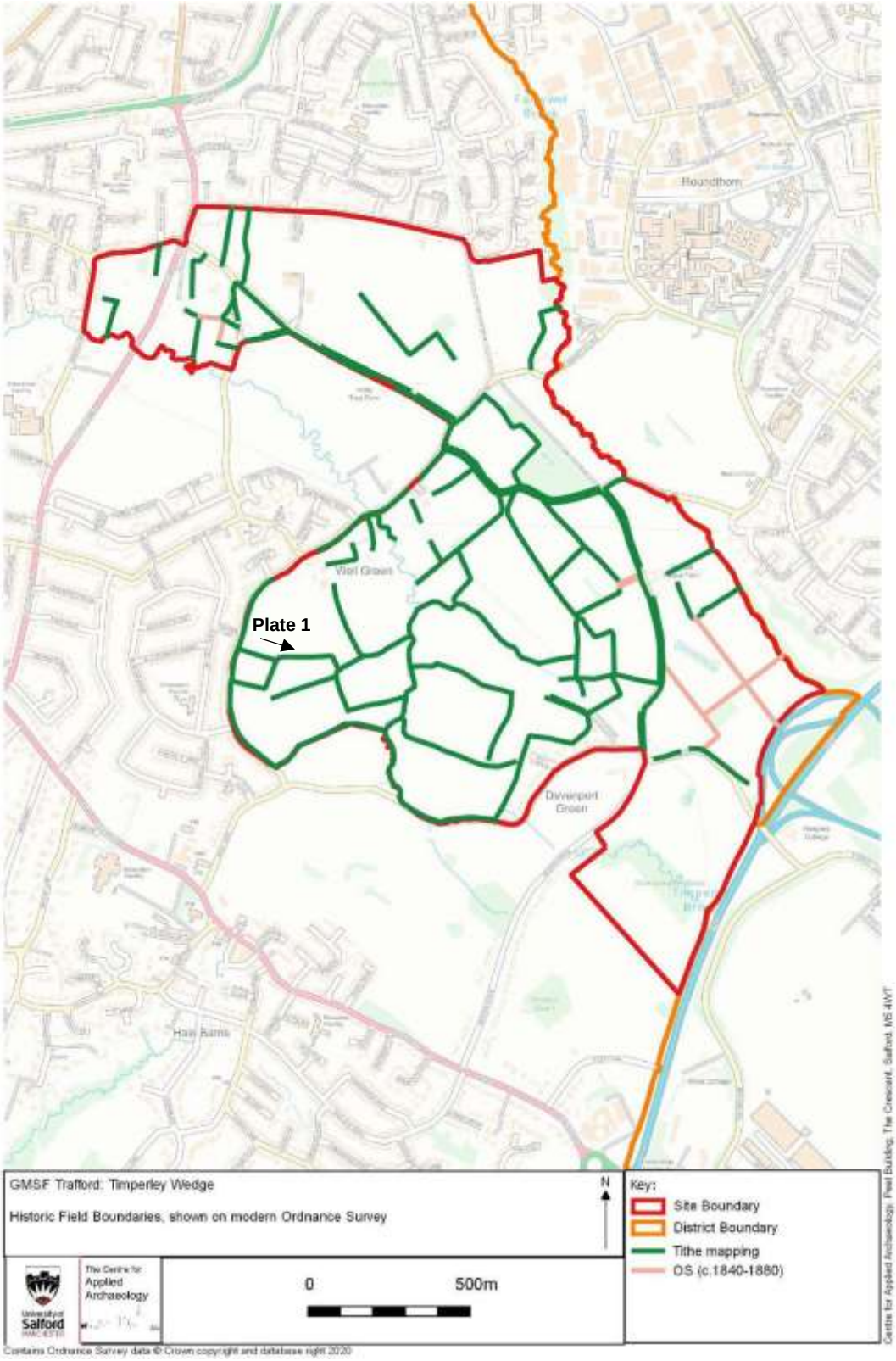


Figure 3 Historic field boundaries, shown on the modern Ordnance Survey map. Also shown is the example field boundary from p3

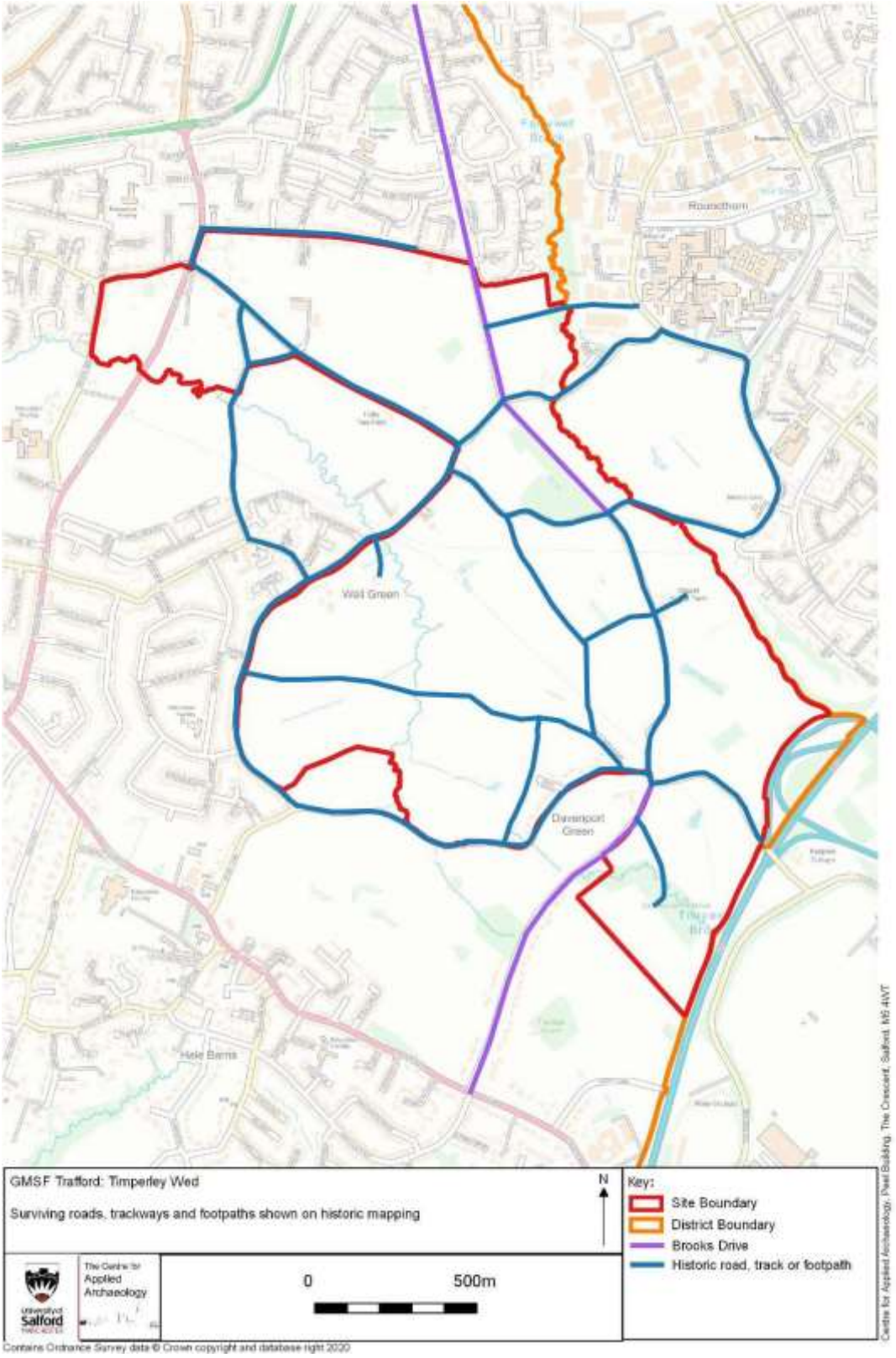


Figure 4 Surviving Roads, trackways and paths shown on historic map

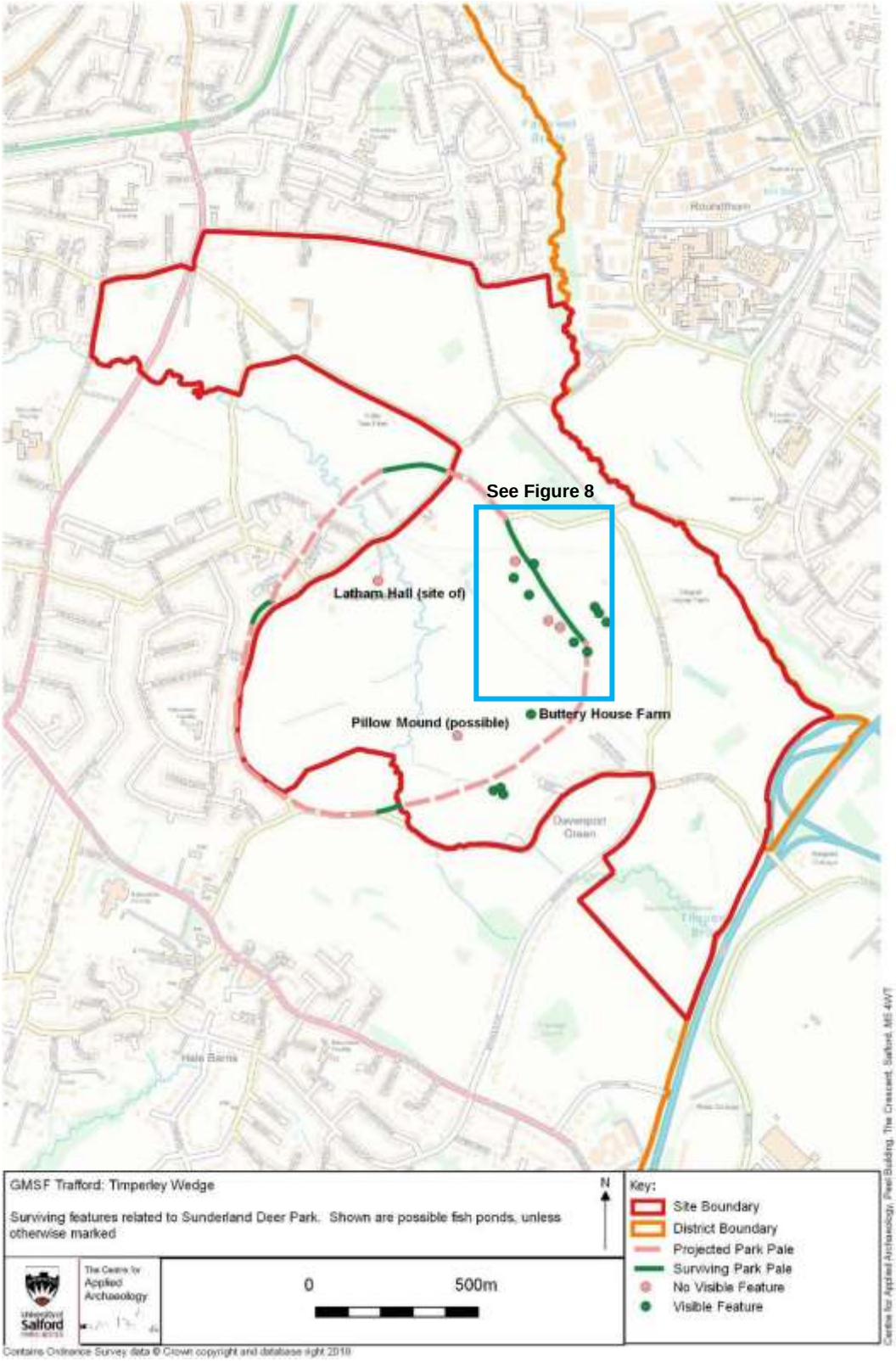


Figure 5 Surviving features relating to the deer park

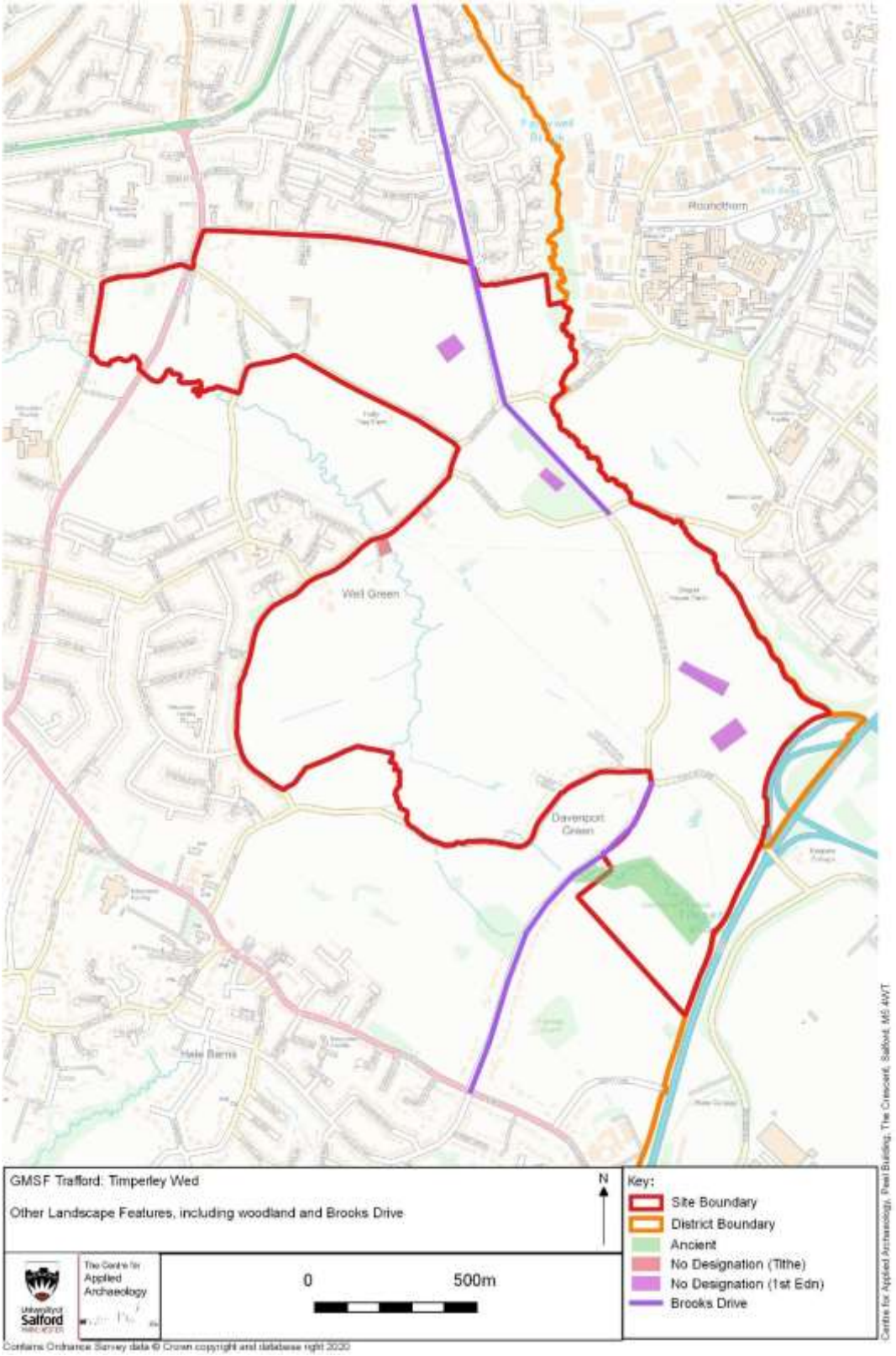


Figure 6 Other landscape features, including woodland and Brooks Drive. The woodland areas shown on purple are late 19th century creations

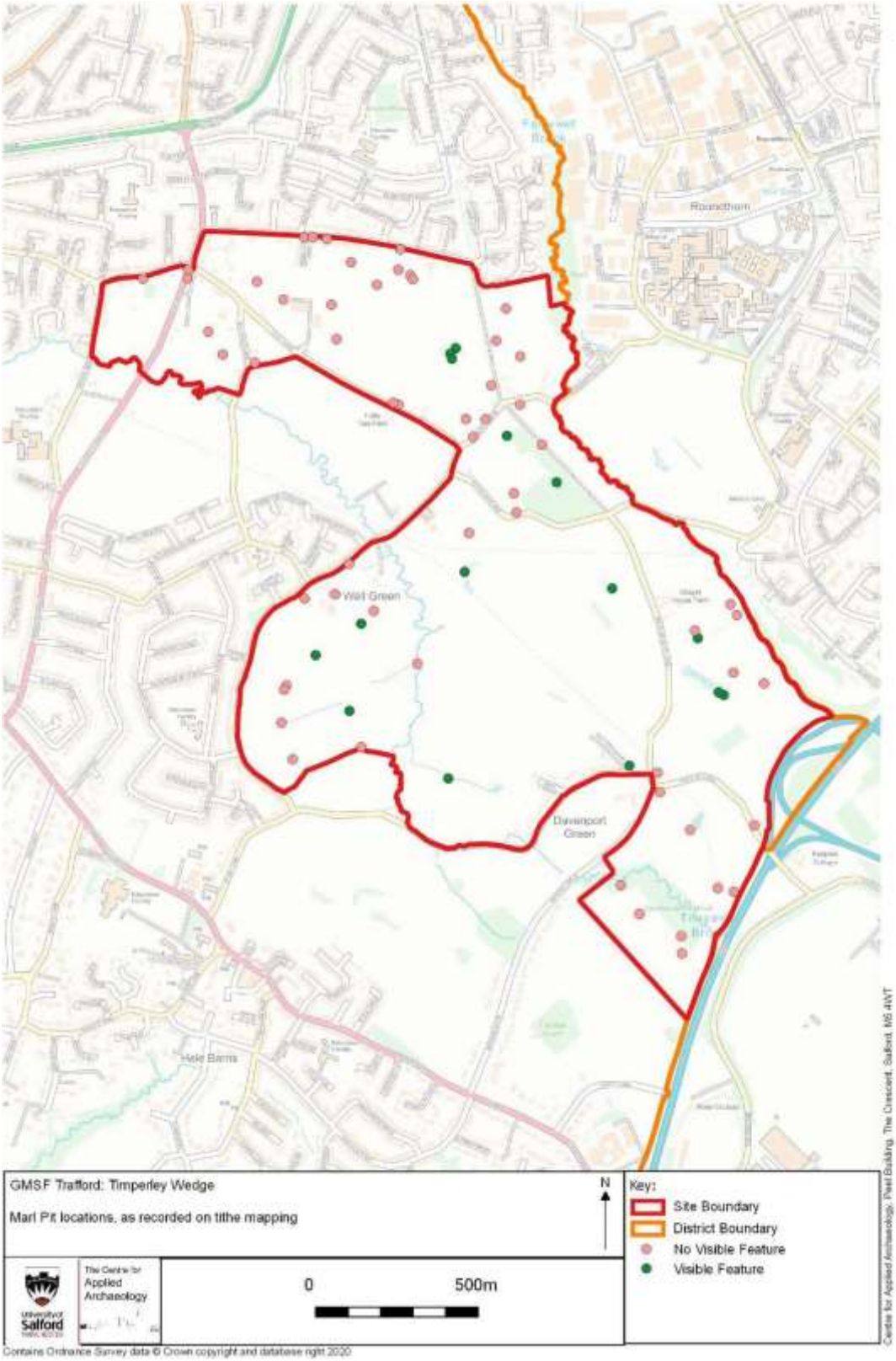


Figure 7 Map showing visible and former marl pits across the landscape

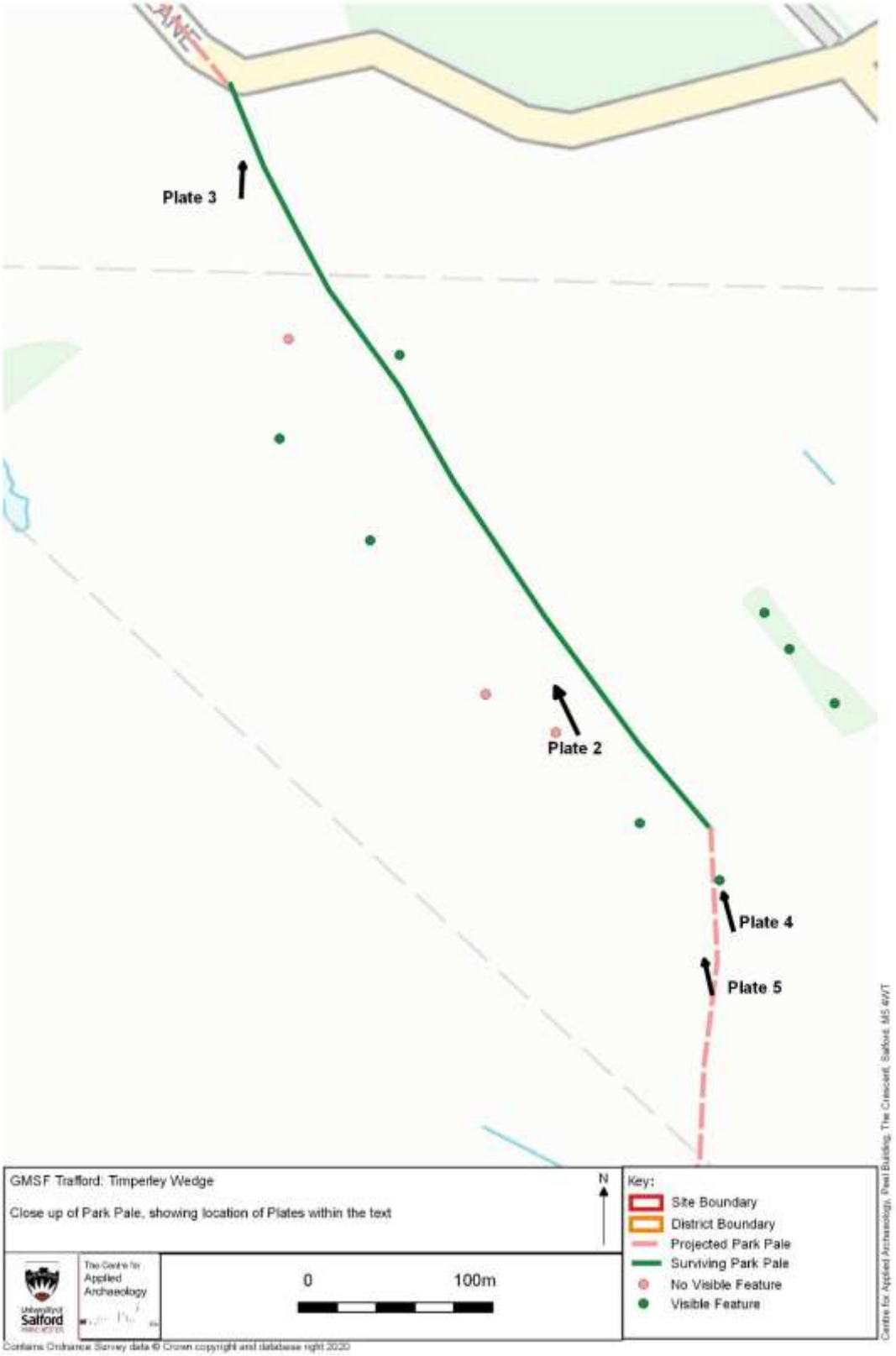


Figure 8 Close up of park pale boundary showing photograph locations (see plates within text)