

Brandhall Village Desk-Based Assessment

Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council

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Quality information

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1. Introduction

Background

- 1.1 AECOM have been commissioned to produce a Desk-Based Assessment for the proposed development of the land comprising the former site of the Brandhall Golf Club, Oldbury, hereafter referred to as the Site. The proposed development is a mixed-use Site. It would consist of c.500 proposed new residential buildings, as well as a primary school and parkland incorporating the existing vegetation (the Proposed Development).
- 1.2 The Site is located within the former Brandhall Golf Course in Sandwell, West Midlands. The Site consists of an area comprising approximately 36.3ha. The Site is bounded by residential streets to the north and south, the M5 to the west and A4123 to the east. The Site contains a number of mature trees interspersed throughout the golf course and a public right of way passes through the Site.

Scope

- 1.3 This report has been prepared to determine the cultural heritage baseline for the Site and the impact of the Proposed Development on the cultural heritage within the Site and wider study area. This report conforms to the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). It describes the Site, including the heritage assets within the study area.
- 1.4 This report is structured in seven sections, with illustrations and appendices at the end.
 - Introduction and general assessment background;
 - Details of the Proposed Development is provided in Section 2;
 - The legislative and planning policy framework is provided in Section 3 (Legislation and Planning Policy) which also includes an overview of Historic England policy and guidance;
 - The methodology for assessment and determination of the study area is set out in Section 4 (Assessment Methodology);
 - A description of the Site's historical and archaeological background is set out in Section 5 (Baseline Assessment);
 - Section 6 provides an assessment of known and potential cultural heritage assets within the Site which have the potential to be impacted by the Proposed Development; and
 - Section 7 summarises the results of the assessment.

Objectives

- 1.5 This desk-based assessment identifies heritage constraints within, and around, the Site and provides relevant and proportional mitigation strategies to reduce the impact of the Proposed Development where required. The objectives of this document are as follows:
 - To place the Site within its full historic and archaeological context through the collection of baseline information;
 - To identify and map all designated and non-designated heritage assets present within the Site and surrounding study area, as well as to assess the significance of potentially affected assets (as defined in Section 4.2 below);
 - In relation to the above, to assess components of the assets' setting which contribute to their significance, where relevant;

- To determine the presence of previously unrecorded non-designated archaeological features and historic structures;
- To determine the potential for the presence of archaeological remains which are as yet unknown; and
- To identify the extent of previous ground disturbance which may have affected archaeological survival.

2. Legislation and Planning Policy

Legislation

The Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979

- 2.1 The Act imposes a requirement for Scheduled Monument Consent for any works of demolition, repair and alteration that might affect a Scheduled Monument. The Act affords protection for York's designated Areas of Archaeological Importance (AAIs) and requires that the Operations Notice Procedure must be followed for all excavation and tipping operations within the designated area.

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

- 2.2 The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the Act) sets out the principal statutory provisions that must be considered in the determination of any application affecting listed buildings and conservation areas.
- 2.3 Section 66 of the Act states that in considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. By virtue of Section 1(5) of the Act a listed building includes any object or structure within its curtilage.
- 2.4 Section 72 of the Act establishes a general duty on a local planning authority or the Secretary of State with respect to any buildings or other land in a Conservation Area to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a Conservation Area.

Planning Policy

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

- 2.5 The NPPF (Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, 2018) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.
- 2.6 Section 16 of the NPPF specifically addresses the historic environment. Where changes are proposed, the NPPF sets out a clear framework to ensure that heritage assets are conserved, and where appropriate enhanced, in a manner that is consistent with their significance. Significance is defined in Annex 2 as being the, "value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic". Significance is not only derived from an asset's physical presence, but also from its setting. The setting of a heritage asset is defined in Annex 2 as, "the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve".
- 2.7 Paragraph 189 of the NPPF 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. Similarly there is a requirement on local planning authorities, having assessed the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal; to take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset (paragraph 190).
- 2.8 In determining planning applications, local planning authorities should take account of the following points:
- the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality;
 - the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness (paragraph 192); and

- opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place.
- 2.9 Paragraphs 193 to 197 of the NPPF introduce the concept that heritage assets can be harmed or lost through alteration, destruction or development within their setting. This harm ranges from less than substantial through to substantial. With regard to designated assets, paragraph 193 states that great weight should be placed on its conservation, irrespective of whether any potential harm is considered to be substantial or less than substantial. The paragraph goes further to say that the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be on its conservation. In paragraph 194, a distinction is made in respect of those assets of the highest significance (e.g. Scheduled Monuments, Grade I and grade II* listed buildings) where substantial harm to or loss should be wholly exceptional.
- 2.10 In instances where the proposed development would cause substantial harm to or the total loss of the significance of a designated asset, consent should be refused unless it can be demonstrated that it is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss (paragraph 195). In instances where development would cause less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated asset the harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal to provide a balanced judgement (paragraph 196).
- 2.11 In the case of non-designated assets, paragraph 197 states that the effect of the application on the significance of the asset should be considered in determining the application. A balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)

- 2.12 The PPG (Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, 2016) provides further advice and expands on the guidance and policy outlined in the NPPF.
- 2.13 Significance of heritage assets and its importance in decision taking is explored in Paragraph 009 of the PPG which states that heritage assets may be affected by direct physical change or by change in their setting. Being able to properly assess the nature, extent and importance of the significance of a heritage asset, and the contribution of its setting, is very important to understanding the potential impact and acceptability of development proposals (ID 18a-009-20140306 Last updated 23 07 2019).
- 2.14 Paragraph 013 of the PPG recognises that the contribution that setting makes to the significance of the heritage asset does not depend on there being public right or the ability to experience that setting. When assessing any application for development which may affect the setting of a heritage asset, local planning authorities may need to consider the implications of cumulative change (ID 18a-013-20140306 Last updated 23 07 2019).
- 2.15 The PPG discusses how to assess if there is substantial harm. It states that what matters in assessing if a proposal causes substantial harm is the impact of the significance of the heritage asset. Ultimately, whether a proposal causes substantial harm will be a judgement for the decision taker. However, it acknowledges that substantial harm is a high test so may not arise in many cases. A key consideration when assessing whether there is an adverse impact on a listed building is whether the adverse impact seriously affects a key element of its special architectural or historic interest. It is the degree of harm to the asset's significance rather than the scale of the development that is to be assessed (Paragraph: 017 Reference ID: 18a-017-20140306).

Local Planning Policy

Black Country Core Strategy:

- 2.16 Policy ENV2 states that all development should aim to protect and promote the special qualities, historic character and local distinctiveness of the Black Country in order to help maintain its cultural identity and strong sense of place. Development proposals are required to preserve and, where appropriate, enhance local character and those aspects of the historic environment together with their settings which are recognised as being of special historic, archaeological, architectural, landscape or townscape quality.

- 2.17 All proposals should aim to sustain and reinforce special character and conserve the historic aspects of the following locally distinctive elements of the Black Country. This includes, but is not limited to:
- Areas of extensive lower density suburban development of the mid 20th century including public housing and private developments of semi-detached and detached housing; and
 - Public open spaces, including Victorian and Edwardian municipal parks, often created upon and retaining elements of relict industrial landscape features.
- 2.18 In addition to statutorily designated and protected historic assets particular attention should be paid to the preservation and enhancement of:
- locally listed historic buildings and archaeological sites;
 - historic parks and gardens including their settings; and
 - locally designated special landscape areas and other heritage-based site allocations.
- 2.19 Development proposals that would potentially have an impact on any of the above distinctive elements should be supported by evidence included in Design and Access Statements which demonstrates that all aspects of the historic character and distinctiveness of the locality have been fully assessed and used to inform proposals. In some instances, local authorities may require developers to undertake detailed Historic Landscape Characterisation studies to support their proposals.

Sandwell Local Development Scheme 2020

- 2.20 The LDS produced by the Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council sets out the following timescales for the preparation and adoption of planning policy;
- Black Country Plan (formerly the Black Country Core Strategy) is scheduled for adoption April 2024; and
 - Sandwell Development Plan (formerly the Sandwell Site Allocations Document) is scheduled for adoption in 2025.

Historic England Guidance

- 2.21 Historic England has published a series of Good Practice Advice (GPA) of which those of most relevance to this appraisal are GPA2 - Managing Significance in Decision-taking (March 2015), GPA3 - The Setting of Heritage Assets (2nd Edition) (December 2017), and Advice Note 12 Statements of Heritage Significance (Oct. 2019).
- 2.22 GPA2 emphasises the importance of having a knowledge and understanding of the significance of heritage assets likely to be affected by the development and that the 'first step for all applicants is to understand the significance of any affected heritage asset and, if relevant the contribution of its setting to its significance' (para 4). Early knowledge of this information is also useful to a local planning authority in pre-application engagement with an applicant and ultimately in decision making (para 7).

GPA3 (Second Edition) provides advice on the setting of heritage assets and consolidates and supersedes earlier advice on that matter published by Historic England in 2015 and 2011 (Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets and Seeing the History in the View: A Method for Assessing Heritage Significance within Views).

Chartered Institute for Archaeologists

- 2.23 The baseline data was gathered in accordance with guidance published by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA), specifically the standard and guidance for historic environment desk-based assessment (CIfA 2020).

3. Methodology for determining the heritage baseline

Assessment methodology

3.1 The aims and objectives of this desk-based assessment are as follows:

- to describe the proposed development;
- to identify designated and non-designated heritage assets with the potential to be affected by the proposed development;
- to assess the impact of the proposals on the significance of heritage assets identified;
- to assess the archaeological potential of the Site and the impact of the proposals on deposits with archaeological potential; and
- to identify opportunities for enhancing the historic environment during the delivery of the proposed development.

Study Area

3.2 Professional judgement has been exercised to adopt a 500m study area from the Site boundary for identifying cultural heritage and archaeology for this assessment. Data will also be collected within a wider area in order to contextualise understanding of the Site within the surrounding archaeological landscape.

Asset Identification

3.3 All assets identified within the study area, irrespective of whether they would be affected by the Proposed Development, are listed in Appendix A. Assets are identified within the text by their National Heritage List for England (NHLE) and/or Historic Environment Record (HER) reference number (with the prefix MBL).

3.4 All heritage assets are shown on Figure 1.

Site visit

3.5 A site visit and walkover survey was conducted on 14th June 2021. The main objectives of the site visit were as follows:

- to carry out a visual inspection of the Site and assess heritage assets and their settings which have the potential to be impacted by the proposed development,
- to identify further non-designated built heritage assets;
- to observe ground conditions and visible evidence of ground disturbance and land use which have may affected potential for archaeological potential.

Data Sources

3.6 The preparation of the heritage baseline was informed by materials gathered from a range of sources, including:

- Sandwell Historic Environment Record;
- Sandwell Archives and Local Studies;
- Historical mapping,

- Available online sources, such as the National Heritage List;
- Available online LiDAR imaging (<https://houseprices.io/lab/lidar/>);
- Available geotechnical data and other assessments as appropriate and available; and
- An archaeological walkover survey to assess known sites and assess the area for potential for additional unrecorded sites and/or built heritage.

Assumptions and data gaps

3.7 The following limitations and assumptions apply to this report:

- The core HER dataset used was provided by Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council on 24th March 2021. Any subsequent changes to these datasets have not been captured by this assessment.

Archaeological Potential

3.8 The potential for an area to contain archaeological remains is rated 'high', 'medium', 'low', 'negligible', or 'unknown'. This rating is based on an understanding of the archaeological resource as a whole and its national, regional and local context. This includes the number, proximity and significance of known and predicted archaeological/historical sites or find spots within the Site and its surrounding Study Area.

4. Heritage Baseline

Introduction

- 4.1 This section provides a description of the archaeological and historical background of the area as well as heritage assets recorded within the Site boundary and Study Area.
- 4.2 There are five assets recorded within the 500m Study Area of the Site within the HER (see Figure 1), which consist of all non-designated assets, three of which lie within the Site boundary. There are no designated assets located within 500m of the Site boundary, although there are two listed buildings within 1km of the Site. Designated assets are recorded with their NHLE number while non-designated assets are recorded with their HER number.

Designated Assets

- 4.3 There are no designated assets within 500m of the Site. Within 1km of the Site there are two listed buildings. These are both located to the south-east of the Site. The first is the Grade II listed Roman Catholic Church of Our Lady and St Hubert (1433148). The church was built in 1934 in an early-Christian basilican style. The church is located approximately 670m south-east of the Site.
- 4.4 The other listed building is The Wernley (1415310), also Grade II listed and located approximately 850m south-east of the Site. The building is a public house, built in 1933-4 in the Jacobean revival style.
- 4.5 The nearest registered park and garden is located approximately 1.13km east of the Site. Warley Park is a Grade II registered park and garden (1001301) laid out in the late 18th century according to the designs of Humphry Repton.
- 4.6 There are no World Heritage Sites, scheduled monuments, conservation areas, registered parks and gardens or registered battlefields within 1km of the Site.

Non-Designated Assets

- 4.7 There are five non-designated assets within the 500m study area, including three within the Site boundary. These comprise ridge and furrow across the golf course (MBL3192) as well as the sites of Brand Hall manor house (MBL2704) and a chapel at Chapel Croft (MBL2996) both of which lie at the south-eastern end of the Site.

Topography, geology and soils

- 4.8 Within the Black Country HLC, the Site falls within character area SD12: Warley, which lies over an area of sandstone and mudstone at a height of 180-220m, higher than surrounding character areas.
- 4.9 The most significant feature of the historic landscape is the South Staffordshire Coalmine. Industry such as mining and ironworking have altered the formerly agricultural landscape, leaving quarries and spoil heaps in addition to catalysing the expansion of residential developments.

Archaeological and historical background

Prehistoric (Up to AD43)

- 4.10 There is one asset of prehistoric date located within the study area. This is a scatter of worked prehistoric flint found within a garden on Pound Road (MBL2840), located at the northern end of the study area.
- 4.11 Evidence of the early prehistoric is generally limited to find spots of stone tools and geological deposits. The evidence of early prehistoric periods within the West Midlands is 'overall sparse', although unevenly distributed. While central areas of the region have generally recorded a low density of early prehistoric

remains, there are outer areas of this region where significant remains have been recorded. These are particularly noted in the river valleys of the Trent, Avon and Severn as well as upland regions of Staffordshire, Herefordshire and Shropshire (Garwood, 2011, 10).

- 4.12 Later prehistoric monuments are notable within the region. Bronze Age (2400-800BC) round barrows have been recorded in dense concentrations around the outer edges of the West Midlands while large concentrations of ring ditches have been recorded within the river valleys of the Upper Severn, Teme, the Avon and the Trent (Garwood, 2011, 69). Although evidence of monuments is sparser within the inner and urban areas of the West Midlands, the Birmingham area has recorded significant concentrations of prehistoric burnt mound remains (Garwood, 2011, 104).
- 4.13 While the Site is situated in an urban setting with limited evidence for the prehistoric, it has been suggested that early remains may have been built-over during urban expansions, rather than be entirely absent from the area (Garwood, 2011, 70).

Roman (AD43-410)

- 4.14 There are no assets of Roman date recorded within the study area.
- 4.15 The West Midlands is situated between two distinct areas of Roman archaeology, the south-east with its towns and villas, and the north-west with more military settlements consisting of legionary forts and camps (Cleary, 2011, 127). The region includes large settlements such as the civitas capital, Wroxeter and legionary fortress as well as smaller forts and villas dotted throughout the West Midlands (Cleary, 2011, 128). A Roman road also runs through the region between settlements. The line of Rycknield Street runs north-west to south-east between settlements in Birmingham and Droitwich (Victoria County History).
- 4.16 There is evidence of Roman activity within the wider area. For example, Roman forts at Metchley are located approximately 5.1km south-east of the Site (1020977). The site comprises buried and earthwork remains of the fort, located on a plateau, and part of the north-western corner of the defences have been reconstructed. Excavations of the fort revealed four phases of activity from AD40 when the fort was constructed, through to approximately AD120 when it was abandoned. The fort was altered in the second phase and thought to have acted as a store depot. Following this the fort was abandoned for a time before a smaller fort was constructed within the site of the former defences. This is also thought to have been abandoned by AD75 although sporadic occupation of the site continued until c.AD120.

Early Medieval (410-1066)

- 4.17 There are no assets of early medieval date recorded within the study area. Archaeologically this period is often one of the less visible periods, and evidence tends to stem from documentary sources and place-name evidence. Many of the landscape features in the medieval and post-medieval periods were established during the early medieval period, from settlements to churches and land organisation and field systems. During the early medieval period the West Midlands was a part of Mercia, a large Anglo-Saxon kingdom, expanding outward from the Trent Valley (Hooke, 2011, 149).
- 4.18 By AD 1000 Warley and Oldbury in the surrounding area of the Site were small hamlets within the manor of Hale. The lands were given to the Earl of Shrewsbury in AD 1066 who transferred around half of the portion containing Warley Wigorn to the ownership of William FitzAnsculf, remaining in Worcestershire while Warley Salop was transferred to Shropshire (Victoria County History, 1901, 316). The Domesday Book recorded a settlement of 12 households in 1086 and other existing settlements in the area included Smethwick to the north-east and Harborne to the south-east.

Medieval (1066-1540)

- 4.19 There are three assets of medieval date recorded within the study area, all of which are located within the Site boundary.
- 4.20 There is ridge and furrow surviving in varying directions across the Brandhall Golf Course (MBL3192), indicating the agricultural nature of the land during the medieval period. There is evidence of a small early settlement within the Site from AD 1444, referred to as Brand Hall manor or the manor house of Warley

Wigorn (MBL2704). The site of the hall is thought to be located at the south-eastern edge of the Site and documentary evidence indicates a possible former moat surrounded the manor although this is unconfirmed.

- 4.21 The site of a possible former chapel is also thought to be located at the south-eastern corner of the Site (MBL2996). St Katherine's chapel in Brandhall is referred to in a grant in 1308 and a field to the west of Brand Hall Farm is recorded as 'Chapel Croft' on the Warley Wigorn Tithe Award of 1845. It is possible that this represents a former chapel and sub-surface deposits may survive within the Site.
- 4.22 The manor of Hale remained under the ownership of the Earl of Shrewsbury's descendants until AD 1177 when it was transferred to David ap Owens, the brother in law of the king, becoming known as the manor of Halesowen. Following Owen's death, the land was given by the crown to the Bishop of Worcester to establish a religious house. The land of Warley and Oldbury came under monastic rule until the dissolution of the religious houses when they transferred to the Earl of Warwick.

Post Medieval (1540-1900)

- 4.23 There is one asset of post-medieval date recorded within the study area. The Plough is a locally listed, 18th/19th century public house of several phases, constructed of red brick and rendered (DSD646). There is a late 19th century or early 20th century coach house and stable in the yard. The building is located on George Road, approximately 420m north of the Site.
- 4.24 During the first half of the 19th century coal mining, iron working and associated industries experienced a boom within the Black Country. Industrial growth attracted workers and their families from other areas. The rapid population increase meant new housing had to be quickly erected and led to workers living in slum conditions. This problem was addressed and saw some improvement during the late 19th century. The industrial development included advancements in transportation; the Smethwick cutting was a canal opened in 1768-9 which ran from Oldbury to Smethwick and Birmingham (Brook, 1977, 189). Within this area, an example of an industrial building includes the ironworks at Halesowen, to the south-west of the study area, which by 1717 had an output of 500 tons per annum (Booth, 1973, 19).
- 4.25 During the post-medieval period, much of the land within the Site remained undeveloped. The tithe map of Warley Wigorn 1844 shows the Site divided into fields; the only buildings within which are those of Brand Hall at the southern end of the Site (Plate 1). Several of the fields names within the Site indicate this land use, with examples such as 'Long Meadow' and 'Barn Leasow' (meaning rough pasture). Much of the land around Brand Hall to the south and west was arable while the land directly to the north, east and south of the hall was recorded as meadow. Chapel Croft is recorded as the name of land parcel 193, just north of Brand Hall. The 1885 Ordnance Survey (OS) map recorded an old quarry to the north of Brand Hall, which would lie within the southern section of the Site.



Plate 1 Warley Wigorn Tithe Map 1844. (© Crown Copyright Images reproduced by courtesy of The National Archives, London, England. IR 29/39/142. www.NationalArchives.gov.uk & www.TheGenealogist.co.uk)

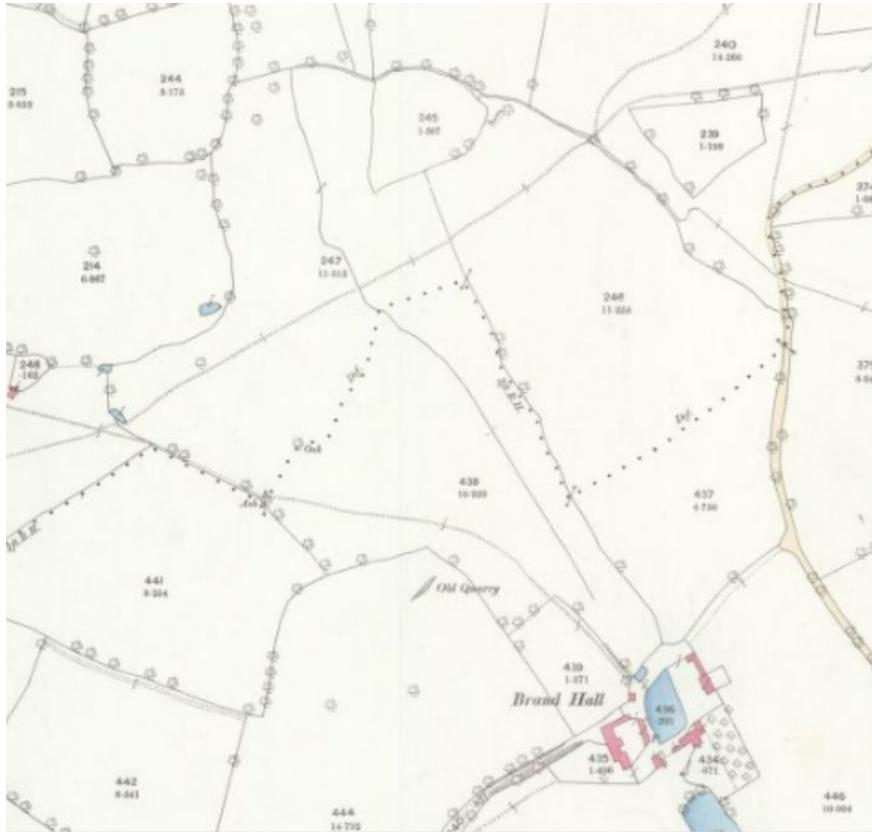


Plate 2 1885 OS map Worcestershire V.6 (Oldbury; Smethwick; Warley Woods)

Modern (1900-present)

- 4.26 There are no assets of modern date recorded within the study area.
- 4.27 Brandhall golf course was first laid out in 1906 and use for agriculture during the First World War. In the 1930s Brandhall Farm was converted into a golf club house, which was subsequently demolished, and the golf course reduced due to the construction of the M5 (Old Memories of Old Warley).
- 4.28 The landscape immediately surrounding the Site was almost entirely agricultural until the 1920s. During the interwar period land-use became largely residential, becoming the single largest centre of 1930s housing in the HLC outside of Wolverhampton. During the 1950s and 1960s several thousand council houses, flats and bungalows were constructed. Though many of the high-rise developments have been replaced by low rise housing, most of these buildings survive.
- 4.29 Cakemore brickworks and colliery is located to the north of the Site on the 1887 OS map and into the early 20th century (Plate 3). Brandhall golf course is first labelled on 1921 OS map (Plate 4) and Brand Hall is still present on the 1944 OS map although the surrounding area is shown as urbanised with the construction of Wolverhampton road to the east of the Site and surrounding residential streets, while Cakemore Brickworks and Colliery appears to be disused by this time (Plate 5).



Plate 3 1904 OS Staffordshire LXXII.NW (includes: Hill and Cakemore; Oldbury)



Plate 4 1921 OS map Staffordshire LXXII (includes: Birmingham; Oldbury; Smethwick)



Plate 5 1944 OS map, Staffordshire LXXII.NW (includes: Hill and Cakemore; Oldbury)

Aerial imaging and LiDAR

- 4.30 Aerial photographs from Google Earth (taken between 1945-2020) and LiDAR imaging (<https://houseprices.io/lab/lidar/>) were viewed and are detailed below.
- 4.31 There are a number of features visible on the LiDAR across the Site. While the LiDAR appears to show a number of earthwork features within the Site boundary, most of these coincide with features of the golf course such as bunkers and are not thought to be archaeological in nature (Plate 6).
- 4.32 The 1945 aerial photograph (Plate 7) shows the Site in use as a golf course with footpaths visible running through the Site on the same alignment as those on the historic mapping (Plates 3-5). Within the Site are various features likely associated with the golf course, and Brand Hall is extant to the south-east. Modern roads and buildings are present to the north and east while to the west much of the land remains agricultural.
- 4.33 The later aerial photographs continue to show the Site in use as a golf course with lines of mature trees between the courses (Plate 8). Ridge and furrow are visible on these aerial photographs, shown aligned in several different directions (Plate 9).



Plate 6 1m DSM LiDAR imaging of the Site reveals various feature, most coinciding with golf course features.
(House Prices, LiDAR imaging. <https://houseprices.io/lab/lidar/map?ref=TQ64934%2090278>)



Plate 7 1945 aerial photograph of the Site showing the golf course as well as Brand Hall to the south-east of the Site (Google Earth Pro, Copyright 2021 The GeoInformation Group).



Plate 8 2020 aerial photograph showing the Site (2020, Google Earth Pro, Landsat / Copernicus).



Plate 9 2020 aerial photograph showing a section of the Site with visible ridge and furrow (2020, Google Earth Pro, Landsat / Copernicus).

Site Visit

- 4.34 A Site visit was undertaken on the 14th June 2021. The Site is a disused golf course, with meadow type long grass and interspersed with rows of trees and containing various footpaths. The land rises from the north and west to the centre of the Site before falling away at the south and eastern edges. A stream runs north to south through the centre with several wooden bridges over it. The Site is bounded by mature trees to all sides and there are glimpsed views of the houses to the east and the motorway to the south-west. There were no views of the listed church to the south-east from the Site.
- 4.35 There are various surviving features of the golf course within the Site including tees, bunkers, and earthwork features (Plates 13-14). The clubhouse to the north of the Site is still extant, although no longer in use and is a 20th century single storey brick building.
- 4.36 The ridge and furrow was not visible during the Site visit due to the long grass, although it is visible on aerial photographs and satellite imaging (see Plate 9).
- 4.37 There are no above ground indications of a building at the site of the Chapel Croft field. A modern compound is located at the southern end of the Site where this feature is thought to be. There are also no above ground remains of Brand Hall, as the area to the south of the Site has been built over by modern houses (Plate 17).



Plate 10 View south from the northern edge of the Site, showing the stream and wooden bridges.



Plate 11 View of the Site from the eastern side looking west, showing the grass with rows of trees and footpaths.



Plate 12 View to the south-west from the south-west corner of the Site shows the motorway beyond the Site.



Plate 13 Bank features at the south-west end of the Site related to the golf course.



Plate 14 Surviving golf course tee and an area of concrete within the Site boundary.



Plate 15 Area of ridge and furrow visible on aerial photography within the Site was indistinct from the ground due to the long grass.



Plate 16 Modern compound at the southern end of the Site, around the site of Chapel Croft.



Plate 17 View to the south of the Site showing modern housing on the Site of the former Brand Hall.



Plate 18 Golf clubhouse to the north of the Site.

5. Assessment of the Baseline

Archaeological Potential

Prehistoric

- 5.1 The only prehistoric asset in the study area is a lithic scatter at the northern edge (MBL2840). Although there is limited evidence from within this area, the undeveloped nature of the Site highlights the possibility that early archaeological remains may survive within the Site boundary. The presence of ridge and furrow within the Site also indicates that the land has likely been in agricultural use without the development of buildings within the Site. Due to this the potential for previously unrecorded remains of prehistoric date is **medium**.

Roman

- 5.2 There are no assets of Roman date recorded within the study area. There are Roman sites in the wider area, including the scheduled Roman fort at Metchley (1020977) located approximately 5.1km to the south-east. The land of the Site has remained undeveloped and it is possible for previously unrecorded archaeological remains to survive within the Site. However, given the lack of evidence of any Roman site in the study area and its immediate surroundings, the potential for previously unrecorded remains of Roman date to be discovered is considered to be **low**.

Early Medieval

- 5.3 There are no early medieval assets recorded within the study area, although several of the place names in the surrounding area have early medieval origins as they were recorded in the Domesday Book. The undeveloped nature of the Site indicates the possibility of previously unrecorded remains surviving within the Site although the agricultural nature of the Site during the later medieval and post-medieval periods indicate that this was likely open land/ agricultural land during the early medieval period. Therefore, the potential for previously unrecorded remains of early medieval date is **low**.

Medieval

- 5.4 The assets within the study area are predominately of medieval date, and all of these are located within the Site boundary. The site of the former medieval manor house as well as a possible chapel at the south-east edge of the Site, as well as the remains of ridge and furrow throughout the Site, indicate that this land was in use during this period as agricultural land around the medieval manor. Given the lack of redevelopment on the Site, there is potential for previously unrecorded remains to survive and given the proximity to the former manor, the potential for previously unrecorded medieval remains is **high** in relation to agriculture but **low** for settlement evidence.

Post-Medieval

- 5.5 During the post-medieval period the Site remained agricultural in nature, while the surrounding area was slowly urbanised in the latter part of this period. Brand Hall manor house is thought to have remained in use during this period and so it is possible that previously unrecorded post-medieval remains may survive within the Site boundary associated with the manor and its land, although the area has been well-mapped. Therefore, the potential for previously unrecorded remains of post-medieval date is **medium** for agricultural related features but **low** for settlement evidence given the well-mapped nature of the Site.

Constraints

- 5.6 There are two heritage assets recorded within the proposed development Site. The first of these is earthworks of ridge and furrow which survive in varying directions across the Site (MBL3192). These may be physically impacted by the construction of the proposed development.
- 5.7 In addition to this, in the south-east corner of the proposed development Site are the site of a possible former medieval building. Chapel Croft appears as a field name on tithe map, 1845, lying within the south-east side of Brandhall golf course (MBL2996). This name is also associated with a former chapel site, where potential has been identified that sub-surface deposits may survive.

- 5.8 The former site of Brand Hall is located just beyond the south-eastern corner of the Site (MBL2704). The hall is no longer extant, and part of the former site is covered by modern roads and buildings beyond the Brandhall Golf Course Site although it is possible for remains associated with the hall to survive within the Site boundary.
- 5.9 There is also potential for previously unrecorded archaeology to survive within the Site boundary. Given the undeveloped nature of the Site, remains may be identified. A find spot of seven worked flints is located within the 500m study area, could indicate the potential for more prehistoric archaeology within the area, as well as the remains of medieval and post-medieval remains associated with the former Brand Hall and surrounding land.
- 5.10 There is not thought to be any impact to the built heritage asset within the study area (DSD646) or any changes to its setting from the Proposed Development. There are also two listed buildings located within 1km of the Site, the Church of Our Lady and St Hubert (1433148) and The Wernley (1415310), both located to the south-east of the study area. Due to the urban nature of the area and the distance from the Site, the presence of the Proposed Development is not thought to significantly change the setting of the listed buildings. There may be views of the Proposed Development from the top of the tower of the Church of Our Lady and St Hubert (1433148), although it is considered this would not result in a significant change to the setting of the listed building.

6. Conclusions

Summary

- 6.1 AECOM was commissioned to prepare a desk-based assessment for the proposed mixed-use development at the former Brandhall Golf Course. Data was gathered from the National Heritage List for England and from the Sandwell Historic Environment Record (HER). There are five assets recorded within the 500m study area. The aims and purpose of the Desk-Based Assessment have been met in accordance with the ClfA Standard and guidance for historic environment desk-based assessment (ClfA 2020).
- 6.2 There are three assets located within the Site boundary, comprising ridge and furrow across the Site (MBL3192), as well as the former Brand Hall (MBL2704) and possible chapel site (MBL2996). There is potential for archaeological remains to survive within the Site which may be physically impacted during the construction of the Proposed Development. There is also potential for previously unrecorded remains to survive within the Site. Any surviving features would be physically affected by the construction of the Proposed Development.
- 6.3 There is one built heritage asset within the study area, a locally listed post-medieval public house located at the north-eastern edge of the study area (DSD646). There is not thought to be any impact to the building or any changes to its setting from the Proposed Development. There are also two listed buildings located within 1km of the Site, the Church of Our Lady and St Hubert (1433148) and The Wernley (1415310), both located to the south-east of the study area. Due to the urban nature of the area and the distance from the Site, the presence of the Proposed Development is not thought to significantly change the setting of the listed buildings. There may be views of the Proposed Development from the top of the tower of the Church of Our Lady and St Hubert (1433148), although it is considered this would not result in a significant change to the setting of the listed building.

Recommendations

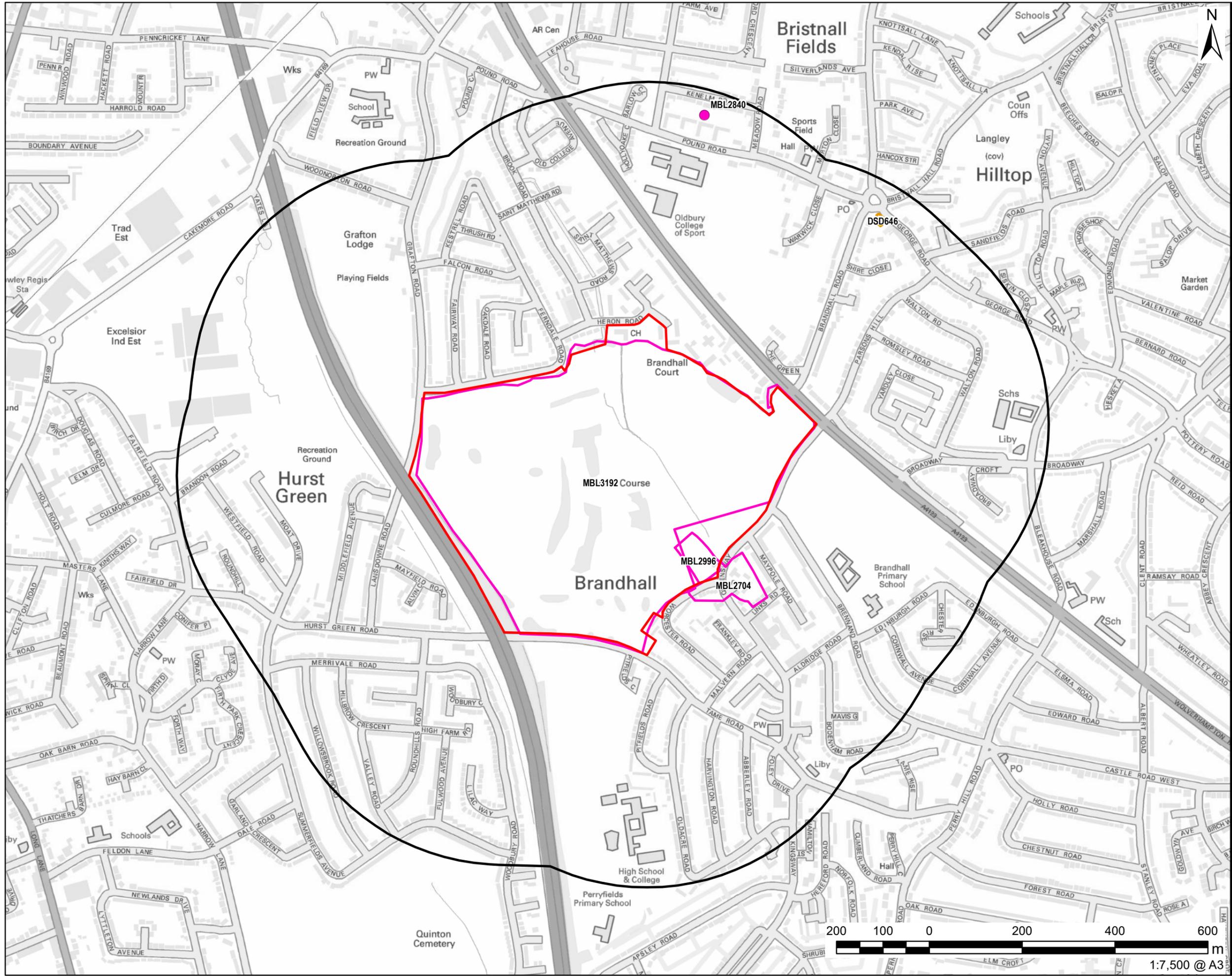
- 6.4 Further assessment of potential impacts upon the archaeological resource within the Site should be undertaken. A programme of geophysical (magnetometer) survey followed by trial trenching should be undertaken at the Site in order to understand the archaeological potential of the Site and to particularly identify the presence of remains associated with Brand Hall and the former chapel in the south-eastern corner of the Site. The requirement for, and timing of, any further archaeological works will be discussed with the County Archaeologist following the results of this.
- 6.5 There is not thought to be any significant impact to the built heritage asset within the study area or the listed buildings located beyond the study area due to the urban nature of the area.

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Appendix A Known Heritage Assets

Reference	Grid Reference	Period	Description
MBL2840	SO 9948 8703	Prehistoric	Findspot: Scatter of 7 worked flints found in 1984 in garden of 226 Pound Rd, Oldbury. Retained by finder and property owner.
MBL2996	SO 9948 8606	Medieval	Monument: Site of the chapel at Chapel Croft, Brand Hall Farm on the Warley Wigorn tithe map of 1845. Now situated within Brand Hall golf course with potential for survival of buried deposits.
MBL3192	SO 9929 8621	Medieval	Monument: Ridge and furrow within Brand Hall golf course. Present in aerial photographs 1977.
MBL2704	SO 9954 8602	Medieval to Post Medieval	Monument: Site, 10m2, of Brand Hall Medieval manor house and fishponds depicted on the Warley Wigorn tithe map of 1845. Documentary evidence suggests possible moat though as yet unconfirmed. Now fully developed as housing.
DSD646	SO99868680	Post Medieval	The Plough, Hill Top, Oldbury. 18 th /19 th century public house of several phases in red brick now rendered with plain tile gabled roof. Casement fenestration and ground floor bay. Late C19 or early C20 coach house and stable in yard.



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