

- Study Area
- North St Albans Draft Allocation
- Range Rings (at 1km intervals)
- Public Right of Way
- Heartwood Forest
- Zone of Primary Visibility (ZPV)
- 12 Photoviewpoint Locations

client
Lightwood Strategic

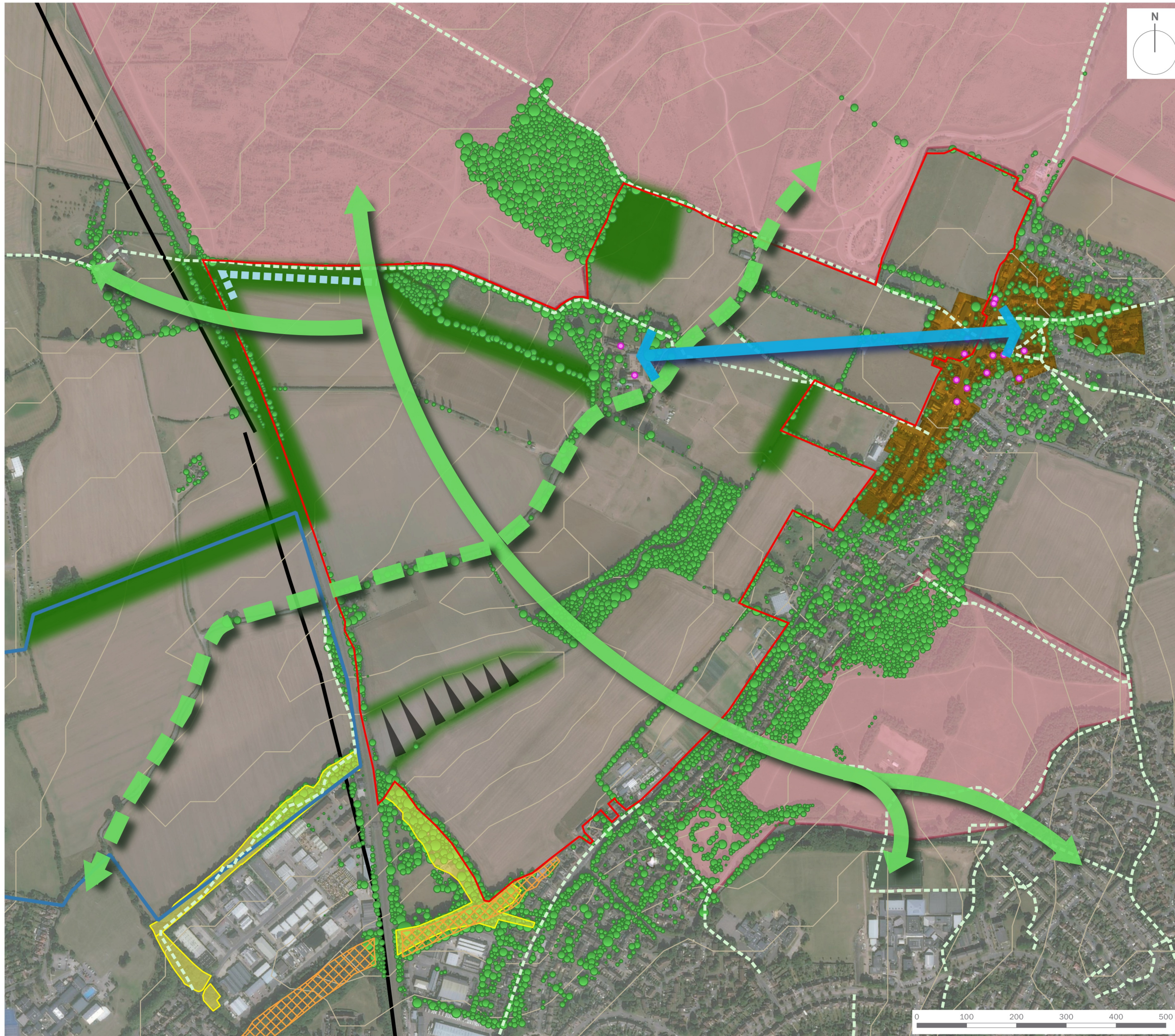
project title
Land at Sandridgebury Lane, St Albans

drawing title
Plan EDP 8: Findings of EDP's Visual Appraisal

date	08 MARCH 2021	drawn by	GY
drawing number	edp6902_d007b	checked	OW
scale	1:20,000 @ A3	QA	RB



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- Study Area
- St Albans North Draft Allocation
- Scheduled Monument
- Conservation Area
- TPO Trees
- Listed Buildings
- Existing Landscape Fabric
- Recreational Venues of Heartwood Forest and Jersey Farm
- Potential Structural Woodland Planting
- GI Connections
- GI Connections: Cycling
- Open Views
- Steeper Slopes Connecting On and Offsite

client
Lightwood Strategic

project title
Land at Sandridgebury Lane, St Albans

drawing title
Plan EDP 9: Landscape Constraints and Opportunities

date	08 MARCH 2021	drawn by	GY
drawing number	edp6902_d008b	checked	OW
scale	1:7,500 @ A3	QA	RB



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**Land at
Sandridgebury
Lane, St Albans**

**Heritage and
Archaeology
Appraisal**

Prepared by:
**The Environmental
Dimension
Partnership Ltd**

On behalf of:
Lightwood Strategic

March 2021
Report Reference:
edp6902_r002a

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	Report Ref: edp6902_r002			
	Author	Formatted	Peer Review	Proofed by/Date
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Section 1

Introduction

Introduction

- 1.1 This report has been prepared by The Environmental Dimension Partnership Ltd (EDP) on behalf of Lightwood Strategic and presents the results of a Heritage and Archaeological Appraisal of Land at Sandridgebury Lane, St Albans (i.e. the Site).
- 1.2 This report has been prepared to inform the site development proposals for promotion in the local plan. The proposals include a residential led development. Initially, the site area for study comprises c.124 hectares (ha), the extent of which is shown on **Plan EDP 1**.
- 1.3 The aim of this assessment is to consider the available resources for the site and to consider any constraints or opportunities in relation to designated and non-designated heritage assets and their potential influence upon the deliverability or capacity of the site.

Site Location and Description

- 1.4 The site is situated to the north of St Albans and to the west of Sandridge. It is centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) 516365, 210492.
- 1.5 The site comprises a number of agricultural fields and woodland. In the centre north of the site is a complex of buildings at Sandridgebury, comprising two Grade II listed buildings forming a country house and farmstead complex. the site is triangular in shape, bounded by a railway line to the west, the Heartwood Forest to the north, and the almost continuous development of Sandridge to the east along the St Albans Road.

The Proposals

- 1.6 The exact form and nature of the proposals are undergoing a design evolution, although at this stage the site is being promoted for a residential led development.

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Section 2 Methodology

General Methodology

- 2.1 This Heritage and Archaeology Appraisal has been prepared in accordance with the *Standard and Guidance for Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment* issued by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA, 2020), which provides a national standard for the completion of desk-based assessments. It has also given consideration to the *Standard and Guidance for the Archaeological Investigation and Recording of Standing Buildings or Structures* (CIfA, 2014), and Historic England's *The Setting of Heritage Assets: Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 (Second Edition (GPA3))* (HE, 2017).
- 2.2 The assessment principally involved consultation of readily available archaeological and historical information from documentary and cartographic sources. The major repositories of information comprised:
- The National Heritage List for England (curated by Historic England);
 - Hertfordshire Historic Environment Record;
 - Historic Mapping;
 - The Hertfordshire District Council planning website; and
 - Historic Aerial Photographs available from the Britain from Above website.
- 2.3 This report provides a synthesis of relevant archaeological information for the site, derived from a search area extending up to 1km diameter from the boundary, hereafter known as the 'study area', to allow for additional contextual information regarding its archaeological interest and/or potential to be gathered.
- 2.4 The information gathered from the repositories and sources identified above was checked and augmented through the completion of a site visit and walkover, completed in January 2021. This walkover considered the nature and significance of known and/or potential archaeological assets within the site, identified visible historic features and assessed possible factors that may affect the survival or condition of known or potential assets.
- 2.5 The report thereafter concludes with an assessment of the site's likely archaeological potential, made with regard to current best practice guidelines.
- 2.6 An assessment has been made of the potential for effects on heritage assets, in terms of their 'setting', in line with the five-step process outlined in the national guidance

(HE, 2017) and other relevant documents related to the assessment and management of the historic environment (HE, 2015). Due regard was also given to guidance concerning conservation areas (HE, 2019).

The Assessment of the Assets' Significance

- 2.7 Reference is made (where appropriate) to English Heritage (2008) *Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment* in this assessment, but the identification of 'significance' will be based on the definition outlined in Annex 2 of the *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF) (as follows):

"The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. The interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting. For World Heritage Sites, the cultural value described within each site's Statement of Outstanding Universal Value forms part of its significance."

- 2.8 So, the 'special interest' of the listed building within the site may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic.

The Assessment of 'Setting'

- 2.9 The identification and assessment of potential impacts through changes within 'setting' follows the 'stepped' approach set out in Historic England's *The Setting of Heritage Assets: Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 (Second Edition (GPA3))* HE (2017).

- 2.10 This 'stepped' approach to the identification of developmental effects in respect of 'setting' can be summarised as follows:

1. Identify which heritage assets and their settings are affected;
2. Assess the degree to which these settings make a contribution to the significance of the heritage asset(s) or allow significance to be appreciated;
3. Assess the effects of the proposed development, whether beneficial or harmful, on that significance or on the ability to appreciate it;
4. Explore ways to maximise enhancement and avoid or minimise harm; and
5. Make and document the decision and monitor outcomes.

2.11 Accordingly, the assessment has been prepared using best practice professional guidance and is therefore considered to provide a robust basis for an evaluation of the proposals for the Site, in respect of heritage matters.

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Section 3 Heritage Resource

- 3.1 This section of the Assessment identifies those heritage assets that could be affected by development proposals at the site and any relevant supporting information on their history, etc. Designated heritage assets are shown on **Plan EDP 1** and information from the Historic Environment Record on **Plan EDP 2**.
- 3.2 The site contains two listed buildings, comprising two Grade II listed buildings of Sandridgebury House (**1102836**) and barn/stable range (**1347255**). Otherwise, the site borders Sandridge Conservation Area which contains one Grade II* listed building and 12 grade II listed buildings.
- 3.3 The southern part of the site borders the Scheduled Monument of Beech Bottom Dyke (**1019136**).
- 3.4 Otherwise, there are no other designated assets within 1km of the site, although the south-eastern corner of the large Childwick Conservation area is located c.0.9km to the west.

Listed Buildings

- 3.5 As identified above, the site contains two Grade II listed building of Sandridgebury House (**1102836**) and barn/stable range (**1347255**), which lie in the central northern part of the site.
- 3.6 The full title of the Sandridgebury House listing is Sandridgebury House, Sandridgebury Court and the Old School, which reflects the three properties which the former house is divided into. It was first listed in 1953 as Aylesford House School and the citation amended in 1984. The citation describes the building as being of a small country house of late 17th century date, 're-cased' in the early 19th century. It is built of brick with a hipped tiled roof and ashlar stacks.
- 3.7 The citation describes it as:

“Red brick. Plain tile hipped roof with large modillioned cornice. 2 storeys. The front elevation is 8 windows. Shallow 2-window projections each end. Recessed sashes. Large late C17 porch towards right, reset in a C20 brick porch. Door with bolection-moulded frame. Heavy leaf-carved consoles carrying deep hood, the cornices carried round porch. Strapwork panelling above door and to soffit of hood. Semicircular hood with carved head and eagles. Early C19 door on left end with long brackets. The left extension is 5 sash windows in Neo Georgian style. 2 storeys. Lower hipped roof. Double pile. Rear of main house is 8 windows. Slightly recessed bay towards left contains a modified late C17 door surround with bolection-moulded frame, leaf carved consoles and pulvinated frieze. The right 2 windows are also slightly recessed, but set more widely apart. Interior of

Sandridgebury Court has 2 late C17 fireplaces. First floor front room has mid C18 Palladian-style doorcase and cornices."

- 3.8 This identifies the main features of the house, describing its main points of architectural interest, although does not explore its history or historical interest.
- 3.9 The origins of the building and earlier history are not readily available, although the Victoria County History notes that the manor of Sandridge passed to the Earl Spencer in the 18th century following inheritance from the Duchess of Marlborough. The HER considers it to be the medieval manorial centre (**9871**) although admits there is no evidence for this. The VCH simply notes that Sandridgebury was the residence of John Clarke, who died in 1820, then passed through the Kinder family through the 19th century, who were tenants of Earl Spencer on the 1940s tithe map. On the tithe map, the property is annotated as 'farmhouse yards, garden and orchard' suggesting little pretention at this time.
- 3.10 At the turn of the 20th century, it was occupied by the Verity family and at the time of the VCH (1908) was occupied by Percival Griffiths. Given the dating of the style of the building, it seems that John Clarke was responsible for much of the 'early 19th' century casing.
- 3.11 In 1951, the house was sold to Aylesford House school, which occupied the house until the 1970s, when it was sold again and converted into three residences.
- 3.12 The house would appear to have had a relatively brief history as a 'country house', most likely originating as a 17th century farmhouse which became 'gentrified' in the early 19th century, before reverting back to a farmhouse in the mid-19th century and then a school.
- 3.13 Notwithstanding this, the building has architectural interest, although not accessible on the site visit, information on-line (such as estate agent particulars) identifies its modest appearance and proportions as a later Georgian country residence. This is manifest within the outward appearance in classical Georgian style and proportions, which belies its simplicity. Its architectural detailing, as identified in the listing citation, gives it architectural interest and these embellishments also convey some artistic interest. The building's use as three residences has upset the rhythm of the frontage, and its interior subdivision is likely to have disrupted the former spaces, although according to the listing citation individual features of interest survive.
- 3.14 Historic interest is conveyed through its association with ownership by Earl Spencer, albeit it appears have largely been tenanted to wealthy individuals and farming families.
- 3.15 In terms of its setting, there is little information regarding its 'setting' as conceived during its 'country house' phase, as by the 1840s tithe map, it was in use as a farm. On this map, the house appears as a single range with rear projection standing to the north-east of a loose courtyard of farm buildings (also listed). The farm estate covers a large area, including most of the site, although the field names on the apportionment do not suggest

that this originated as a 'park' as might be associated with a late 18th/early 19th century country house and all were in use as wood, arable or grass.

- 3.16 The 1879 ordnance survey map (**Plan EDP 3**) shows more detail than the tithe). At this time, the house was still located at the north-eastern edge of the farm courtyard. It has lawns laid out to the north, bounded by mature trees in a style reminiscent of Victorian gentry gardens. To the north-west is a walled garden. The house appears to be approached from the south and the east along short driveways, and that from the east appears to have been the 'formal' access, as it passes to the northern frontage adjacent to the lawns. The northern frontage would appear to have been the principal elevation of the house, whereby the rear overlooked the farm buildings, although this is now slightly ambiguous due to the current arrangement on the site, and the southern elevation seems to have taken a greater prominence. The only element of its setting which is hinted at as being 'parkland' is the field to the south-west of the house, which is indicated as having scattered mature trees, which is characteristic of naturalistic parkland.
- 3.17 The 1898 map shows little change to the principal elements of the house and gardens. The farm complex has been re-arranged, with the construction of two new ranges on the northern and western sides, which create a new yard area and provides separation with the house and the farmyard. The southern approach now appears a little more developed, with additional tree planting, potentially specimen trees. The 'park' character to the south-western field seems to have diminished, as no trees are marked in this area and the field has been subdivided.
- 3.18 The 1924 Ordnance Survey map shows no change other than an orchard being added to the south-west.
- 3.19 There is little change on historic mapping, with a gap in the resources between 1939 and 1975. The 1975 map (**Plan EDP 3**) depicts the house as 'Concord School' and reflects its usage at the time of the school. Additional buildings have been placed to the west of the house, and the driveway to the east now sealed, but otherwise the pertinent features (i.e. the lawns to the north and the walled garden) appear to remain and the southern approach has gained more prominence. At the farm, additional buildings have been added, primarily to the south of the yard.
- 3.20 Its current setting is defined by the building's immediate grounds and spaces. The whole is well enclosed from the wider area by dense vegetation, but from mapping and Google earth imagery its current setting can be reasonably accurately established. The principal aspect which has affected its setting is the use of the building as three residences. The main entrances are now to the south, and the once open lawns to the north have been divided into three gardens. Imagery held online indicates that there is a terrace here, which at least partially survives, and confirms that the northern elevation once overlooked 'polite' gardens.
- 3.21 The former access to the east, once the likely principal access, now appears to be unused (**Image EDP 1**), and the primary access is from the south, where the entrance

drive passes through brick piers, and passes along a manicured driveway (**Image EDP 2**). The house still maintains a relationship with a former coach-house (now converted) and to the farmyard, which is physically located to the south-east and comprises historically associated buildings, some listed in their own right, although no longer in the same ownership and use (**Image EDP 3**).

- 3.22 Despite the subdivision of the main garden, the historically associated 'grounds' are still understood as they are defined by mature trees and hedgerows. These areas remain the best areas from which to appreciate the significance of the building, as well as being historically linked. Due to the mature boundaries and planting, there is very little experience of the house from areas beyond its grounds. This is with the exception of the (private) land to the north, whereby the rising ground allows for views of the northern elevation of the house (**Image EDP 4**). There is some evidence to suggest that this was the more 'polite' elevation, and it is possible that this frontage was intended to be viewed from this direction or potentially have views out across the lawns.
- 3.23 Otherwise, there are very few views to the house or grounds from areas to the south, west and east, with those only limited to longer glimpsed views of the roof top (e.g. **Image EDP 5**). This wider farmland, which forms the bulk of the site, was once associated with Sandridgebury House by virtue of being farmed from it, but this is no longer the case.
- 3.24 Given the above, it is considered that the setting of the Sandridgebury does make a positive contribution to its significance, these being principally: the former gardens and grounds, which immediately surround the house, which are historically associated and form the best location from which to experience the significance of the house; the remaining southern driveway approach and gate piers; the buildings of the farm complex, which are historically associated; and the view of the house from the north.
- 3.25 It is recognised however, that the wider farmland, due to its former historic links, does make some contribution to the listed building's historic interest, albeit this is not readily appreciated (except to the north) and no longer functional, thus makes only a very limited contribution.

Farm Buildings

- 3.26 The barn and stable range of the farm are Grade II listed. This is listed as Barn and Stable Range on South Side of Stable Yard at Sandridgebury Farm (**1347255**). These were first listed in 1984 although the citation does not appear to have been updated since. This building forms the southern side of the farm courtyard, representing an early 18th century barn, with stables extended in the mid-19th century. The remaining buildings in the courtyard comprise of later timber clad stables, which are not listed.
- 3.27 The listing citation describes the listed building as follows:

"Barn and stable range. Early C18, extended mid C19. Timber frame. Weatherboarded. Some red brick. Plain tile roofs, some slate. 2-bay barn on W end is larger than adjoining

stables. Clasped purlin roof with diagonal braces from tiles. Long tie braces. Stable range is 2 storeys. 5 narrow bays on W are timber frame and early C18. C19 3-bay extension to W, then lower mid C19 L-shaped extension returning towards N. The 8-bay range has 3 stable doors and a half-hipped roof. Gabled sack hoist to left of C18 part. Internally the C18 part has exposed heavy framing. Hay loft preserved. Original partitions and feed boxes in W 3 bays. The rear elevation retains a C18 sack hoist. Extension on E has slate roof and timber frame rear wing. Red brick wall towards road with dentilled brick eaves. The W return range has, on E side, 4 glazing bar casements, the right 3 segmental-headed."

- 3.28 The citation notes this as a multi-period building, which is reflected in its external appearance and gives it archaeological interest. Access was not obtained for inspection, but it can be appreciated from the roadside, where its outward appearance on the outer face (i.e. not the courtyard face) can be seen. The 19th century eastern extension can be readily appreciated, as a roadside structure, although the appreciation of the remainder has been obscured by the construction of a low stable range, obscuring the rear elevation of the earlier stables. The upper parts of the small timber-clad barn can be seen.
- 3.29 Its significance derives principally from its architectural interest, evident in the demonstration of its 18th to 19th century architectural techniques utilised in agricultural buildings. This phasing also gives archaeological interest. As noted above, there is some historic interest in its associations with Sandridgebury House. Being of humble appearance there is very little artistic interest.
- 3.30 In terms of its setting, it has a positive relationship with the other farm buildings within the courtyard complex to the north, despite being slightly later. It also has a positive relationship with Sandridge House, with which it can be experienced in combination. Together, these buildings represent a positive historic relationship, which allows the development of the principal house, and its associated farm, to be established. To the east is a late 19th century house, which provides some contemporary historic context, as well as being most likely historically associated. To the south are further farm buildings, which represent later 19th and 20th century expansion beyond the original courtyard complex. However, they do not make as strong a contribution as the courtyard, due to their later development and, in some cases, corrugated construction being of obvious later development.
- 3.31 In terms of the wider area, comprising the wider farmland of the site, there does continue to be a relationship, albeit now this is for equestrian sports rather than its traditional farming use, and also only associated in part through paddocks to the west. Whilst this makes a base contribution, the appreciation of this is limited through the surrounding buildings and vegetation, which curtails this experience and limits the contribution.

Designated Heritage Assets in the Wider Area

Sandridge

- 3.32 The site sits adjacent to the Sandridge Conservation Area, which contains a single Grade II* listed building and 12 Grade II listed buildings. Other than the Grade II* listed church, the individual listed buildings will not be discussed separately, but collectively as part of the fabric of the conservation area.
- 3.33 The Grade II* listed Church of St Leonard (**1308298**) is located c.150m to the east of the site, on the eastern side of the main village street. The citation notes this as the parish church and dating from the late 11th and 12th century, with late 14th century additions and restored in the late 19th century, resulting in the reconstruction of the tower and west end (**Image EDP 6**).
- 3.34 The citation describes in some detail its architectural features, such as window styles, broached spire, arches, piers, 19th century crown post-roof, original chancel roof, capitals, carvings and interior monuments. Its significance derives a great deal from this architectural interest. It also derives from its historic interest, through the monuments and burials of notable people, but also from its role as the religious centre for the village. It also contains archaeological interest through its phasing, and artistic interest through elaborate decoration.
- 3.35 In terms of its setting, it is located within its churchyard, from which its significance can be chiefly appreciated. Its churchyard contains gravestones and monuments as would be expected and is entered through a lychgate on its western side (which is separately listed). Beyond the churchyard, there are traditional buildings to the west, and south, comprising three listed buildings (**Image EDP 7**), but also more modern properties, to the south, south-east, east and north, which provide a 20th century context to the church. The church derives some significance from the surrounding buildings, being in the centre of the village, although it is evident that the character of these is mixed.
- 3.36 More widely, the church can be typically glimpsed from other areas of the village, which typifies its experience, although being set back to the east of the main road, these glimpsed views are more limited from the main thoroughfare through the village. It is set back on slightly higher ground within the village, meaning that the church is visible from a wider area beyond the settlement, in particular in longer views from the west, south-west and south-east, whereby the church can be experienced in combination with its mixed settlement surroundings.
- 3.37 This extends to the site itself, where the church is readily visible from northern parts, adjacent to the village, and also in some longer views from more elevated ground around Sandridgebury Lane to the west and also to the south-west (e.g. **Images EDP 8** and **9**). Some of these longer views make a positive contribution to the significance of the church, whereby not only the tower, but also the nave can be experienced, allowing for its architectural interest to be appreciated within its village setting.

Conservation Area

- 3.38 As noted above, the Sandridge Conservation Area is located adjacent to the north-eastern boundary of the site. The conservation area was originally designated in 1969 and extended in 1977 and 1986. A Conservation Area Character Statement (CACS) was prepared in 2000.
- 3.39 The CACS distils the character of the conservation area. It describes the historic development, stating that the village is likely to date back to the Anglo-Saxon period, although notes earlier activity comprising a nearby Roman Road and the Beech Bottom Dyke. In the medieval period, the settlement grew up around the church and along the High Street, which is where the majority of the sixteenth and seventeenth century buildings are located. The 19th century saw rapid development on the High Street, which was the main road between St Albans and Wheathampstead. Post-war developments mainly took place on the eastern side of the village. The CACS notes how infill development has taken place towards the end of the 20th century.
- 3.40 The CACS describes the essential characteristics as comprising the cluster of older buildings around the church, and then later development in a linear fashion along the High Street north and south. It also includes two 1930s council housing developments to the north and south. The architectural character is described as mostly two storey structures; and being a variety of differing buildings forms, comprising detached, pairs or short terraces.
- 3.41 The CACS is brief, summarised above. It does not mention open spaces (of which there are few) or key views. The conservation area is rather inwards looking, with the buildings fronting the main street. Overall, its 'historic' nature is linear in form, although has become more nucleated due to later 20th century developments.
- 3.42 Of its setting, the CACS only mentions the later 20th century developments to the north-east and east, whilst noting that the western side is more open to the west, where the conservation area backs onto the recreation ground and open farmland. It is also on the western side that Pounds Farm is located, the last remaining village farm.
- 3.43 The site lies to the west and south-west of the conservation area, which forms the agricultural setting on this side of the village. Where this can be experienced, this makes a positive contribution to the significance of the village by being a remnant of its once 'rural' landscape. Even still, developments to the south of the village have served to link the village to the wider St Albans, so it has lost something of a 'separate' identity. Notwithstanding this, in views from the site back towards the conservation area, the 'historic' character cannot readily be appreciated due to the preponderance of later buildings and the rear of the properties invariably being non-descript residential elements.
- 3.44 The single defining continuation in the experience of the village as a conservation area, is through the visibility of the church, rising as it does from a cluster of buildings on the valley floor. In terms of its setting, the agricultural fields within the northern part of the

site make a positive, albeit limited contribution, by being closely related fields and allowing for views of the church.

Archaeology

- 3.45 Information on archaeological heritage assets was gathered from the Hertfordshire Historic Environment Record and the National Heritage List for England.

Designated Archaeology

- 3.46 In terms of designated archaeology, the southern part of the site borders the Scheduled Beeches Bottom Dyke, whilst the area adjacent to it, within the site, is defined as an 'Archaeological Site Subject to Recording Condition'. The latter are sites identified within the local plan (1994) where *"preservation is not necessary, but recording prior to any proposed development may be essential"*.
- 3.47 As noted above, the scheduled monument 'Beech Bottom Dyke' (1010136) lies directly adjacent to the southern boundary of the site. According to the scheduling, this represents an Iron Age territorial boundary. It was first scheduled in 1981 and updated in 2000. The scheduling identifies that this *"is a major component of the late Iron Age landscape surrounding the important nucleated settlements near St Albans (Verlamion) and Wheathampstead"*. It notes that Beeches Bottom Dyke may have been an important boundary of an estate related to the pre-Roman precursor to St Albans at Wheathampstead and acted as a considerable symbol of authority.
- 3.48 In form, it describes the dyke as comprising a ditch and banks and extended for c.1.9km. At Valley Road, c.0.4km to the west of the site, the scheduling describes the ditch as being of 30-35m in width and up to 10m in depth with steep sides. Banks originally flanked either side of the ditch, but only survive in a few areas. It adds a particularly well-preserved section lies between Valley Road and the railway (to the west of the site). As it approaches the site, the ditch has become infilled, with only a short section of well-preserved ditch to the east of the railway. It then runs through the rear of properties fronting St Albans Road, where it has been infilled, and it is here that it runs along the southern boundary of the site. Of this section the scheduling says:
- "the ditch runs within the rear property boundaries of Nos 138 to 128 St Albans Road and is largely infilled. The extent of the buried feature is known from earlier maps, and it can still be detected as a very slight depression in the garden of No 130."*
- 3.49 It is unclear how much further east the Dyke ran, if it extended so far, although a projection of the alignment shows that it may have run along St Albans Road/Sandridge High Street. According to the HER it has never been archaeologically excavated although an evaluation (EHT8363, 8362) of the section directly to the south of the site revealed the presence of the ditch, but the base was too deep to be reached. This is now within a small area of open space to the rear of newly built properties at 138 St Albans Road, although no earthwork remains are now present (**Image EDP 10 and 11**).

- 3.50 The area either side of the scheduled monument, including extending to within the site, is noted within the Local Plan as an 'Archaeological Site Subject to Recording Condition', highlighting the potential for associated Iron Age remains to be present within its vicinity. There are no upstanding earthworks in these areas (**Images EDP 11** and **12**), and the course of the ditch is well understood. Notwithstanding this, it is considered that any archaeological remains in this area could be "*suitably mitigated through sensitive masterplanning or recording prior to construction*", should this be necessary.
- 3.51 In terms of its setting, the monument now runs through the urban fringe of St Albans. It is surrounded by urban development on both sides as it passes through the area. In relation to the site, this is undeveloped, which allows for some appreciation of the relationship to the topography, even if the agricultural fields bear little resemblance to the original character of its Iron Age surroundings. Notwithstanding this, the earthwork form of the scheduled monument adjacent to the site is not well preserved, and currently it is difficult to actually appreciate the significance of the monument itself, let alone the landscape through which it passes. Its purposes as a territory marker are no longer functional but can still be understood by the manner in which it runs across the area, and its preservation as a scheduled monument will ensure this line survives.

Non-designated Archaeology

- 3.52 The site contains two other 'Archaeological Sites Subject to Recording Conditions' within its boundary, and one other HER entry.

Prehistoric

- 3.53 The earliest record within the site relates to an 'Archaeological Site Subject to Recording Condition' which is located in the northern part of the site, to the north of Sandridgebury. This covers a broad area, mainly extending beyond the boundaries of the site, although a small part extends into the north. The drawn polygon captures a number of more discrete cropmarks potentially indicative of a prehistoric date as refined by the aerial photograph analysis of the National Mapping Programme (NMP). The cropmark recorded within the site comprises a polygonal enclosure (**6007**), of possible prehistoric date.
- 3.54 Other cropmarks of prehistoric date lie to the north of the site, in the location of the Woodland Trust's Heartwood Forest (see **Plan EDP 2**). These comprise possible Bronze Age barrows (**7592, 7949, 7950, 7951, 16538**), enclosures of possible Iron Age/Romano-British date (**7954, 6116**). The area of Heartwood forest was the subject of a programme of archaeological investigation prior to the establishment of the woodland, comprising geophysical survey and several phases of trenching. The work proved the existence of some of the cropmarks, confirming a Bronze Age barrow (**7948**), flint debitage (**16550**), a potential Neolithic/Bronze Age ditch (**16548**), prehistoric trackway (**16507**) and a late Iron Age/Roman site indicated by ditches and a possible villa (**16539, 16506, 16537**). However, not all the cropmarks and features were identified, and the HER records one place where a previous flint scatter was discovered which upon trenching revealed no features (**9770**).

3.55 Elsewhere in the study area, the HER records chance finds of Palaeolithic handaxes (**583, 13540**), a Mesolithic hammer (**4161**) found in the 19th century; a Neolithic flint scatter (**9607**) identified through fieldwalking 0.7km to the west of the site; and further cropmarks of possible barrows (**7963, 7964**), 0.8km to the north-west of the site.

3.56 Overall, the wider landscape seems to have been well utilised throughout the prehistoric period, especially in areas to the north. In the later prehistoric period, patterns of settlement may well reflect later Roman use. Despite the apparently well-studied nature of the area, little has been recorded within the site, other than a potential enclosure in the north, and possible features associated with Beeches Bottom Dyke to the south. As such, there is the potential for localised areas of prehistoric archaeology to exist within the site. The nature of the archaeology is likely to need establishing through investigative work through the course of a planning application, in order to identify any appropriate mitigation, although the potential presence of archaeology at this stage need not prevent the allocation of the site.

Romano-British

3.57 The HER notes the course of a Roman Road (**4615**) which broadly runs along the ridgeline and wood within the site, before dropping down to pass to the north of Sandridge.

3.58 According to the HER, the road runs from the basilica at Verulamium north-east towards Welwyn. It notes that parts of it are still in use as paths or current road and that its course is 'clear for much of it'. Although its course has not been investigated as it passes through the site, Google earth imagery from 2006 identifies a cropmark of what is likely to be a roadside ditch along the exact postulated alignment in the south-western part of the site. As such, it is considered that the road does indeed pass through the site, but its nature and preservation is likely to need establishing through investigative work through the course of an application, although at this stage there is no reason to believe that the remains could not be mitigated.

3.59 On the ridgeline either side of the road is an 'Archaeological Site Subject to Recording Condition' recorded as 'Area of Roman Finds'. The corresponding HER record (**656**) identifies that this relates to Roman tile, found either side of the road in the 1960s. The HER also records that further tile was found on the surface in 1973. The volume is not recorded, but they may be associated with activity focused on the Roman Road allocation of the site.

3.60 Other Roman activity beyond the site boundary is recorded through the Heartwood Forest investigations to the north, through the presence of Roman features and possible villa (**16506, 16539**), although Roman activity would appear more concentrated than the earlier prehistoric activity within this area.

3.61 Elsewhere within the study area, Romano-British activity is represented by a possible occupation site indicated by fieldnames (**9733**) 0.8km to the north-east of the site, and findspots of Roman coins (**15529, 15530**) from within the village.

- 3.62 There is a known archaeological potential within the site for a Roman Road, and possible roadside activity. Whilst the nature and extent are likely to need establishing through investigative work through the course of a planning application, the presence of potential archaeology at this stage need not prevent the allocation of the site and there is no reason to believe (based on the current evidence) that they would form such a substantial constraint (if any at all) as to prevent the overall deliverability of the site.

Medieval

- 3.63 The HER records that the manor of Sandridge originates from the early medieval period, and the HER assumes that the site of the medieval manor was at Sandridgebury (**9871**) within the site. However, it also concedes that there is no actual archaeological evidence for this, and that the house dates from the 17th century. It is possible that the manor lay elsewhere within the parish. Other than this, there are no records from within the site for medieval activity.
- 3.64 The area of Sandridge village (**2629**), to the east of the site, is noted as another 'Archaeological Site Subject to Recording Condition' for potential Anglo-Saxon and Medieval remains, although this does not extend into the site and it is unlikely any associated remains would be present here. Within the village, the HER records timber framed buildings at Pound Farm (**9512, 15259**) and medieval pottery (**15650**) from House Lane.
- 3.65 In relation to the medieval period, the settlement pattern is well understood, and development within the 'historic core' of Sandridge most likely focused on the medieval church. Other than the potential for medieval remains at Sandridgebury, the majority of the site is likely to have been in the agricultural hinterland of the village providing sustenance and needs for the settlement until enclosure.
- 3.66 As such, there is localised potential for medieval archaeology around Sandridgebury, and potential for medieval agricultural features such as boundaries (of very low value) for the remainder of the site. The medieval archaeological potential therefore presents little constraint to the allocation of the site, being as it is localised to a very small part of the site.

Post-medieval to Modern

- 3.67 The post-medieval to modern settlement pattern is well established. Other than the 17th century buildings at Sandridgebury and its farm, there are no record within the site from this period.
- 3.68 The HER record many features within the study area, invariably relating to discrete features which are typical of development of the post-medieval landscape. These include wells (**10014, 10015, 10016**), a pound (**13512**), a school (**13513**), the site of malthouses (**6886, 9911**), gravel/chalk pits (**9774, 16549, 7953, 16536, 16541**), a railway bridge (**5585**), mileposts (**5024, 5025**), a rifle range (**18812**), farms (**30601**,

15197, 13514, 15198), site of a workhouse (**10012**), ditches (**16546**), and woodbanks (**16528**).

- 3.69 Although not listed, Cheapside Farm (**15197**) is noted in the HER. This lies 0.2km to the north-west of the site, separated from it by fields and the railway cutting. The HER notes this as a mid-19th century planned farmstead with a regular plan and farmhouse at its southern end, although an earlier farm existed on this site. Its setting, which contributes to its significance, is defined by the fields which immediately surround the complex, up to the railway line. the site lies beyond the railway line and falls away, meaning that only the north-west corner forms part of its experience.
- 3.70 Although as a potential non-designated asset it may carry some weight within a planning application, there is no reason to believe that any potential effects through change within its setting could not be addressed through sensitive masterplanning, if needs be.
- 3.71 The only other record is 0.8km to the south, whereby the site of an 18th century country house and park (**15775**) is recorded. However, this is now entirely covered by the suburban development of St Albans and has no bearing on the archaeological potential of the site.
- 3.72 As such, there is localised potential for post-medieval archaeology around Sandridgebury, and potential for post-medieval and modern agricultural features such as boundaries (of very low value) for the remainder of the site. Therefore, this presents little constraint to the allocation of the site, being as it is localised to a very small part of the site.

Section 4

Conclusions and Recommendations

- 4.1 This report has considered the significance of the relevant heritage assets identified to inform the potential allocation of the site.
- 4.2 In terms of designated heritage assets, the principal considerations within the site are the Grade II listed buildings at Sandridgebury House and barn/stables, and suitable mitigation should be provided to ensure the buildings are retained and appropriate measures taken to minimise any potential harm through its setting. This comprises retention of the house grounds as its immediate setting, and consideration of views of the house from higher ground to the north. Otherwise, the grounds are well screened, and provided this is maintained, a suitable offset may be achieved to the west and south of the complex. There is also an historic link to Sandridge village, although none of the individual assets within Sandridgebury can actually be discerned from the village itself. Some consideration may need to be given to maintaining a visual relationship.
- 4.3 Otherwise, other designated assets will need consideration due to potential impacts through change within their setting. These being the Sandridge Conservation Area and listed buildings within; in particular the church, and the Beech Bottom Dyke scheduled monument.
- 4.4 In relation to the conservation area, the rural surroundings of it extend into the northern part of the site, whilst there are also views of the church from both areas close to it within the site, and longer views from higher ground within the site to the south-west. Given the size of the site, there is no reason to believe a suitable buffer and landscaping could not be given to the setting of the conservation area, to help preserve its rural setting and also preserve some of the views of the church where it can be readily appreciated within its village context.
- 4.5 In terms of the scheduled monument, this is in poor condition adjacent to the site and its setting is largely defined by modern developments. Its linearity and function will still be able to be appreciated and preserved through its alignment, and although a suitable offset may need to be given, there is no reason to believe that introduction of built form within its setting would be incongruous. There is the potential for some on-site interpretation to help explain the monument.
- 4.6 In summary, given the size of the site and the character of the designated heritage assets in question, there is no reason to believe that these assets would form such a constraint to the development of the site as to inhibit its overall deliverability or impact on its capacity.
- 4.7 In terms of archaeology, it is recognised that the site has archaeological potential, particularly in relation to prehistoric remains in the north and possibly in relation to Beech Bottom Dyke in the south, and Romano-British remains associated with a Roman road

and potential roadside activity. There is also potential for medieval settlement activity in the vicinity of Sandridgebury.

- 4.8 Notwithstanding this, the prehistoric and Roman activity within the site has long been recognised and noted within the Local Plan (1994) as areas subject to archaeological recording conditions, in contrast to areas which are required to be preserved *in situ* which are also identified in the Local Plan. Although the Local Plan is somewhat out of date, it establishes the principal that archaeology could be suitably identified and mitigated through the course of a planning application.
- 4.9 Notwithstanding this, and considering the provisions of the NPPF, at this stage, there is no reason to believe that the potential archaeology within the site would represent an overriding constraint to the allocation of the site. Strategies for investigation and an appropriate mitigation response are likely to be needed at an application stage.

Section 5

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Images



Image EDP 1: General view of the former eastern access to Sandridgebury House, showing the house through the gates, looking west.



Image EDP 2: The southern access to Sandridgebury House, looking north. Now the principal access to the properties is here.



Image EDP 3: View of Sandridgebury farm complex looking north-west. The timber clad buildings are later 19th century. The house can just be seen in the background.