



**Heritage Statement on a Proposed Extension Area at
Elbridge Farm Recycling Centre, Chichester Road,
Bersted, PO21 5EF**

March 2023

NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

This Heritage Statement sets out the historical background to, and impact of, a proposed extension to Elbridge Farm Recycling Centre, Chichester Road, Bersted. It is considered that the works associated with this development will have a neutral impact upon the historic farmstead of Elbridge, and no impact upon any buried archaeological remains due to the absence of any associated groundworks, save the erection of a concrete slab fence which has minimal intrusive impact.

BACKGROUND

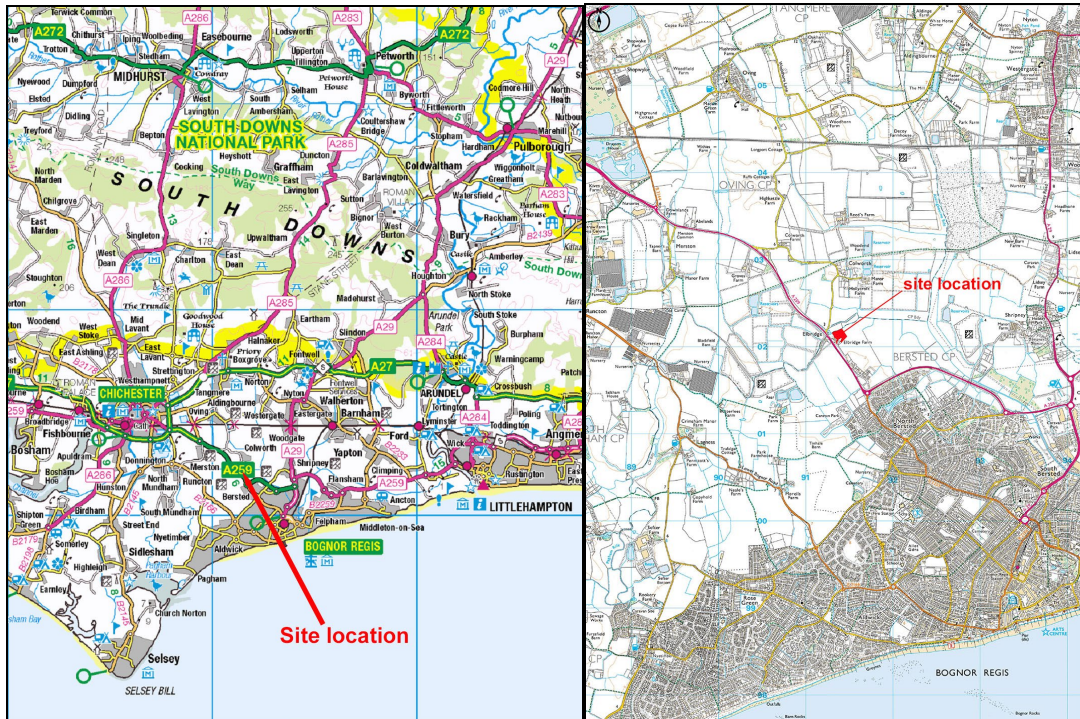


Figure 1 Site location. © Crown copyright. All rights reserved. License number: AL100036068

1. The site lies between the city of Chichester (c.6km to the north-west) and town of Bognor Regis (c.3km to the south-east) in the parish of Bersted in West Sussex. It sits to the immediate south-east of the junction of the A259 (Chichester-Bognor Regis road) and Colworth Lane, at 5m aOD and SU 9138 0214. The underlying geology is chalk overlain by river terrace deposits and brickearth.
2. The site operator is intending to submit an application for the extension of the current recycling centre. In order to inform both themselves and the Local Planning Authority of any potential heritage issues relating to the development of the site, they have commissioned West Sussex Archaeology Ltd to draw up this Heritage Statement.
3. It is not the purpose of this Heritage Statement to rehearse the clauses of the various publically available planning legislation, guidance and policy documents, suffice it to say that these provide the framework within which the heritage issues relevant to this site will be discussed. With reference to this project these are: the National Planning Policy Framework (2021 revision); the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990; and the West Sussex Waste Local Plan (2014, pp. 77-8).

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

1. A search was made of Chichester District Council's and West Sussex County Council's Historic Environment Records for a radius of 1km around the site, from which the records described below are of relevance (see Figure 2 for locations).

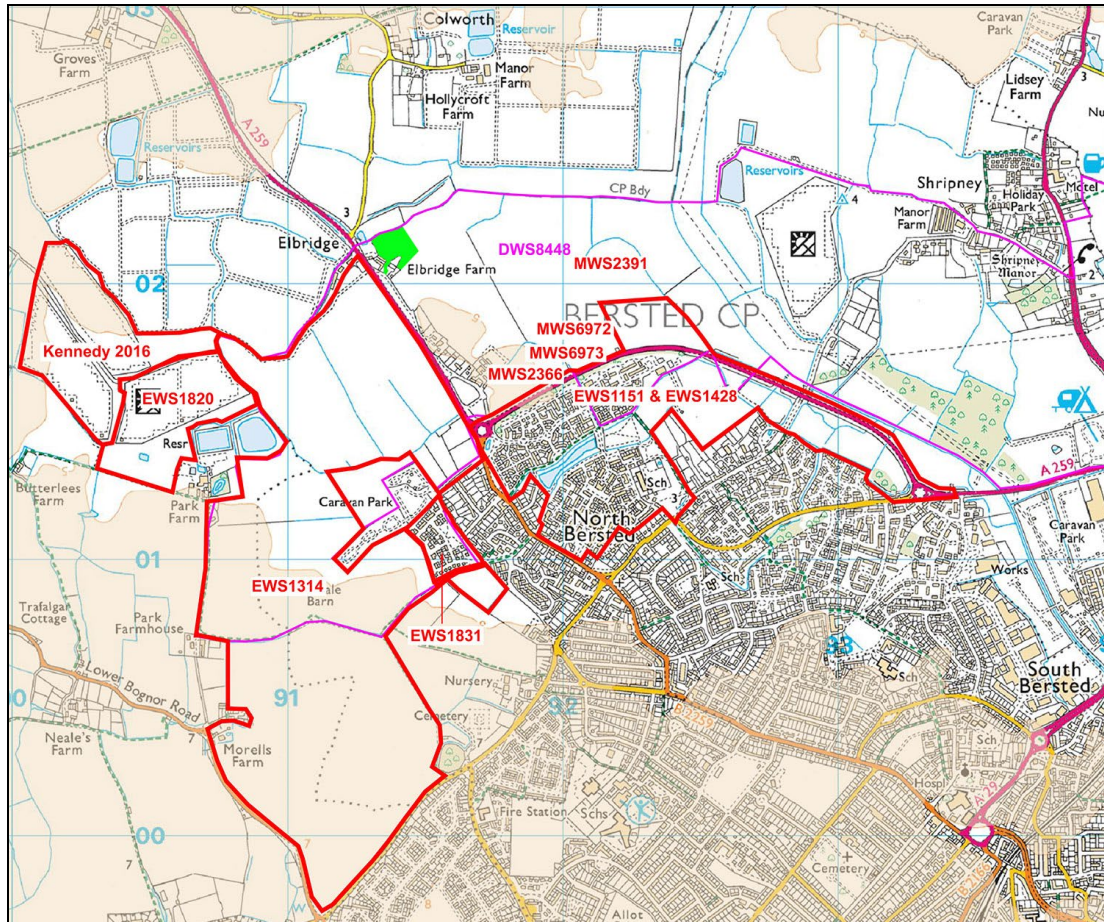


Figure 2 Map showing the site (in green), Archaeological Notification Area (in purple) and surrounding archaeological investigations and finds spots (in red). © Crown copyright. All rights reserved. License number: AL100036068

2. There are no designated heritage assets within the vicinity of the site, but it does lie within the North Bersted Multi-Period Archaeological Notification Area (DWS8448), as a result of previous archaeological investigations carried out to the south of the site: in 2005 Archaeology South-East excavated 168 trenches on land to the south-east of the site, which revealed archaeological deposits dating from the Middle Bronze Age to the modern periods (EWS1151); in 2007 Archaeology South-East excavated a series of test pits and boreholes on the same site with the aim of reconstructing the paleoenvironment of the area, these revealed a past environment of brackish intertidal mudflats and creeks with some fringing saltmarsh (EWS1428); in 2007 and 2008 Thames Valley Archaeological Services undertook an excavation on this same land, which revealed extensive Bronze Age, Iron Age and

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Roman deposits, including an Iron Age Warrior burial (EWS1151); in 2009 Cotswold Archaeology excavated 410 archaeological investigation trenches on land to the south of the site which revealed multi-period archaeological deposits, the nearest of which contained evidence for Bronze Age and later occupation (EWS1314); in 2015 Cotswold Archaeology and in 2016 Archaeology South-east both carried out limited archaeological watching briefs on land to the west of the site, which revealed no archaeological deposits (Kennedy 2016 & EWS1820); and in 2018 Archaeology South-East excavated 30 archaeological investigation trenches on land to the south of the site, 13 of which revealed evidence for Iron Age activity (EWS1831).

3. In addition to these archaeological investigations, there are a number of other find spots of archaeological material in the vicinity of the site: a possible tumulus, together with coins, at least one of which was apparently Roman, were noted in a field in the 19th century to the south-east of the site (MWS2366/MWS5840); to the east of the site, a spread of Roman finds was noted in ploughsoil, suggesting the presence of a Roman building (MWS2391); and two undated mounds are recorded to the south-east of the site (MWS6972 & MWS6973).
4. In the medieval period the site lay on the northern edge of the historic manor of North Bersted, which, until the mid-sixteenth century formed part of the estate of Pagham in the possession of the see of Canterbury. In 1542 North Bersted manor was acquired by the Crown, but in 1628 the manor was granted to Edward Ditchfield and others, who sold it two years later to the Lords Craven. The latter held it until 1785, when it was sold to Richard Barwell of Stansted, then to William Brereton (in 1812), then the Fletcher family until 1941 (Salzman, pp.165-170).
5. The first mention of the name “Elbridge” comes in a land grant of 1292, where Margery, once wife of Nicholas Tonht, citizen of Chichester, gives land at Elbridge to John, her son. The land is stated to contain houses, fields, meadows, gardens and other appurtenances (WSRO Add Mss 54005). A series of legal documents held by Nottinghamshire Archives (DD/N/202/1-38) provides a list of a number of the owners of Elbridge Farm from 1331 until 1707, these include: Richard de Assheby, Robert de Elneste (1331), Edward Barlotte of Haine (1554), the Knight family (1535-1588), George Overy of Ditcheninge (1612), the Chapman family (1612-1679), the Dorrington family (1679-1706/7), and Sir Richard Farrington (1706/7). Included within these documents are several descriptions of the farm itself, the first of which, dated to 1554, describes it as comprising “one messuage, one tenement, two gardens, two orchards, 100a of land, 10a of meadow, 20a of pasture, 3a of woods and appurtenances (DD/N/202/4&5). By 1656 it still described as having “one messuage”, but by 1700 it has grown to “one messuage, two barns, one stable” (DD/N/202/27). The historic map evidence, discussed below, shows three buildings on the

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site in 1778-83, which most likely represent the messuage (farmhouse) and its two barns, the latter on the basis of the evidence above, perhaps being built between 1656 and 1700, with the farmhouse having its origins as early as the 13th century.

6. Later documents held by West Sussex Record Office provide further details of owners and tenants: in 1724 the occupier is named as William Horne, with the owner being Anne Palmer, niece of Sir Richard Farrington, listed above (WSRO Add Mss 8540); by 1768 the occupier was John Saite, described as a yeoman (WSRO HCC/Acc 1771A/Box16/Bundle1/12); from at least 1810 until at least 1842 it is the Upton family who are the occupiers (WSRO Add Mss 51533-51534 & Add Mss 51557-51559 & TDW115), with the Woods family as owners from at least 1797 until at least 1815 (WSRO Add Mss 5776); in 1842 the owner is Sir James Fellowes (WSRO RDW115); by 1852 the Uptons had moved on and the tenant is Richard Coote (WSRO Add Mss 11800), who holds it until at least 1870 (WSRO Add Mss 11806); and then finally in 1896 the recently deceased Henry Davis is listed as holding Elbridge (WSRO AM 692/27).



Figure 3 Extract from the Yeakell & Gardner map of Sussex, the site is outlined in red

7. The earliest map to show the area of the site is Yeakell & Gardner's map of Sussex of 1778-1783. At this date the farmstead, consisting of three buildings, is located closer to the parish boundary than is currently the case, with the surrounding land shown as fields (see figure 3). The Tithe map of 1842 (WSRO TDW115) shows a more detailed but similar picture, although by this date two ponds have appeared, one within the farmyard, with a larger second to the north. In addition a fourth building is shown to the south-east of the original three.

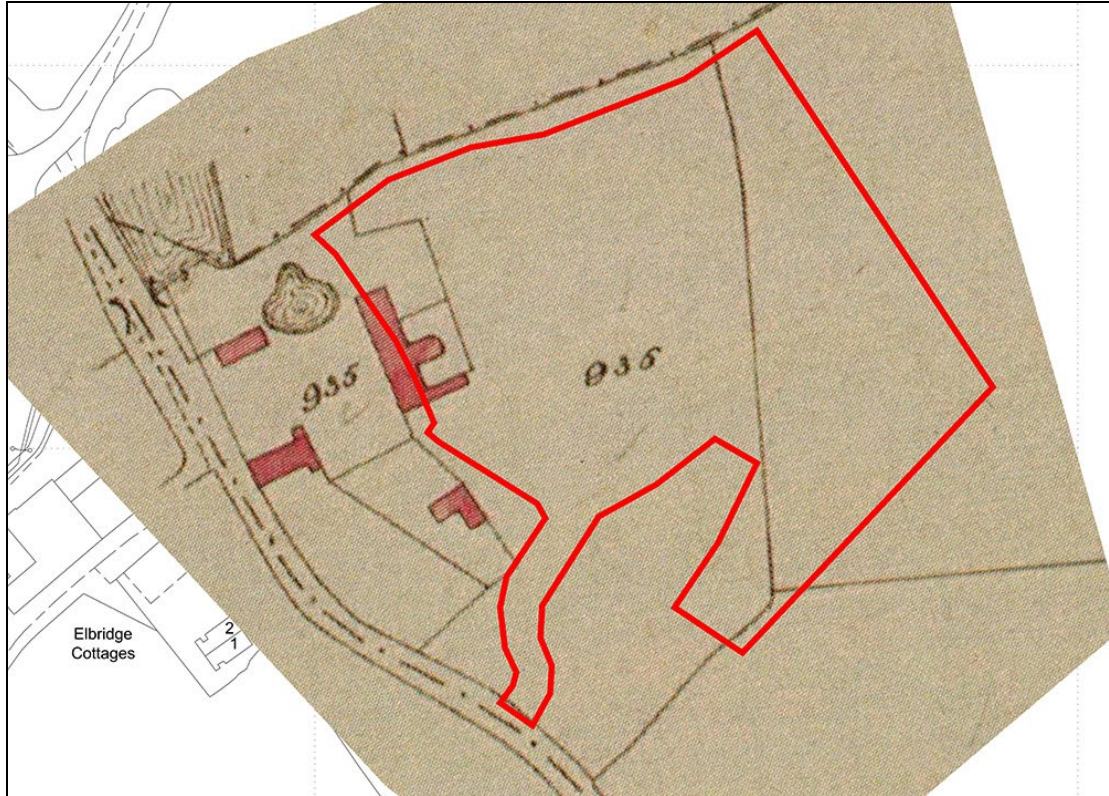


Figure 4 Extract from the Tithe map of Bersted (WSRO TDW115), the site is outlined in red

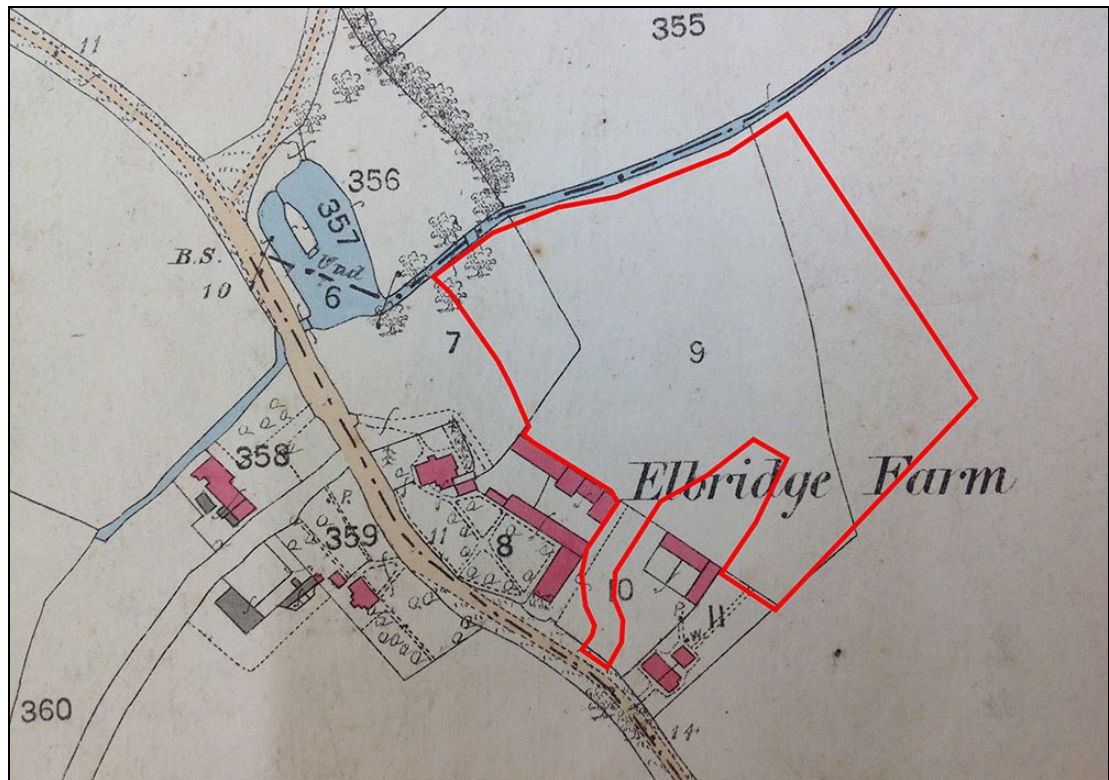


Figure 5 Extract from the 1st edition 1:2500 Ordnance Survey map, the site is outlined in red

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8. It would appear that by 1875, the date of the 1st edition Ordnance Survey 1:2500 map, the earlier farm has been demolished and a new one built in its stead to the south-east. The site of the earlier farm is now a field. The new farm consists of a farmhouse to the north-west, with two “L”-shaped complexes of farm buildings to the south-east. Further to the south-east are two other outbuildings, and a pair of cottages. There is no change shown on the succeeding 1898 and 1910 OS maps, save for a slight enlargement to the farmhouse and the southern of the two “L”-shaped farm buildings. Post-WWII expansion sees a further series of farm buildings appear to the north-east and south-east of the farm.
9. Neither Historic England’s Aerial Photo Explorer, nor Aerial Archaeology Mapping Explorer revealed any further features within the vicinity of the site.

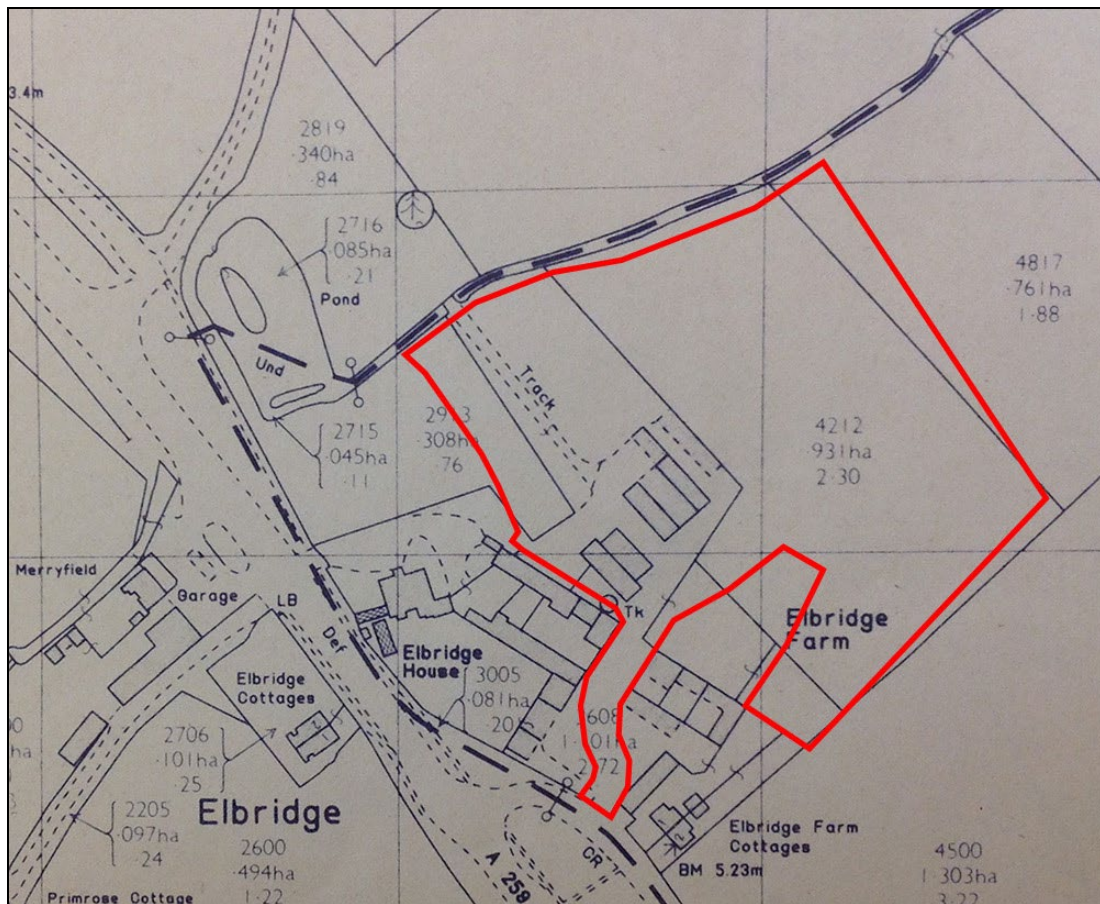


Figure 6 Extract from the 1:2500 1974 Ordnance Survey edition, the site is outlined in red

THE DEVELOPMENT & ITS IMPACT

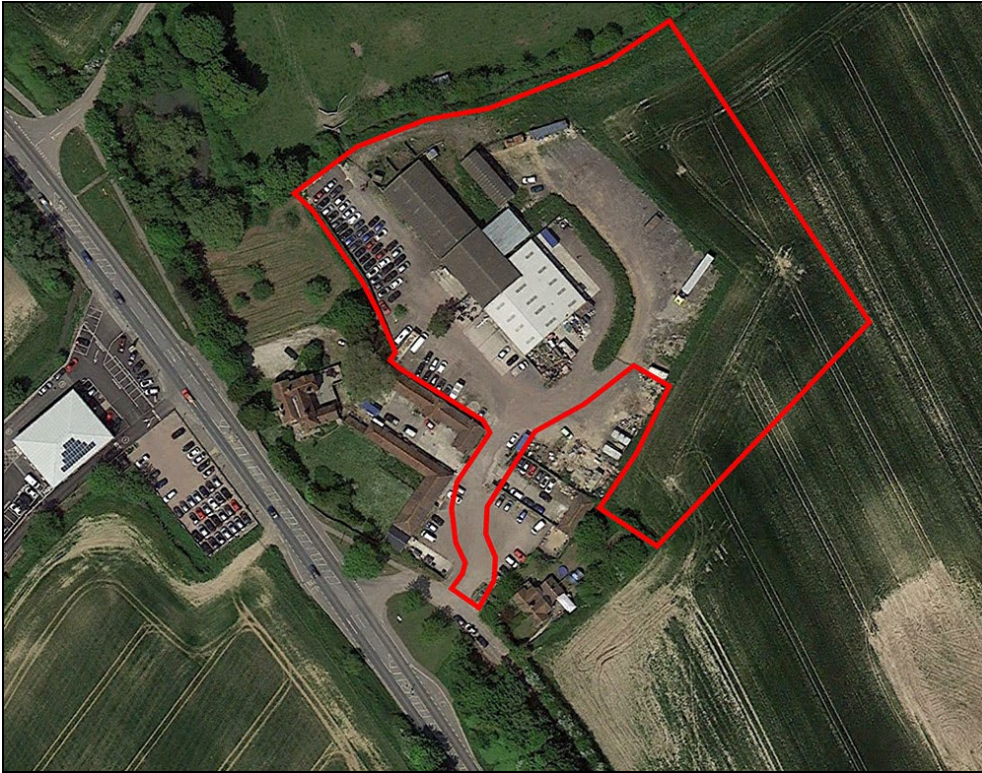


Figure 7 Aerial photo of the site in 2013, before it became the Recycling Centre in 2014, with the proposed site boundary shown in red (Google Earth © 2022 Google)

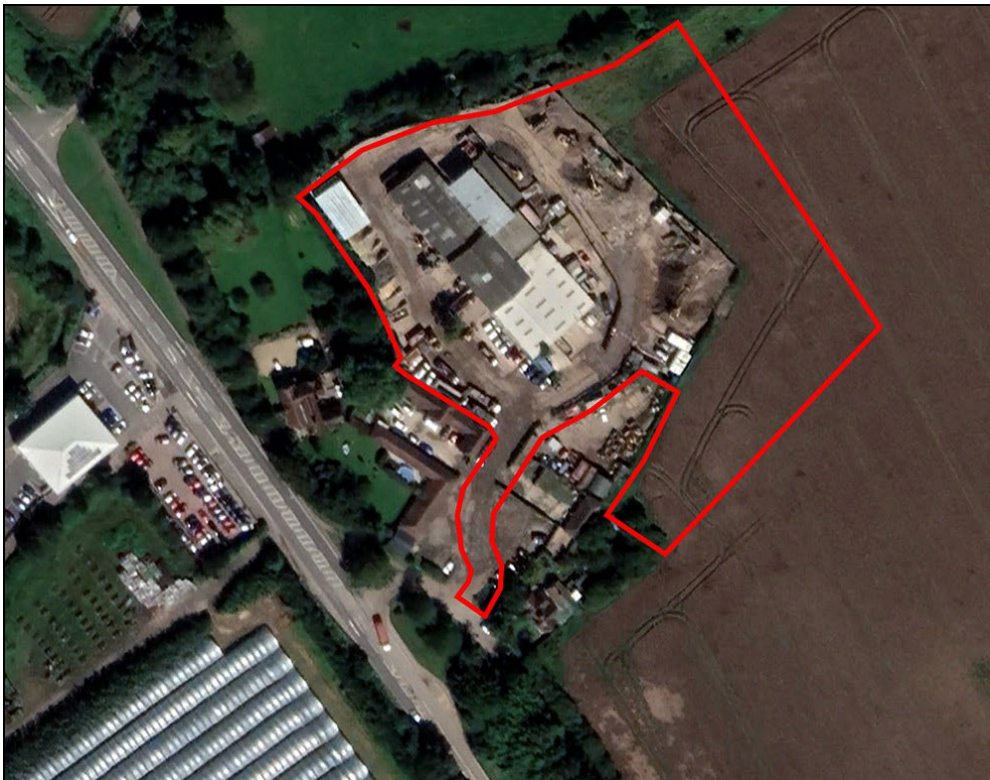


Figure 8 Aerial photo of the site in 2021 with the proposed site boundary shown in red (Google Earth © 2022 Google)

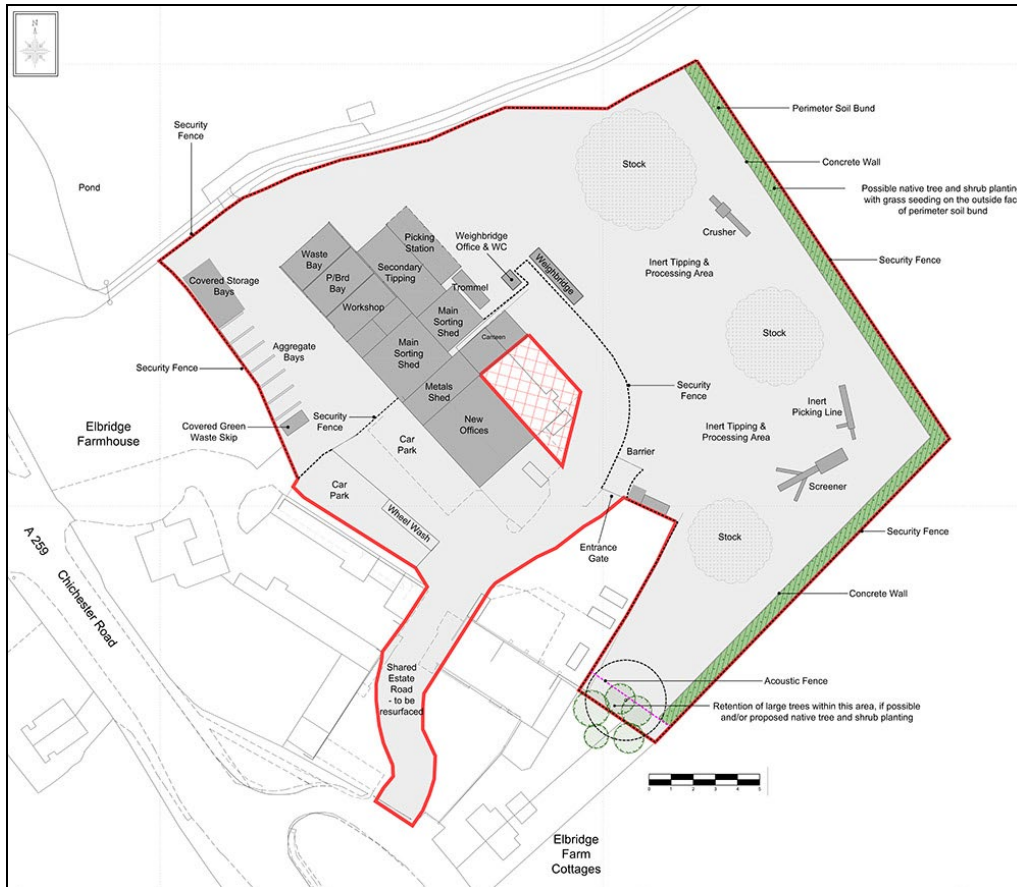


Figure 9 Plan of the site as proposed

1. This application seeks to increase the throughput of waste from 30,000 tonnes to 75,000 tonnes per annum, to obtain approval for minor changes to the site layout, and to increase the area of the site to the north-east and south-west. These proposals have the potential to impact upon the setting of the undesignated historic farmstead of Elbridge farm and any buried archaeological remains that might exist in the area of the proposed site extension.

2. As has been discussed above, Elbridge Farm has its origins in the medieval period, however its original site was abandoned and its buildings demolished in the mid-19th century, when the current farm buildings were erected between 1842 and 1875 to the south-east. This new farm consisted of a farmhouse, two ranges of farmbuildings, a further detached farmbuilding and a pair of cottages. All these buildings are constructed of flint, with brick quoins and detailing and tiled rooves, with the two ranges being currently unoccupied. The buildings are typical of a Sussex/Hampshire farmstead of the period, and as such are relatively common, as reflected in their un-Listed status, although their significance is increased by their relatively unaltered form.

3. The site sits within a wider landscape comparatively rich in prehistoric and Roman remains, as evidenced by the excavated sites to the south and south-east. These are considered to be of local, regional and, in

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some cases, national importance, the latter being the case with the Late Iron Age warrior burial. It is considered likely that further such remains will exist within the area of the proposed extension to the existing site, which may be negatively impacted by any associated groundworks.

4. The impact of the proposed development upon the historic farm buildings and their setting is considered to be neutral, since all the additions and extensions to the existing site lie within the fenced area of the recycling centre, granted permission in 2014, which, together with its adjoining mature tree line, provides an effective screen. Furthermore the historic map evidence, together with the 2013 aerial photograph (see Figure 7), demonstrates that this has always been a working farm, with associated buildings and activity covering the area of the later recycling centre (compare Figures 7 and 8). The setting will therefore experience no significant change.



Figure 10 The south-western side of the site showing the existing concrete storage bins. In the upper image, looking south-east, the rooves of the historic farm buildings can be seen in the background, outside of the compound gate; in the lower image, taken from just inside the compound gate and looking west, the tree screen that runs along the full length of the south-west boundary can be seen

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5. The impact of the proposed development upon any buried archaeological remains lying within the area of the extension to the north-east and south-east of the site has been mitigated by the developer agreeing that no groundworks will be carried out as part of this application, save for the posts for a concrete slab wall fronting the interior soil bund (see Figure 9). Instead the existing ploughsoil will be retained, providing an effective protective layer for any underlying archaeological remains, with any surface treatments added on top. This will mirror the situation within the existing compound against its eastern boundary. It is therefore not considered that any archaeological intervention will be required in advance of or during development works.



Figure 11 The area of the proposed extension to the site compound, looking north-west (upper image) and south-west (lower image)



Figure 12 The interior of the existing compound inside its north-eastern boundary, showing the area of old ploughsoil used as the base for current operations

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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