



Heritage Assessment

Lower Cleggswood Farm, Heald Lane,
Littleborough

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Bloor Homes

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Executive Summary

Stantec has been instructed by Bloor Homes to consider the heritage significance of the buildings at Lower Cleggswood Farm, in relation to the development proposed by Bloor Homes at Land to the West of Hollingworth Road and Land off Rakewood Road, Littleborough (the 'Site').

The Hollingworth Road land parcel forms part of a strategic land allocation for residential development in the adopted Places for Everyone ('PfE') and is the subject of a live hybrid planning application which has been submitted to Rochdale Borough Council ('RBC').

Whilst not included on RBC's list of non-designated heritage assets, the buildings at Lower Cleggswood Farm have been identified as a 'non-designated heritage asset' within the 'Land North of Smithy Bridge Historic Environment Assessment 2020', which forms part of the PfE evidence base. Within the evidence base document, the buildings at Lower Cleggswood Farm are assessed to be of *"local (low) significance."*

Whilst PfE Policy JP Allocation 20 set out the requirement to undertake archaeological evaluation at the allocation site, reference to built heritage is not specifically made within the policy wording. Instead, the text supporting the policy makes reference to the aforementioned evidence base document, stating that: *"The masterplan must seek to protect and enhance such assets where possible, otherwise their harm must be robustly justified and mitigated."*

This Heritage Assessment has been produced to assess the heritage significance of the buildings and to provide justification for their loss in order to meet the requirements of local and national planning policy.

The assessment finds that the overall significance of Lower Cleggswood Farm is derived from its architectural and historic interest as an example of a linear plan farmstead, including a locally typical laithe-house plan dating from the late 18th Century, likely to have been a satellite or subsidiary farm to a larger farm. It is concluded that the significance of Lower Cleggswood Farm is of low local significance, derived predominantly from its historic interest.

The desk-top research undertaken for this assessment identifies several other examples of laithe-house farmsteads in the local area, many of which are better examples and are included on RBC's list of non-designated heritage assets. These examples include Cleggs Wood Farm, Higher Eafield Farm, Knowl Farm, and Branch Wood Farmhouse and adjoining farm buildings. The fact that Lower Cleggswood Farm has not been identified, on RBC's list of non-designated heritage assets, would appear to suggest that the group of buildings is of a lower level of significance.

Of the buildings assessed at Lower Cleggswood Farm, only House 1, House 2, the Stone Barn, and the Stable Building are considered to hold any heritage interest. This is as a result of their historic interest and group value as part of a late 18th-19th Century farmstead, typical of the local area. The buildings have been extensively altered and are considered to hold limited, if any, architectural interest. As such, any heritage interest would be low and only at a local level.

The remaining buildings at Lower Cleggswood Farm are not considered to hold heritage interest sufficient for these buildings to be considered as non-designated heritage assets. Indeed, a number of buildings at Lower Cleggswood Farm are no longer in use and have fallen into a state of disrepair.

In order for buildings at Lower Cleggswood Farm to be retained, conversion to residential use would be considered the most appropriate approach. However, in order to secure any conversion, significant interventions and levels of repair would be required to these buildings. Given the lack of heritage interest held by these buildings, it is not considered economically viable, or appropriate, to retain these buildings within the proposed development. Furthermore, the buildings need to be removed to accommodate SUDs features, thereby facilitating the comprehensive masterplanning of the site.

Whilst the demolition of the buildings at Lower Cleggswood Farm would result in the loss of a non-designated heritage asset, which in NPPF terms would result in 'harm,' the NPPF requires decision makers to make a 'balanced judgement' having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset. Given the 'low' local level of significance of such measures, it is considered that the benefits arising from the proposed development at an allocated residential site significantly outweigh the resulting harm. Such benefits include, inter alia:

- A significant contribution to the supply of high-quality family homes, including both market and affordable homes, at a site that is allocated for residential use in the adopted PfE Plan.
- An increase in properties in higher council tax bands – one of the Council's objectives.
- Provision of land for a new primary school, in accordance with the adopted policy requirement.
- Approximately seven hectares of public open space within a strong network of green infrastructure, for the enjoyment of the whole community.
- Planting of new trees and hedgerows, ensuring a net gain in biodiversity.
- Delivery of 140 parking spaces, including parking for disabled people and families, which will continue to enable people to visit and enjoy the Hollingworth Lake area; and
- Sustainable population growth by increasing the number of local residents, thereby helping to ensure the vitality and viability of local shops, schools, services and facilities in Littleborough and Smithy Bridge.

1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose and Scope

- 1.1.1 Stantec has been instructed by Bloor Homes to consider the heritage significance of the buildings at Lower Cleggswood Farm, as part of the development proposals at Land to the West of Hollingworth Road and Land off Rakewood Road, Littleborough (the 'Site').

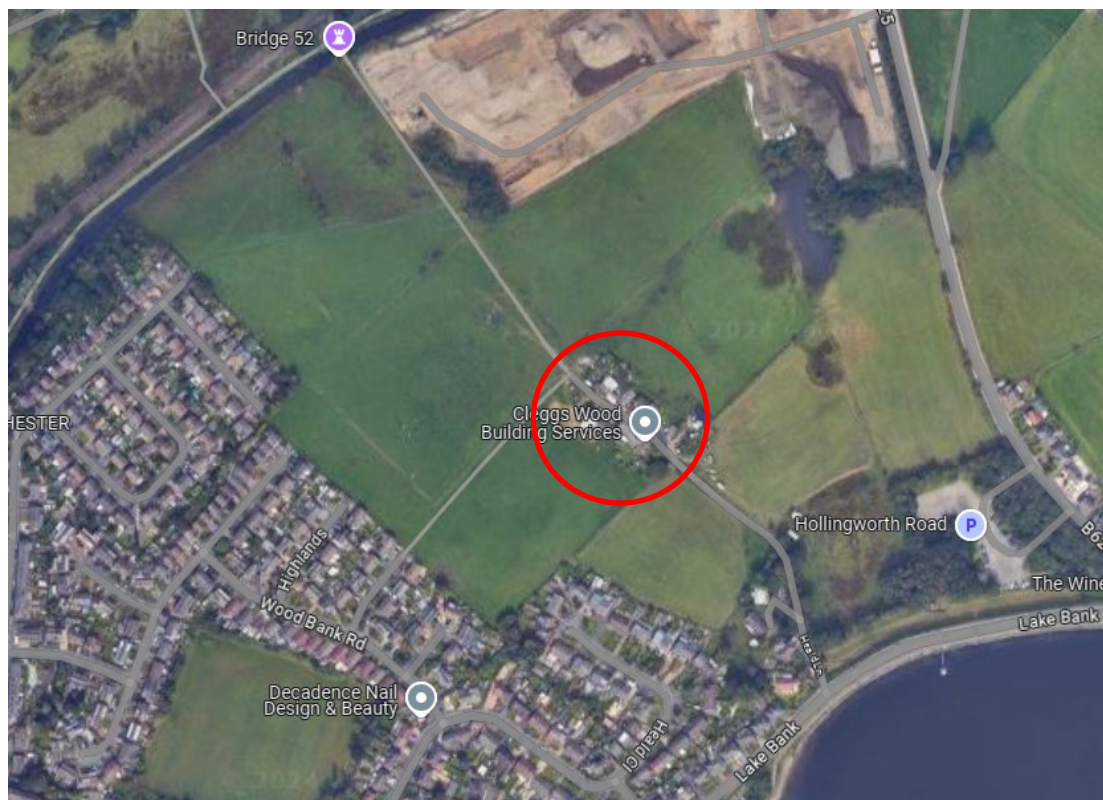


Figure 1 – Location of Lower Cleggswood Farm (Source: Google Maps)

- 1.1.2 The Site forms part of a strategic land allocation for residential development in the adopted Places for Everyone (PfE) as Policy JP Allocation 20: Land North of Smithy Bridge.
- 1.1.3 A hybrid planning application (ref: 24/00581/HYBR) has been submitted to Rochdale Borough Council (RBC) and comments have been received from the Council's Conservation Officer in relation to the proposed demolition of the farm buildings.
- 1.1.4 The farm buildings, whilst not included on RBC's list of non-designated heritage assets (last updated 28 June 2023), have previously been identified by RBC as a 'non-designated heritage asset' as part of the PfE evidence base. Whilst no formal assessment has been undertaken by the Council, Officers have confirmed this position in recent comments received (23 October 2024)¹:

"Further consideration is required in relation to retaining on-site buildings. She advised that the on-site farmhouse is deemed to be a 'non-designated heritage asset.' If the buildings could not be retained, then justification for their loss

¹ <https://www.rochdale.gov.uk/heritage-conservation/non-designated-heritage-assets>

should be provided as part of the planning application – a Level 2 historic assessment is required as a minimum but is not mitigation for the loss.

Retention (or justification for the loss of heritage features) should be properly considered in accordance with the relevant policy requirement (PfE Policy JPA 20, part 4)."

- 1.1.5 Further work has therefore been requested in order to understand the heritage significance of these buildings and to provide additional justification for their loss in order to meet the requirements of paragraph 207 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), published December 2024.
- 1.1.6 A Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment (Stantec, 2019) was submitted as part of the hybrid application, and this set out in detail an assessment of the designated heritage assets and below ground archaeology in relation to the Site. As such, this Heritage Assessment focuses solely on the non-designated assets at Lower Cleggswood Farm and does not repeat any of the previously undertaken assessment.

1.2 The Site

- 1.2.1 The application site comprises approximately 18.6 hectares (ha) of currently open agricultural pasture, approximately 4km northeast of Rochdale and 18km northeast of Manchester city centre. The site is bounded by Hollingworth Road to the east, Lark Bank and Hollingworth Lake to the south, the Rochdale Canal forms the northern boundary and there is existing residential development to the west.

1.3 Methodology

- 1.3.1 The assessment of significance of the identified heritage assets follows the heritage interest-led approach set out in the NPPF, comprising archaeological, architectural, and historic interest. This has been guided by the definitions provided in the updated 'Planning Policy Guidance.'
- 1.3.2 The assessment of significance is also informed by Historic England's Good Practice Advice in Planning (GPA) 'Note 2: Managing Significance in Decision Taking in the Historic Environment' (2015) (GPA2), Historic England Advice Note 7 (Second Edition) (HEAN7): Local Heritage Listing: Identifying and Conserving Local Heritage (2021). and 'Advice Note 12: Statements of Heritage Significance – Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets' (2019).
- 1.3.3 Furthermore, RBC has produced a 'Guide to completing the non-designated heritage asset nomination form' (date unknown)², and further guidance on their website, which has been developed in line with the national policy and guidance referred to at paragraph 1.3.2 above. This focuses on the following criteria, which are broadly aligned to the criteria set out in HEAN7:
- Architectural significance - sites that demonstrate local architectural style and character or are associated with a local architect, designer or engineer of importance.
 - Historical significance - sites associated with a local historical event, which have importance as a community asset, are associated with local famous or notable people or appear on the First Edition of the Ordnance Survey Map.
 - Positive contribution - such as a landmark or as part of a key view.
 - Designed Landscape - asset is a component of a designed landscape.

² [Rochdale Borough Council, Guide to completing non-designated heritage asset nomination form](#)

- 1.3.4 This Assessment has been informed by desk-top research and a site visit, carried out in December 2024. Walkovers of the Site and environs were completed, to confirm the topography and existing land use, the nature of any existing buildings and structures, and assess factors which may have affected the survival or condition.

1.4 Policy Framework

- 1.4.1 A summary of the policy framework is set out below.

National Planning Policy

- 1.4.2 The NPPF sets out Government planning policy with Chapter 16 providing policy guidance for conserving and enhancing the historic environment. The guidance recognises the importance of preserving assets in a manner appropriate to their significance and guides that any harm or loss to significance should require clear and convincing justification.
- 1.4.3 Paragraph 207 requires applicants to describe the heritage significance of heritage assets potentially affected by proposed development. This should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance.
- 1.4.4 Paragraph 208 places an onus on local planning authorities to identify and assess the significance on any heritage asset that may be affected, and to take this assessment into account when considering the impact of a proposal.
- 1.4.5 Paragraph 210 states that local planning authorities, in determining planning applications, should take account of: the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation; the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.
- 1.4.6 Paragraphs 212 and 213 advise that great weight should be given to a designated asset's conservation; the more important the asset, the greater this weight should be. They go on to state that significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset, or development within its setting. Any such harm or loss should require clear and convincing justification.
- 1.4.7 Paragraph 216 of the NPPF guides that the effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account 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 in determining applications affecting non-designated heritage assets.
- 1.4.8 Implementation of the NPPF is supported by the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) (2014 with updates).

Local Planning Policy

- 1.4.9 The Development Plan for Rochdale comprises the following relevant documents:
- Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan Document (March 2024)
 - Rochdale Adopted Core Strategy (October 2016)

Places for Everyone, 2024

- 1.4.10 Part of the Site is allocated in the adopted PfE for around 300 new homes and a new primary school. PfE became part of the statutory development plan for the nine PfE authorities (including Rochdale) on 21 March 2024. Policy JP Allocation 20: Land North of Smithy Bridge sets out the policy requirements for the Site.
- 1.4.11 The policy specifically requires development to *“Deliver a landscape-led development, incorporating high-quality green and blue infrastructure, that takes advantage of the site’s attractive setting next to Hollingworth Lake and the Rochdale Canal and reflects and responds to the special qualities and sensitivities of the key characteristics of the Pennine Foothills landscape character type....”*
- 1.4.12 There is a requirement within the policy for additional archaeological evaluation within the allocation site and whilst built heritage is not specifically referenced within the policy text, the justification makes references the previously prepared Heritage Assessment and notes that the document *“...identifies heritage assets which may be impacted upon through the development of this site. The masterplan must seek to protect and enhance such assets where possible, otherwise their harm must be robustly justified and mitigated.”* (PfE, paragraph 11.268).
- 1.4.13 PfE also includes several strategic policies that apply to the Greater Manchester Area. Strategic Objective 4 seeks to *“Maximise the potential arising from our national and international assets”*. This includes reference to enhancing cultural and heritage assets across the plan area.
- 1.4.14 Strategic Policy JP-P2: Heritage relates specifically to the Historic Environment and states:
- “We will proactively manage and work with partners to positively conserve, sustain and enhance our historic environment and heritage assets and their settings. Opportunities will be pursued to aid the promotion, enjoyment, understanding and interpretation of heritage assets, as a means of maximising wider public benefits and reinforcing Greater Manchester’s distinct character, identity and sense of place. Local Plans will set out the key elements which contribute to the district’s identity, character and distinctiveness and which should be the priority for conserving and enhancing in the future and demonstrate a clear understanding of the historic environment and the heritage values of sites, buildings or areas and their relationship with their surroundings. This knowledge should be used to inform the positive management and integration of our heritage by:*
- 1. Setting out a clear vision that recognises and embeds the role of heritage in place-making,*
 - 2. Ensuring that the heritage significance of a site or area is considered in accordance with national planning policy in the planning and design process and opportunities for interpretation and local engagement are optimised.*
 - 3. Integrating the conservation and enhancement of heritage assets and their settings, with creative contextual architectural responses that contribute to their significance and sense of place.*
 - 4. Delivering positive benefits that sustain and enhance the historic environment, as well as contributing to the economic viability, accessibility and environmental quality of a place, and to social wellbeing; and*
 - 5. Exploring opportunities to reduce greenhouse gas emissions that restoration of historic buildings offers.*

Particular consideration will be given to ensure that the significance of key elements of the historic environment which contribute to Greater Manchester’s distinctive identity

and sense of place are protected from harm. These include historic town centres, places of worship, historic transport routes including the canal network, industrial buildings and structures including textile mills, farmsteads and other sites, buildings, and areas of identified archaeological, architectural, artistic and/or historic value.

Development proposals affecting designated and non-designated heritage assets and/or their settings will be considered having regard to national planning policy. Where heritage assets have been identified as being at risk, Local Plans should identify specific opportunities for them to contribute to regeneration and place making, and they should set out strategies for their repair and re-use. Development proposals which will help safeguard the significance of and secure a sustainable future for Greater Manchester's heritage at risk will be supported in principle, provided they are not contrary to national policy or other policies in the development plan. Proposals should be informed, as necessary, by the findings and recommendations of the appropriate heritage assessment(s) in the development plan evidence base and/or any updated heritage assessment submitted as part of the planning application process."

Rochdale Core Strategy, 2016

- 1.4.15 The Development Framework for Rochdale comprises the Rochdale Core Strategy (adopted October 2016), and content from which that is relevant to this assessment is detailed below.

Policy P2: Protecting and enhancing character, landscape and heritage

Enhancing and protecting the borough's unique character can lead to improvements in quality of life and can also help to boost the visitor economy and inward investment.

1. *We will protect and enhance the borough's character, the distinctiveness of its town centres, housing areas and countryside, and the qualities of its landscapes, utilising the considerable potential of these assets in development and regeneration schemes. We will do this by:*
 - a. *Requiring new development to integrate successfully with the key natural features of the borough, e.g. river valleys and the Pennine landscape,*
 - b. *Requiring new development to take opportunities to protect and open up important views of hills and valleys which are part of the borough's unique character,*
 - c. *Restoring the River Roch and other water bodies to their place as key and attractive features of the borough, including opening up waterways where they have been covered, and enhancing their setting, heritage assets and biodiversity potential,*
 - d. *Protecting, enhancing and utilising outstanding cultural landscapes, such as the Cheesden Valley area and around Littleborough and Hollingworth Lake; and*
 - e. *Conserving and enhancing townscape character.*

2. *We will protect the borough's heritage by:*
- a. *Conserving, enhancing and promoting key heritage assets, both statutory and non-statutory including consideration of their wider settings. Key heritage assets of the borough include:*
 - i. *Four outstanding conservation areas: Central Rochdale, Middleton and Littleborough town centres and Rock Nook / Summit,*
 - ii. *Other designated assets such as listed buildings, conservation areas, registered parks and scheduled ancient monuments,*
 - iii. *The heritage of the Co-operative movement, the Rochdale Pioneers and the Labour movement,*
 - iv. *The Edgar Wood and J. H. Sellers cultural heritage,*
 - v. *The heritage of the seventeenth and eighteenth century vernacular tradition; and*
 - vi. *The engineering heritage, including mills, canals and railways.*
 - b. *Conserving, enhancing and utilising other non-statutory heritage assets of local interest, be they buildings, parks, gardens or archaeological sites, including promoting their sensitive restoration,*
 - c. *Using heritage assets positively and intelligently to strengthen identity and image and support the visitor economy, particularly in development and regeneration schemes; and*
 - d. *Prioritising the conservation of heritage assets at risk from decay, giving special attention to designated heritage assets in this regard.*

2 Statement of Significance

2.1 Definitions

2.1.1 Heritage significance is defined in Annex 2 of the NPPF as:

“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.”

2.1.2 The NPPF definition of significance further guides that in the planning context, heritage interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic, or historic. The definitions are provided in the updated PPG.

2.1.3 In relation to designated heritage assets, the assessment considers the contribution that setting makes to the overall significance of the asset. The setting of a heritage asset is described in Annex 2 of the NPPF 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. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance may be neutral.”

2.1.4 Setting is the way in which the asset is understood (i.e., evidential, and historical interests) and experienced (aesthetic and communal values). Setting is not an asset in itself and differs from curtilage (historic/present property boundary); context (association with other assets irrespective of distance); and historic character (sum of all historic attributes, including setting, associations, and visual aspects). The foregoing is based on guidance produced by Historic England (GPA3, The Setting of Heritage Assets, 2017).

2.2 Statement of Significance

2.2.1 As noted in the introduction, this Assessment focusses specifically on the significance of the buildings considered non-designated assets at Lower Cleggswood Farm. It is understood that no previous formal assessment has been undertaken in relation to the group of buildings.

2.2.2 Non-designated heritage assets are defined in the Planning Practice Guidance as being:

“...buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes identified by plan-making bodies as having a degree of heritage significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, but which do not meet the criteria for designated heritage assets.”

“A substantial majority of buildings have little or no heritage significance and thus do not constitute heritage assets. Only a minority have enough heritage significance to merit identification as non-designated heritage assets.”³

2.2.3 Historic England provides guidance on local heritage listing in HEAN7, which sets out criteria for assessing the suitability of assets to be considered a Non-designated Heritage Asset. In line with the criteria set out in HEAN7, the local interest of Lower Cleggswood Farm is considered below.

³ Paragraph: 039 Reference ID: 18a-039-20190723

- 2.2.4 Lower Cleggswood Farm comprises a series of buildings, set in a linear arrangement along a farm track. To the northwest are several large-scale modern agricultural buildings which would not be considered to hold any historic value. **Figure 2** shows the buildings relating to the historic buildings within the farmstead. The labels on Figure 2 have been used throughout the remainder of this report to identify the buildings.



Figure 2 – Key Plan of Existing Buildings (Source: Google Maps)

- 2.2.5 There is evidence to suggest that Lower Cleggswood Farm has been occupied since at least the mid-17th Century, with a number of wills from between 1669 and 1793 identifying Lower Cleggswood as their place of residence^{4 5 6 7}. However, it is noted that the extant buildings at the Site are likely to be later and date from the late 18th Century onwards. Anecdotal records suggest that the extant farm buildings replaced an earlier farmstead that was ravaged by fire⁸.
- 2.2.6 The Hennet County Palatine of Lancaster map of 1830 (**Figure 3**) shows two buildings of rectangular planned form at the Site, which is likely to be part of the Stone Barn, and a now demolished farmhouse. The 1851 Census records show four entries for Lower Cleggswood, but no further information on house number or name is provided. The 1851 Census lists Robert Kershaw (28) as a Colliery Labourer, Thomas Stott (27) as a Coal Miner, Lawrence Collings (30) as a Farmer of 24 acres and Thomas Ashworth (48) as a Butcher. The 1871 Census records just two entries for Lower Cleggswood, with one entry listed as Lower Cleggswood occupied by Ann Ashworth (63, widowed) and the second as Lower Cleggswood Farmhouse, occupied by Lawrence Collings (50) as a Farmer of 24 acres. It is unclear as to which buildings these entries relate to.

⁴ WCW/Infra/C1415/95 Will of John Watmough, Lower Cleggswood, Butterworth, Rochdale 16th July 1748

⁵ WCW/Supra/C178A/45 Will of Sarah Jones, Lower Cleggswood, Butterworth, Rochdale 3rd September 1669

⁶ WCW/Supra/C285A/81 Will of Richard Ingham, Lower Cleggswood, Butterworth, Rochdale 19th October 1706

⁷ WCW/Supra/C549C/24 Will of John Whatmough, Lower Cleggswood, Butterworth, Rochdale, 4th April 1793

⁸ [JPA22 North of Smithy Bridge Historic Environment Summary](#)

- 2.2.7 The 1891 Census shows two entries for Lower Cleggswood: 1 Lower Cleggswood, occupied by John Wilson (57), Farmer, and 2 Lower Cleggswood, occupied by James Lee Whitehead (29), Outdoor Worker. No. 2 Lower Cleggswood is noted to have four rooms.
- 2.2.8 The 1911 Census lists William Heselline (54), Farmer, as the occupier of Lower Cleggswood Farm, which is identified to have 5 rooms within the dwelling. A further entry for 2 Lower Cleggswood is provided with Herbert Horrocks (34), Fuller Miller listed as the occupier, with four rooms identified. The 1939 register identifies 2 Lower Cleggs Wood, and lists Ben Kershaw (29), Butcher as the occupier.



Figure 3 – Extract from the 1830 Henriet County Palatine of Lancaster map showing Lower Cleggswood Farm

Map Regression

- 2.2.9 All maps referenced in the following section are provided within **Appendix A**.
- 2.2.10 Lower Cleggswood Farm is first clearly visible in its current layout on the 1851 OS county series map, and comprises House 1, House 2, the Stone Barn, and part of the Front Barn, with a small, enclosed garden to the rear (southwest) of the houses and barn. The farmstead is identified as Lower Cleggs Wood. By 1893, the farmstead remained largely unchanged with the addition of the chicken coop to the rear (southwest) of the houses, and the addition of the stone stable to the northwest of the Stone Barn. The front barn appears to have been divided into three bays. The farmstead is still referred to as Lower Cleggs Wood. A description of the farm in the late 19th century describes the farm as a dairy farm, with the dairy located in the cellar of the farmhouse.
- 2.2.11 By 1908, the only changes were the addition of 2no small buildings to the rear of Front Barn, with the open sided southwest elevation clearly denoted, and the addition of a small rectangular building to the north of the yard where the milking parlour now stands. The farmstead is identified as Lower Cleggswood. The 1954 OS map shows no change between 1908 and 1954, and the farmstead is still referred to as Lower Cleggswood.

- 2.2.12 By the time of the 1968 OS map the Rear Barn had been constructed, and the Milking Parlour is shown to have been significantly extended or rebuilt. A modern agricultural building is shown to have built to the north beyond the Milking Parlour. The farm is then identified as Lower Cleggswood Farm. By the time of the 1976 National Grid, the only change appears to have been the extension of the modern agricultural shed to the north of the Site. The only change between 1976 and 1989 was the addition of further modern agricultural sheds to the northwest of the farmyard.

Assessment of Significance

- 2.2.13 The non-designated heritage asset consists of nine individual structures. The overall significance of Lower Cleggswood Farm is derived from its architectural and historic interest as an example of a linear plan farmstead, including a locally typical laithe-house plan dating from the late 18th Century, likely to have been a satellite of subsidiary farm to a larger farm (probably Cleggswood Farm to the east).
- 2.2.14 The tables below set out an assessment of the each of these structures against the criteria in HEAN7.

Criterion	Appraisal of House 1
Asset type	Late 18 th / Early 19 th Century end of terrace farm labourer's cottage
Age	Late 18 th / Early 19 th Century, with later alterations during the mid-20 th Century including single storey porch extension to south elevation.
Rarity	The building is not a rare example of its typology.
Architectural and Artistic interest	The architect is not known. The cottage is late 18 th / early 19 th Century in the local vernacular and is typical of this architectural style. Together with House 2 the house is stone-built, with diminishing large quoins to corners, stone flag roof to rear and slate to front slope, with brick-built chimneys. Catslide roof to rear, with an infilled opening to north elevation at ground floor. There are no particular architectural features of note that would be considered to hold any intrinsic interest.
Group Value	Association with the adjoining House 2, and Stone Barn, and wider pre-1950s farm buildings
Historic Interest	There is no significant historical association of local or national note. The farm provides evidence to the evolving requirements of agriculture in the local area.
Landmark Status	The building currently sits along Heald Lane. Due to topography and field boundaries surrounding the farm, views to and from the farm are limited the property is not considered a landmark. Where views are visible, the farm is viewed in conjunction with a number of buildings.

Criterion	Appraisal of House 2
Asset type	Late 18 th / Early 19 th Century end of terrace farm labourer's cottage
Age	Late 18 th / Early 19 th Century, with later alterations during the mid-20 th century including conversion of the attic with box dormer to provide 2no additional bedrooms, rear extension to from kitchen and utility room, and front single storey extension to provide small office and porch area.
Rarity	The building is not a rare example of its typology.
Architectural and Artistic interest	The architect is not known. The cottage is late 18 th / early 19 th Century in the local vernacular and is typical of this architectural style. Together with House 1 the house is stone-built, with diminishing large quoins to corners, with stone flag roof to rear and slate to front slope, with brick-built chimneys. Small cellar, under front room, accessed by narrow stairs from back reception room. Evidence of former openings through to Stone Barn visible through alcoves. There are no particular features of note that would be considered to hold any intrinsic architectural or artistic interest.

Criterion	Appraisal of House 2
Group Value	Association with the adjoining House 1, and Stone Barn, and wider pre-1950s farm buildings
Historic Interest	There is no significant historical association of local or national note. The farm provides evidence to the evolving requirements of agriculture in the local area.
Landmark Status	The building currently sits isolated along Heald Lane. Due to topography and field boundaries surrounding the farm, views to and from the farm are limited the property is not considered a landmark. Where views are visible, the farm is viewed in conjunction with a number of buildings.

Criterion	Appraisal of Stone Barn
Asset type	Late 18 th / Early 19 th Century laith plan stone barn
Age	Late 18 th / Early 19 th Century, believed to have been constructed after House 1 and House 2, due to evidence of infilled window to north party wall to House 1, and separate stone coursing between the Stone Barn and House 2. Later alterations during the 20 th Century, including subdivision of the barn to provide a self-contained workshop, and significant rebuilding of northern part of the barn in the mid-late 20 th Century.
Rarity	The building is not a rare example of its typology.
Architectural and Artistic interest	The architect is not known. The barn is late 18 th / early 19 th Century in a vernacular architectural style and is typical of its type. Internally the building has been subdivided, with concrete floor inserted to parts of the building surrounding historic stone flags. Concrete feed troughs are visible in the floor to northern section of building. Former archway to rear, now partially infilled, with modern door. Roof structure has been replaced, and roof covering now of metal corrugated sheets. External walls built of various stone suggesting construction/ extension in multiple phases. There are no particular features of note that would be considered to hold any intrinsic architectural or artistic interest.
Group Value	Association with the adjoining House 1, and House 2, and wider pre-1950s farm buildings
Historic Interest	There is no significant historical association of local or national note. The farm provides evidence to the evolving requirements of agriculture in the local area.
Landmark Status	Due to topography and field boundaries surrounding the farm, views to and from the farm are limited the property is not considered a landmark. Where views are visible, the farm is viewed in conjunction with a number of buildings associated with the farm use on the site.

Criterion	Appraisal of Chicken Coop
Asset type	Late 19 th Century chicken coop
Age	Late 19 th Century, with later alterations
Rarity	The building is not a rare example of its typology.
Architectural and Artistic interest	The architect is not known. The building is late 19 th century in a vernacular architectural style. There are no particular features of note that would be considered to hold any intrinsic architectural or artistic interest.
Group Value	Association with wider pre-1950s farm buildings
Historic Interest	There is no significant historical association of local or national note. The farm provides evidence to the evolving requirements of agriculture in the local area.
Landmark Status	The building is small, and in a collapsed state. Due to its scale and location within the site the building does not hold any landmark qualities and is not visible from beyond its immediate garden setting.

Criterion	Appraisal of Rear Shed
Asset type	Early 20 th Century former bottling shed
Age	Early 20 th Century
Rarity	The building is not a rare example of its typology.
Architectural and Artistic interest	The architect is not known. The building is early 20 th Century and is a typical outbuilding. The roof has been replaced with mono-pitched corrugated metal sheeting. The building is currently used as a garden store and there are no particular features of note that would be considered to hold any intrinsic architectural or artistic interest.
Group Value	Forms part of the wider farm complex but of later phase of development, such that there is limited group value.
Historic Interest	There is no significant historical association of local or national note. The wider farm provides evidence to the agricultural traditions, of which the building forms part of the evolution. Given the later date, the building holds limited historic interest.
Landmark Status	The building is small and is located in close proximity to House 1, House 2, and the Stone Barn. Due to topography of the surrounding area, the scale and location within the site, the building does not hold any landmark qualities and is not visible from beyond its immediate setting.

Criterion	Appraisal of Rear Barn
Asset type	Mid-20 th Century large agricultural storage building
Age	Mid-20 th Century, circa 1960s
Rarity	The building is not a rare example of its typology.
Architectural and Artistic interest	There are no particular features of note that would be considered to hold any intrinsic architectural or artistic interest.
Group Value	Whilst there is association with the wider farmstead, due to its associated use, this is not considered to hold group value
Historic Interest	Modern agricultural storage building holds no historic interest.
Landmark Status	This building is not considered to have landmark status.

Criterion	Appraisal of Stone Stable
Asset type	Late 19 th Century stable building
Age	Late 19 th Century
Rarity	The building is not a rare example of its typology.
Architectural and Artistic interest	Barn of solid stone walls, with a mixture of flat and arched stone lintel to door and window openings, with a timber lintel observed internally above the door. Pitched roof formed of timber purlins spanning between gable walls, supporting timber rafters, batten and stone slab roof. Internally the stable is subdivided with short brick walls built off the stone slab floor. There are no particular features of note that would be considered to hold any intrinsic architectural or artistic interest.
Group Value	Forms part of the group of farm buildings, its group value is considered to be limited.
Historic Interest	There is no significant historical association of local or national note. The wider farm provides evidence to the agricultural traditions, of which the building forms part of the evolution.
Landmark Status	The building is located centrally within the site and is surrounded by the remaining farm buildings. It does not hold any landmark qualities and is not visible from beyond its immediate setting.

Criterion	Appraisal of Front Barn
Asset type	Former Cartshed
Age	Late 19 th Century with 20 th Century alterations.
Rarity	The building is not a rare example of its typology.
Architectural and Artistic interest	The architect is not known. The former cart shed is of brick and stone construction with a modern roof structure. The building has been significantly altered over time with extensions to the south and east (rear), with steel windows inserted to the south and east. There are no particular features of note that would be considered to hold any intrinsic architectural or artistic interest.
Group Value	Whilst there is association with the wider farmstead, due to its associated use and significant alterations, this is not considered to hold group value.
Historic Interest	There is no significant historical association of local or national note. The wider farm provides evidence to the agricultural traditions, of which the building forms part of the evolution.
Landmark Status	The building is single storey, and due to the scale, its location within the site and surrounding topography, the building is not considered to have landmark status.

Criterion	Appraisal of Milking Parlour
Asset type	Mid-20 th Century milking parlour
Age	Mid-20 th Century, circa 1950s with later alterations.
Rarity	The building is not a rare example of its typology.
Architectural and Artistic interest	Single-storey stone built structure. Internally, whilst not inspected due to safety issue, anecdotally described as washroom to eastern section, bottling processing to central section and parlour to western section. The roof structure has been replaced with metal framing and covered with corrugated metal sheeting (with asbestos). Internal machinery dates from the 1980s onwards.
Group Value	Whilst there is association with the wider farmstead, due to its associated use and later date the building is not considered to hold group value.
Historic Interest	Given the date of construction, the building holds limited, if any historic interest.
Landmark Status	The building is single storey and is not considered to have landmark status.

Summary

- 2.2.15 Lower Cleggswood Farm is an example of the laithe-house farmstead typology, where the farmhouse and associated agricultural buildings are all situated in a single line under one roof. Typically associated with the late 18th and early 19th Centuries, the principal building group appears on the 1st Edition OS map (1851) in this format, which would correlate with the farm being of this typology. Such farmsteads are typically found on the Pennine moorlands, often associated with the informal enclosure of the common land, where small farms predominated and farmers and their families often supplemented their income by textile working, coal mining and quarrying.
- 2.2.16 The desk-top research undertaken for this Assessment identifies several other examples of laithe-house farmsteads in the local area. Many of these are better examples and are included on RBC's list of non-designated heritage assets. This includes Cleggs Wood Farm, Higher Eafield Farm, Knowl Farm, and Branch Wood Farmhouse and adjoining farm buildings. The fact that Lower Cleggswood Farm has not been identified on RBC's list of non-designated heritage assets, would appear to suggest the group of buildings is of a lower quality.
- 2.2.17 Of the buildings assessed above only House 1, House 2, the Stone Barn, and the Stable Building are considered to hold any heritage interest. This is as a result of their historic interest and group value as part of a late 18th-19th Century farmstead, typical of the local area. As

noted above, the buildings have been extensively altered and are considered to hold limited, if any architectural interest. As such, any heritage interest would be low and only at a local level.

- 2.2.18 The remaining buildings are not considered to hold heritage interest sufficient for these buildings to be considered as non-designated heritage assets.

3 Impact Assessment

3.1 Introduction

- 3.1.1 The management and mitigation of change to the historic environment resulting from development are based on the recognition within Government planning objectives that "...heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource..." (see NPPF Section 16).
- 3.1.2 Impacts to the historic environment and associated heritage assets arise where changes are made to their physical environment by means of the loss and/or degradation of their physical fabric or setting, which in turn leads to a reduction in the significance.

3.2 Description of Proposals

- 3.2.1 As part of the development proposals for the wider site, the demolition of the buildings at Lower Cleggswood Farm is proposed. The Council's Heritage Officer has advised that justification for the demolition of the non-designated heritage assets is required, in accordance with paragraph 216 of the NPPF.
- 3.2.2 The following section therefore sets out the reasons as to why the buildings cannot be retained within the proposed development.

3.3 Justification for Demolition

Condition / Viability of Restoration and Repair

- 3.3.1 A number of buildings within Lower Cleggswood Farm are no longer in use and have fallen into a state of disrepair.
- 3.3.2 The Rear Barn, Rear Shed, Front Barn, Chicken Coop, and Milking Parlour were all assessed above as holding insufficient heritage interest to be considered non-designated heritage assets in their own right. Of these five structures, the Rear Barn, Front Barn, Chicken Coop, and Milking Parlour were observed to be in various states of disrepair and in some instances partial collapse. The Rear Barn and Chicken Coop in particular are in an advanced state of decay.
- The Rear Barn was observed to be in a state of significant disrepair / partial collapse. Reference to Google Earth imagery dated 2022, indicated this has occurred recently, and that a section linking the barn with the Stone Barn and the Stone Stable has been demolished.
 - The Front Barn was observed to be in a poor condition, with an asbestos cement sheeting roof.
 - The Chicken Coop was observed to be in a state of significant disrepair / partial collapse, with the roof structure largely missing.
 - The Milking Parlour again is in a poor state of repair, with the interior open to the elements due to failure of the asbestos roofing.
- 3.3.3 In order for these buildings to be retained, conversion to residential use would be considered the most appropriate approach. However, in order to secure any conversion, significant interventions and levels of repair would be required to these buildings. Given the lack of heritage interest held by these buildings, it is not considered economically viable, or appropriate to retain these buildings within the proposed development.

- 3.3.4 In relation to the Rear Shed, this building was observed to be in a generally good condition; however, the size and composition of the building means that it would not be suitable for meaningful conversion. This combined with the lack of heritage value means that the loss of the building would not be considered harmful in heritage terms.
- 3.3.5 Of the buildings identified as holding a low level of heritage significance, there are several challenges associated with their restoration and conversion.
- Whilst House 1 and 2 are of a liveable condition, it is noted that there are significant areas of decay to the roof, and that the properties feature little, if any, insulation.
 - The Stone Barn is currently in a state of disrepair, and its condition is expected to continue deteriorating unless extensive repairs are carried out. The stone walls exhibit signs of movement, with bowing and cracking observed in places. In addition, the landowner advised of an area of collapse and rebuild to the rear wall which is believed to have occurred during the 1980s. The roof structure was observed to be in a dangerous condition with rotten trusses, some missing, and props in some areas.
 - The Stone Stable appeared to be in a generally good condition; however, the size and composition of the building means that it would not be suitable for meaningful conversion.
- 3.3.6 Given the internal layout and original use of the buildings, it is considered that in order to facilitate conversion to an alternative use, significant structural interventions would be required. This would include the reconfiguration of internal spaces, upgrading of fabric for sustainability and energy efficiency improvements and loss and/or alterations to fixtures and fittings. The extent of work required is likely to result in the further erosion of the low level of interest held by these buildings.
- 3.3.7 Given the current market conditions, combined with the escalating build costs, it is considered that in order to secure a conversion that was of high-quality, sustainable, and secured an efficient use of the Site, the residential units would need to be sold at rates well above the average prices, making the retention of these buildings within the development uneconomical.

Drainage and Site Levels

- 3.3.8 The existing buildings at Lower Cleggswood Farm are located within a low plateau point within the Site, which is therefore the most suitable location for the required attenuation swales. Alternative locations for the attenuation swales have been considered; however, these alternative locations have been reviewed by the technical consultant team and are not considered feasible, due to ground levels, continuity with the continuous SUDS system proposed north to south and subsequent negative viability impacts. Any alternative solution would be unlikely to deliver a SUDS design which would meet the requirements set out in the Flood Risk Assessment.
- 3.3.9 If the attenuation basin were to be provided elsewhere within the Site, this would require the construction of deep underground drainage of up to 10m from the proposed ground level. As well as being extremely cost prohibitive, this would also result in significant Construction, Design and Management (CDM) risks, and would have a direct impact on the viability of the proposed development.
- 3.3.10 Furthermore, the topography and levels of the wider site (24/00581/HYBR) are such that the Site needs to be regraded to enable the development platforms, further limiting the potential for alternative locations for drainage solution to be accommodated elsewhere within the Site.

4 Conclusions

- 4.1.1 Lower Cleggswood Farm is not identified as a non-designated heritage asset on RBC's list of non-designated heritage assets, which was last updated 28 June 2023. As noted in this report, the list does identify several farmsteads of a similar age and typology within Littleborough including Brown Bank Bridge and Cleggs Wood Farm (now Higher Lakewood), suggesting that the buildings at Lower Cleggswood are of a lower quality. Whilst it is noted that, like the statutory National Heritage List for England, buildings and structures can be added at any time, the assessment set out in this report concludes that the significance of the buildings are low and would not be eligible for inclusion on the list of non-designated heritage assets. It is also acknowledged that the list of non-designated heritage assets has been updated since the University of Salford's 2020 heritage assessment and despite a number of other buildings being included within the Littleborough area, Lower Cleggswood Farm has not been included on this list.
- 4.1.2 Nonetheless, RBC Officers have identified that the buildings are considered to be non-designated heritage assets within the 'Places for Everyone Land Allocations, Rochdale: JPA22 Land North of Smithy Bridge – Heritage Assessment' (University of Salford, 2020). However, no reference is made explicitly to this within the policy wording for the allocation.
- 4.1.3 The farm is typical of its era and the local vernacular. There is nothing inherently special about its design that sets it apart from other buildings of this period and in fact there are better examples found within the local area. The buildings within the farmstead have been extended, unsympathetically and modified externally, with interior features also lost through alteration, and decay, subsequently compromising their architectural interest.
- 4.1.4 Taking account of the above it is considered that the House 1, House 2, the Stone Barn, and the Stables have a low level of local significance. This concurs with the University of Salford's 2020 assessment, which concluded that the buildings were of 'low' local significance. It is noted that 2020 assessment contradicts itself, by stating that 'the historic buildings are considered to be of local 'low' significance within the built heritage commentary (page 4) but goes on to state 'high local significance' within the table provided at page 8. It is understood that this is an error in the heritage assessment's concluding table of recommendations.
- 4.1.5 It is recommended that building recording, prior to demolition, be secured by way of an appropriately worded condition. Whilst the Council's Heritage Officer has suggested that recording is not considered mitigation, Conservation Principles, 2008⁹ is clear that recording can be considered 'mitigation'.

"If some negative impact or loss of fabric is unavoidable, mitigation should be considered to minimise harm. This will normally include making records and archiving parts of significant elements, including archaeological deposits, that will be removed or altered prior to and during the work, in accordance with Principles 6.3 and 6.4."

- 4.1.6 Comments from the Greater Manchester Archaeological Advisory Service (dated 11 September 2024) also suggest that the buildings at Lower Cleggswood Farm "would require at least a Level 2 survey, to allow for exterior and interior inspection, photography, and appropriate recording to understand the development and phasing of the farm site. The record would also inform whether a further stage of monitoring and recording would be required during any strip-out or demolition works that could reveal further information." This was confirmed by the Council's Heritage Officer (meeting 23 October 2024) who stated that a Level 2 survey would be required as a minimum.
- 4.1.7 Demolition of the Lower Cleggswood farm buildings, as proposed here, would result in the total loss of a non-designated heritage asset, which in NPPF terms would result in harm.

⁹ [Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance](#)

Paragraph 216 of the NPPF, in respect of non-designated heritage assets, requires decision makers to make a 'balanced judgement' having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset. Given the low local level of significance concluded from this assessment, it is considered that the many benefits arising from the scheme – for which there is a clear need, in a sustainable location, and at an allocated site – outweigh the resulting harm. Such benefits include, inter alia:

- A significant contribution to the supply of high-quality family homes, including both market and affordable homes, at a site that is allocated for residential use in the adopted PFE Plan.
- Provision of land for a new primary school, also in line with the adopted policy requirements.
- Approximately seven hectares of public open space within a strong network of green infrastructure, for the enjoyment of the whole community.
- Planting of new trees and hedgerows, ensuring a net gain in biodiversity.
- Delivery of 140 parking spaces, including parking for disabled people and families, which will continue to enable people to visit and enjoy the Hollingworth Lake area; and
- Sustainable population growth by increasing the number of local residents, thereby helping to ensure the vitality and viability of local shops, schools, services and facilities in Littleborough and Smithy Bridge.

APPENDIX A – Historic Map Regression

Site Details:

HOLLINGWORTH ROAD,
LITTLEBOROUGH, OL15 0AZ

Client Ref: EPL014140
Report Ref: GS-9027683
Grid Ref: 393366, 415445

Map Name: County Series

Map date: 1851

Scale: 1:10,560

Printed at: 1:10,560



Surveyed 1848
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Copyright N/A
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Revised N/A
Edition 1851
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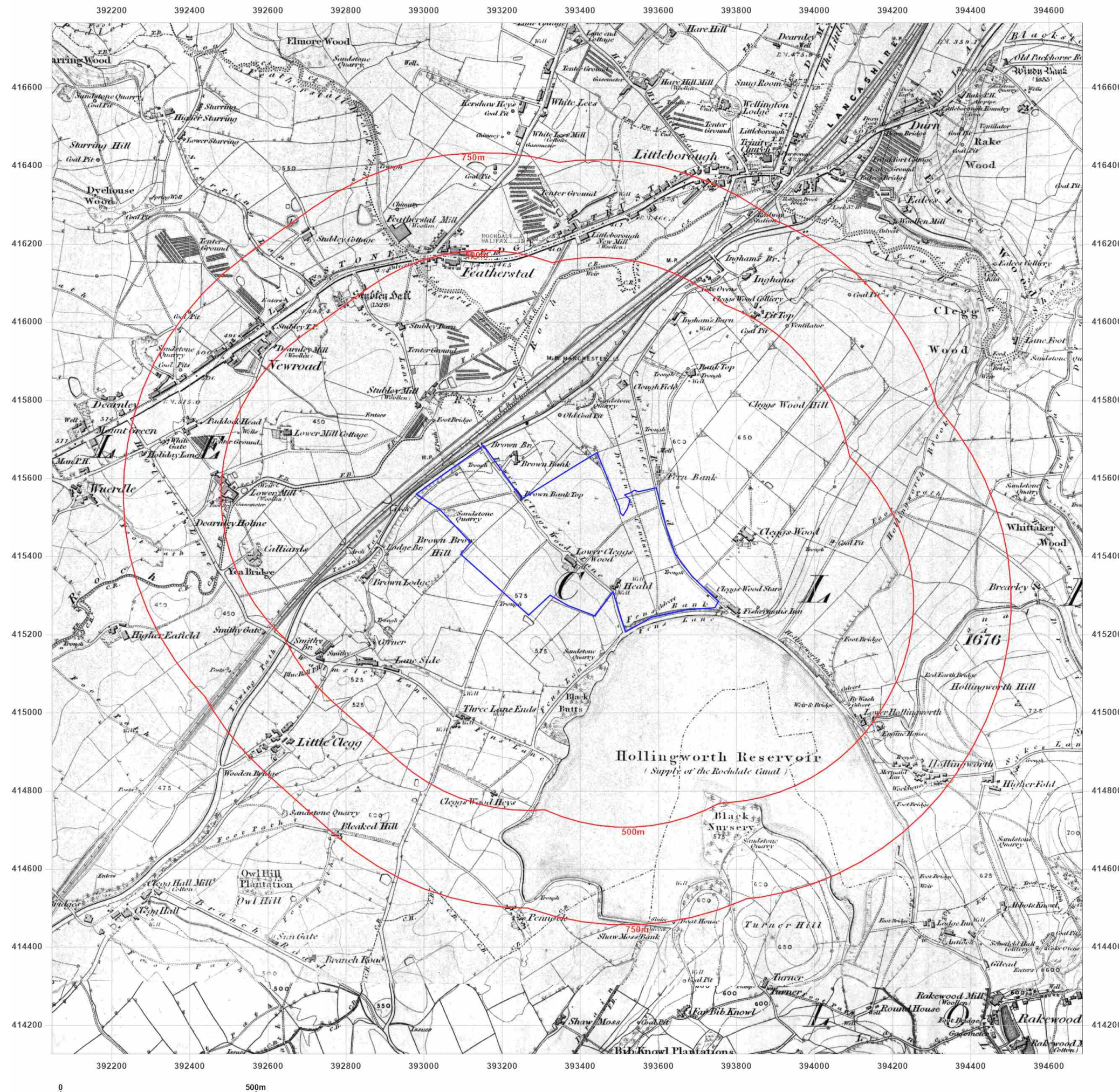


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Site Details:

HOLLINGWORTH ROAD,
LITTLEBOROUGH, OL15 0AZ

Client Ref: EPL014140
Report Ref: GS-9027683
Grid Ref: 393366, 415445

Map Name: County Series

Map date: 1890-1892

Scale: 1:10,560

Printed at: 1:10,560



Surveyed 1892
Revised 1892
Edition N/A
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Surveyed 1890
Revised 1890
Edition N/A
Copyright N/A
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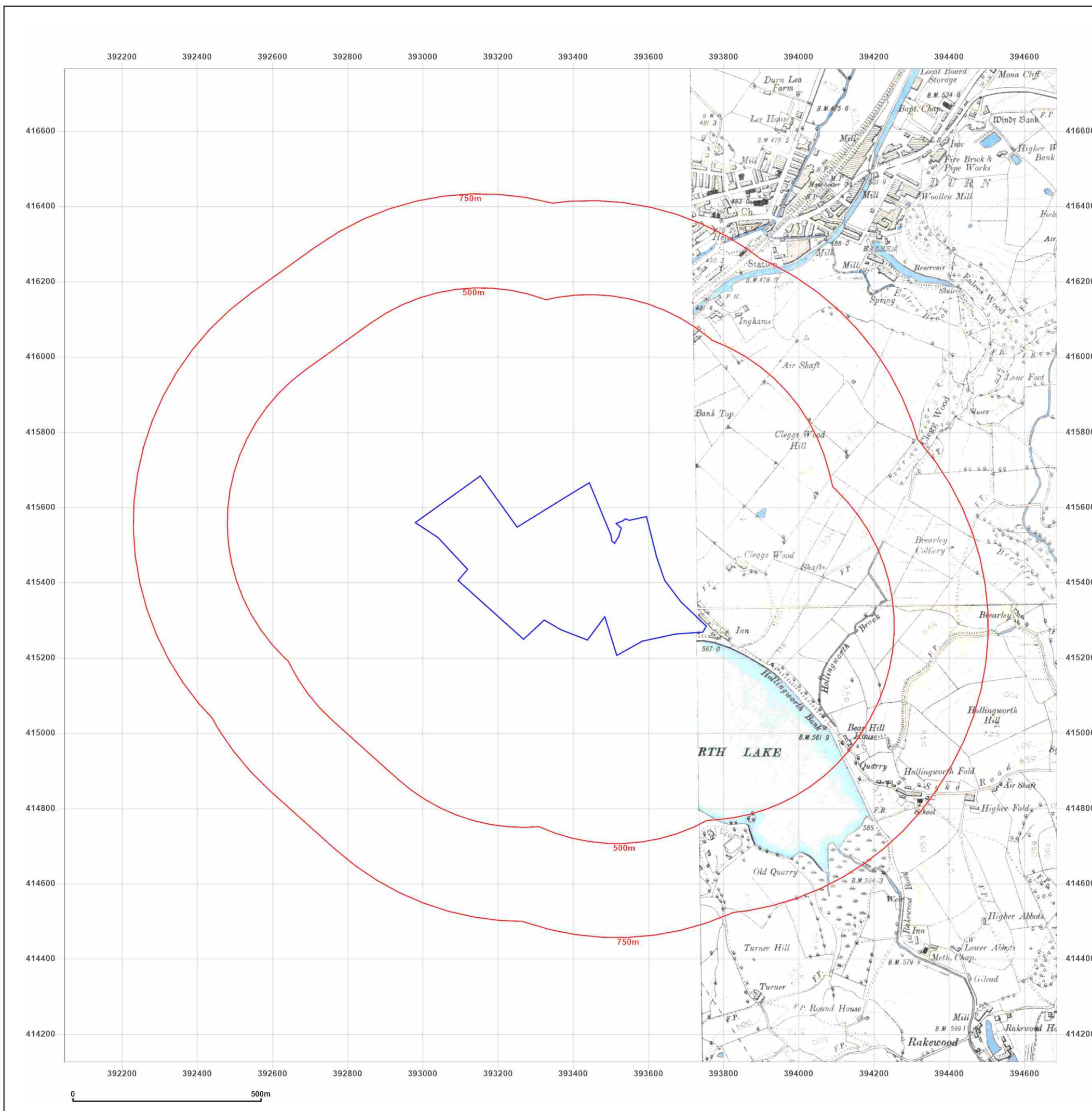


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Client Ref: EPL014140
Report Ref: GS-9027683
Grid Ref: 393366, 415445

Map Name: County Series

Map date: 1907-1909

Scale: 1:10,560

Printed at: 1:10,560



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Revised 1909
Edition N/A
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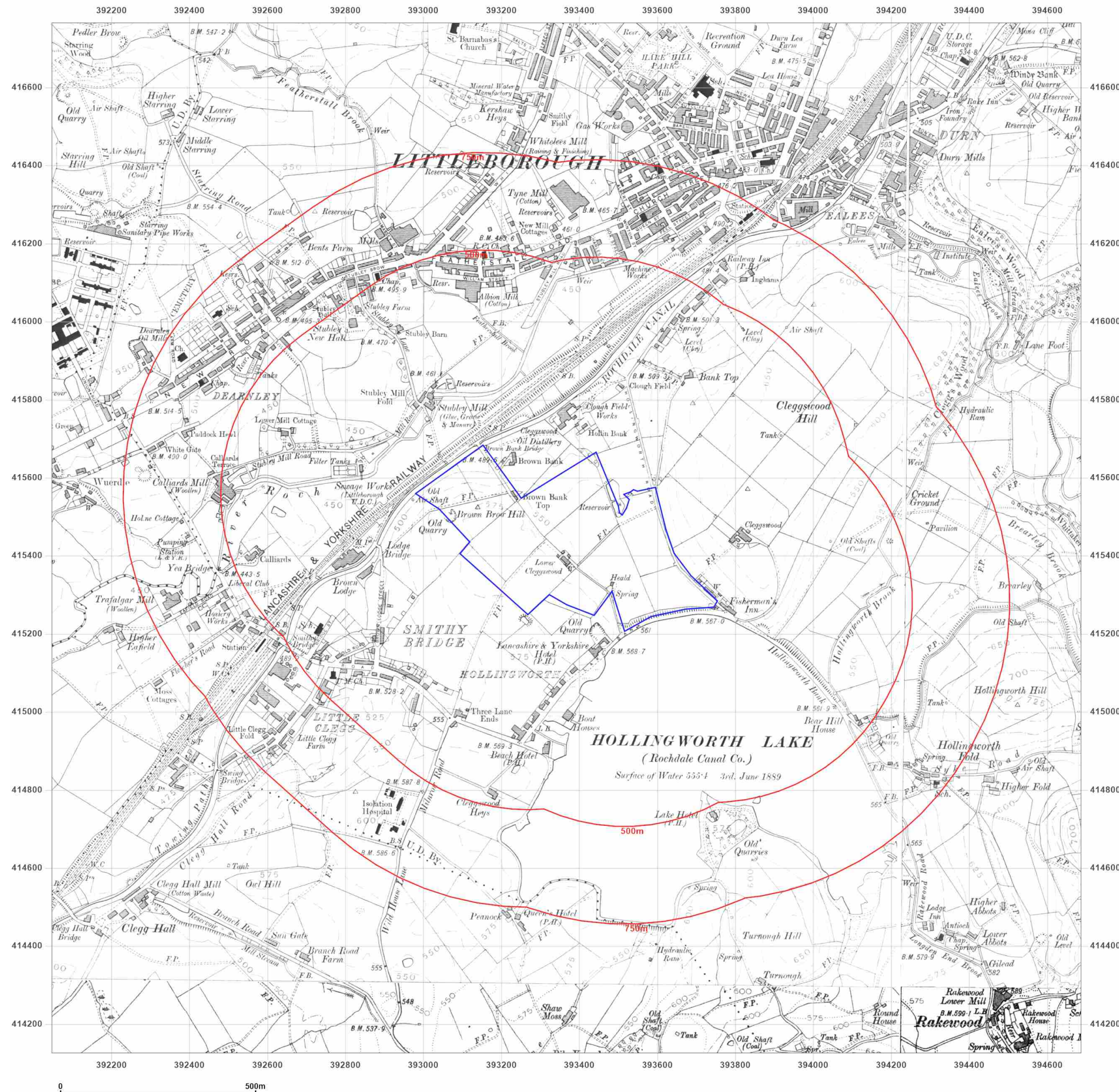


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Client Ref: EPL014140
Report Ref: GS-9027683
Grid Ref: 393366, 415445

Map Name: County Series

Map date: 1907-1911

Scale: 1:10,560

Printed at: 1:10,560



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Surveyed 1849
Revised 1900
Edition N/A
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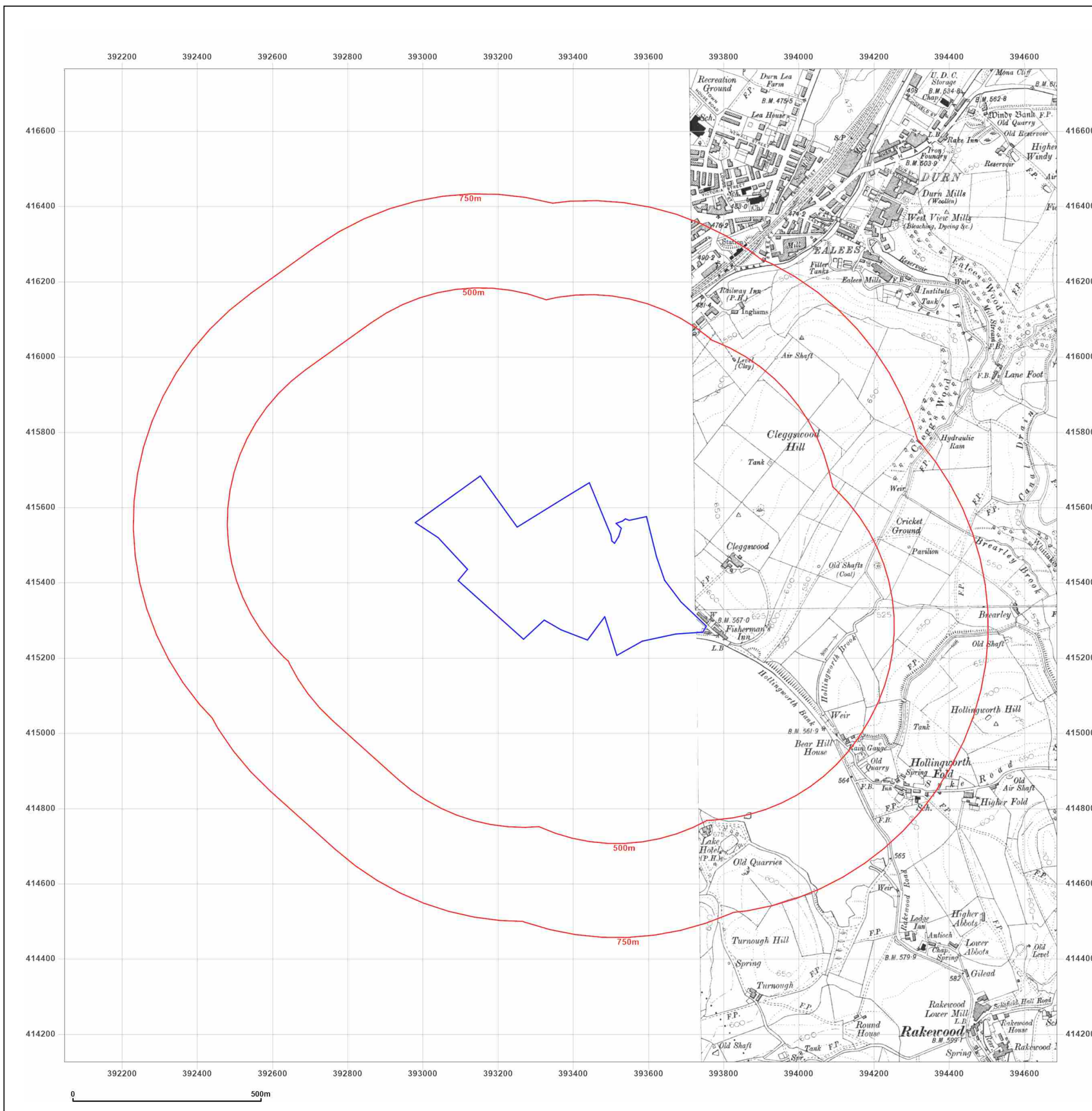


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Client Ref: EPL014140
Report Ref: GS-9027683
Grid Ref: 393366, 415445

Map Name: County Series

Map date: 1910-1911

Scale: 1:10,560

Printed at: 1:10,560



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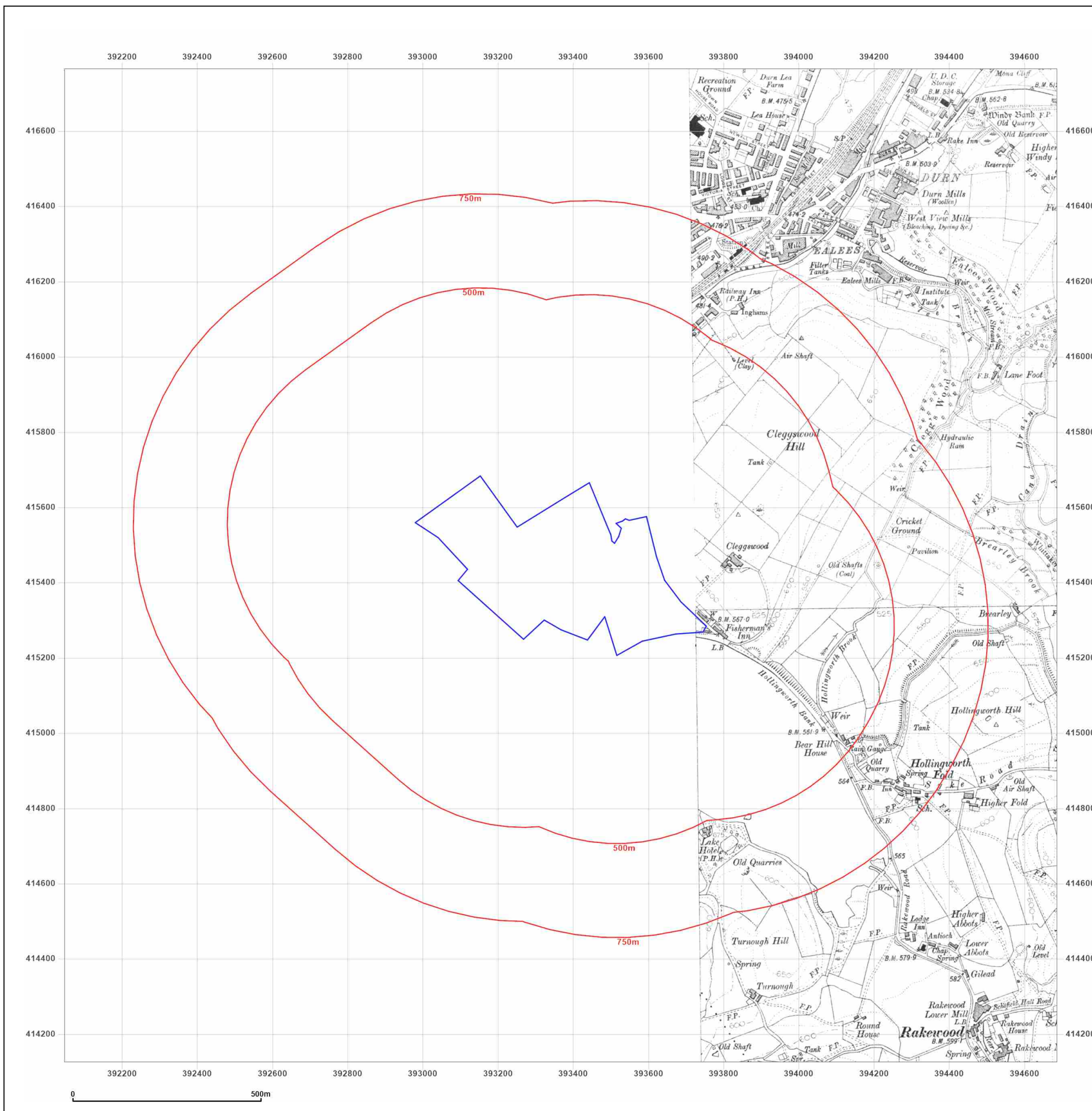


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Client Ref: EPL014140
Report Ref: GS-9027683
Grid Ref: 393366, 415445

Map Name: County Series

Map date: 1928

Scale: 1:10,560

Printed at: 1:10,560



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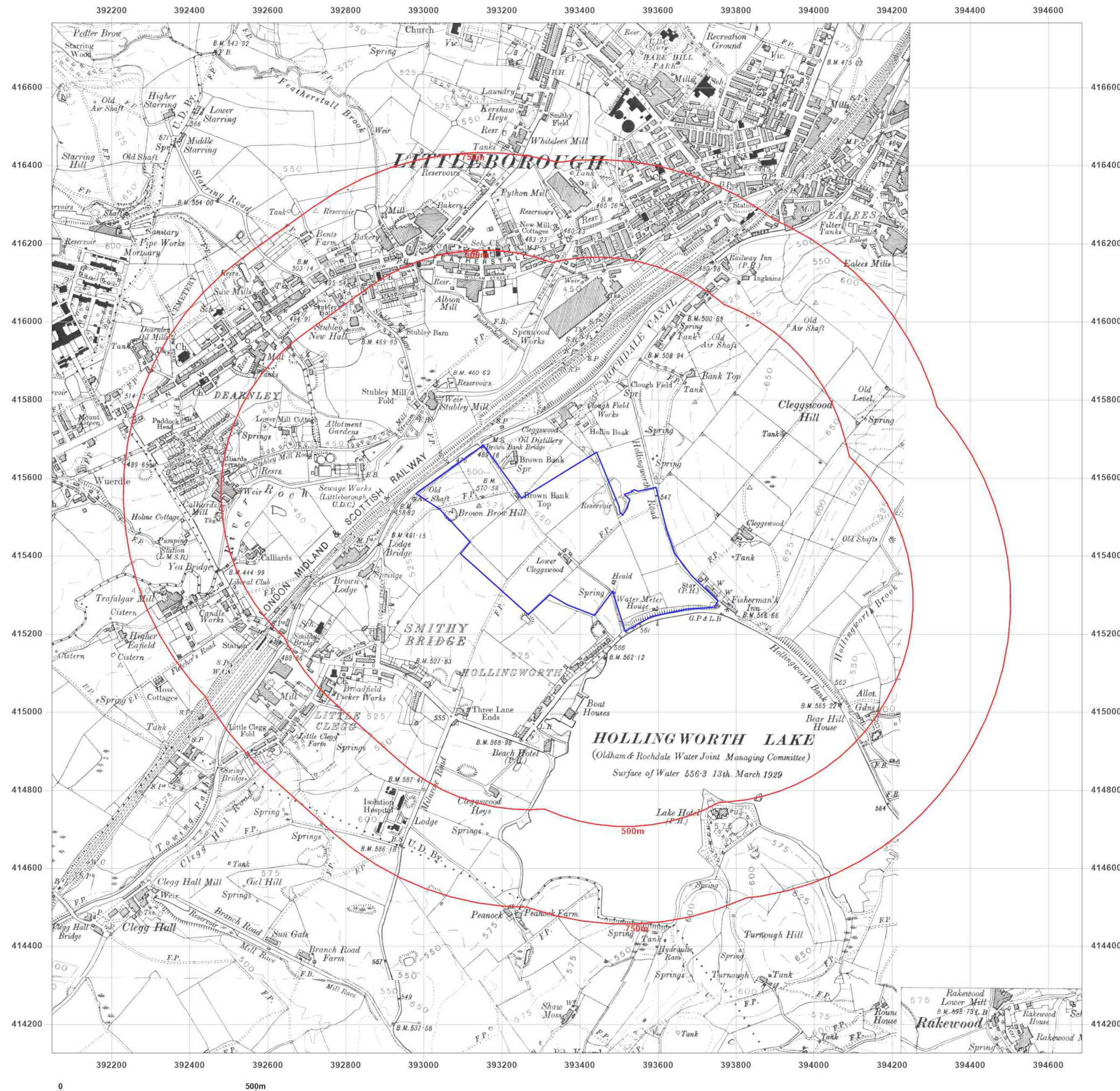


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Client Ref: EPL014140
Report Ref: GS-9027683
Grid Ref: 393366, 415445

Map Name: County Series

Map date: 1938

Scale: 1:10,560

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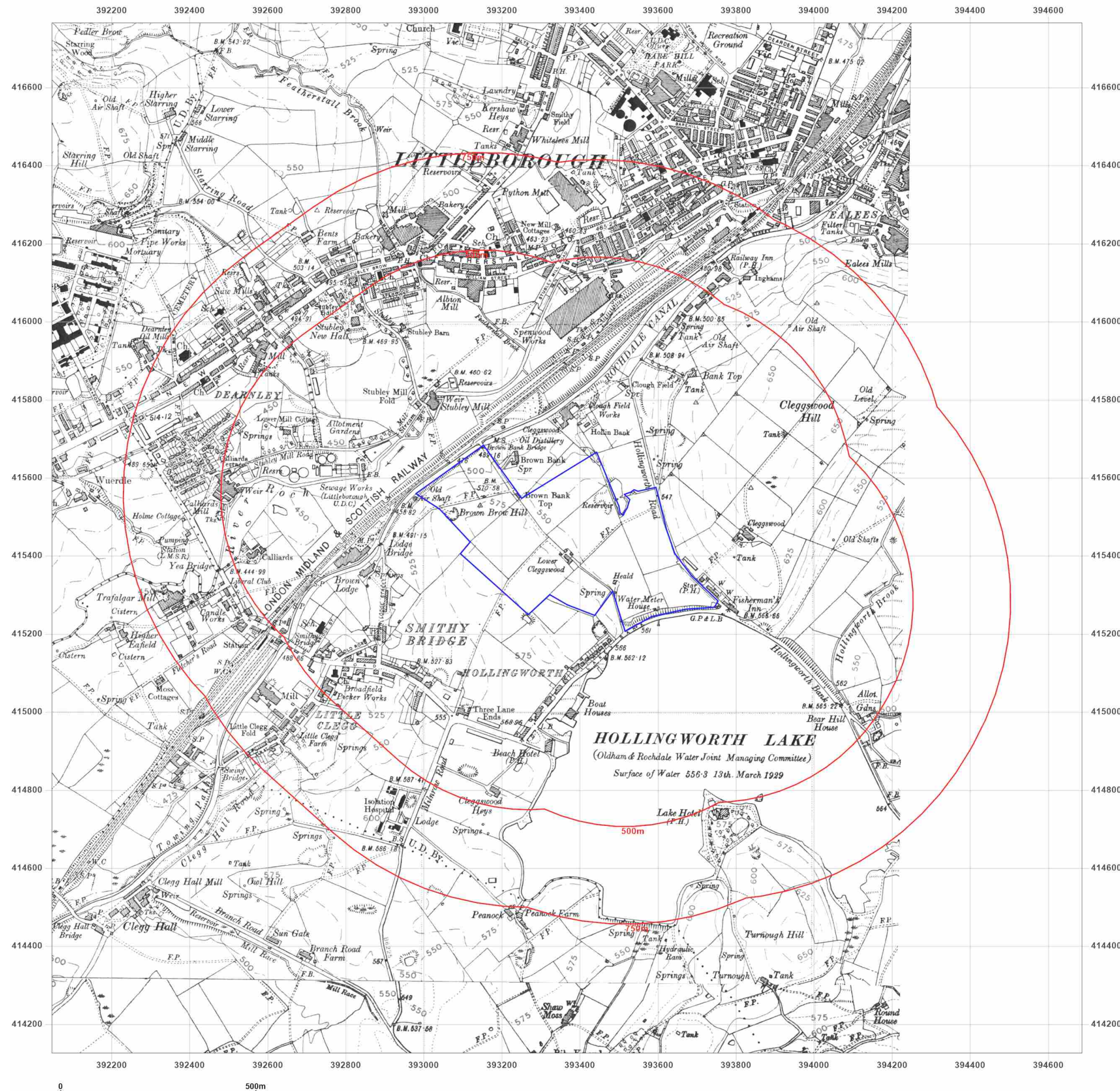


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Client Ref: EPL014140
Report Ref: GS-9027683
Grid Ref: 393366, 415445

Map Name: Provisional

Map date: 1949-1954

Scale: 1:10,560

Printed at: 1:10,560



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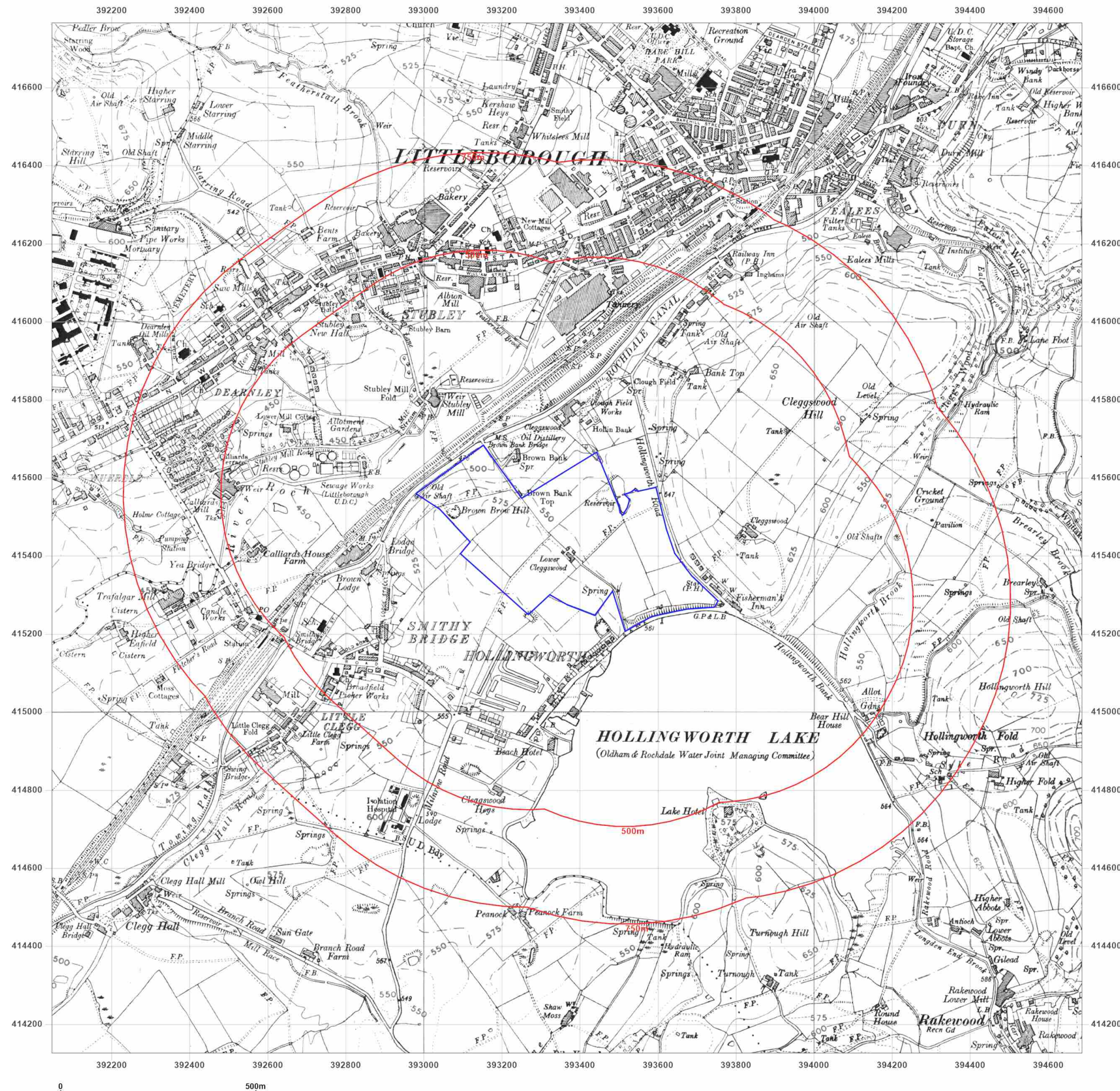


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Report Ref: GS-9027683
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Map Name: Provisional

Map date: 1967-1968

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Printed at: 1:10,560



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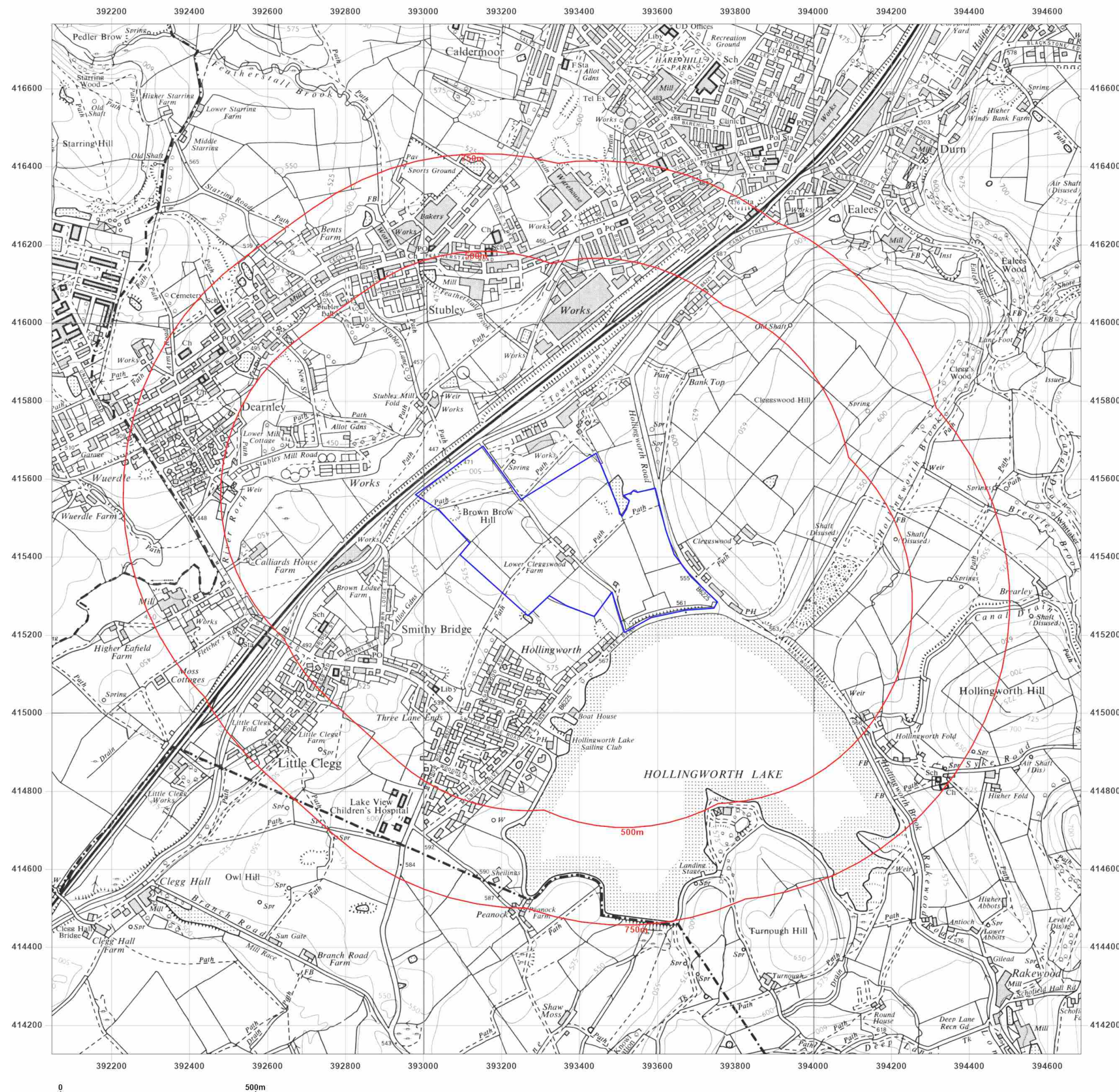


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Client Ref: EPL014140
Report Ref: GS-9027683
Grid Ref: 393366, 415445

Map Name: National Grid

Map date: 1976

Scale: 1:10,000

Printed at: 1:10,000



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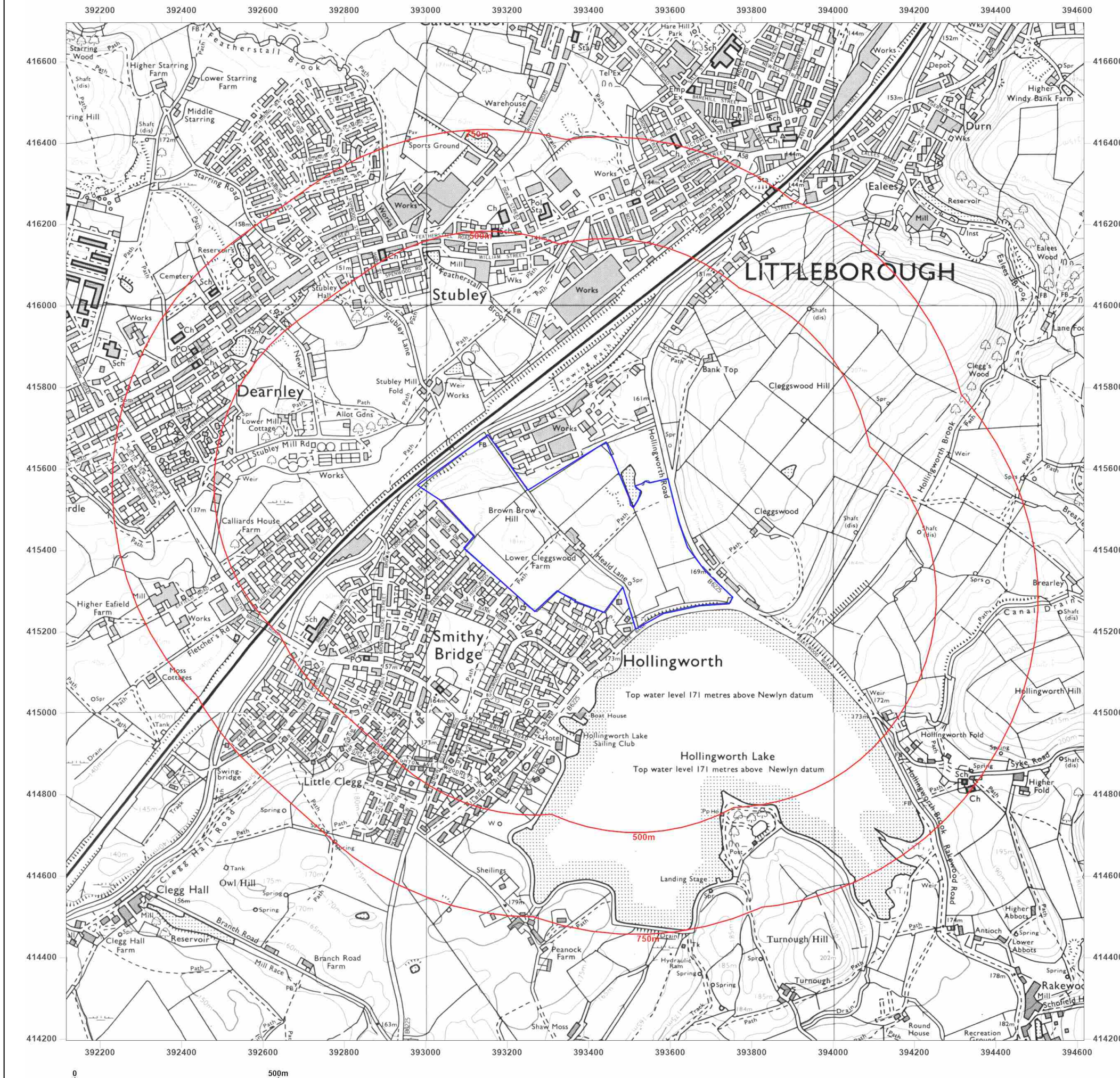


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Report Ref: GS-9027683
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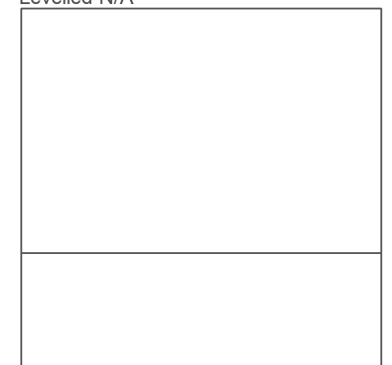
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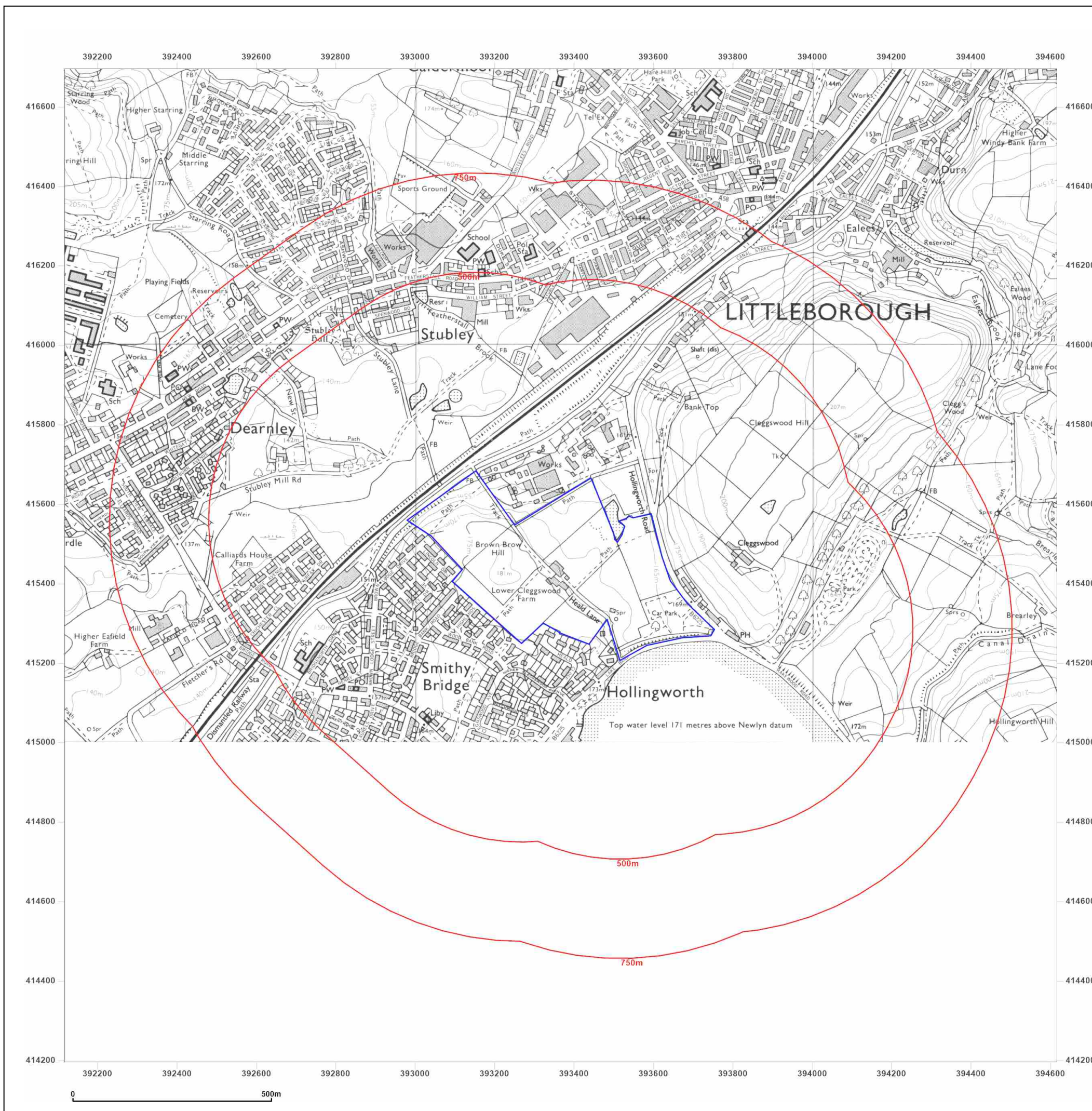


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Site Details:

HOLLINGWORTH ROAD,
LITTLEBOROUGH, OL15 0AZ

Client Ref: EPL014140
Report Ref: GS-9027683
Grid Ref: 393366, 415445

Map Name: National Grid

Map date: 2001

Scale: 1:10,000

Printed at: 1:10,000



2001



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Site Details:

HOLLINGWORTH ROAD,
LITTLEBOROUGH, OL15 0AZ

Client Ref: EPL014140
Report Ref: GS-9027683
Grid Ref: 393366, 415445

Map Name: National Grid

Map date: 2010

Scale: 1:10,000

Printed at: 1:10,000



2010

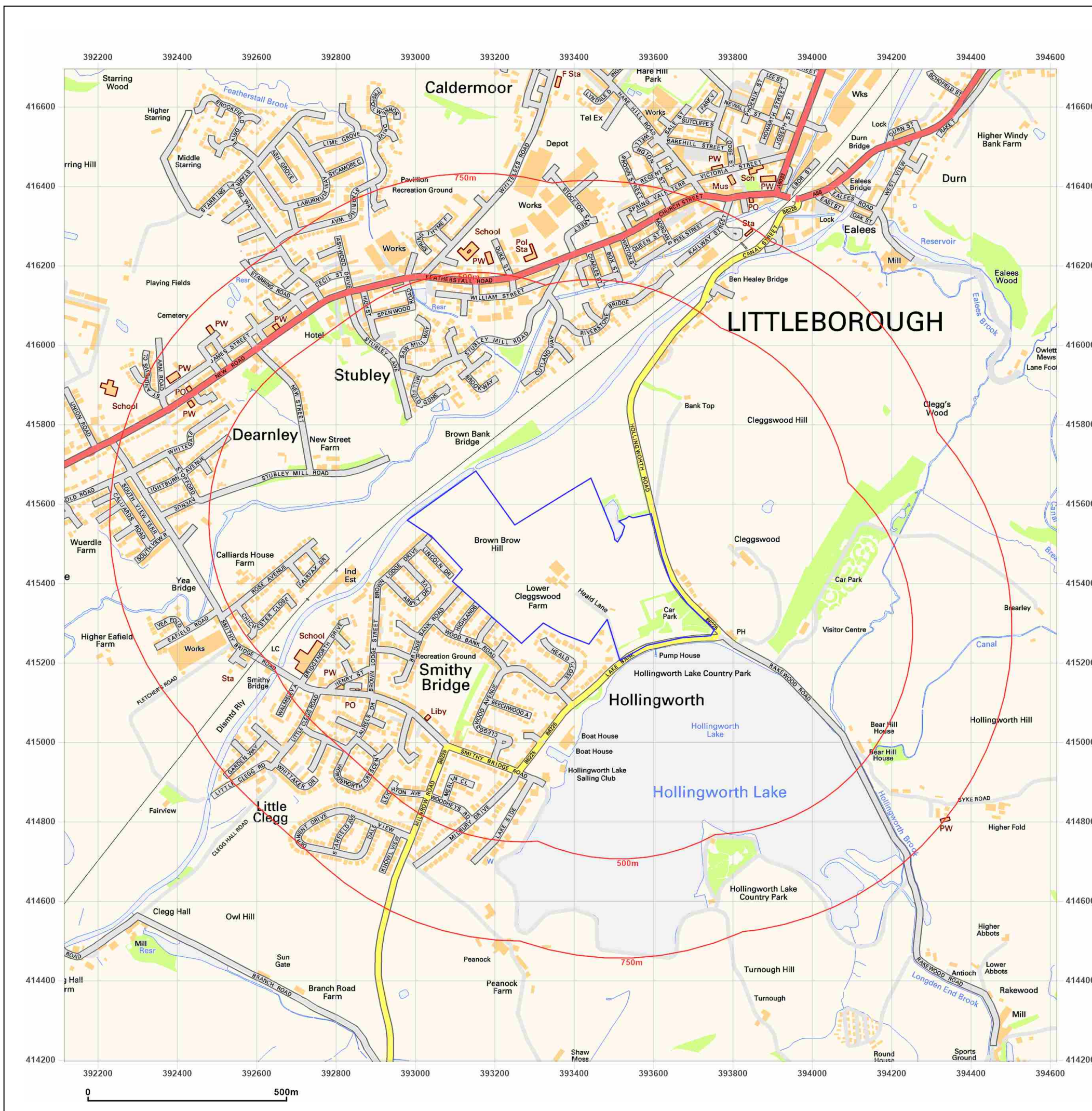


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Client Ref: EPL014140
Report Ref: GS-9027683
Grid Ref: 393366, 415445

Map Name: National Grid

Map date: 2022

Scale: 1:10,000

Printed at: 1:10,000



2022

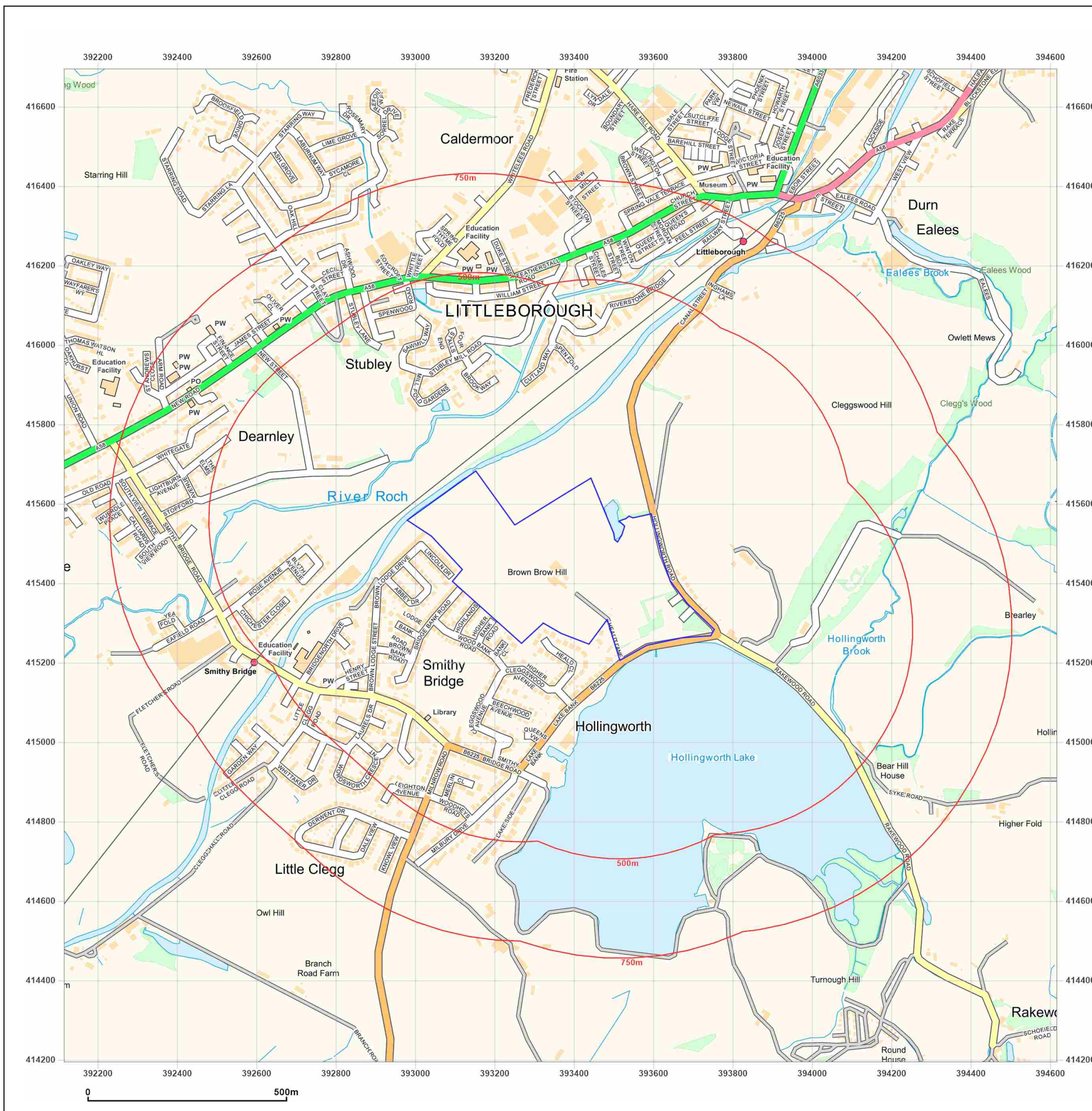


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