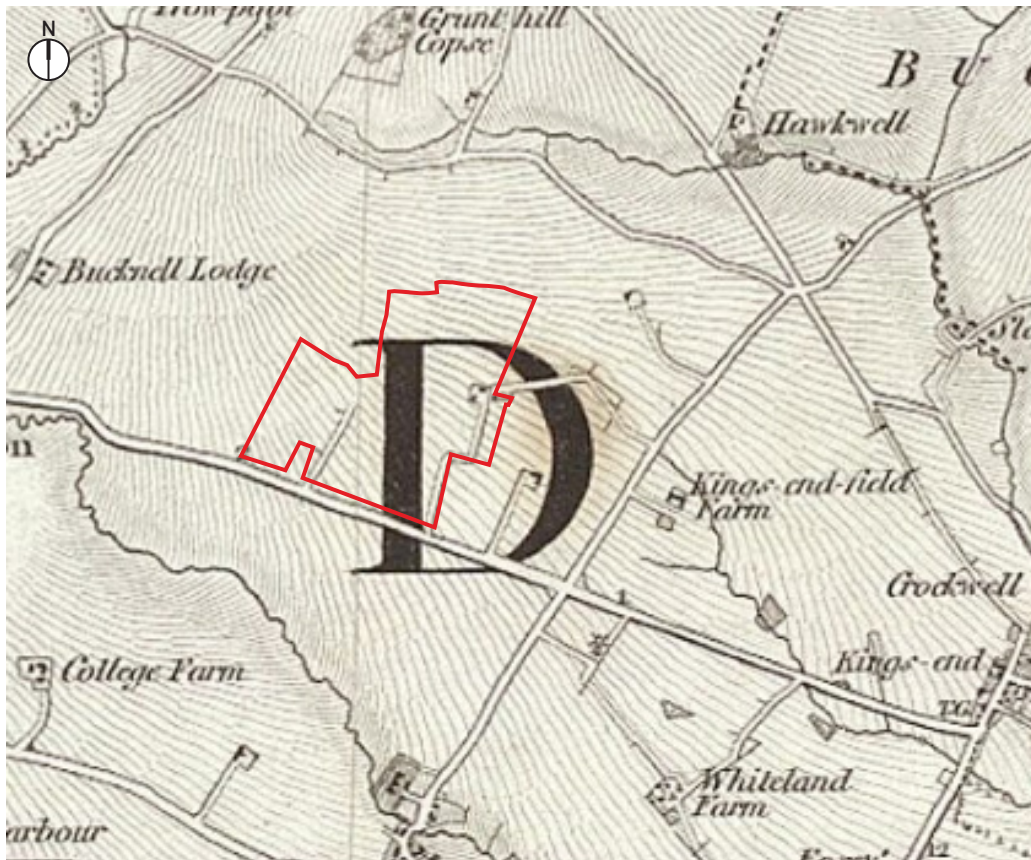


1797 - Map of Oxfordshire. Himley Farm is not shown



1833 - The first cartographic evidence of Himley Farm

# 2.0 Understanding the Asset

## 2.1 The formation of Bicester

The town of Bicester is noted in the Domesday Book, but it is thought that the settlement dates to the early Anglo-Saxon period. After the Norman Conquest, the area of Bicester was dominated by two major manors: Bicester and Wretchwick. Smaller townships, then developed at King's End Parish and Market End Parish, today form part of the main town of Bicester. It was primarily an agricultural settlement, dependant on the surrounding countryside, and the selling of sheep was a major source of revenue.

## 2.2 Farming in the Bicester area

Up until the sixteenth century, the Site was part of the common arable land. In 1758, agricultural practices, in the Bicester area, changed radically with the introduction of the enclosure system, a major change from the open fields system which had been in existence since the sixteenth century. The fields at Market End became enclosed as a result of the Act of 1757, but not until 1793-94 was the Act adopted for the fields at King's End, in the area of Himley Farm. In 1797, the areas were still called Bicester Fields, and was remarkably productive, with local farmers gaining a reputation for the production of butter and the quality of livestock. Towards the end of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth century, the agriculture of Bicester suffered a great depression leading to substantial emigrations of the poorest for North America.

## 2.3 The Himley Farm barns

The earliest known cartographic evidence for the buildings dates to 1833, although a dating stone on the west wall of the northern barn is inscribed with the date 1760. According to the map, the farm comprised three buildings that do not coincide with the current layout of Himley Farm. This might suggest earlier structures on the site which were demolished and the current structures erected incorporating the earlier datestone; there is no firm evidence for this.

Himley Farm appears in its current layout on the Ordnance Survey (OS) map of 1881 where the barns are linked by a smaller building and to the north of the yard the long stable building is visible.

There is limited historical information pertaining to the site and as such evidence for phases of development at Himley Farm is inconclusive. Based on cartographic evidence and a visual assessment, it reasonable to conclude that the barns date from the early nineteenth century.



1881 - This map is the first evidence of the current layout of the barns



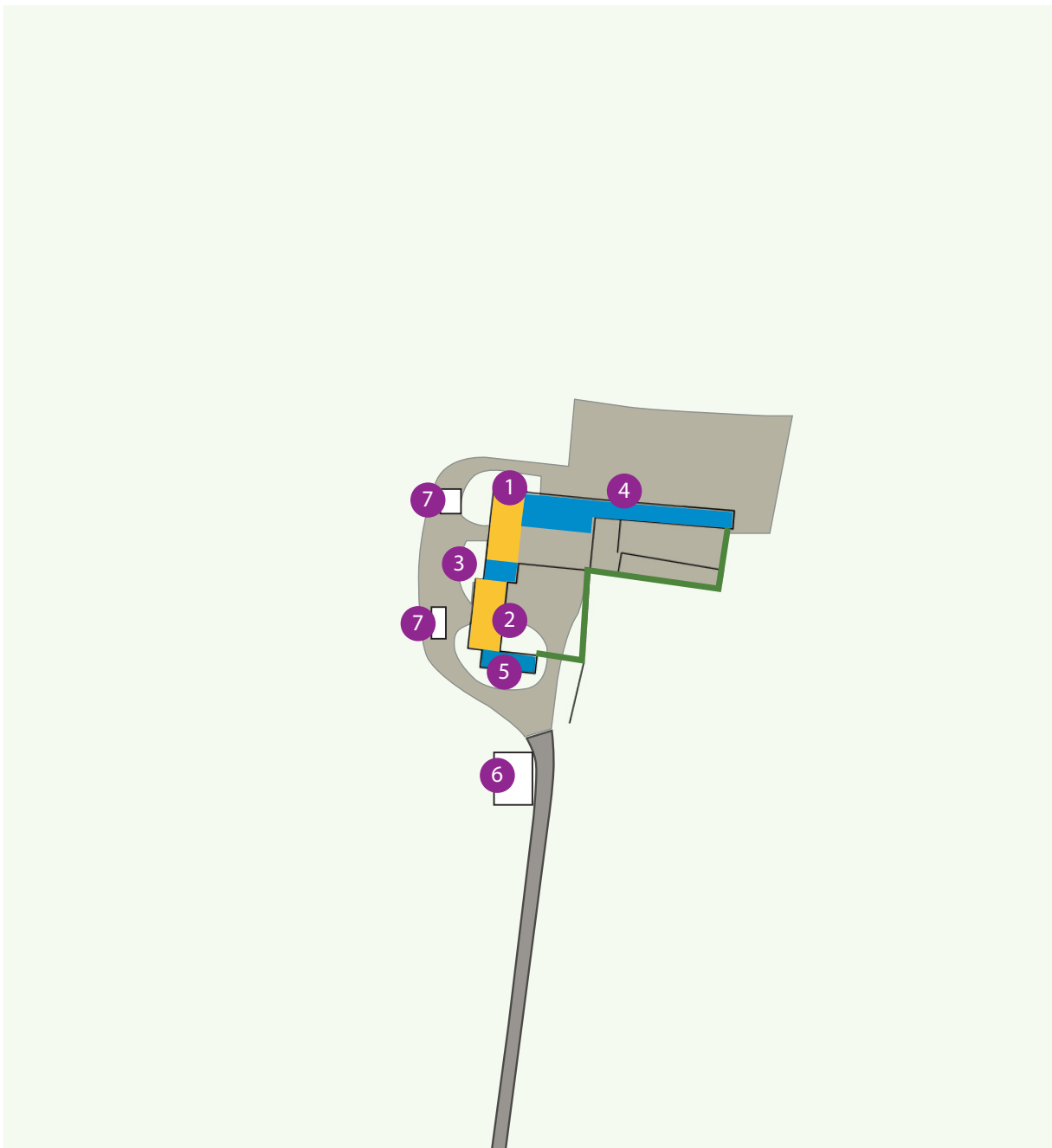
1900 - Both the farm buildings and field boundaries remain in the same configuration



1920 - By this period, there are additional structures on the site.






1960 - The farm building complex has further developed with additional outbuildings



Site plan with showing listed structures

- 1 North Barn
- 2 South Barn
- 3 Connecting structure
- 4 "Goat house"
- 5 Pig sty
- 6 Grain Store
- 7 Sheds

-  Curtilage structure
-  Grade II listed
-  Boundary wall

## 2.4 Design and construction

The farm complex at Himley Farm is composed of two north-south ranging barns and a low east-west aligned building. The buildings are part of a continuous group where each structure is physically linked and arranged around a courtyard to the south-east of the complex of buildings.

The two barns are rectangular in plan, similar in size but misaligned with the northernmost building's axis slightly shifted to the east.

The buildings are of the hand threshing type, with opposing doors originally corresponding to an area of stone floor (not present) for threshing and stone-lined slit ventilators along the walls. The two barns are of the same building typology and represent a very common type of farm building which predates the industrialisation and the mechanisation of farming processes. They were used for the processing of wheat and other cereals, and were located in their landscape to facilitate the transport of raw materials for threshing and storage. The roof structure of the barns is a butt-purlin roof with trusses.

## 2.5 Later history

It is not known when the barns ceased to be used as agricultural spaces. The barns were converted into a dwelling in 2004. The north barn and linking building are currently used by Mrs Catharine Murfitt as her family home, and the south barn is used for storage. The east-west oriented low building projecting from the north-east of the north barn is currently unused, but was originally in use as goat house.

## 2.6 Curtilage structures

The connecting structure between the two barns is a one-storey single-bay building, with double pitched slate roof, built of limestone rubble, roughly coursed and with brick quoins. There is a newly-created slit ventilator on the west side. Upon visual assessment, the stonework on the west side has visible joints, suggesting that it was built after the construction of the two barns. It is shown on the 1881 map, and as such was built in the mid-nineteenth century.

The former goathouse projecting from the north-east of the north barn is unused. It is constructed of rubble-coursed limestone, and is entirely open on one side, supported by timber columns. The roof is corrugated Perspex and fibre cement panels. The goathouse is shown on the 1881 map, so it has been assumed that it was built in the mid-nineteenth century. A former pig-sty abuts the south-east wall of the south barn and is currently out of use.

## 2.7 Other structures on the site

There are two small temporary structure for storage and the housing of goats. These buildings are of modern construction and considered to be of no heritage merit. Two buildings close to the property were demolished in 2004.

## 2.8 Other structures close to the site

A steel clad grain store/general building was erected to the south of the barns (planning application approved in 2001) for farming purposes. It has no heritage merit, and is not a curtilage structure.



The roof structure of the northern barn with a replacement roof structure. Apart from the stone ventilators, there are no historic features remaining.



The roof structure of the southern barn, thought to be original



The northern barn

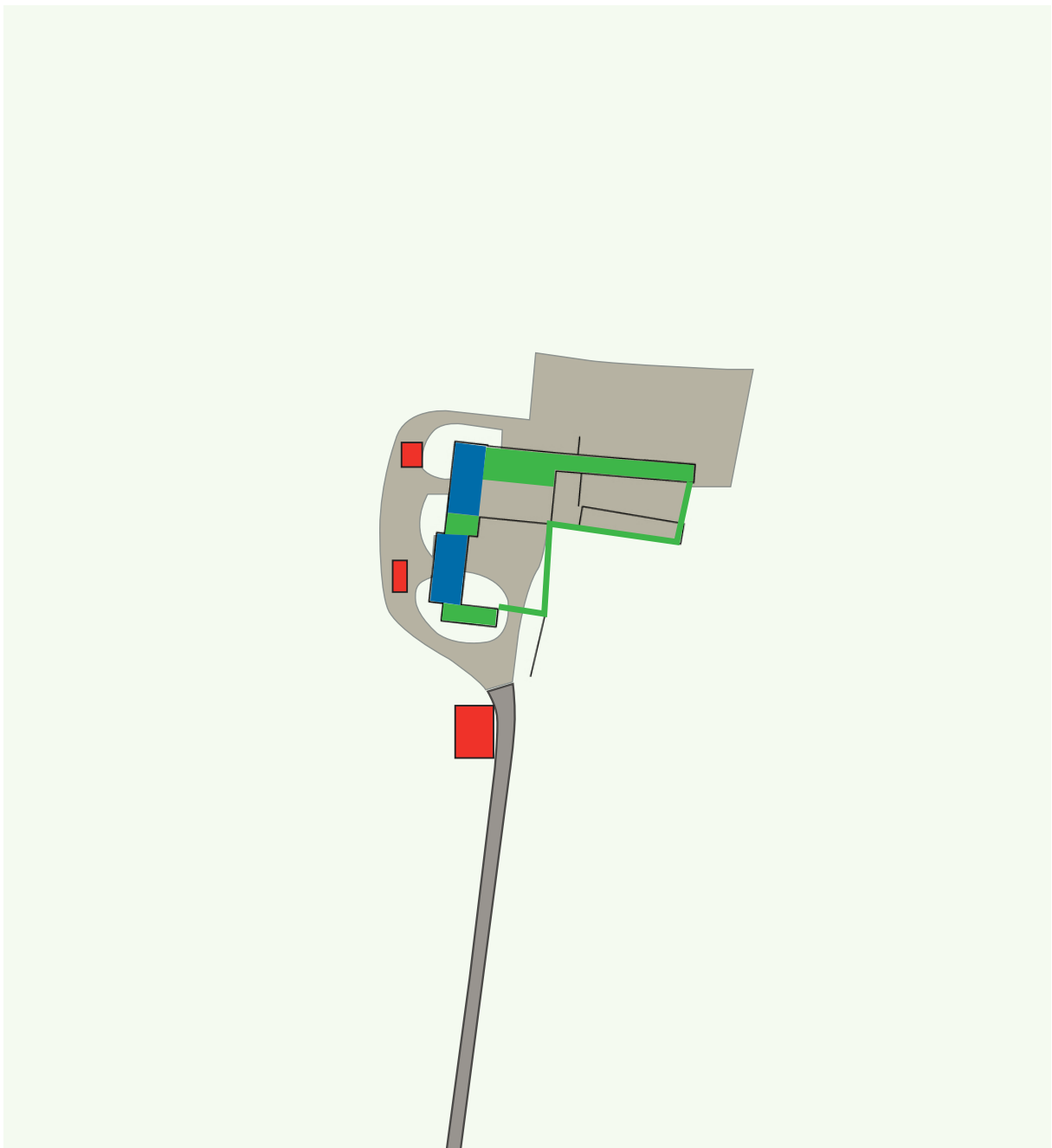


The southern barn






One of the curtilage structures, the goat house, forming the northern boundary of the courtyard





Assessment of significance of the structures on the site

-  Medium value
-  Low value
-  No value

# 3.0 Assessment of Significance

## 3.1 Introduction

Assessing ‘significance’ (otherwise known as ‘value’ in Environmental Statement terminology) is the means by which the cultural importance of a place and its component parts is identified and compared, both absolutely and relatively.

The purpose of this is not merely academic. It is essential for effective conservation and management, because the identification of areas and aspects of higher and lower significance, based on a thorough understanding of a place, enables policies and proposals to be developed which protect, respect and where possible enhance its character and cultural values.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) places the concept of significance at the heart of the planning process for the historic environment. Its definition of significance is:

*The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset’s physical presence, but also from its setting.*

This definition is used for the assessment in this section. By way of background, English Heritage’s *Conservation Principles* also outlines broadly similar heritage values that make up significance: evidential, historical, aesthetic and communal.

As noted in the introduction, this Statement contains no assessment of the archaeological significance or potential of the site. However, in accordance with the NPPF, a search has been carried out at the Oxfordshire Historic Environment Record and is included in Appendix 1.

## 3.2 Assessment of Value

In accordance with established EIA procedures, the value of the heritage assets on the Site have been categorised according to the table below. The intention of this ranking is to enable readers of this report to recognise, at a glance, the relative value of the different elements of the Site. There are no structures of ‘very high’ or ‘high’ value on Himley Farm.

Value of Receptor	Criteria
Very High	International significance - exceptional interest World Heritage Sites
High	National significance – special interest Grade I and II* listed buildings, Grade I and II* Registered Parks and Gardens, Scheduled Monuments
Medium	Regional significance – regional interest Conservation Areas, Grade II listed buildings, Grade II Registered Parks and Gardens
Low	Local significance – local interest Locally listed buildings, undesignated heritage assets of local importance

### 3.3 Significance of the Himley Farm barns

In summary, the barns have significance as Grade II listed buildings. The barns are of architectural importance as an example of hand-threshing barns in the Oxfordshire vernacular style, where the function directly influenced the design, built in local materials. The barns have archaeological importance as evidence of historic farming processes e.g., the barn doors and stone slit ventilators facilitated hand-threshing. Apart from the roof structures, neither barn contains any historic fixtures or fittings. The barns have historical importance because they demonstrate the continuation of agricultural traditions in this area throughout the nineteenth and early-twentieth century. It is not known when the barns went out of agricultural use.

The Himley Farm barns are part of a large (80+) group of similar structures in the Oxfordshire area. Most are listed at Grade II, as with Himley Farm, but a small handful are listed Grade I and Grade II\*. These tend to be of earlier date, and have historical associations. Barns of special interest within this group are often marked out by their roof structure, including shape, construction and materials. Hand-threshing barns housed the process of threshing until the mid-nineteenth century.

The west wall of the northern barn is inscribed with the date 1760. The first cartographic evidence for the buildings dates to 1833. This map depicts the farm as comprising three buildings that do not coincide with the current layout of Himley Farm. Evidence for phases of development at Himley Farm is patchy and inconclusive, but on the basis of cartographic evidence and a visual assessment, it is reasonable to conclude that the barns date from the early nineteenth century. Taken together, the construction of the barns can be assigned to a period of development of agriculture in the area of Bicester, and its increasing industrialisation.

The barns survive largely intact, with some slight alterations and repairs. For example, the stonework has been patch repaired in places with brick. During conversion of the northern barn into a domestic dwelling, a mezzanine floor has been inserted to increase living space, and windows (in the roof and the connecting structure) have been inserted. Other than the roof structure and stone slit ventilators, there are no internal features of interest.

The high quality of construction materials also makes the barns a valuable asset in the long term; they have scope to be adapted, as in the case of the northern barn, to residential use. They make an important contribution to the character and sense-of-place for the surrounding area and are repositories of past farming techniques and requirements.

By nature of their Grade II listing, the barns have **medium value**.

### 3.4 Significance of the setting

In considering the existing setting of the barns and its contribution to their significance it is most comprehensive to structure our thinking as follows: physically the setting is composed of their immediate and extended setting. Both the immediate and extended setting need to be scrutinized in terms of use and their visual qualities.

The immediate setting is the courtyard of buildings. This arrangement is typical of

historic farmsteads and is comprised of the listed barns, a number of ancillary buildings and a courtyard enclosed by walls. This immediate setting adds to the historic and archaeological interest of the designated heritage assets as the arrangement and character of the ancillary buildings survive from their historic agricultural use making the buildings immediately recognisable as farm buildings. There are some views from the heritage assets into the courtyard though the lack of windows means the views are quite limited. From the southern barn, the view of the courtyard from its former cart door entrance for example reinforces the architectural character and significance of the building.

However, the fact the courtyard is basically no longer used for its original purpose reduces the contribution of the immediate setting. The courtyard setting has not changed substantially since being in agricultural use but parts of the courtyard are now overgrown and many of the buildings are clearly underused.

Overall the immediate setting of the courtyard contributes to the significance of the heritage assets as its arrangement dates from its agricultural use which adds to the historic and agricultural significance of the assets. This contribution is reduced by the change of use that has taken place on the site and the consequential visual effect.

The extended setting is comprised of the surrounding fields, which include some recent agricultural buildings. The heritage assets can be seen from a considerable distance around the open countryside. The surrounding fields were historically essential to the existence of the farm buildings as the crops grown in them were stored and processed in the buildings and would have fed the animals kept on the site. The surrounding fields maintain a field pattern which is relatively unchanged since the nineteenth century. These field boundaries give the appearance of cultivated farmland. However, the change of use to residential in 2004 reduced this agricultural-use link between the two and reduces its contribution to the listed barns' significance.

The visual contribution of the extended setting is largely limited to the views gained from the access track from which the farm buildings can be seen in the context of the fields and field boundaries. The isolation of the buildings surrounded by fields, adds to their historic and archaeological interest as it reinforces their character as historic farm buildings. However, the architectural interest is reduced by a large twentieth-first century farm building which dominates the approach.

There are some limited views of the buildings from the A4030 to Middleton Stoney and none from the A4095 Howes Lane due to vegetation and the gradient of the land. There are no public rights of way from which the barns can be seen.

Views of the extended setting from the heritage assets are limited due to the inward-looking character of the courtyard of farm buildings and the lack of windows. Glimpses of the extended setting can be gained through the slit ventilators of the barns, the roof windows (installed in 2004) and the front door. This adds some limited significance to the assets as it reinforced their agricultural character but the views are so restricted that the additional significance is minimal.

The setting of the barns possess **medium value**.



# 4.0 Policy context

## 4.1 Introduction

As the Himley Farm barns are listed Grade II, any works that might affect their settings and therefore their significance are subject to statutory control according to national, regional and local policies. Relevant policies for the current proposals are the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), the Cherwell District Local Plan, the Design and Conservation Strategy for Cherwell 2012-2015, and Cherwell Council Listed Building Planning Guide no.5.

## 4.2 National policies

### 4.2.1 Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation) Act 1990

The overarching legislation governing the consideration of applications for building consent that affect heritage assets is contained in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Sections 16(2) and 66(1) of the Act require *local planning authorities, when considering whether to grant listed building consent, to have special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.*

### 4.2.2 National Planning Policy Framework

The NPPF was adopted in March 2012. Section 12, entitled Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment, contains guidance on heritage assets, which includes listed buildings and conservation areas. Amongst its core principles NPPF states at Paragraph 17 that planning should conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of this and future generations.

The following paragraphs are relevant to this application;

Para 128 requires that in determining an application the local planning authority should require an applicant to describe the significance of the heritage assets affected, including any contributions made by their settings.

Para 129 requires local authorities to assess and identify the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset).

Para 132 emphasises that when considering the impact of a development on the significance of a heritage asset the local planning authority should avoid harm or loss of the asset through development within its settings.

Para 134 states that where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use.

Para 137 states that local planning authorities should look for opportunities to enhance or better reveal the significance of a heritage asset through development within its settings. Proposals that preserve those elements of the settings that make positive contribution to or better reveal the significance of the heritage asset should be treated favourably.

NPPF defines setting as follows:

*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 the significance or may be neutral.*

#### 4.2.3 Supplement to Planning Policy Statement 1: EcoTowns, 2009

*ET 15.1 Planning applications for eco-towns should demonstrate that they have adequately considered the implications for the local landscape and historic environment. This evidence, in particular that gained from landscape character assessments and historic landscape characterisation should be used to ensure that development complements and enhances the existing landscape character. Furthermore, evidence contained in relevant Historic Environment Records, should be used to assess the extent, significance and condition of known heritage assets (and the potential for the discovery of unknown heritage assets) and the contribution that they may make to the eco-town and surrounding area. Eco-town proposals should set out measures to conserve and, where appropriate, enhance heritage both assets and their settings through the proposed development.*

### 4.3 Regional policy

The South East Plan, the regional spatial strategy for the south east of England, was revoked on 25 March 2013 under the Regional Strategy for the South East Plan (Partial Revocation) order 2013. The revocation of the plan decentralises planning powers to local authorities.

The South East plan was replaced by the Oxfordshire Structure Plan 2016 apart from three 'saved' policies which continued in existence until the adoption by the local planning authorities of local plans.

### 4.4 Local policy

#### The Non Statutory Local Plan 2011

The Non Statutory Local Plan 2011 (December 2004), supposed to update and review the Adopted Local Plan 1996 (November 1996), was never completed and adopted. The plan has nevertheless been approved as interim planning policy for development control purposes. Chapter 9, *Conserving and Enhancing the Environment*, contains policies relevant to this application as follows.

*EN39 Development should preserve listed buildings, their features and settings, and preserve or enhance the character or appearance of designated conservation areas, as defined on the proposals map. Development that conflicts with these objectives will not be permitted.*

*EN44 Special care will be taken to ensure that development that is situated within the setting of a listed building respects the architectural and historic character of the building and its setting.*

## Adopted Local Plan 1996

Policies within the Adopted Local Plan 1996 (November 1996) were saved and will continue to be used until they are replaced by Local Plan Development Framework. Policies relevant to the present application are contained in Chapter 9 Rural Conservation, Urban Conservation and Design.

Policy C19 states that before the determination of an application for the alteration, demolition or extension of a listed building applicants will be required to provide sufficient information to enable an assessment to be made of the likely impact of their proposals on the special interest of the structure, its setting, or special features.

Policy C20 states that special care will be taken to ensure that development which is situated within the setting of a listed building respects the architectural and historic character of the building and its setting.

## The new Cherwell Local Plan (2006-2031)

The new Cherwell Local Plan (2006-2031) was submitted to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government for formal examination on 31 January 2014. The consultation period for the proposed modifications has now expired and the policies contained in both plans should be taken into consideration.

The following points are relevant for this application.

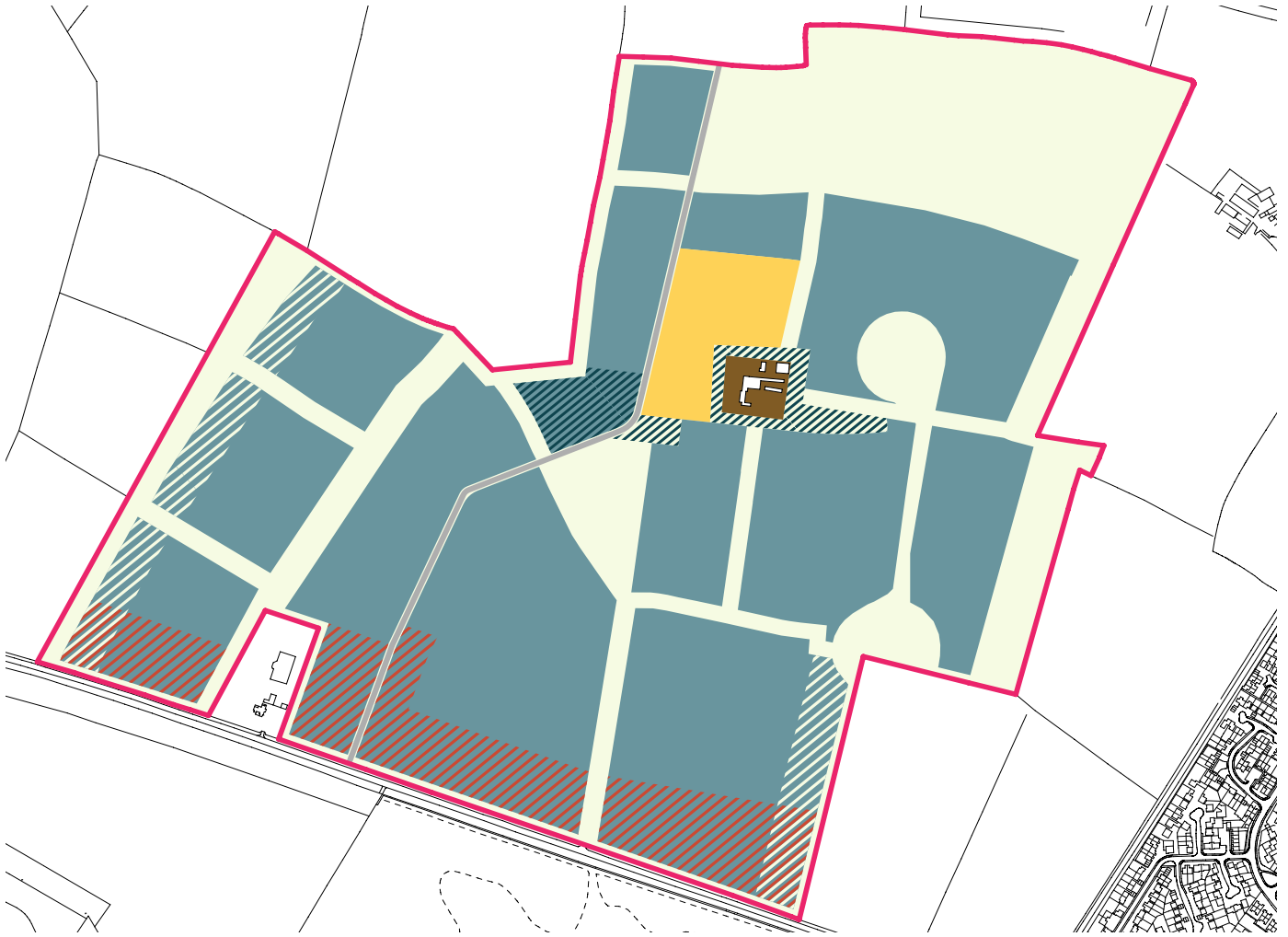
*9.45 The setting of a listed building may often form an essential part of its character e.g. gardens or grounds laid out to complement its design or function. In the case of a group of listed buildings in a settlement, the wider setting may comprise a large part of the street scene. In considering development proposals under the above policy the Council will have regard to the desirability of preserving the setting of listed buildings and will resist development which would adversely affect it.*

## 4.5 Guidance









Other documents and guidance used in this report included the *Design and Conservation Strategy for Cherwell 2012-2015*, which sets out the Council's remit in these areas, within the broader Planning framework.

In addition, the English Heritage publication *The Setting of Heritage Assets* (2011) sets out EH guidance on managing change within the settings of heritage assets, including historic buildings, sites, areas, and landscapes.





The parameter plan for the Himley Village Development

-  Boundary Line
-  Primary Road
-  Housing
-  Social / Community
-  Other Uses (as per land use schedule)
-  School
-  Himley Farm
-  Hard/Soft Landscape

# 5.0 Proposals

In May 2014, the NW Bicester Masterplan was produced by the Masterplan team, including Farrells, Barton Wilmore, Hyder, Bioregional, SQW and Remarkable for A2Dominion. The project aims to establish a pioneering community providing up to 6,000 future-proof homes, it will also create outstanding green spaces, a business park and many sports and leisure facilities.

This report has been prepared in support of the Proposed Development at Himley Village.

The outline application on the 90.3ha site which comprises Himley Village will deliver:

- Up to 1,700 new homes
- Land for a new primary school
- Commercial, social and community facilities
- A retirement village / extra-care homes
- Green infrastructure / landscaping
- Access and infrastructure works

There are no direct works to the barns or to buildings within the site boundary of the barns. Ancillary farm buildings, including the large grain store near the barns' access road, will be demolished. On completion of the Proposed Development, the setting of the listed barns will be changed, from a rural landscape to suburban development.

# 6.0 Impact Assessment

The criteria for assessing the magnitude of change and the significance of effect is set out in the table below. These correspond to the assessment made in Chapter 14: Cultural Heritage of the Environmental Statement. The magnitude of change, and the corresponding significance of effect can be adverse or beneficial.

Magnitude of Change	Criteria
High	Considerable change, such that the receptor is totally altered Comprehensive change to setting
Medium	Change such that the receptor is clearly altered Considerable change to setting
Low	Minor change such that the receptor is slightly altered Slight change to setting
Negligible	Very minor changes to the receptor or setting

The below table shows how the value of receptor and the magnitude of change are combined to arrive at the significance of the effect.

		Magnitude of Change			
		High	Medium	Low	Negligible
Value of receptor	Very High	<b>Substantial</b>	<b>Substantial/moderate</b>	<b>Moderate</b>	Minor
	High	<b>Substantial/moderate</b>	<b>Moderate</b>	<b>Moderate/minor</b>	Minor
	Medium	<b>Moderate</b>	<b>Moderate/minor</b>	Minor	Negligible
	Low	<b>Moderate/minor</b>	Minor	Negligible	Negligible

There are no direct works planned for the barns. There is one indirect effect of the development on the barns, and this is the change of setting.

The immediate setting of the heritage assets will not be affected by the development as the courtyard and the boundary remain intact, allowing the barns to be experienced at close range, in the same way as now.

The extended setting of the barns will be affected, as it will change the setting from agricultural land to planned suburban development. The barns will no longer be read within their historic context of the surrounding fields. However, the importance of this historic relationship between the surrounding fields and the barns has already been reduced as the barn is now a domestic dwelling.

The barns will be integrated into, and become the heart of, the Masterplan, which acknowledges the historic field boundaries within the Site layout; this provides some evidence (albeit only discernible on plan) of the former field pattern.

The visual contribution of the extended setting is appreciated from the access track approaching the farmhouse. This access track will stay the same but the views along it will change from an agricultural landscape to suburban planned development. The large twentieth-first century grain store which currently obstructs the view from the access track to the barns, its removal as part of the works will improve the approach to the barns and reading of the barns close to.

There are views out of the barns over fields, but as these views are restricted the new Development has little impact.

Currently, there are only limited views of the barns from the roads, due to vegetation and the gradient of the land. These limited views will be maintained as a result of the Development, but what is now an isolated residence (the northern barn) will be integrated within a vibrant community. The open space to the immediate north-west has been maintained as playing fields for the adjacent school; this will ensure some continued connection with open space.

On balance, the new Development has a **medium** magnitude of change on the setting of the barn. The significance of effect is **moderate/minor adverse**.

In terms of the NPPF, the harm caused to the setting is **less than substantial**.

# 7.0 Conclusion

The proposals, which have acknowledge the historic field network in plan, have sought to avoid or minimise harm to the value of the heritage assets and their setting. The barns will be integrated into a vibrant new community.

However, the change in the setting from agricultural use to a planned suburban development, will cause less than substantial harm to the setting of the Grade II listed barns. This less than substantial harm is more than outweighed by the public benefits of the overall scheme - as required by paragraph 134 of the NPPF - through provision of 6000 new homes in a zero carbon development.

The proposals are, therefore, in accordance with the 1990 Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act, the NPPF, and the Cherwell Local Plan.

# 8.0

## Sources

Brunskill, R.W., 2007, *Traditional Farm Buildings and their Conservation (Vernacular Buildings)*, London

Cherwell District Council, 1996, *Cherwell Adopted Local Plan*, <http://www.cherwell.gov.uk/index.cfm?articleid=9632>

Cherwell District Council, 2004, *Cherwell Non-Statutory Local Plan 2011 (December 2004)*, [http://npa.cherwell.gov.uk/LocalPlan/Plan\\_index.htm](http://npa.cherwell.gov.uk/LocalPlan/Plan_index.htm)

Cherwell District Council, 2011, *Cherwell Local Plan 2011 – 2031*, <http://www.cherwell.gov.uk/index.cfm?articleid=9803>

Cherwell District Council, 2010, *Eco-Bicester – One Shared Vision*, <https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/sites/default/files/folders/documents/roadsandtransport/transportpoliciesandplans/areatransportstrategies/bicester/EcoBicester-OneSharedVision.pdf>

English Heritage, 2011, *The Setting of Heritage Assets*, <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/publications/setting-heritage-assets/>

Highways Agency, 2013, *Manual for Roads and Bridges: Volume 11 - Environmental Assessment*, <http://www.standardsforhighways.co.uk/ha/standards/dmrb/vol0/section1.htm>

ICOMOS, 2011, *Guidance on Heritage Impact Assessments for Cultural World Heritage Properties*, [http://www.icomos.org/world\\_heritage/HIA\\_20110201.pdf](http://www.icomos.org/world_heritage/HIA_20110201.pdf)

National Planning Policy Framework 2012, Ch. 12, <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

Planning Policy Statement: eco-towns - A supplement to Planning Policy Statement 1, 2009, <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/eco-towns-planning-policy-statement-1-supplement>

Town and Country Planning Act 1990, <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1990/8/contents>

# Appendices

Appendices

Appendices

# Appendix 1 HER Map

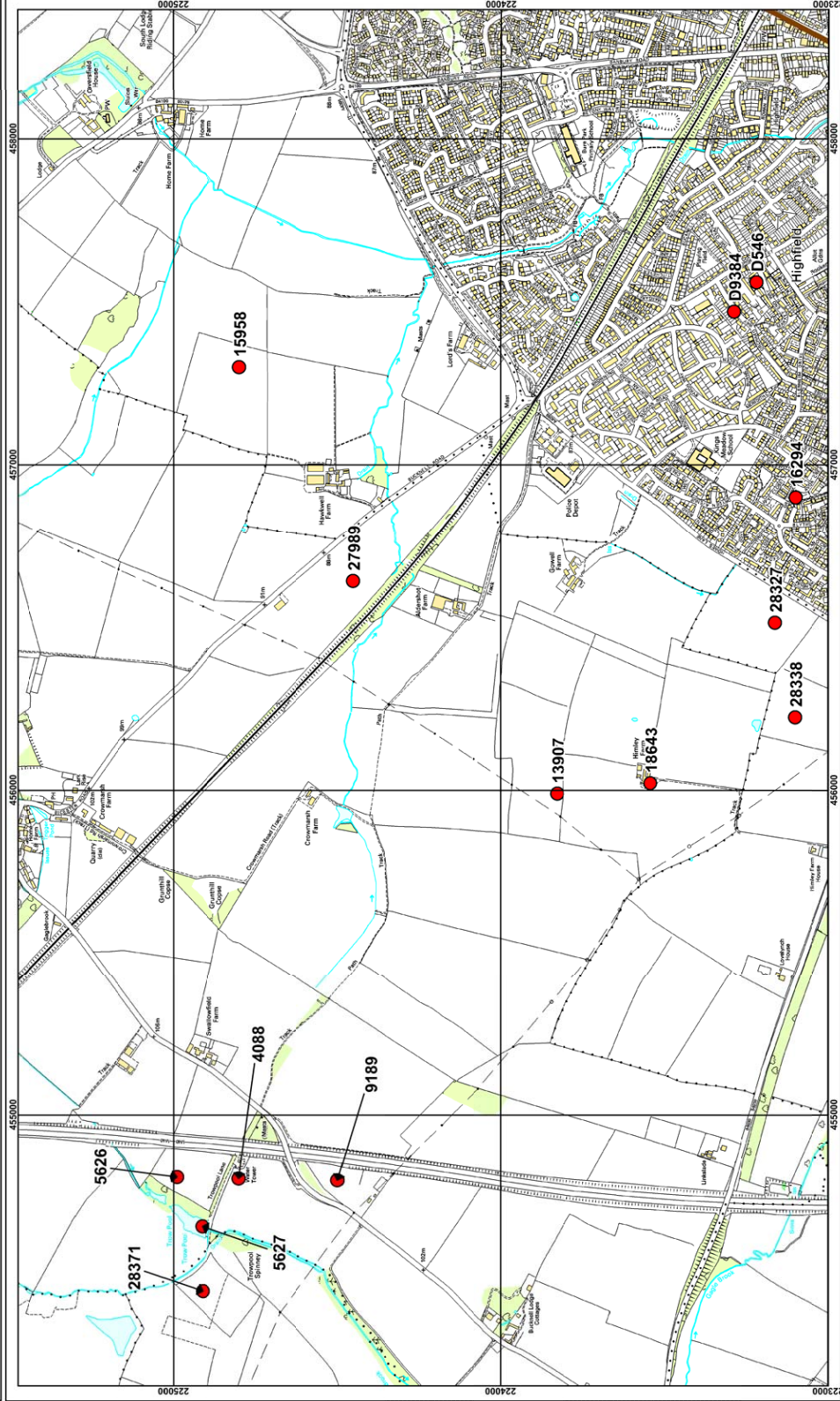
## All Monuments Within 1.6km of Himley Farm

Northern Half of Search Area  
Compiled by J Robinson on 4 November 2014  
Scale 1:15693

**OXFORDSHIRE  
COUNTY COUNCIL**  
ENVIRONMENT & ECONOMY  
www.oxfordshire.gov.uk



Historic & Natural Environment Team  
Infrastructure Planning Service  
Speedwell House  
Speedwell Street  
Oxford OX1 1NE



©Crown Copyright and database rights 100023343 2012 NOT TO BE REPRODUCED FOR COMMERCIAL PURPOSES



# Appendix 2

## List Description

Name: 2 BARNS APPROXIMATELY 700 METRES NORTH EAST OF HINLEY FARMHOUSE, CHESTERTON (NOT INCLUDED)

List Entry Number: 1046883

Location 2 BARNS APPROXIMATELY 700 METRES NORTH EAST OF HINLEY FARMHOUSE, CHESTERTON (NOT INCLUDED), B4030

The building may lie within the boundary of more than one authority.

County: Oxfordshire

District: Cherwell

District Type: District Authority

Parish: Bucknell

Grade: II

Date first listed: 26-Feb-1988

Legacy System Information

The contents of this record have been generated from a legacy data system.

Legacy System: LBS

UID: 244532

List Entry Description

Details

BUCKNELL B4030 SP52SE (North side) 7/8 2 barns approx. 700m NE of Hinley Farmhouse, Chesterton (not included) - II

2 barns. 1760 on datestone; one barn possibly slightly later. Coursed limestone rubble with wooden lintels; corrugated-asbestos roofs. 4-bay plans in staggered alignment with small altered link. Dated barn has full-height opposed doors, and has slits to other bays plus 3 slits and a triangular apex vent to the north gable wall. Second barn has lower doors but is otherwise similar. Interiors: Butt-purlin roof with through tenons; trusses have tie beam, collar and short raking struts.

Listing NGR: SP5602223545

National Grid Reference: SP 56022 23545

# Alan Baxter

**Prepared by** Suzannah Meade and Sarah Jackson

**Reviewed by** Tom Brooks

**Draft issued** December 2014

T:\1665\1665-077\12 DTP Data\1665-77\_Heritage Statement\_2014-11.indd

This document is for the sole use of the person or organisation for whom it has been prepared under the terms of an invitation or appointment by such person or organisation. Unless and to the extent allowed for under the terms of such invitation or appointment this document should not be copied or used or relied upon in whole or in part by third parties for any purpose whatsoever. If this document has been issued as a report under the terms of an appointment by such person or organisation, it is valid only at the time of its production. Alan Baxter & Associates LLP does not accept liability for any loss or damage arising from unauthorised use of this report.

If this document has been issued as a 'draft', it is issued solely for the purpose of client and/or team comment and must not be used for any other purpose without the written permission of Alan Baxter & Associates LLP.

**Alan Baxter & Associates LLP** is a limited liability partnership registered in England, number OC328839. Registered office: 75 Cowcross Street, London, EC1M 6EL.

© **Copyright** subsists in this document.



**APPENDIX 15.1**  
**ARCHAEOLOGICAL DESK-BASED ASSESSMENT**





## **Himley Village, Bicester, Oxfordshire**

### **Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment**

November 2014

**Waterman Energy, Environment & Design Limited**

Pickfords Wharf, Clink Street, London SE1 9DG,  
[www.watermangroup.com](http://www.watermangroup.com)





**Client Name:** P3Eco Ltd  
**Document Reference:** EED14995\_R\_5\_1\_3\_AB  
**Project Number:** EED14995

## Quality Assurance – Approval Status

This document has been prepared and checked in accordance with  
Waterman Group's IMS (BS EN ISO 9001: 2008, BS EN ISO 14001: 2004 and BS OHSAS 18001:2007)

---

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Prepared by</b>	<b>Checked by</b>	<b>Approved by</b>
First	November 2014	Andrew Burn Senior Heritage Consultant	Susana Parker Senior Heritage Consultant	Joanna Bagley Associate Director

## Comments

---





## Disclaimer

This report has been prepared by Waterman Energy, Environment & Design Ltd, with all reasonable skill, care and diligence within the terms of the Contract with the client, incorporation of our General Terms and Condition of Business and taking account of the resources devoted to us by agreement with the client.

We disclaim any responsibility to the client and others in respect of any matters outside the scope of the above.

This report is confidential to the client and we accept no responsibility of whatsoever nature to third parties to whom this report, or any part thereof, is made known. Any such party relies on the report at its own risk.

## Content

<b>1. Introduction</b> .....	<b>1</b>
The Site.....	1
Geology.....	1
Proposed Development .....	1
<b>2. Methodology and Significance Criteria</b> .....	<b>3</b>
Methodology .....	3
<b>3. Historical Baseline and Analysis</b> .....	<b>5</b>
Designated Heritage Assets .....	5
Historical Overview .....	5
Map Regression.....	8
Previous Archaeological Investigations .....	10
Aerial Photograph Analysis.....	10
Geophysical Survey.....	10
Evaluation .....	11
Truncation and Potential for Survival.....	12
<b>4. Assessment of Significance</b> .....	<b>13</b>
Significance Criteria .....	13
Statement of Significance .....	13
Evidential Value: Medium .....	13
Historical Value: Low .....	13
Summary of Significance .....	14
Impacts of the Himley Village Development .....	14
<b>5. Conclusions and Recommendations</b> .....	<b>15</b>
<b>6. References and Sources</b> .....	<b>16</b>
Bibliography .....	16

## Figures

Figure 1: Site Location Plan.....	
Figure 2: Historic Environment Records .....	
Figure 3: Designated Assets.....	
Figure 4: Previous Investigations.....	

## Appendices

- A. Ordnance Survey Maps

- B. Legislation and Planning Policy
- C. Historic Environment Records - Gazeteer
- D. Glossary (National Planning Policy Framework)

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1. This archaeological desk based assessment has been prepared by Waterman Energy, Environment & Design Ltd (Waterman EED) on behalf of P3Eco Ltd to accompany the submission of an outline planning application for development of land located to the east of Bicester (hereafter referred to as the Site). The location and extent of the Site is shown in **Figure 1**. The development comprises a residential led scheme, hereafter referred to as the Himley Village Development.
- 1.2. This report provides a baseline summary of known, below ground heritage assets for the area, based on existing data, the analysis of historic sources and a walk-over survey. Extant, built heritage assets are considered elsewhere in a Built Heritage Statement produced by Alan Baxter and Associates and included as Technical Appendix 14.1 to the Environmental Statement. The aim is to also assess the potential for unknown below ground heritage assets and the nature of any impact the Himley Village Development is likely to have on the buried historic environment. In addition, the impact of the Himley Village Development on the setting of heritage assets surrounding the Site is also assessed.
- 1.3. This assessment follows best practice procedures produced by English Heritage<sup>1,2</sup>, the Institute for Archaeologists<sup>3</sup> and policy contained in Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), *Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment*<sup>4</sup>.
- 1.4. In light of the planning policy context and guidance relating to heritage (see **Appendix B** for detail), this assessment forms the basis for the consideration of the need for any further archaeological investigations pre-determination to inform the planning process, and also the need, as necessary, for any measures that would mitigate the Himley Village Development's impact on the historic environment.

### The Site

- 1.5. The Site is approximately 90 hectares (ha) in area, centred on Ordnance Survey Grid Reference SP 56022 23545. It is located to the west of Bicester, set away from the historic core of the settlement.
- 1.6. The Site comprises open arable fields to the South of Himley Farm, with some central pastoral fields and areas of woodland. The buildings of Himley Farm are included within the Site, and the farm yard is located amongst these buildings. Himley Farm and outbuildings will be retained within the Himley Village Development.
- 1.7. The Site is broadly level with no large prominences but falls 11.5 m from NW to SE.

### Geology

- 1.8. Bedrock geology within the Site is made up of Cornbrash Formation Limestone. This sedimentary Bedrock formed approximately 161 to 168 million years ago in the Jurassic Period. The local environment was previously dominated by shallow carbonate seas. Drift geology is not recorded by the BGS.

### Proposed Development

- 1.9. Planning permission is sought for 'Development to provide up to 1,700 residential dwellings (Class C3), a retirement village (Class C2), flexible commercial floorspace (Classes A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, B1

<sup>1</sup> English Heritage, October 2011. *The Setting of Heritage Assets*

<sup>2</sup> English Heritage, April 2008. *Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance for the sustainable management of the historic environment*

<sup>3</sup> Institute for Archaeologists, November 2012. *Standard and Guidance: Desk Based Assessments*

<sup>4</sup> Department for Communities and Local Government, March 2012. *National Planning Policy Framework*

*and C1), social and community facilities (Class D1), land to accommodate one energy centre and land to accommodate one new primary school (up to 2 form entry) (Class D1). Such development to include provision of strategic landscape, provision of new vehicular, cycle and pedestrian access routes, infrastructure and other operations including demolition of farm buildings on Middleton Stoney Road.'*

## 2. Methodology and Significance Criteria

### Methodology

- 2.1. This assessment has included the following:
  - Appraisal of relevant heritage assets noted on the Oxfordshire Historic Environment Record (HER);
  - Consultation of relevant heritage information in local, regional and national archives, as appropriate;
  - Consultation of previous Heritage studies for the Site, including the DBA undertaken by Hyder consulting in 2014, and fieldwork reports by Oxford Archaeology and Northamptonshire Archaeology.
  - Consultation of online resources;
  - Appraisal of English Heritage data sets;
  - Appraisal of designated heritage assets and areas, including conservation areas, local lists and archaeological alert area designations, in the immediate area;
  - A walk-over survey of the Site and immediate area;
  - Assessing the presence of known heritage likely to be affected by the Himley Village Development proposal;
  - Assessing the potential for unknown heritage assets likely to be affected by the Himley Village Development proposal; and
  - Assessing the effect of the Himley Village Development proposals (as known) on the settings of heritage assets in the study area.
- 2.2. The sources consulted include information in the Oxfordshire Historic Environment Record (OHER), which consists of records of heritage assets. These relate to sites, find spots, historic buildings and heritage investigations in the area, as well as any known information relating to listed buildings and scheduled monuments. **Figure 2** shows all relevant HER records in the study area (1 km radius from the boundary of the Site). **Appendix C** contains a full list of all HER records in the search area. The number references used in the text are those used by OHER. There are also references to the NMR numbers as published online by English Heritage via the Heritage Gateway, National Heritage for England, and Pastscape websites.
- 2.3. The Oxfordshire History Centre was visited in order to obtain information from early maps, documents and secondary sources. A full set of OS maps is reproduced in **Appendix A**.
- 2.4. The Site was visited on 10<sup>th</sup> November 2014. The aim of the visit and walkover was to identify any features of heritage merit, and the ground conditions. The weather was overcast. Most of the Site was accessible from public footpaths, roads and other rights of way. A photographic record of the visit was made.
- 2.5. Information on previously recorded heritage assets is presented in Section 3 of this report.
- 2.6. Section 4 provides a professional assessment of the significance pertaining to heritage assets likely to be affected by the Himley Village Development proposal, an assessment for the potential for

unknown/unrecorded heritage assets, and the likely physical impact of the Himley Village Development on the historic environment within the Site, and the wider setting.

- 2.7. Section 5 concludes with a summary of this assessment. This will also identify the need for additional investigations to further inform the planning process, and assesses the need to mitigate any impact of the Himley Village Development proposals on the historic environment.

### 3. Historical Baseline and Analysis

- 3.1. The following presents information about the known designated and undesignated heritage assets within the study area. All heritage assets within the study area are listed in **Appendix C** and the assets discussed are shown on **Figure 2 and 3**.

#### Designated Heritage Assets

- 3.2. There are no scheduled monuments, world heritage sites, registered parks and gardens or registered battlefields within the study area. Within the Site are two barns forming part of Himley farm which are designated Grade II (MOX13251 on Figure 3). Beyond the Site but within the site boundary there are four listed buildings, two in Caversfield and two in Bucknell, located to the north east and north-west of the Site respectively.

#### Historical Overview

##### Prehistoric (up to 42 AD)

- 3.3. The earliest archaeological evidence within the study area is Neolithic material recovered from the area of a post medieval quarry to the south-east of the Site (MOX24475). Additional Neolithic evidence is present to the north of the Site where an enclosure, pit and trackway were identified through excavation (MOX24518).
- 3.4. Other evidence for prehistoric human activity dates to the Iron Age (c. 800 BC – AD 43) and comprises a settlement consisting of a ring ditch, boundary ditch, oven and pit (MOX26600). This is located in the area of the former Slade Farm which also produced some Mesolithic evidence.
- 3.5. The only recorded assets within Site itself are also prehistoric. In the centre of the Site are anomalies identified by geophysical survey and subsequent evaluation (EOX5650). The anomalies are sub-rectangular and sub-circular ditched enclosures, curvilinear ditches and pits that are likely to date to the later prehistoric or Roman periods. A geophysical survey<sup>5</sup> and evaluation<sup>6</sup> of the Site have also identified a trackway or droveway of uncertain date. In addition, in the same area, a crop mark of a rectilinear enclosure (MOX5631) was recorded. It is likely that this feature was also one of the anomalies recorded by a geophysical survey<sup>7</sup>.
- 3.6. There is a possible ring ditch of unknown date (MOX5629) located 648 m to the south east of the Site. Features of this type are most likely to date to the Bronze or Iron Ages (c. 2200 BC – AD 43). A ring ditch could indicate a round barrow, a funerary monument usually constructed over an inhumation burial or cremation, or a round house, depending on the size. As these details were not available for this asset it is not possible to be more specific.
- 3.7. These assets indicate primarily later prehistoric activity in the study area, with an area of more intensive activity directly to the north of the Site indicated by the geophysical anomalies of the survey undertaken for a previous planning application (R3.0046/14) which included the current Site (**Figure 15.3**).

<sup>5</sup> Northamptonshire Archaeology 2012. Archaeological Geophysical Survey for the Proposed Bicester Eco Development, Oxfordshire, December 2011 – February 2012

<sup>6</sup> Oxford Archaeology 2014. Bicester Eco Development, Bicester, Oxfordshire. Archaeological Evaluation Report Volume 1 – 3

<sup>7</sup> Northamptonshire Archaeology 2012. Archaeological Geophysical Survey for the Proposed Bicester Eco Development, Oxfordshire, December 2011 – February 2012



### Roman (43 AD to 409 AD)

- 3.8. There is one heritage asset dating to the Roman period within the study area. This is located 60 m to the east of the Site and comprises enclosures, including a rectangular enclosure, and associated finds (MOX26613). This is likely to be associated with a Romano-British settlement and may indicate either settlement or agricultural activity.
- 3.9. There was a more substantial Roman settlement approximately 1 mile to the west of the centre of modern Bicester (MOX8461). The town, Alchester, was occupied from AD 43 to the fifth century when the site became increasingly waterlogged and was eventually abandoned. There was initially a Marching Camp surrounded by a defensive ditch and, whilst the fort was in operation, a civilian settlement grew up outside it. The fort was abandoned in the mid A.D. 60s but the settlement continued to expand as an administrative and market focus in the area. Temples and several stone buildings have been identified within the town and a stone town wall was built in the second century ([www.blhs.org.uk](http://www.blhs.org.uk)).
- 3.10. This indicates evidence for Roman activity within the study area. The presence of a settlement in close proximity to the Site indicates there is potential for unknown Roman archaeology to be present.

### Early Medieval (410 AD to 1065 AD)

- 3.11. There are no recorded heritage assets dating to the early medieval period within the study area.
- 3.12. The Site lies within the civil parishes of Bucknell and Bicester. There is evidence of a Saxon settlement at Bicester and it is recorded in the Domesday Book. The Saxon settlement is thought to have been located to the north of the Roman town and adjacent to the Roman road. The name Bicester is thought to originate from Bernecestre which can be interpreted as meaning 'the fort of the warriors' or 'of Beorna', possibly a notable person in the area in the Anglo Saxon period<sup>8</sup>. Bucknell village lies to the north of the Site, just beyond the boundary of the study area and is mentioned in the Domesday Book as Buchelle.
- 3.13. It is likely that during the early medieval period the Site formed part of the hinterland of the settlements of Bicester and Bucknell. Any activity on the Site at this time is likely to be agricultural in nature.

### Medieval (1066 AD to 1539 AD)

- 3.14. Two listed buildings in the vicinity date to the medieval period: the Church of St Lawrence (LB UID 1046533) in Caversfield and a church yard cross (LB UID 338850) in Bucknell.
- 3.15. There is further evidence for medieval activity within the study area, to the east of Middleton Stoney, in the form of a deserted medieval village (MOX4971). Deserted medieval villages indicate the abandonment or contraction of settlements and are fairly common in the later medieval period. In this case the village never expanded again, but the continued use of the church indicates that there must have been occupation in the area, possibly comprised of scattered farms rather than a nucleated settlement.
- 3.16. The town of Bicester developed further in the medieval period and was granted a market in 1239 A.D. The early town developed at King's End and Market End, linked by a causeway across the Bure River. Evidence of the medieval town can be observed in the tenth century houses in Priory Lane and Manorsfield Road, and the present property boundaries in the town centre which reflect the medieval burgrave plots. Medieval Bicester expanded further once Bicester Priory was founded in

<sup>8</sup> Lobel, M D 1959. A History of the County Of Oxfordshire Vol 6. Victoria County History, 14-56

1182 A.D. Excavations in the 1960s revealed a religious complex containing a large church, which housed the shrine of St Edburg, and other associated monastic buildings, including a hospital.

- 3.17. During the medieval period the Site would have formed part of the hinterland of the settlements of Bucknell, Caversfield and Bicester and the most likely activity within the Site at this time would have been agricultural in nature.

### Post Medieval (1540 AD to 1750 AD) and Industrial (1751 AD to 1900 AD)

- 3.18. There are geophysical anomalies highlighted by the geophysical survey undertaken by Northamptonshire archaeology<sup>9</sup>, probably representing ditches, at South Lodge Stables, on the south-east edge of Caversfield. It is possible that these may indicate former field boundaries or field drainage and if so are likely to date to this period.
- 3.19. The two designated barns at Himley Farm were also constructed during the post medieval period and are visible on historic ordnance survey mapping dating to the 1890s.
- 3.20. There has been no Historic Landscape Characterisation produced for Oxfordshire but the Cherwell District Landscape Assessment, undertaken in 1995, provides some useful information for determining the historic value and time depth of the landscape. In addition cartographic analysis indicates changes that have occurred within the landscape.
- 3.21. The cartographic sequence for the Site, demonstrates that much of the area was farmed in an open field system until the late eighteenth century, when enclosure awards were passed, and the landscape began to be divided into smaller fields with individual owners. The sequence of Ordnance Survey maps, which began in the later nineteenth century, records the same field boundaries present today within the Site. As enclosure maps were not available for this area, it is not possible to determine if these boundaries date to the initial period of enclosure or are a slightly later development. The villages of Bucknell and Caversfield are largely unchanged throughout the map sequence. The key change in the area is the expansion of Bicester and therefore increasing urbanisation in the area bordering the Site. Within the wider landscape surrounding the Site there has been a slight reduction in the amount of field boundaries.
- 3.22. The Cherwell and District Landscape Assessment<sup>10</sup> describes the landscape within which the Site lies as the Oxfordshire Estate Farmlands character area. This area runs from Bletchingdon in the south, around the north of Bicester and up to the county boundary with Northamptonshire, and is characterised by a rolling landform and a pattern of woodland and mixed farmland. Much of the landscape in this character area is associated with estates linked to the extensive areas of remaining eighteenth century parkland, and this is one of the special features of the character area. The closest evidence for parkland is at Bignell Park to the south of the Site, although this dates to the later nineteenth century and so is not classed as part of the eighteenth century parkland. The Landscape Assessment characterises the local landscape within and around the Site as large scale open farmland or large scale undulating farmland. The former has weak field patterns while the latter has strong field patterns, which are given definition by well-maintained hedges.
- 3.23. The Landscape Assessment draws out some of the key landscape elements of the area surrounding the Site but does not designate it as an area of high landscape value. As with other parts of Cherwell, the area to the north of Bicester has been considerably affected by military development. Military airfields such as RAF Bicester are dominant features in the landscape where they occur.

<sup>9</sup> Northamptonshire Archaeology 2012. Archaeological Geophysical Survey for the Proposed Bicester Eco Development, Oxfordshire, December 2011 – February 2012

<sup>10</sup> Cobham Resource Consultants 1995. Cherwell District Landscape Assessment for Cherwell District Council

- 3.24. Other key features in the landscape of the Cherwell district are small settlements. Many of these date to the early medieval and medieval periods and a significant number of these settlements experienced abandonment or shrinkage as a result of social and economic change in the late medieval or post medieval period. The two closest villages to the Site, Caversfield and Bucknell, have a church which dates to the Anglo-Saxon period, and medieval or earlier origins, respectively. Both the villages experienced shrinkage in the post medieval period with little remaining of Caversfield except for the church and the manor house. The predominant architecture in these settlements is of the vernacular style which is typical for the district.
- 3.25. Overall, the historic landscape within which the Site is located can be described as typical for the area. It is of a predominantly rural nature characterised by late eighteenth and early nineteenth century arable fields. Any activity within the Site in the post medieval period is most likely to be in line with this use of the landscape, and any features that may be present would be agricultural in nature.

### Twentieth Century onwards (1901 AD onwards)

- 3.26. There are no recorded heritage assets dating to this period.

### Map Regression

- 3.27. Much of the Site lay within the area covered by Williams' 1753 map of Bicester, showing the manors of Market End and King's End. This map shows that, at this time, a large proportion of the land in this area was farmed in furlongs, long narrow divisions that were developed due to the difficulty of turning earlier ploughs. These were usually found within an open field system.
- 3.28. In 1780, an enclosure award was granted for the manor of Bucknell. Unfortunately the accompanying map no longer survives. Enclosure awards for the areas of Market End and King's End date to 1757 and 1793 respectively. The presence of the enclosure awards demonstrates that the land within the Site is likely to have been open fields until the late eighteenth century.
- 3.29. The 1851 Caversfield tithe award shows the area to the north of the Site under either arable or grassland with a small coppice in the south-west corner. The field boundaries are the same as the current boundaries. There are some fieldnames recorded on the tithe award which indicate former activity within the Site. For example, the field to the north-east of the area of woodland is named 'The Limekiln Ground' which may indicate there once was a limekiln in the vicinity. The small narrow field to the east of the woodland is named 'Stone Pit Pieces' which could suggest quarrying activity in the area. No tithe award was available for Bucknell. It is assumed that this map, if it did exist, would have shown the rest of the Site area.
- 3.30. The 1884-6 1:10,560 scale OS map shows that the field boundaries within the Site had already achieved their present layout by this time.
- 3.31. Home Farm, Lords Farm, Hawkwells Farm, Crowmarsh Farm, Himley Farm, Aldershot Farm and Gowell Farm were present. There is also a barn labelled Parkers Barn one field to the south east of Himley Farm.
- 3.32. To the north-west, the village of Bucknell was depicted as a small nucleated settlement centred around the Manor House and the church, with a small cluster of buildings located to the east of the main area of settlement, separated by two small fields. The village had achieved its current road pattern by this time.

- 3.33. To the east of the Site, Bicester was considerably smaller than in the present day. The Bicester Union Workhouse lay in open countryside approximately halfway between the Site and the town along Bucknell Road. Slade Farm was also depicted to the east of the Site. A large house labelled Bignell House surrounded by fairly extensive grounds, lay beyond the southern edge of the study area.
- 3.34. The 1900 1:10,560 scale OS map shows no change within the Site, or in Bicester and the surrounding villages. To the south of the Site, the grounds of Bignell House had expanded to abut the current line of the B4030 to the south of the Site, and were labelled Bignell Park. A significant number of trees had been planted within the park including a wide bank of trees, labelled as Bignell Belt, along the northern boundary of the park, which is adjacent to the road.
- 3.35. On the 1923 1:10,560 scale edition, the only change in the area to the north-east of the Site is the addition of a filter bed in the field immediately to the west of Home Farm. The most important change on this map is the introduction of the railway line which is located to the north of the Site. A pumping station, a tower, a quarry and a lime kiln were recorded north east of the Site, where the Avonbury Business Park is now located.
- 3.36. The 1938-1952 1:10,560 scale OS map shows there was no change within the Site. A small building had been constructed adjacent to the line of the current B4030, to the south of the Site. It is likely that this building is the one labelled 'Lovelynych House' on modern maps. By the time of the 1952 map this building had been enclosed within its own plot. There was little change to Bucknell, and no change to Caversfield. Bignell House and Bignell Park, to the south of the Site, were also unchanged. Outside the Site there existed a probable residential development next to the former Bicester Union Workhouse, which at this time was used as a home for poor boys. On the 1952 map this residential area was labelled 'Highfield' and the former workhouse was named Market End House. This map also depicts the gradual northward expansion of Bicester, and Bicester Airfield was recorded to the north of the town.
- 3.37. There were only minor changes recorded on the 1955 1:10,000 scale OS map. The filter beds close to Home Farm, north-east of the Site, and the pumping station to the south of the Site were no longer depicted.
- 3.38. There is no change recorded on the 1966 1:10,000 scale OS map.
- 3.39. The 1970 1:10,000 scale OS maps show little change. Himley Farm and another small building had also been constructed towards the southern end of the track, which links the original farm buildings at Himley farm with the B4030. The map also records the development of buildings to the west of Bicester Airfield. Bicester had expanded further to the north and north-west into the areas of Highfield and Woodfield. The areas around Slade Farm and King's End Farm remain undeveloped.
- 3.40. The 1982-1988 1:10,000 scale edition shows that the plot of the new Himley Farm building had increased in size to its present day extent. Parkers Barn was no longer recorded. The field pattern within the Site remains unchanged. A small depot is depicted to the north east of the Site, in the area now occupied by Avonbury Business Park. Outside the Site boundary there had been further development to the north-east around Brashfield House. To the north-west Bucknell remained relatively unchanged. By the time of the 1988 map Bicester had expanded even further, with the north-western limit of the town abutting the A4095 to the east of the Site, covering the area where King's End Farm stood.
- 3.41. The 1996 1:10,000 scale map shows no change within the Site. The depot in the location of Avonbury Business Park had expanded slightly and was labelled as a Police HQ. The map also shows that

Bicester had almost reached its current extent by this time, with expansion to the north, and the A4095 extended. Slade Farm was no longer recorded but the area around it remained undeveloped.

- 3.42. By the time of the 1999 1:10,000 scale OS map there had been no change within the Site. Two small strips of plantation had been planted between Gowell Farm and Himley Farm and one of the fields in Himley Farm was labelled as a piggery. The building on the B4030 at Himley Farm was named 'Lovelynch House' and the small building adjacent to the access track for Himley Farm was now 'Himley Farmhouse'.
- 3.43. By this point Bucknell had achieved its current layout, as had the village of Caversfield, with the two separate areas of development along Hemmingford Lane and around Brashfield House joined together.
- 3.44. The 2006 1:10,000 scale OS map shows no change to the Site. The piggeries at Himley Farm had moved one field to the west. There had been further development at the Avonbury Business Park. The map also shows that the area around Slade Farm, to the east of the Site, had been developed and Bicester was shown at its current extent.
- 3.45. The 2010 1:10,000 scale map shows that there had been a small amount of development at Lords Farm, to the north of the Site, but shows no other changes.

### Previous Archaeological Investigations

- 3.46. Between 2010 and 2013, three phases of archaeological investigation were undertaken over the whole of the north-west Bicester Masterplan area. These comprised aerial photograph analysis by Air Photo Services in 2010<sup>11</sup>, geophysical survey undertaken by Northamptonshire Archaeology in 2012<sup>12</sup> and evaluation undertaken by Oxford Archaeology in 2014<sup>13</sup>. This was summarised in detail in a previous desk based assessment undertaken by Hyder Consulting<sup>14</sup>. The location and results of these investigations within the current application area are illustrated on **Figure 3**.

### Aerial Photograph Analysis

- 3.47. Aerial photograph analysis was undertaken within the Himley Farm application area. This identified various areas of crop marks indicating buried archaeological features. In many areas these were underlain by extensive geological features, which were also visible as crop marks. In most cases these two types of feature could be distinguished, but where this was not possible, they were recorded as possible archaeological features<sup>15</sup>. The aerial photograph analysis identified crop marks across the Site of possible Iron Age and Romano British date, along with some medieval ridge and furrow. The location of all the crop marks identified within the Site are shown on **Figure 3**.

### Geophysical Survey

- 3.48. A 50% sample magnetometer survey was undertaken between December 2011 and January 2012 across the North West Bicester Masterplan area. This identified a large number of magnetic anomalies with the Site representing subsurface features and confirmed and expanded upon the

<sup>11</sup> Air Photo Services 2010b. *Bicester Eco Town, Oxfordshire. Part 2: The Exemplar Site: Interpretation of Aerial Photographs for Archaeology*

<sup>12</sup> Northamptonshire Archaeology 2012. *Archaeological Geophysical Survey for the Proposed Bicester Eco Development, Oxfordshire, December 2011 – February 2012*

<sup>13</sup> Oxford Archaeology 2014. *Bicester Eco Development, Bicester, Oxfordshire. Archaeological Evaluation Report Volume 1 – 3*

<sup>14</sup> Hyder Consulting Ltd 2014a. *Bicester Eco Development - Application 2 (South of Railway): Cultural Heritage Desk-Based Assessment*

<sup>15</sup> Air Photo Services 2010b. *Bicester Eco Town, Oxfordshire. Part 2: The Exemplar Site: Interpretation of Aerial Photographs for Archaeology*

crop marks identified by the aerial photograph analysis. Whilst the bulk of features are located to the north of the current Site, the locations of all the anomalies identified within the Site are shown on **Figure 3**.

- 3.49. Within the Site there are several areas of ridge and furrow, some aligned approximately north – south and some aligned east – west. In the centre of this area there are three short sections of ditch and a semi-circular ditch. To the east of this, there are two sinuous ditches and sections of a single ditch, all on a north-west – south-east alignment. A pair of adjacent pits was located to the west of the ditches. In the most southerly part of the Site there are ditches possibly representing several enclosures.

## Evaluation

- 3.50. An evaluation was carried out over the whole North West Bicester Masterplan area. In total this was designed to provide a 2% sample of the Masterplan Area, excluding areas of existing woodland, hedgerows and buildings. It was proposed to excavate 541 trenches, each 50 m long, but a number could not be excavated largely due to ecological constraints. In total 529 trenches were excavated, and 130 of these contained features of archaeological origin, including 26 that had only furrows or modern features. These were located to investigate geophysical anomalies, crop marks, and areas where these were not recorded<sup>16</sup>.
- 3.51. The evaluation identified one area of possible Bronze Age activity, to the north-east of the current Site, and three small areas of Early to Middle Iron Age activity, on the northern, eastern and western edges of the Site. A significant area of Roman activity is located directly to the north of the Site, which was also identified by crop marks and geophysical anomalies, and a smaller area of Roman activity on the western edge of the Site.
- 3.52. The possible Bronze Age activity consists of two possible burnt mounds, located in a shallow valley of an existing stream, and possibly associated with a cluster of four pits and a sinuous ditch. Burnt mounds are not common in Oxfordshire but in areas where they have been excavated their purpose has been suggested as connected with saunas or specialised sites for cooking food. The evidence for Iron Age activity appears to indicate dispersed utilisation of the landscape, which is reasonably unusual for this period, and may indicate that more substantial settlement exists outside the Site. The exception to this may be a large enclosure in the north of the Site, identified from crop marks and geophysical survey, and from which pottery of this date was recovered.
- 3.53. The small area of Roman activity on the western edge of the Site contained a limited number of features but produced a substantial amount of early Roman pottery. It may represent a small scale domestic settlement, possibly an outlying farmstead. The significant area of Roman activity in the centre of the Site consists of linear ditches and probably indicates an agricultural settlement of relatively low status in use throughout the period. This continuity of settlement is perhaps unusual. Isolated finds of human remains may indicate the potential for further burials to be found in the area of the NW Bicester Masterplan Site and within the Himley Village Site.
- 3.54. In addition to this there were frequent examples of ridge and furrow and remnants of field boundary ditches and drainage ditches that indicate that much of the Site was under arable cultivation since at least the medieval period.

<sup>16</sup> Oxford Archaeology 2014. *Bicester Eco Development, Bicester, Oxfordshire. Archaeological Evaluation Report Volume 1 – 3*

### **Truncation and Potential for Survival**

- 3.55. There has already been extensive pre-application investigation of the potential archaeological resource within the Site and large parts of the study area through aerial photograph analysis, geophysical survey and evaluation. This has demonstrated good archaeological survival within the Site and significantly increased the knowledge of the archaeological potential of this area and the significance of the archaeological resource within the Site.

## 4. Assessment of Significance

### Significance Criteria

- 4.1. The intrinsic significance unique to each heritage asset can be defined as the sum of tangible and intangible values which make it important to society. This may consider age, aesthetic and the fabric of an asset as well as intangible qualities such as associations with historic people or events.
- 4.2. To assess the heritage significance of the Site this report has drawn guidance from English Heritage<sup>17</sup> which recommends making assessments under the categories of: Evidential, Historical, Aesthetic and Communal Value.
- 4.3. The significance of the Site will be assessed using a number of significance ratings:
  - **High:** A feature, space or theme which is significant at national or international level. These will tend to have a high cultural value and form an important element of a building or site.
  - **Medium:** A feature, space or theme which is significant at a regional or national level. These will tend to have some cultural merit and form a significant part of the building or site.
  - **Low:** A feature, space or theme which is of local or regional significance.
  - **Neutral:** A feature, space or theme which has no cultural significance but is also not considered intrusive to heritage value.
  - **Intrusive:** A feature, space or theme which detracts from heritage value.

### Statement of Significance

#### Evidential Value: Medium

*“Evidential value derives from the potential of a place to yield evidence about past human activity.”<sup>18</sup>*

- 4.4. The evaluations undertaken within the Site demonstrate that there is good evidence for survival of Prehistoric, Romano British, Medieval and post medieval remains within the Site and within the wider study area. While these are considered to be of no more than local significance, the evidential value is considered **medium** due to the demonstrable good survival within the Site, and the contribution it makes to our understanding of the historic development and settlement of the area around Bicester.

#### Historical Value: Low

*“Historic value derives from the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present.”<sup>19</sup>*

- 4.5. The Site shows some evidence of occupation during the Medieval period. Similarly the wider area to the west of Bicester, including the Site, has been occupied and in agricultural use since the Medieval Period. As such the historical value of heritage assets within the Site is assessed as **low**.
- 4.6. Aesthetic and communal value are not relevant in this instance as they do not apply to the buried heritage of this Site.

<sup>17</sup> English Heritage, April 2008. *Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance for the sustainable management of the historic environment*

<sup>18</sup> English Heritage, April 2008. *Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance for the sustainable management of the historic environment*

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid*



### Summary of Significance

- 4.7. The Site has potential to yield evidence of heritage assets relating to the prehistoric, Romano-British, medieval and post medieval periods, of no more than **medium** significance. While there is demonstrable good survival for archaeological remains they are likely to be of no more than local or regional significance.

### Impacts of the Himley Village Development

- 4.8. The Himley Village Development will most likely have an adverse impact on surviving buried heritage assets. Evaluation has demonstrated survival of remains from the prehistoric to post medieval periods, and excavation of foundations, enabling works, services and other ground-intrusive works may damage, truncate or completely remove archaeological deposits.

## 5. Conclusions and Recommendations

- 5.1. It is not envisaged that the Site contains assets of more than **medium** significance, and these would most likely be confined to the prehistoric, Romano-British and medieval periods. The potential for assets to survive within the Site is negligible for the early medieval and twentieth century periods.
- 5.2. The area of the Site has been in agricultural use since at least the post medieval period, and most likely much earlier, as demonstrated by the presence of broad ridge and furrow of medieval date. Evaluation has established the potential for archaeological survival within the Site. The development will therefore have an impact upon *in situ* archaeological remains.
- 5.3. Due to the high potential within the Site for archaeological evidence of up to medium significance, it is recommended that further archaeological work be undertaken in the form of an archaeological watching brief to be carried out on any ground-intrusive works as part of an appropriately worded planning condition on any consent.

## 6. References and Sources

### Bibliography

Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979

Department for Communities and Local Government, March 2012. *National Planning Policy Framework*

English Heritage, October 2011. *The Setting of Heritage Assets*

English Heritage, April 2008. *Conservation Principles – Policies and guidance for the sustainable management of the historic environment*

The Highways Agency, August 2007. *Design Manual for Roads and Bridges*, Volume 11, Section 3, Part 2 HA 208/ 07 *Cultural Heritage*

International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), 2010. *Guidance on Heritage Impact Assessments for Cultural World Heritage Properties*

Institute for Archaeologists, November 2012. *Standard and Guidance: Desk Based Assessments*

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

Air Photo Services 2010a. Bicester Eco Town, Oxfordshire. Part 1: The Entire Site: Interpretation of Aerial Photographs for Archaeology.

Air Photo Services 2010b. Bicester Eco Town, Oxfordshire. Part 2: The Exemplar Site: Interpretation of Aerial Photographs for Archaeology

Hyder Consulting Ltd 2010a. Bicester Eco Town – Exemplar Site. Desk-Based Assessment

Hyder Consulting Ltd 2010b. An Application for the Exemplar Phase of the NW Bicester Eco Development proposals submitted by P3Eco (Bicester) Limited and A2Dominion Group. Environmental Statement Volume 1: Main Text

Hyder Consulting Ltd 2014a. Bicester Eco Development - Application 2 (South of Railway): Cultural Heritage Desk-Based Assessment

Hyder Consulting Ltd 2014b. Bicester Eco Development – A4095 NW Strategic Link Road: Cultural Heritage Desk-Based Assessment

Lobel, M D 1959. A History of the County Of Oxfordshire Vol 6. Victoria County History, 14-56

Northamptonshire Archaeology 2012. Archaeological Geophysical Survey for the Proposed Bicester Eco Development, Oxfordshire, December 2011 – February 2012

Oxford Archaeology 2010. Bicester Eco Town Exemplar Site, Caversfield, Oxon. Archaeological Evaluation Report

Oxford Archaeology 2014. Bicester Eco Development, Bicester, Oxfordshire. Archaeological Evaluation Report Volume 1 – 3

Cobham Resource Consultants 1995. Cherwell District Landscape Assessment for Cherwell District Council

Bicester Local History Society [www.blhs.org.uk](http://www.blhs.org.uk) (accessed 23/11/2014)

## Figures

Figure 1: Site Location Plan

