



CHERWELL DISTRICT COUNCIL

**WRITTEN SCHEME OF INVESTIGATION FOR
ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION, AT LAND AT
COTEFIELD, BODICOTE, OXFORDSHIRE**

Prepared on behalf of Banner Homes Limited

Grid Ref SP 4654 3746

16 April 2012

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1 INTRODUCTION

a) Site Description

- 1.1 This document sets out a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) prepared by RPS on behalf of Banner Homes Ltd to provide for an archaeological investigation ahead of and during the construction of 82 homes at Land at Cotefield Farm, Oxford Road, Bodicote, Oxfordshire (Figure 1). The site is located on arable land approximately 3.77 ha in extent, centred at SP 4654 3746 and is at heights between 107 and 114m OD to the south of Blackwood Place and Molyneux Drive to the north-west of Cotefield Farm. The underlying geology is Middle Lias Marlestone.
- 1.2 A two staged process has been agreed with the County Archaeological Officer (advisor to the LPA) based on the results on a field evaluation by means of trial trenches undertaken by Northamptonshire Archaeology in 2010 (NA November 2010). The strategy requires an initial archaeological excavation of the a significant zone of Iron Age/early Romano-British archaeology within the northern area of the site ('core area'), followed by a 'strip, map and sample' style watching brief on major ground works associated with the development within a zone of less intensive archaeological remains ('peripheral zone'). These areas combined are c.1.7ha in extent.

b) Planning Background

- 1.3 The site is within Cherwell District Council. An earlier outline planning application was submitted in 2010 (CDC reference: 10/00058/OUT) and subsequently withdrawn. Following the withdrawal of the application, based on the advice received from the County Archaeological Officer during the consultation period, a programme of archaeological field evaluation was carried out. The archaeological evaluation was conducted in 2010 by Northamptonshire Archaeology under the management of RPS. Following receipt of the associated report (NA November 2010) the Oxfordshire County Archaeological Officer advised RPS that in event that planning permission being granted on the site at a later date, a further stage of archaeological mitigation would be required.
- 1.4 The subsequent proposal (application Ref 11/00617/OUT) for a residential development of 82 dwellings (Fig. 2) was initially refused by notice on 11th April 2011. However an appeal was made against the Cherwell District Council decision by Banner Homes Ltd under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (Appeal Ref; APP/C3105/A/11/2159619) and planning permission was granted by the Planning Inspectorate (decision date 26 March 2012) subject to conditions.
- 1.5 This WSI sets out the principles for the archaeological work in accordance with Condition 11 of that permission which states:

“No development shall take place within the site until the applicant, or their agents or successors in title, has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in

accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted by the applicant and approved in writing by the local planning authority”

c) Standards

- 1.6 The required archaeological works will be undertaken by an Institute for Archaeologists (IfA) Registered Organisation. All works will be conducted in accordance with the procedural documents of English Heritage (1991; 2002; 2006) and the appropriate standards and guidance for archaeological excavation (IfA 2008a). Where appropriate the research frameworks set out for the East Midlands and its wider region may be applied (EH 1997; Cooper 2006).

2 HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

a) National Planning Policy

2.1 Whilst the relevant planning document is the one that was in force at the time the application was approved, it is noted that the historic environment section of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) published on 27th March (DCLG 2012 chapter 12) is substantially a précis of PPS5 and introduces no significant changes with regard to the protection afforded to heritage assets by the planning system. PPS5 was supported by the 'PPS5 Planning for the Historic Environment: Historic Environment Planning Practice Guide', which currently remains in force. The appeal decision was granted on the 26th March 2012 a day before the publication of The NPPF. Therefore although the works will be carried out in accordance with section 141 of the National Planning Policy Framework they will still need to be consistent with the guidance of Planning Policy Statement 5.

i. Planning Policy Statement 5 – Planning for the Historic Environment

2.2 In March 2010 the Department for Communities & Local Government introduced new planning policy for the Historic Environment – Planning Policy Statement 5 – Planning for the Historic Environment. Effective as of 1st April 2010, PPS 5 replaced both PPG 15 (Planning and the Historic Environment) and PPG 16 (Archaeology and Planning) with the intention of developing a more holistic approach to the historic environment and planning.

2.3 In combining all elements of the historic environment, PPS 5 introduces the concept of a 'heritage asset', the significance of which will need to be assessed in support of a planning application. The term 'heritage asset' "embraces all manner of features, including: buildings, parks and gardens, standing, buried and submerged remains, areas, sites and landscapes, whether designated or not and whether or not capable of designation" (CLG 2010a, paragraph 3.10).

2.4 PPS 5 indicates that:

"the difference between a heritage asset and other components of the environment is that a heritage asset holds meaning for society over and above its functional utility. It is this heritage significance that justifies a degree of protection in planning decisions. The aim of the policies within the PPS is to conserve these assets, for the benefit of this and future generations. This is done by supporting their maintenance and by requiring that change to them is managed in ways that sustain and where appropriate enhances their heritage significance." (CLG 2010a, 3.11)

2.5 The policies in the PPS:

"are a material consideration which must be taken into account in development management decisions, where relevant." (CLG 2010b, paragraph 3)

- 2.6 In submitting planning applications that have a Historic Environment dimension to them, applicants will be required to provide a description of the significance of the heritage asset that may be affected and to submit a desk-based assessment:

“where an application site includes or is considered to have the potential to include, heritage assets with archaeological interest”.

“In considering the impact of a proposal on any heritage asset, local planning authorities should take into account the particular nature of the significance of the heritage asset and the value that it holds for this and future generations.” (Policy HE 7.2)

“Where loss of significance is justified on the merits of new development, local planning authorities should not permit the new development without taking all reasonable steps to ensure the new development will proceed after the loss has occurred by imposing appropriate planning conditions or securing obligations by agreement.” (Policy HE 7.7)

b) Local Planning Policy

i. Cherwell District Adopted Local Plan 1996

- 2.7 Local plans provide the basis for making decisions on planning applications. Local plans are being replaced by the Local Development Framework (LDF) which will establish planning policy for the district to 2026. The existing planning policy for the district is contained in the saved policies of the Cherwell Local Plan, adopted 1996.

- 2.8 The saved policies include C25 ‘Development affecting the site or setting of a schedule ancient monument’ and C27 ‘Development in villages to respect historic settlement pattern’. The policies will continue to be used until they are replaced by the Local Development Framework.

- 2.9 The Non Statutory Cherwell Local Plan 2011 was intended to review and update the local plan adopted in 1996. Work on this plan was however discontinued prior to adoption.

ii. Draft Cherwell District Council Local Development Framework

- 2.10 The Local Development Framework or ‘LDF’ is the term used to describe the set of documents which will eventually include all of the planning authority’s local development documents, one of which will be the Core Strategy. As these new documents are adopted by the council, they will eventually replace the Cherwell District Local Plan adopted in 1996.

- 2.11 This WSI is produced in conformity with national, regional and local planning policy, as set out above.

3 TOPOGRAPHIC & GEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The site is located to the west of Oxford Road (A4260) within a field on the edge of Bodicote. The field. The c.3.77ha area of field concerned has been used as arable since the 19th century and is relatively flat with a gradual slope down to the south-east from 117m OD to 107m OD. The underlying solid geology of the site was identified as Middle Lias marlstone with Middle Lias clays, silts and siltstones from the south-west (Northamptonshire Archaeology 2010).
- 3.2 During the evaluation of the site in 2010 (Northamptonshire Archaeology November 2010) the geology was found to be variable comprising as follows:

“mid orange and red-brown silty clays, with siltstone and ironstone inclusions of variable size and frequency. Siltstone bedrock outcrops were seen in trial trenches 21, 16, 12 and 8. The south-western trenches had a geology comprising light yellow-brown clay sand and orange red-brown clay sand, with siltstone inclusions. The geology was overlain by a layer of subsoil...with an average depth of 0.27m. Above the subsoil was a topsoil...at an average depth of 0.12m.”

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

a) Introduction

i. *Oxfordshire HER*

4.1 The 2006 brief by County Archaeology for the archaeological evaluation stage stated:

“A Roman occupation site has been recorded south of Cotefield Farm and Cotefield House at SP 4693 3720 centroid (HBSMR 1747). Extensive remains of burnt stones, Roman pottery and inhumations were observed and reported in VCH Vol 1, and pottery was identified by the Ashmolean Museum. In addition, a cursus-like cropmark has been identified at SP 4733 3718 centroid (HBSMR 5700). Certain relatively recent features can be expected on the site. The 1st edition OS map shows that the far eastern side of the application area was crossed on a northeast – southwest alignment by two parallel field boundaries containing mature trees. A third boundary hedge lay further to the east just outside the application area. These hedgerows bounded two narrow linear closes that may have been the result of early enclosure by agreement. Similar narrow closes enclosed by agreement in the 16th century can be seen in Mansmoor Closes at Charlton on Otmoor. Traces of these boundaries should survive below ground, and should be sampled and recorded as part of the landscape history of this site.”

4.2 This HER information was enhanced by site specific archaeological information derived from the trial trenching by Northamptonshire Archaeology in 2010 (NA November 2010). The evaluation (site accession number OCCMS.2010.85) comprised the investigation of 26 trenches, the majority of which were 30m length by 1.6m in width. Several smaller trenches were used to trace ditch lines located during the works. The principal aim of the evaluation was ‘*to quantify the extent, date, nature and significance of any cultural heritage features within the area affected by the proposed development.*’ The trench layout is provided on Figure 3. Archaeological features were found to be present within 14 of the 26 trenches.

4.3 The earliest evidence consisted of two Neolithic pits, one within Trench 20 (pit 2007) in the central northern area and one within Trench 7 (pit 704) in the southern area of the site (Figure 3). The pit in Trench 7 was 0.95m in diameter by 0.25m in depth and contained a typical mixed assemblage of hazelnut shell fragments (27), animal bone (including two pig bone fragments) and an assemblage of worked flints including a retouched serrated blade and a retouched blade (13 other flakes and 9.8g of small debitage). The pit in Trench 20 was 0.6m in diameter by 0.17m in depth and contained three sherds of pottery (probably Neolithic) 14 flakes, three blades (one utilised) and 4.3g of small debitage in addition to small bone fragments. The total assemblage from the two pits also included burnt clay, burnt bone and a quantity of charcoal. In addition to these features 19 Neolithic worked flints were recovered from later features (ibid). The early-middle Neolithic date of the pits and ‘background noise’ flintwork is clearly of interest in the context of a possible Neolithic cursus monument in the vicinity.

4.4 The report discussion states:

“The early to middle Neolithic pits containing pottery, flint, hazel nut shells and other materials are known from a number of sites in central and eastern England such as Biggleswade (Jones 2009) and Kilverstone (Garrow et al 2007). Such features are generally associated with occupation. Neolithic occupation is considered largely temporary in character, though it may incorporate deliberate processes of artefact deposition...deliberately deposited artefacts and environmental remains such as hazel nut shell were often considered to signify pit decommissioning at the end of settlement phases (Garrow et al 2007). The potential for sporadic Neolithic pitting within the areas of investigation is considered to be moderate to high based on the evaluated sample.”

4.5 No evidence for Bronze Age activity was encountered within the trenches with the next period of activity being of Iron Age date and comprising evidence for at least two focal areas within Trenches 19 and 20 respectively. These comprised probable ring-ditch defined roundhouse sites typical of the midland region (e.g. as found in dense concentration at the Daventry International Rail Freight Terminal (DIRFT) centred on Crick in Northamptonshire. Such sites typically demonstrate no more than an eaves drip to evidence the actual presence of a roundhouse within a surrounding circular drainage ditch. Trench 19 was the more complex perhaps indicating a detailed sequence of phases or simply a complex arrangement, and included five Iron Age ditches, one exhibiting a Romano-British period recut (demonstrating use of the site into the Roman period). The Trench 20 ditch appeared to be a simple single phase c.14m ring-ditch extending north to the edge and just beyond the northern edge of the site (Figure 3). The majority of this features lies beyond the impact area and can therefore be preserved in situ (see Figure 4). There is some potential for additional foci, particularly within the ‘core area’ identified on Figure 4.

4.6 Two or three phases of wider enclosure or boundary ditch were also identified. The NA report (ibid, 23) also states:

“A series of ditches in the central part of the site appear to represent potentially late Iron Age boundary features. This was substantial in nature in Trench 19 and less substantial in Trench 16, thus possibly becoming less substantial away from the two main activity areas in Trenches 19 and 20. They were traced using cropmarks from Google Earth and confirmed by trial trenching. Although the features included domestic debris, there were few signs of occupation features associated with them.”

4.7 Like the Neolithic pits these Iron Age to early Roman features were sealed by subsoil. Finds included c.157 sherds (1058g) of hand-made Iron Age and occasionally specifically late Iron Age pottery with some wheel thrown vessels. The pottery specialist suggests ‘an overall date range

spanning the 1st century BC to the mid-1st century AD is suggested.' In addition 5 locally produced grog-tempered wares of Roman date were recovered from Ditch [1919] in Trench 19.

- 4.8 Other finds included 23 fragments of vesicular fuel ash slag from Trench 23 and 1.3kg of animal bone largely from trenches 19 and 20 and including cattle, sheep/goat, pig and horse remains typical of a farming settlement. The specialist notes (Ibid, 21);

“Identifiable animal bone was recovered...which suggests, if more were collected during the course of any subsequent excavation, the animal husbandry of the site the site could be characterised.”

- 4.9 In terms of ecofacts from soil sampling the specialist reports;

“Assessment has shown a small range of well preserved ecofacts and indicates that further sampling during the course of any subsequent excavation could be viable. It could be possible to establish which crops, if any, grew at the site and to make basic comparisons with nearby contemporary sites and more regional sites.”

5 DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

- 5.1 Development proposals consists of provision of 82 dwellings with pedestrian access from the north-east and vehicular access from the A4260 to the east and landscaping as shown on Figure 2.

6 ARCHAEOLOGICAL STRATEGY

- 6.1 The mitigation strategy was discussed and agreed in principle with the County Archaeological Officer (with the RPS consultant archaeologist) following the evaluation in 2010 at which time the basic areas of excavation ('core area') and 'strip, map and sample' style watching brief ('peripheral area') were decided (see further below). The approach set out here was further consolidated in communications with the County Archaeological Officer and RPS on the 4th and 11th April 2012 when it was also agreed that this WSI could be prepared without a brief provided it was based on the mitigation plan previously agreed (i.e. Figure 4).
- 6.2 Figure 4 shows the basic 0.629ha for the core area excavation designed to include the area centred on Trench 19 and between Trenches 19 and 20. 'Excavation' is defined below. The ring-ditch within Trench 20 appears to be largely or completely located within open space beyond the impacts from house construction. A 1.032ha 'peripheral' area subject to 'strip, map and sample' as defined below, to include the location of outlying features including elements of the boundary ditches. This had been adopted in order to expedite the staged release of areas back to the developer in order to allow development to proceed. Both areas may encounter sporadic Neolithic pits.
- 6.3 Three categories of archaeological works are required, comprising;
- Archaeological Excavation;
 - Archaeological Strip, Map and Sample; and
 - Archaeological Watching Brief.
- 6.4 These are defined as follows:
- 6.5 **Archaeological Excavation:** Archaeological excavation is the process by which soil is removed to reveal and study structural remains of habitation, commercial, industrial, agricultural and religious activity, and scientifically recover objects/ environmental evidence associated with these types of land use. Structural remains may be substantial 'positive' features such as walls or 'negative' features such as pits, quarries, post holes and trenches. Excavation is the most comprehensive and detailed level of archaeological sampling and for the purposes of this project comprises the 'core area' and will include:
- 20% excavation of linear features with sampling of all terminals and intersections;
 - 50% sampling of all pits and other discrete features as a minimum, with 100% excavation where deemed appropriate when dealing with 'special deposits' or other pivotal evidence of an unusual, sensitive or otherwise significant nature;

- 100% excavation of post holes and other remains such as hearths, beam slots, internal pits etc. where part of a structure;
 - 100% excavation of graves or other human remains in accordance with the relevant legislation;
 - 100% excavation of Neolithic pits; and
 - Environmental, geo-archaeological and other sampling (including sampling for scientific dating techniques) to be carried out at an appropriate level in accordance with English Heritage guidance, and as recommended by the English Heritage Regional Advisor on Archaeological Science.
- 6.6 Whilst archaeological works are underway access will be restricted to the archaeological operatives and official visitors. The area will be fenced off with herras style fencing including the area of the spoil heap. 'Signing off' parts of or the entirety of areas will only be undertaken in agreement with the RPS archaeologist on behalf of the client, and the County Archaeological Advisor (CAO) on behalf of the LPA, once they are fully satisfied that archaeological works have been completed. Further generic details of recording and reporting are provided below.
- 6.7 The Strip, Map and Sample process will be applied to the 'peripheral area' and the following interpretation applies:
- 6.8 **Archaeological Strip, Map and Sample:** This is a lower level of archaeological action than Excavation but more intensive than Watching Brief. It is a methodology whereby the building contractor undertakes topsoil removal, within specific construction areas, including sufficient subsoil removal/cleaning for archaeological purposes to allow clear identification of archaeological features. This process is conducted under archaeological supervision and guidance using a toothless bucket. The archaeological machine supervisor has authority to ensure sufficient subsoil is removed to 'clean' the surface of the geology. The exposed geology may have archaeological features cut into it, which are planned and investigated by the monitoring archaeologists ahead of any further ground reduction.
- 6.9 This process will ensure good visibility of archaeological features. The sampling strategy will normally include the following:
- minimum of one experienced archaeologist to monitor two 360-degree mechanical excavators during site stripping (provided machines are working in close proximity and health and safety protocols are adhered to);

- features exposed will be marked up by the machine supervisors (using spray paint) for plotting;
 - all archaeological features are pre-ex planned for strategy review by RPS and the CAO ahead of further construction works that might affect archaeology within the areas;
 - a representative selection are sample excavated and fully recorded (no more than 5% of linears and normally no more than between 10% and 50% of the total number of tree holes, pits/post-holes); and
 - large quarries or other features containing bulk homogenous fills may be suitable for machine excavation subject to agreement with the CAO.
- 6.10 During works areas of archaeological interest will be segregated by the erection of barrier tape or mesh fencing and appropriate signage (under the auspices of the main/Principal Contractor). Significant portions of the archaeological area may be rapidly released back to the developers where archaeological features are shown to be absent, following sign off by the CAO, whilst archaeological investigation is undertaken within those part of each area that contain archaeological features.
- 6.11 It is recognised that there is often a difference in the depth of topsoil stripping required for construction purposes and the 'cleaner' finish required for archaeological works. Therefore for the 'archaeological Strip, Map and Sample' areas the archaeological monitoring archaeologist will direct the topsoil and subsoil stripping in relation to finish level (providing that depth does not exceed formation level). In practice c.450mm of combined topsoil and subsoil is anticipated on this site based on the evaluation results. In addition to the initial topsoil and subsoil strip the main construction contractor will be required to make a mechanical excavator available if necessary for any subsequent machine work within the stripped easement that might be required by the CAO to clarify potential areas of archaeological interest in areas of construction impact.
- 6.12 To facilitate the archaeological Strip, Map and Sample exercise a 'window' for a rolling programme of archaeological recording will be required. Thus archaeological works will follow the stripping programme, and will be completed and signed off prior to any further construction works in those areas. The site will be broken up into areas such that these can be completed sequentially (in line with the pinch points in the construction programme) and signed off progressively by the CAO to allow subsequent construction works within those areas.
- 6.13 The following construction activities within the 'peripheral area' shown on Figure 4 will require strip, map and sample investigation prior to further construction related activities;
- House platforms;

- Roads/hard-standings;
 - Main service trenches; and
 - Temporary haul roads and/or compounds.
- 6.14 **Sign off process and contingency:** Following the stripping of designated site areas the archaeological sub-contractor will be required to provide a pre-excavation plan of features exposed using an EDM or GPS (compatible with the main contractors' grid). This plan will form the basis of a site meeting between the CAO, the RPS Consultant Archaeologist, the Archaeological Contractor and the Developer/main contractor, to determine the appropriate level of recording response. The key variable will be the complexity and significance of the archaeology exposed. Low-grade landscape features (expected to be the norm) will be afforded the lower level of Strip, Map and Sample works as set out in bullet points above. However, should restricted areas of particular archaeological importance be identified during such works (i.e. associated with settlement or other specialist activities, rather than the general landscape archaeology currently expected) the CAO may require limited additional 'excavation' level recording within the 'peripheral area'. **Contingency for such eventualities will be allowed for within the programme and budget.** It should be recognised that archaeological works are designed to reduce risk of delay to the contractors programme via rapid identification of archaeological resources and rapid recording response.
- 6.15 **Archaeological Watching Brief:** If possible the completion of the targeted areas of investigation above will facilitate a complete sign off of the site, without further watching brief on additional minor services, foundations, hard-standings etc. However dependant on the nature and significance of the findings from those stages the CAO may require further precautionary archaeological 'Watching Briefs' during the remaining construction works. Archaeological Watching Brief is defined as follows:
- 6.16 The Archaeological Contractor watches and rapidly intervenes in ground disturbance works and rapidly records any chance discovered resource. This will not normally result in delays to the construction programme. The staffing levels of archaeologists undertaking watching brief will generally be low and will be weighted such that construction methodologies with a higher potential to disturb archaeological remains will be afforded a more intensive archaeological monitoring response than minor works such as tree planting.
- 6.17 All archaeological works will be undertaken by the nominated archaeological contractor and will be managed /monitored on behalf of the client by Robert Masefield BSc, MA, MiFA or the Historic Environment Team at RPS.

7 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

a) Aims and Objectives

7.1 The general aim of the investigations is to establish the character, date and function of any archaeological features and deposits. All works will link into existing research frameworks for the West Midlands, as appropriate <http://www.iaa.bham.ac.uk/research/projects/wmrrfa/seminar.shtml>.

7.2 The programme of archaeological works is designed to mitigate the impact of the development upon the archaeological resource. This will fulfil conditions on the planning consent enabling development to proceed. The approach taken is to excavate and record the archaeological remains to allow 'preservation by record', prior to development impact. This will remove the archaeological constraints upon development prior to main works commencing, allowing clear access for construction activity.

7.3 The broad archaeological objectives for the archaeological works are as follows:

A - To investigate the origin and development of domestic occupation by:

1. analysing the distribution of material culture
2. investigating the form and function of structural features
3. comparing the assemblages of rubbish disposal deposits by period

B - To investigate paleo-economy and industry through time by:

1. examination and comparison of faunal remains
2. analysis and comparison of soil samples from industrial contexts
3. to identify possible crop regimes and staple food stuffs from environmental sampling

C - To investigate the origin and development of the agricultural landscape by:

1. determining the phasing of any extant field systems by excavation
2. investigate the changes in landscape flora by environmental sampling
3. consideration of the wider geological/hydrological landscape as a mechanism for catalyzing settlement

7.4 Initial outline research aims for the investigation are based on the background data that exists for the site and include the following:

- To establish the nature, extent and significance of early-middle Neolithic settlement at the site and its regional context, to include analysis of pitting and artefact distributions;

- To establish whether there was indeed a hiatus of activity between the middle Neolithic and Iron Age at the site, as hinted by the evaluation;
- To establish the social and economic status, extent and duration of occupation of the Iron Age settlement focussed on Trenches 19 and 20 and their relationship with the wider boundary features;
- To establish whether the Iron Age settlement was likely to have formed the southern extent of a larger settlement area similar to concentrations of similar midlands style roundhouse enclosures at sites such as DIRFT, and place the site within its regional context;
- To establish whether the Roman phase ditch within Trench 19 was part of the latest phase of occupation at the site or whether it represents a new phase of land/settlement management (i.e. if the Iron Age settlement was present at the Roman invasion of AD43 what was the effect on this settlement);
- To establish the presence of absence of later Roman, Saxon, medieval and/or post medieval settlement, burial related, industrial or agricultural features within the areas of investigation; and
- To establish the presence of absence of other archaeological features which inform the history of the landscape of the Development Site.

7.5 Aims and Objectives are likely to be refined as the work progresses. It is anticipated that as the nature of the archaeological remains becomes apparent during the excavation, a further series of site specific research aims will be identified. These will be based on the regional research frameworks (e.g. Cooper 2006). These will be formulated during discussions between the CAO, RPS and the archaeological contractor in consultation with relevant specialists, incorporated into a short written supplement to this Project Design, and which will be submitted to Oxfordshire County Council. The following broad themes may be addressed:

Iron Age

- Settlement archaeology;
- Settlement and landscape;
- Linear monuments and other land divisions;
- Ritual, structured deposition and religion;
- Agricultural economy;

- Finds: Craft industry and exchange;
- Social relations and society in the first millennium BC; and
- Economic and social change during the Late Iron Age / Roman transition.

Roman

- Chronology;
- The late Iron Age landscape and the strategy and consequences of conquest;
- Rural settlement, landscape and society;
- Artefact production, exchange and consumption; and
- Ritual, religion and identity.

7.6 In addition the programme of works provide the opportunity to examine the relationship between Iron Age and Roman settlement patterns, given the close proximity and apparently well defined chronology, as highlighted in the Mitigation Strategy (UCA 2005). Specific question might include:

- The differences in the form of settlement between the late Iron Age and early Roman periods; are they typical of regional and national trends?
- Is there evidence for settlement shift in the different periods? Why and when did it occur?
- How does the material culture of the settlements change between the Iron Age and Roman periods? Is there evidence of different attitudes to artefacts and can the presence of structured deposits be detected (e.g. deliberate artefact deposition in Iron Age pits)?
- Can evidence of changing economic and social opportunity be detected between the Iron Age and later Roman period?
- Is there evidence of different architectural traditions between the Iron Age and Roman periods? Can different uses of space be detected between the sites?
- Is there any evidence of craft activity or industry, does this change through time?
- Is there any evidence for the Iron Age and Roman settlements position within the local and regional social structure, relating them to larger settlements, villas or towns?

- 7.7 The presence of any field systems may allow some of the issues raised by Willis (2006) to be addressed:
- Evidence of agricultural specialism and changes in practices through time, (e.g. changes in field size and layout);
 - Evidence of change or continuity in the form and arrangements of field systems; and
 - Can our understanding of how field systems were used be improved by studying the artefactual and paleoenvironmental evidence from field systems?
- 7.8 Evidence derived from the dating and paleoenvironmental programmes, with regular specialist input, will be integrated into the overall research objectives to produce a flexible strategy to contribute to increasing understanding and reconstruction of past environments, agricultural regimes, economy, social status and religious beliefs (English Heritage 2002, 19). Sampling will conform to English Heritage guidelines (2002). The environmental evidence will be considered with particular reference to the Iron Age / Roman transition, contrasting the small rural with larger settlements and changing agricultural specialisation (Monckton 2006, 272-7). A number of specific issues will be addressed by the paleoenvironmental programme (Monckton 2006, 277):
- Evidence of arable farming methods derived from charred plant remains: Increase in disposal of spelt wheat chaff and the introduction of corn driers are indicative of changes in cereal production and bulk processing, (analysis can provide evidence of changes in corn drier function);
 - Evidence of arable expansion from pollen bearing deposits to complement the cereal remains;
 - Evidence for use of fodder;
 - Analysis of weed floras and weed ecology to provide evidence of expansion of agriculture and source of cereals; and
 - Investigate the timing of the increase in the variety of foods available, including imports and introduced plant foods.
- 7.9 The importance of tightly defined radiocarbon dating from sites in the 1st Millennium BP has been highlighted (Monckton 2006, 272; Willis 2006, 128-9). Samples will be taken from locations with secure provenance and with the potential to resolve key stratigraphic issues. The adoption of 'single entity dating' will be the preferred methodology (Hasselgrove et al 2001, 4-5; Willis 2006, 128). To ensure an adequate choice of single entity samples, the radiocarbon dating programme will also draw on those samples taken for palaeoenvironmental purposes. The financial proposal

from the investigation will allow for 5 AMS radiocarbon determinations as a baseline. Further radiocarbon-dating may be provided for within the project contingency if justified and required by the CAO.

8 METHODOLOGY

a) Generic

- 8.1 All work will be undertaken to Institute for Archaeologists Standards and Guidance for:
- Archaeological Excavation (1994, revised 2008)
- 8.2 In accepting a contract to undertake the works, the appointed archaeological sub-contractor will take responsibility for the standards and levels of recording and reporting plus the preparation, if necessary, of Health and Safety documentation. The archaeological contractor will work within the requirements of the Principal Contractor where archaeological works coincide with the main construction contract.
- 8.3 The archaeologists will follow the Code of Conduct of the Institute for Archaeologists.
- 8.4 An Archaeological Site Code will be obtained by the archaeological contractor.
- 8.5 Service plans will be consulted by prior to any works prior to the main contract but will be the responsibility of the Principal Contractor during the main contract.
- 8.6 All relevant health and safety legislation will be adhered to. A Health & Safety Risk Assessment will be prepared for archaeological works. Risk Assessments will be prepared by the archaeological contractor and submitted to RPS for passing to the Project CDM Co-ordinator/Main Contractor.
- 8.7 A method statement detailing the staffing, programme and methodology will be prepared by the archaeological contractor and submitted to RPS Planning and the client.

b) Proposals for Mitigation

- 8.8 The proposed development may have an impact on any surviving archaeological remains. The core area requiring full archaeological excavation comprises an area of 6,286m² (0.286ha) whilst the periphery area requiring 'strip, map and sample' watching brief comprises 10,324m² (1.032ha).

c) Details of Excavation Methodology

- 8.9 All mechanical excavation will be undertaken under continuous archaeological supervision. Excavation will be by tracked excavator using a toothless ditching bucket. Mechanical excavation will proceed until the first archaeologically significant layer or undisturbed natural deposits are reached. Where mechanical excavation is undertaken it shall avoid damage to archaeological remains and be limited to removal of "overburden" unless set out otherwise in this design. The mechanical excavator/s will operate under archaeological supervision at all time. "Overburden" will be removed under direction of the nominated person in charge of fieldwork or delegated

- archaeologists. Mechanical excavators shall not track over an area once excavated to the upper archaeological horizon.
- 8.10 Care will be taken to ensure that machines used do not rut, compact or otherwise damage buried or exposed archaeological features and deposits ahead of recording. No potentially significant archaeological deposits will be removed prior to recording and sampling (if necessary) to provide an adequate understanding of their character.
- 8.11 Spoil transport by dumpers will proceed only along defined outside the stripped areas or routes clear of archaeological remains. Spoil will be stored appropriately in locations agreed by the client or where part of the main construction works at locations deemed suitable by the main contractor.
- 8.12 A unique site identifier, a Site Code, will be applied to each defined area or zone of excavation.
- 8.13 The excavation area will be cleaned sufficiently to define the extent of and location of archaeological features. Pre-excavation plans and site grids will be generated using Leica System 1200 differential GPS system or equivalent system at an accuracy of +/-20mm to Ordnance Survey National Grid and Ordnance Survey datum and be made available for monitoring meetings. The archaeological grid will be compatible with the main contractor's grid to allow accurate plotting of archaeology relative to the development.
- 8.14 All archaeological features will be hand excavated sufficiently to characterise the remains and determine their date and function. Excavated sections will be targeted to confirm stratigraphic relationships where these are not visible in plan, and to obtain a representative sample of larger features. Sampling levels will be as presented in section 6 above. follows, although this may be subject to variation on site in agreement with the County Archaeological Officer, to permit the redeployment of resources to answer specific questions. As indicated a minimum of 20% of linears within the 'core area' will be sampled. Slots will be a minimum of 1m in width where away from intersections. Where deposits of particular interest or importance are encountered up to an additional 25% may be excavated. Such deposits may include areas of structured deposition; assemblages of important or unusual artefactual material; or where unusual methods of construction are apparent. It is anticipated that the need for this will be determined as part of the normal site monitoring process in consultation with the County Archaeological Advisor and the RPS archaeologist.
- 8.15 Any human remains will be excavated following notification of the relevant authorities, and will be removed under Ministry of Justice licence.
- 8.16 All areas will be subject to metal detecting during and after stripping and during excavation to ensure maximisation of finds retrieval. All spoil heaps will also be scanned.

- 8.17 Overall plans of all features will be made by Leica System 1200 survey grade differential GPS system at an accuracy of +/-20mm to Ordnance Survey National Grid (OSGB36) or equivalent system. These will be plotted at appropriate scales and be made available for the first monitoring meetings. Features or areas of particular interest or areas of complex stratigraphy will be planned by hand at 1:50 or 1:20, as appropriate. Sections will be drawn through all cut features and significant vertical stratigraphy, normally at a scale of 1:10, and levelled to Ordnance datum. Additional levels will be taken as appropriate.
- 8.18 All archaeological deposits will be individually numbered in a single continuous sequence. They will be described on pro-forma context sheets to include details of the individual context, its relationships, interpretation and a check-list of associated illustrations, finds, samples and photographs. A 'Harris Matrix' stratification diagram will be used to record stratigraphic relationships. This record will be compiled and fully checked during the course of the evaluation. Spot dating should be incorporated where applicable during the course of the works.
- 8.19 A full photographic register will be maintained, including direction of shot, location and context number. Contractors may find it convenient to produce digital photographs for ease of dissemination; however, conventional black and white and colour photography should be undertaken for inclusion within the project archive. Contractors will be expected to liaise with the archive repository over their photographic requirements **before** fieldwork starts.
- 8.20 A full photographic record of the investigations will be prepared illustrating in both detail and general context the principal features and finds discovered. The photographic record will also include 'working shots' to illustrate more generally the nature of the archaeological investigation. The transparencies will be mounted in suitable frames for long-term curation in preparation for deposition with the archive.
- 8.21 All site recording, analysis and finds handling will be carried out using systems that conform to the Institute for Archaeologists Code of Conduct (2010) and Standards documents (2008).
- 8.22 All finds will be recorded by context. Special finds will be recorded in three dimensions. All finds will be treated according to the guidelines in Watkinson and Neal (1998).

d) Treatment of Finds and Samples

- 8.23 The environmental sampling strategy will be reviewed as the project progresses in consultation with the County Archaeological Advisor and drawing on specialist advice. Sampling will conform to English Heritage Guidelines (2000, 2002). Samples will be taken with particular regard to resolving specific palaeoenvironmental questions.

- 8.24 Samples from locations with secure provenance and with the potential to resolve key stratigraphic issues will be taken for radiocarbon dating. Different sampling strategies may be employed according to the perceived importance of the deposit or feature under investigation and future mitigation strategies. Close attention will be given to sampling for date, structure and environment. Sample size should take into account the frequency with which material is likely to occur. Bulk sieving should be considered for recovery of environmental evidence to ensure that complete samples of artefactual evidence are collected for significant deposits.
- 8.25 The strategy for sampling archaeological and environmental deposits and structures (which can include soils, timbers, pollen, diatoms, animal bone and human burials) will be developed in consultation with the Scientific Advisor for the LPA.
- 8.26 All finds will be treated in a proper manner and to standards agreed in advance with the recipient museum. They will be exposed, lifted, cleaned, conserved, marked, bagged and boxed in accordance with best professional practice.

e) Treasure Act or Potential Treasure

- 8.27 All finds of gold and silver will be recorded, removed to a safe place and reported to the Coroner in accordance with the Treasure Act 1996, updated by The Treasure (Designation) Order 2002. Where retrieval cannot be effected the same day, appropriate security measures will be put in place to safeguard the finds.

f) Strip, Map and Sample and Watching Brief

- 8.28 The detailed methodology for strip, map and sample and watching brief will be as above but at the lower sampling ratios as set out in Section 6.

g) Health & Safety

- 8.29 During archaeological works associated with the construction phase plant and welfare facilities will be provided by the Main Contractor who will act as the Principal Contractor for CDM purposes. The archaeological contractor will provide all necessary health and safety risk assessments and safe systems of work documents and method statements to the main (Principal) Contractor.
- 8.30 Should the excavation be undertaken ahead of the main contract the archaeological contractor will be responsible for provision of welfare facilities, fencing and will be responsible for and adhere to all relevant health and safety regulations.
- 8.31 The archaeology contractor will provide a Risk Assessment for the project prior to the commencement of the works to the Principal Contractor (under CDM Regulations). The

archaeology contractor's Health and Safety will be under the auspices of the Principal Contractor (PC) and will adhere to their requirements.

- 8.32 All the latest Health and Safety guidelines will be followed on site.
- 8.33 No personnel will work in deep or unsupported excavations. The sides of all excavations or trenches deeper than 1.2 metres or less if the ground is considered by a competent person to be unstable will be stepped or battered (or specified by the PC). Due to the difficulty of working in shored trenches, shoring will be avoided wherever possible. Safety helmets will worn by personnel in deep trenches or other potentially unsafe positions. All deep trenches shall be fenced off and will be clearly indicated by "deep excavation" signs.
- 8.34 The archaeologist(s) will not enter an area under machine excavation without alerting the machine driver to his/her intention.
- 8.35 The archaeologist(s) shall remain alert and take due care not to impede the progress of moving machinery. He/she shall stand well back from the turning circle of an excavator' buckets and cabs.
- 8.36 Spoil will be stored at a safe distance away from trench edges at least 1.50 metres.
- 8.37 The archaeology contractor will provide any necessary protective footwear, high-visibility jackets, and safety helmets. All staff and visitors to the site will be expected to wear full PPE at all times.

h) Welfare Facilities

- 8.38 During the Main Contract Welfare facilities will be provided by the Main Contractor.
- 8.39 Attendances that the Main Contractor is expected to provide are as follows:
- A 360' tracked excavator with 1.80/2.0m wide toothless ditching bucket (topsoil and subsoil to be kept separate). The Main Contractor is expected to open and (possibly) backfill the investigation areas (subject to archaeological requirements/supervision) and manage the spoil safely and effectively during the works;
 - At least one dumper trucks to move spoil to spoil management area;
 - Staff responsible for spoil management;
 - Welfare facilities/office space for up to (?) 10 archaeologists. Office space to include desks, chairs and shelving, power, lighting and heating;
 - Welfare facilities to allow for possibility of male and female staff members;

- Secure tool store (10ft x 8ft lockable vandal-proof unit);
- Clothes store with drying facilities; and
- Mess room with kettles, sink, water supply.

9 LIAISON/MONITORING

- 9.1 Archaeological work will be monitored by RPS on behalf of the client.
- 9.2 The CAO will be responsible for monitoring progress and standards throughout the project on behalf of the Local Planning Authority.
- 9.3 Monitoring meetings will be arranged on a regular (weekly) by RPS.
- 9.4 Public outreach - The results of the excavation will be brought to the attention of the wider public through a programme of outreach. Depending on the circumstances of the excavations and the results of the works a variety of techniques may be employed. The outreach measures will be agreed by the client, RPS and the CAO. These may include some or all of the following:
- Press releases to local media;
 - Talks to local societies, Parish Council; and
 - Summaries and progress on the archaeological contractor's website.

10 POST FIELDWORK METHODOLOGY

- 10.1 All records and materials will be compiled in a structured archive in accordance with the guidelines of Appendix 3 in the English Heritage procedural document, Management of Archaeological Projects (1991).
- 10.2 All finds will be cleaned, catalogued and prepared for storage prior to review by suitably qualified specialists (to be confirmed once the archaeological contract is awarded) who will assess their potential for further analysis.
- 10.3 Artefacts will be analysed, catalogued and quantified according to artefact type series currently in use in Oxfordshire.
- 10.4 An Assessment Report and Updated Project Design will be prepared and presented within six months of completion of site works. This will include a description of the archaeological remains accompanied by appropriate illustrations and photographs together with specialist assessment of all artefacts and ecofacts. It will contain a programme of works designed to lead to full analysis and publication of the results. It will include a full list of contexts.
- 10.5 Should the results of the work not justify the preparation of a full UPD, a short summary of the results together with a programme for final analysis and publication will be submitted for approval by the CAO. The project will be deemed complete following the completion of the publication within a journal to be agreed by the CAO and the submission of the archive (see Section 12).

11 COPYRIGHT

- 11.1 It is normal practice for both the copyright and ownership of the paper and any digital archive resulting from an archaeological project to rest with the originating body (usually the archaeological contractor). The originating body will deposit the archive in a museum or other appropriate repository on the completion of the project, and normally transfers title and/or licences for use of the archive at this stage.
- 11.2 However, until notified to the contrary, existing and future copyright and all other proprietary rights in all drawings, details, plans, specifications, schedules, reports, calculations and other work originated or made in the course of performing the scope of works will be assigned to the client.

12 PROGRAMME/INSURANCES

- 12.1 Programme details will be provided to the County Archaeological Officer at least 2 weeks prior to commencement of the archaeological works. At present it is likely that the first stage of mitigation (i.e. the 'core area excavation') would proceed ahead of the main contractor's groundworks. It is anticipated that this work would take in the region of 5-8 weeks to complete depending on staffing levels and a detailed programme to be drawn up by the nominated archaeological contractor.
- 12.2 The strip, map and sample watching brief works would take place under the main contract during initial groundworks. Currently it is not known when this will take place or what the full programme of archaeological works will be. However, if it is possible to strip the main areas outlined above in a single phase it may be possible to complete these works within a period similar to that of the core area.
- 12.3 The archaeology contractor will be required to be insured against claims for:
- public liability to the value of £10,000,000 any one occurrence and in the aggregate for products liability;
 - professional indemnity to the value of £10,000,000 any one occurrence; and
 - Employer's liability to the value of £25,000,000 each and every loss.

13 ARCHIVE DEPOSITION

- 13.1 The site archive will be organised to be deposited with the County Museum store at Standlake, according to their current guidance (Museums Resource Centre, Cotswold Dene, Standlake, Witney, Oxfordshire OX29 7QG). It is the appointed contractors' duty to ensure that they conform to these standards.
- 13.2 Account must also be taken of the requirements of Standlake regarding the conservation, ordering, organisation, labelling, marking and storage of excavated material and the archive accession number.
- 13.3 Prior to the deposition of the artefacts with the Museum the following procedures will have been completed:
- Notification of the fieldwork and approximate quantity of finds will be given to the museum ahead of the fieldwork phase. A 'notification form' will be supplied with the relevant details of the project at this stage;
 - Where possible the site code/accession number and context number shall be marked on all finds;
 - All finds packaging, including boxes and bags will be clearly marked with the assigned accession number;
 - Transfer of ownership from the landowner to the Museum will be agreed in principle prior to the fieldwork and a written transfer of ownership form will be forwarded to the museum ahead of deposition. Any other finds remain for the landowner to assess and dispose of;
 - The archive will be deposited complete and will include a full index of contents;
 - There may be a case for non retention of certain artefacts of low academic value. The selection of these will accord with SMA (1993, revised 1997); and
 - Further guidelines and requirements of the museum for the acceptance of finds and archive as outlined in the Museum's procedures for the deposit of archaeological archives will be adhered to.
- 13.4 A project's archive comprises every record relating to that project, from written records and illustrative material to the retained artefacts.
- 13.5 Digital archives must be prepared according to local requirements. A microform copy of the site archive and narrative will be made to RCHME standards and submitted to the National Archaeological Record. An OASIS form will be completed online.

- 13.6 The archaeology contractor project manager will ensure that every element of the archive is kept clean and secure, and that it is stored in a suitable environment.
- 13.7 The archive comprising written, drawn, photographic and electronic media, will be fully catalogued, indexed, cross referenced and checked for archival consistency.
- 13.8 RPS will be responsible for monitoring progress and standards throughout the project, and will be kept regularly informed during fieldwork, post-excavation and publication stages by the appointed archaeological contractor.

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FIGURE 1:

Site Location

FIGURE 2:

Development Proposals

FIGURE 3:

Evaluation Trench Locations

FIGURE 4:

Mitigation Areas