



## **Wykham Park Farm ES Addendum: Heritage**

### **Introduction**

This document forms an addendum to the previously submitted Environmental Statement for the proposed residential development at Wykham Park Farm, Oxfordshire, of March 2013. This addendum has been produced to take account of:

- Oxfordshire County Council's response on consultation of the development proposal, dated 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2013. This included advice from the Planning Archaeologist, Richard Oram, dated 18<sup>th</sup> March 2013, in which he requested that an archaeological field evaluation be carried out.
- A subsequent Regulation 22 request, dated 19<sup>th</sup> April 2013, which required an archaeological field evaluation to be undertaken prior to the determination of the application.
- The results of a programme of archaeological trial trenching evaluation, which took place in August and September 2013.

Cherwell District Council issued a second Regulation 22 request regarding the application, dated 22<sup>nd</sup> August, which requested the assessment of non-designated heritage assets in the Landscape and Visual section of the Environmental Statement. This issue has been addressed by a separate addendum to the Landscape and Visual Chapter.

This addendum should be read in conjunction with:

- The Archaeology and Cultural Heritage Chapter and appendices (B.9) of the original Environmental Statement; and
- *Wykham Park Farm, Banbury, Oxfordshire, Archaeological Evaluation* (Cotswold Archaeology 2013b, given as Appendix A to this addendum, hereafter referred to as Appendix A).

### **National and Local Planning Guidance**

Since the completion of the original ES chapter, the government has issued draft Planning Practice Guidance for the National Planning Policy Framework which is available as an online resource. A section of this covers *Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment*.

### **Baseline Information**

The baseline information of the original ES chapter has now been supplemented by new information from the field evaluation of August and September 2013. This involved the excavation of 161 archaeological trial trenches across most of the site (the easternmost field was excluded due to the presence of a crop and the anticipated lack of impact of the proposed scheme in this area). The trial

trenches were targeted on geophysical survey anomalies and possible cropmarks, as well as investigating seemingly blank areas within the site. A Written Scheme of Investigation for the works was approved by Richard Oram, the Oxfordshire Planning Archaeologist, prior to the commencement of works (Cotswold Archaeology 2013a), and Mr Oram monitored the works during site visits of 3rd, 13th and 22nd of September 2013.

The trial trenching found evidence of five archaeological features or groups of features within the site.

The presence of a causewayed enclosure, a type of monument that commonly dates to the earlier Neolithic period, was previously suggested by geophysical survey anomalies in the south-eastern area of the site forming a characteristically interrupted ditch. Further to the south, beyond the site, another section of the possible causewayed enclosure circuit has shown up as cropmarks (original ES Chapter illustration B9.1, MOX4460) suggesting the circuit is approximately 250m in diameter, again consistent with being a causewayed enclosure. Early Neolithic pottery has been recovered from a pit to the south-west of the enclosure, south of the site (Original ES Chapter illustration B9.1, MOX12816). The topographic location of the possible causewayed enclosure, above a river valley, is also consistent with this type of monument. Causewayed enclosures have been interpreted as having diverse uses when investigated at different sites, and previous interpretations have included their use as religious or ceremonial sites, for the disposal of the dead, as cattle kraals, markets, and as places for meeting and feasting.

Investigation of the circuit within the site has shown that the anomalies reflect below-ground archaeological features in Field 5 of the site (Appendix A, Fig. 3, trenches 18 and 19). Here the ditches were seen to be wide and shallow, with fills that contained no dateable finds. A causewayed enclosure at South Petherton in Northamptonshire was seen on investigation to be defined by similarly wide and shallow ditches, the fills of which were devoid of finds. It was concluded that the ditches probably represent the ditches of a Neolithic causewayed enclosure (CA 2013b, Appendix A).

Several other causewayed enclosures have been identified in Oxfordshire (Bradley 2010a, Briggs et al 1986), Northamptonshire and Warwickshire (Chapman 1999) and such monuments are found across southern and western Britain. In Oxfordshire, the monuments have been recorded in river valley locations (Briggs et al 1986), mostly further to the south in the Thames Valley. Fourteen such enclosures (and four more probable such enclosures) are recorded along the Thames corridor and its Cotswold Tributaries (Hey and Barclay 2011). Investigation of causewayed enclosures in this region has the potential to contribute to the *Ceremony and Monuments* research objective A in the Solent Thames Research Framework Research Agenda (Bradley 2010b), which states that a better understanding of causewayed enclosures is needed. Such remains are also considered to be rare at a national level and so the remains are considered to be of medium to high significance. The sections excavated across the ditches and the trenches excavated within the circuit have not indicated the presence of definitely associated finds or features but there may be potential for such remains within the circuit beyond the site.

No comparable remains were uncovered in other areas of the site and no definitely associated features were recorded either within or in the vicinity of the enclosure, but an undated enclosure and ditch were also uncovered in field 5. This undated enclosure of pre-medieval date was recorded to the east of the sections of probable causewayed enclosure ditches. This was seen on the

geophysical survey to be a possible rectilinear enclosure, of which ditches defining the northern and western sides were uncovered during the trial trenching (Appendix A, Fig. 3, trenches 6 and 16, original appendix B9.2). No dateable material was recovered from the fills of the ditches. An undated ditch, possibly corresponding to an anomaly on the geophysical survey, was uncovered further to the south in trench 3 (Appendix A, Fig. 3). On current evidence, these remains are considered to be of low significance, due to their poor contextual associations (lack of dating and associated features), although their association with the causewayed enclosure ditches cannot be entirely ruled out.

As predicted in the original Environmental Statement chapter, the Iron Age remains uncovered to the north-west of the site, in the site known as Land to the East of Bloxham Road, were seen to extend into the northern area of the site (Appendix A, Fig. 3, Field 4, trenches 25 and 27). Within the area to the west of the site, a complex of geophysical survey anomalies was investigated by trial trenching and found to comprise a ditch-defined enclosure and roundhouse of Late Iron Age date, dated from pottery within the fills of the features. Within the current development site, geophysical survey suggested that the complex encroached into field 4 of the site. This was investigated by trench 27, which uncovered a north/south aligned ditch which probably represents this easternmost enclosure ditch (Appendix A, Fig. 3, trench 27). No dateable finds were recovered from this ditch, and four further undated ditches were uncovered to the south in trench 25, although the proximity to the late Iron Age complex makes these features highly likely to be of the same date. Such sites are relatively common in Oxfordshire, and as a simple, small-scale enclosed farming settlement site the complex is considered to be of low significance.

Ditches of another possible enclosure were uncovered in the northern part of Field 4 (Appendix A, Fig. 3, trenches 2 and 33). These may relate to a small rectilinear enclosure suggested by geophysical survey anomalies, although the features uncovered in the trial trenching do not line up precisely with the geophysical survey anomalies (original ES appendix B9.2). No dateable material was found in the fill of the ditches, which may define the western and northern limits of the enclosure, and no internal features were recorded. On current evidence, these remains are not considered to be of greater than low significance, due to their poor contextual associations.

Furrows of probable medieval or later date were uncovered across the site. As the remains of former open field earthworks which are extremely common in the region, which have been degraded by cultivation so they survive as below-ground remains only, they are considered to be of not greater than low significance.

The easternmost field of the site was not investigated by the archaeological trial trenches due to the presence of a crop and as the scheme is not anticipated to cause impacts to below-ground archaeology in this area. Anomalies recorded in this area during the geophysical survey (original ES appendix B9.2) suggest the presence of a ditch-flanked trackway and/or field system ditches. On current evidence these are considered to be of potentially low archaeological significance.

The remainder of the anomalies or possible cropmarks investigated were found to be of probable natural geological origin, with no corresponding below-ground archaeological remains present.

It had been suggested that geophysical survey anomalies indicating a possible north-west to south-east aligned trackway could represent an alternative route of the Salt Way, a medieval routeway. On investigation, no deposits suggesting possible routeways were identified within the site.

## Identification and Assessment of Impacts

The following assessment of impact and significance has used the criteria given in Appendix B9.3 of the original ES chapter.

### Physical impacts

The following table replaces most of Table B9.1, Potential Construction Impacts, of the original ES chapter, with the exception of the first receptor of the original table, the parish boundary, the assessment of impact for which is not revised here. This table does not replace table B9.2, Potential Operational Impacts, of the original ES chapter, which remains extant.

**ES Addendum Table 1, Potential Construction Impacts**

Receptor	Interest and Significance of Interest	Magnitude of Impact	Significance of Impact
<b>Physical impact to known and potential heritage assets</b>			
Possible Neolithic Causewayed Enclosure, lying partially within the eastern area of the site	Archaeological: medium to high	<p>The detailed design of the scheme in this area will ensure that the archaeological remains present are preserved in situ. It is anticipated that this may include the deposition of material to form a buffer over the archaeological horizons and the use for this area as open space (play space and outside sports provision).</p> <p>It is anticipated that a method statement for groundworks in this area will be agreed with Richard Oram, the Oxfordshire Planning Archaeologist, prior to the commencement of the development to ensure the archaeological remains are safeguarded.</p> <p>There is no evidence from the trial trenching to suggest that remains of the causewayed enclosure extend into other areas of the site.</p> <p>No impact</p>	Neutral
Other undated enclosure and undated ditch, in the	Archaeological: low	The detailed design of the scheme in this area will ensure that the archaeological remains present are	Neutral

Receptor	Interest and Significance of Interest	Magnitude of Impact	Significance of Impact
eastern area of the site		<p>preserved in situ. It is anticipated that this may include the deposition of material to form a buffer over the archaeological horizons and the use for this area as open space (play space and outside sports provision).</p> <p>It is anticipated that a method statement for groundworks in this area will be agreed with Richard Oram, the Oxfordshire Planning Archaeologist, prior to the commencement of the development to ensure the archaeological remains are safeguarded.</p> <p>No impact</p>	
Extension of Iron Age settlement into field 4 of the site, comprising an enclosure ditch and other ditches	Archaeological: low	<p>Proposed development will cause the removal and/or truncation of remains.</p> <p>Magnitude of impact of proposed scheme alone = medium, but cumulatively major with now-consented development to the west</p>	Cumulatively moderate adverse
Undated rectilinear enclosure in northern area of Field 4	Archaeological: low	<p>The detailed design of the scheme in this area will ensure that the archaeological remains present are preserved in situ. It is anticipated that this may include the deposition of material to form a buffer over the archaeological horizons and the use for this area as informal open space and children's play.</p> <p>No impact</p>	Neutral
Archaeological features suggested by geophysical survey anomalies in the easternmost field of the site, comprising a	Archaeological: low	<p>The detailed design of the scheme in this area will ensure that the archaeological remains present are preserved in situ. It is anticipated that this may include the deposition of material to form a buffer over the archaeological horizons and the</p>	Neutral

Receptor	Interest and Significance of Interest	Magnitude of Impact	Significance of Impact
possible ditch defined trackway and/or field system ditches		use for this area as open space (play space and outside sports provision).  It is anticipated that a method statement for groundworks in this area will be agreed with Richard Oram, the Oxfordshire Planning Archaeologist, prior to the commencement of the development to ensure the archaeological remains are safeguarded.  No impact	
Medieval furrows	Archaeological: low	Proposed development will cause the removal and/or truncation of remains.  Magnitude of impact = up to major	Slight adverse

### Cumulative impacts

Since the completion of the original ES chapter, the proposed residential development at Land East of Bloxham Road, to the north-west of the site, has been consented at Appeal. If the impact of the proposed scheme is considered in conjunction with the consented scheme, this would have a cumulative impact upon the Iron Age remains

### Non-physical impacts

Due to the medium to high significance of the causewayed enclosure remains, the potential for non-physical impacts upon the remains is considered here also. No above ground remains of the monument are present and it is not visible or intelligible when visiting the site. The current landuse of the area is mostly arable cultivation, with pasture and some buildings present within the area most likely to be within the circuit of the ditches. Its current landuse is not considered to contribute to the significance of the asset through setting. Hedgerows and belts of vegetation restrict longer views, especially from areas of the circuit that lie within the site. Such monuments often lie overlooking river valleys, and the enclosure may once have had views over the river to the south. These are not currently possible from within the site, although they may be possible from the southern edge of the circuit, and make a small contribution to the significance of the monument. The site does not have any intervisibility with known contemporary monuments. It has little sense of remoteness due to the buildings present in this area, and the built-up area of Banbury to the north.

The detailed design of the area of the site where the monument lies has yet to be determined, but it will be open space for play space and outdoor sports provision. The change of use within the site from arable to public open space is not anticipated to have an adverse impact upon the monument through changes to its setting, as its current landuse is not considered to contribute to its significance through setting. Views south towards the river from the southern edge of the circuit will not be affected by the proposed scheme. The proposed scheme gives an opportunity for on-site interpretation of the monument in its detailed design, if this is considered appropriate by the Planning Archaeologist.

### ES Addendum Table 2, Potential Operational Impacts

Receptor	Interest and Significance of Interest	Magnitude of Impact	Significance of Impact
<b>Non-physical impact to known and potential heritage assets</b>			
Possible Neolithic Causewayed Enclosure, lying partially within the eastern area of the site	Archaeological: medium to high	No impact on significance through change of landuse and no alteration of southern views of the river valley from the southern edge of the circuit.  No impact	Neutral

### Mitigation

Detailed mitigation measures will be agreed with the Oxfordshire Planning Archaeologist and implemented. It is anticipated that these will comprise:

- Excavation of the probable Iron Age remains in the north-western area of the site (trenches 25 and 27); and
- A method statement to ensure that the possible causewayed enclosure remains in the eastern area of the site (trenches 18 and 19) are preserved in situ, as well as the undated enclosure in the same area and any archaeological remains uncovered in the eastern area of the site following a later phase of trial trenching.

### Summary of Impacts

Following the completion of the trenching, it is anticipated that the proposed scheme will have a physical impact upon two groups of archaeological remains; part of a small Iron Age settlement and medieval furrows.

The detailed design of the scheme will ensure that remains of probable causewayed enclosure, an undated enclosure in the same field, an undated enclosure in the northern area of the site, and any remains present in the easternmost field will be preserved in situ.

A previously identified physical impact upon a parish boundary (negligible to low impact upon a resource of medium significance, of up to slight adverse significance) is also anticipated.

Potential non-physical impacts upon heritage assets in the vicinity have been assessed in the original ES chapter. The impact upon the setting of the Salt Way route is reconsidered in the addendum to the Landscape and Visual chapter. The construction of the proposed scheme is not anticipated to impact upon the significance of the probable causewayed enclosure archaeological remains through changes to setting.

## Conclusions

Following the trial trenching, the proposed scheme is anticipated to have physical impacts upon two groups non-designated archaeological heritage assets (which are not of significances commensurate with being designated heritage assets). Under paragraph 135 of NPPF, a balanced judgement is required having regard to the scale of the harm or loss (potential removal) and the significances of the heritage assets (low). A previously assessed negligible to low impact upon a non-designated parish boundary of medium significance should likewise be considered as a balanced judgement under paragraph 135 of NPPF.

## Bibliography

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**1<sup>st</sup> November 2013**