

# Proposed Great Wolf Lodge: Land to the East of M40 and South of A4095, Chesterton, Bicester.

## An Archaeological Evaluation Report

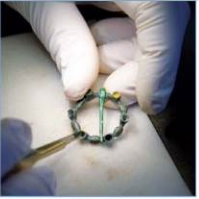
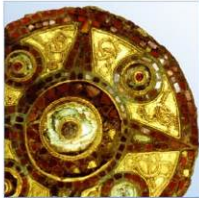
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# Proposed Great Wolf Lodge - Land to the East of M40 and South of A4095, Chesterton, Bicester': An Archaeological Evaluation Report

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This document has been prepared in accordance with AOC standard operating procedures.

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## Non-Technical Summary

AOC Archaeology were commissioned by Great Lakes UK Ltd to undertake a phased archaeological trial trench evaluation at Bicester Hotel & Golf Club, Oxfordshire (NGR: SP 54928 21731). The works were carried out between the 4<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> November, comprising of 14 evaluation trenches measuring between 25 to 50m long by 2m wide.

No archaeological remains or significant finds were observed on the site during the archaeological evaluation. The natural sub strata comprised of a mixture of mid brown clayey sand and Cornbrash Formation limestone bedrock in all trenches across the site. This underlay a light to dark brown clayey sand subsoil with occasional fragmented pieces of limestone measuring between 0.05m – 0.28m in depth. The topsoil comprised of a light brown silty clay and measured between 0.19m – 0.38m in depth. The first phase comprised of nine trenches to the south end of the site with the second phase consisting of six trenches to the north.

The archive, consisting of paper records, drawings and digital photographs, will be collated and deposited with Oxfordshire Museum Services, at the end of all fieldwork. Copies of the evaluation report will be issued to the client, the archaeology advisor to the Local Planning Authority and – ultimately – the local studies library, on the understanding that it will become a public document. A digital copy of the report will also be submitted to the HER and NMR. A summary of the findings will be submitted to the Archaeological Data Service (ADS).



## **1. Introduction**

### **Site Location**

- 1.1 This document details the results of an archaeological evaluation undertaken by AOC Archaeology at the Bicester Hotel & Golf Club (hereafter referred to as “the Site”), Oxfordshire (NGR: SP 54928 21731 – Figure 1).
- 1.2 The Site is bound by the M40 to the west, by the A4095 to the northeast, by Bicester Golf Club Clubhouse and the eastern half of Bicester Golf Course, comprising of nine holes, to the southeast and by agricultural land to the south.
- 1.3 The archaeological evaluation was carried out during November 2019. The works involved the excavation and recording of 14 archaeological evaluation trenches measuring between 25m to 50m by 2m.

### **Planning Background**

- 1.4 The local planning authority is Cherwell District Council, to whom archaeological advice is provided by Richard Oram, the Planning Archaeologist at Oxfordshire County Council.
- 1.5 The archaeological evaluation was requested to be undertaken pre-determination. The proposed development involves the construction of a leisure facility and hotel. The site is currently in use as a golf course and covers an area of nine golf holes. Bicester Hotel and a further nine golf holes adjoining the site to the east are outwith the development and will remain operational.
- 1.6 AOC (2019) undertook a desk-based assessment for the Site in May 2019. No Scheduled Monuments are located within the Site or the 1.5km Study Area. Eight Listed Buildings of Grade II status and two Listed Buildings of Grade II\* status are located within the 1.5km Study Area, (AOC, 2019: 8). The assessment established that the site was likely undeveloped, agricultural land prior to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century when a quarry was established along the northern boundary of the site. In the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century Chesterton Golf Course, now known as Bicester Hotel and Golf Club, expanded onto the site and required landscaping work which AOC understand was largely undertaken after 2002; the northwest field within the site was not an active part of the golf course and remained undeveloped until 2002. The level of truncation across the site by this landscaping is unknown, although evidence from LiDAR imagery and aerial photographs indicates that the level of truncation appears to be greater in the northern corner of the site, where following this major landscaping several ponds were created.
- 1.7 The Planning Archaeologist at Oxfordshire County Council indicated to AOC during consultation that pre-determination trenching would need to accompany an ES.

### **Geology and Topography**

- 1.8 The British Geological Survey GeoIndex (BGS 2019) records the bedrock on the Site as part of the Cornbrash Formation. This is a limestone, sedimentary bedrock that was formed approximately 168 to 164 million years ago, during the Jurassic Period in a local environment dominated by shallow carbonate seas. There are no superficial deposits recorded on the Site.
- 1.9 The Site and its landscaping within the extant Bicester Golf Course occupies a relatively flat topography varying from 86mAOD in the northwest of the Site to 82mAOD along the side that is bound to the west by the M40. The eastern side of the Site varies from 85mAOD near the A4095 to 84mAOD in the south-eastern corner.

- 1.10 The nearest boreholes were undertaken along the western boundary of the Site along the line of the M40 in 1979. Clay was recorded at a depth of 2.3m at 83.63AOD in the northwest of the Site in borehole SP52SW26. In the southwest corner of the Site, along the line of the M40, borehole SP52SW23 recorded clay at a depth of 1.55m at 79.12m AOD.'

## **2. Archaeological and Historical Background**

- 2.1 An archaeological desk-based assessment (DBA) was undertaken on the Site (AOC 2019). The gazetteer from the DBA is included as Appendix D.

### **Prehistoric and Roman (8000 BC- 410 AD)**

- 2.2 There are no find or remains dating to the prehistoric or Roman periods within the Site.
- 2.3 Several finds and features dating to the prehistoric period are recorded within the 1.5km Study Area. A Mesolithic Quartzite Macehead is recorded at Site 14, 465m to the west of the Site, however the accuracy of the location of this findspot is tentative. Therefore, the closest accurately plotted asset that has been identified as dating to the prehistoric period was recorded at Site 16, 960m to the south of the Site, on aerial photography and has been interpreted as a Bronze Age Ring Ditch.
- 2.4 Further Ring Ditches attributed to the Bronze Age have been identified from aerial photography at Site 5, situated 1.2km west of the Site and at Site 15, 1.2km to the northeast of the Site. A settlement dating to the late Iron Age was recorded during an archaeological evaluation in 2006 at Site 34, situated 1.2km to the northeast of the Site.
- 2.5 The Roman Akeman Street (centred Site 2) is situated 355m to the south of the Site. Akeman Street is associated with the Roman town of Alchester 2.2km to the southeast of the Site and the village of Chesterton. Akeman Street is believed to head through the southern half of Chesterton to the southeast of the Site on a southeast to northwest alignment before exiting Chesterton on the east to west aligned Green Lane.
- 2.6 A preliminary survey for the construction of the M40 in 1962 recorded potential features at Site 4, 720m to the southwest of the Site, on the west side of the M40 and along Akeman Street. A possible Roman trackway and associated structures, that may indicate a Roman villa site, has been suggested for the cropmarks at Site 4. It should be noted that Site 4 is also close to RAF Weston-on-the-Green, although the possible trackway is on a slightly different alignment than the runway and taxiway infrastructure of Raf Weston-on-the-Green.
- 2.7 Twenty-five coins dating from the late Roman period were found during metal detecting at Site 20, 1km to the south of the Site. It has been suggested that these coins could indicate the presence of a Roman villa or settlement within the vicinity of Alchester.
- 2.8 Further, potential evidence for the Roman period within the 1.5km Study Area has been recorded at Site 37, 590m to the east of the Site. Following geophysical investigations, an enclosure and boundary ditches were uncovered at this site in an archaeological evaluation conducted by Wessex Archaeology in 2017. No internal features were recorded during the evaluation and only one undiagnostic pottery sherd dating to the Roman period was found; therefore, the identification of this site as dating to the Roman period must be considered to be tentative.
- 2.9 The nature of remains or potential remains dating to the prehistoric or Roman periods within the 1.5km Study Area suggests that they are located away from the Site. The distribution of these sites could indicate the nature of archaeological investigations. These archaeological investigations are focussed on the alignment of the M40 during its construction to the west of the Site; the Roman

Akeman Street including any finds or remains that may be present along its alignment to the south of the Site, and development sites closer to Bicester, northeast of the Site. However, aerial photography does suggest that, overall, prehistoric sites are predominantly located to the west and northeast of the Site, whereas sites that potentially date to the Roman period are situated along the alignment of the Roman Akeman Street to the south of the Site or further east towards Chesterton and the Roman town of Alchester. Therefore, the potential for finds or remains dating to the prehistoric or Roman periods to be present on the Site is considered to be Low.

#### **Early Historic and Medieval (410 – 1600 AD)**

- 2.10 No assets dating to the early historic and medieval period are present within the Site.
- 2.11 With the exception of the extant settlement of Chesterton, the closest asset dating to the early historic and medieval period is the Deserted Medieval Settlement of Bignell (Site 11), situated 750m northeast of the Site. The ruins of the chapel were recorded around 1700 and modern houses now cover the suspected Deserted Medieval Settlement. No significant, visible remains are now present at site of the settlement although faint traces were detected in cropmarks from aerial photography undertaken in 1961. Bignell was deserted sometime between 1350 and 1450.
- 2.12 It is likely that the Site remained part of the agricultural land to the west of Chesterton and southwest of the Deserted Medieval Settlement of Bignell (Site 11) throughout the medieval period. Although finds or remains of an early historic and medieval period within the Site cannot be ruled out, it is considered that the potential for finds or remains dating from the early historic or medieval periods to be present within the Site is Low.

#### **Post-medieval (1600-1900 AD)**

- 2.13 Early pre-Ordnance Survey maps of the Site tend to be schematic and lack detail. Saxton's map of 1579 depicts the settlement of Middleton Stoney (labelled 'Middleton Stone'), Chesterton and Bicester (labelled 'Burcester'), however there are no further details on the map.
- 2.14 The Chesterton Pre-enclosure Map of circa 1764 to 1768 is the first map to show detail regarding the Site. The Site occupies an area marked 'Standle Leys' which contains one prominent, green field labelled 'Standle Piece'; the name of 'Standle Leys' suggests that the Site was an area of land put down to grass or clover for either a season or a limited number of years during the years 1764 to 1768. The road layouts and individual buildings at Chesterton (labelled 'Great Chesterton'), Little Chesterton and Bignell are clearly depicted. A road or track labelled 'Northbrook High Way' (Site 58) can be seen between the fields of 'Upper Crop' and 'Lower Crop' on an irregular west to east alignment, this route accesses 'Standle Ley's from the west.
- 2.15 Stanley's Map of 1815 depicts the settlement of Chesterton (labelled 'Chesterton Magne') to the east of the Site and there are buildings depicted at Bignell to the northeast of the Site. The Site itself is shown as comprising of the majority of one field with portions of two other fields in the eastern and southern portions of the Site. There is an entranceway depicted (Site 53) along the northern boundary of the Site. This is an unusual feature on Stanley's Map as few fields have been depicted which these entranceways. Stanley's Map suggests that an entranceway is the sole function of this feature, no other assets are identified with regard to structures or trackways with which this entranceway may be associated. Site 53 is still extant as a partially metalled gateway onto Bicester Golf Course. 'Northbrook High Way' (Site 58) is no longer extant follow the enclosure of the land around Chesterton.

- 2.16 The Ordnance Survey Map of 1888 shows the Site as being made up of five fields. Two Public Footpaths enter the Site from its southern boundary and join up just below the middle of the Site; this combined Public Footpath exits the site on its north-eastern side along the modern A4095. One of the field boundaries (Site 54) is still extant as a ditch and drainage feature within the Site on a southeast to northwest alignment.
- 2.17 The Site was clearly in agricultural use throughout the post-medieval period and any post-medieval remains which might survive on Site are likely to be agricultural in nature. Although finds or remains from the post-medieval period, other than those related to agricultural use, cannot be ruled out, the potential for such remains to be present is considered to be Low.

#### **Modern (AD Post 1900)**

- 2.18 The Ordnance Survey maps in the modern period show that the Site remains relatively unchanged prior to the development of Chesterton Golf Club from the late 20<sup>th</sup> century. However, a quarry is shown on the Site at Site 52 along the A4095 on the Ordnance Survey Map of 1923 (Figure 8). Although the quarry is still extant on the Ordnance Survey mapping of 1967 to 1968 (not illustrated), by the time of the Ordnance Survey Map of 1970 (not illustrated) the quarry is no longer depicted.
- 2.19 Chesterton Golf Course, to the east of the Site is first depicted on the Ordnance Survey Map of 1993 to 1996 (not illustrated). New features are depicted that indicate that the Site may have been part of the golf course at this time. A feature that appears to be a golf pond (Site 56) is depicted in the eastern portion of the Site, a golf water drain (Site 57) heads northwest from this pond (Figure 3). These two features are still extant on the present Bicester Golf Course. Despite the depiction of these features the extent of the landscaping undertaken within the Site to construct the golf course is unclear golf course. However, information supplied during the walkover survey indicates that the topography of the Site was relatively flat until landscaping works for the golf course were undertaken around 2002.
- 2.20 Finds or remains from the modern period will likely consist of agricultural field boundaries, field drainage systems and the remains of the quarry at Site 52. There will also be the potential for landscaping and drainage from the construction of the original Chesterton Golf Course. Therefore, the potential for finds or remains dating from the modern period to be present within the Site is considered medium.

### **3. Aims of the Investigation**

- 3.1 The aims of the archaeological evaluation were defined as being:
- To establish the presence/absence of archaeological remains within the site.
  - To determine the extent, condition, nature, character, quality and date of any archaeological remains encountered.
  - To record and sample excavate any archaeological remains encountered.
  - To assess the ecofactual and environmental potential of any archaeological features and deposits.
  - To determine the extent of previous truncations of the archaeological deposits.
  - To enable the Planning Archaeologist at Oxfordshire County Council to make an informed decision on the status of the application, and any possible requirement for further work.
  - To make available to interested parties the results of the investigation.
- 3.2 The specific aims of the archaeological evaluation were defined as being:

- To determine the presence and preservation of field boundaries/ features or ridge and furrow,
- To understand the level of possible truncation or landscaping undertaken onsite.

3.3 The final aim is to make public the results of the investigation, subject to any confidentiality restrictions.

## **4. Scope of Works and Strategy**

4.1 A written scheme of investigation and a Risk Assessment/Method Statement (RAMS), prepared by AOC, defined the site procedures for the archaeological evaluation. These documents detailed how the evaluation would be undertaken. All work was carried out in accordance with local and national guidelines (CifA 2014 a, b & c and Historic England 2011, and 2015 a-d). Provision was made for a report as defined in the WSI. The trench locations were surveyed in by GPS.

4.2 A unique site code (OXCMS:2019:136) was assigned to the project by Oxfordshire Museum Services and was used as the site identifier. The archaeological evaluation was conducted by Stuart Wilson under the overall direction of Sian Anthony, Project Manager at AOC Archaeology. An ecologist from WSP was present on site to inspect all proposed trench locations, as well to check spoil heaps for amphibian presence such as the Great Crested Newt. Two additional trenches were removed from the original proposed trench plan, due to their close proximity to the golf course ponds and the high risk of disturbing newts (Figure 2). This was agreed in advance with the Planning Archaeologist at Oxfordshire County Council.

4.3 In the field, context numbers were allocated according to trench number e.g. context 1001 is in Trench 1. In this report, the table of stratigraphy lists the stratigraphic sequence by trench and a full list of all features is given in Appendix A, the context register.

4.4 During the works original trench locations were moved slightly to avoid unnecessary destruction of the fairway, or the excavation of artificial bunds. One 50m trench was divided into two 25m trenches to avoid such issues. Trench 14 was moved due to the presence of an electric cable and irrigation channel to the west of the site.

4.5 Upon completion of the works, all trenches were backfilled and compacted to the original ground level to a satisfactory standard.

4.6 The archaeological evaluation and subsequent post-excavation conform to current best archaeological practice and local and national standards and guidelines:

- Historic England – Environmental Archaeology: A guide to the theory and practice of methods, from sampling and recovery to post-excavation (HE 2015c).
- Historic England – Animal Bones an Archaeology: Guidance for Best Practice (HE 2014).
- Historic England – Human Bones from Archaeological Sites: A guideline for best practice for producing human osteological assessments and analytical reports (HE 2004).
- Historic England – Waterlogged Organic Artefacts: Guidelines on their Recovery, Analysis and Conservation (HE 2012).
- Historic England – Waterlogged Wood: Guidelines on the Recovery, Sampling, Conservation and Curation of Waterlogged Wood (HE 2010).
- Historic England – Investigative Conservation: Guidance on how the detailed examination of artefacts from Archaeological Sites can shed light on their manufacture and use (HE 2008).
- Chartered Institute for Archaeologists – Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation (CifA 2014).



- Chartered Institute for Archaeologists – Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials (CifA 2014a).
- Chartered Institute for Archaeologists – Standard and Guidance for the Creation, Compilation, Transfer and Deposition of Archaeological Archives (CifA 2014b).
- Chartered Institute for Archaeologists – Code of Conduct (CifA 2014c).
- Museum of London – Archaeological Site Manual (MoL 1994).
- RESCUE & ICON – First Aid for Finds (RESCUE & ICON 2001).
- United Kingdom Institute for Conservation – Conservation Guidelines No.2 (UKIC 1983).
- United Kingdom Institute for Conservation – Guidance for Archaeological Conservation Practice (UKIC 1990).

## 5 Results

### Trench 1 (Figure 2 & 3 and Plates 1 & 2)

Table of the Stratigraphic Sequence

Context Number	Thickness	Height of Deposit (mOD)	Description / Interpretation
101	0.24m	81.58m – 81.34m	Light brown clay silt. Friable compaction. TOPSOIL.
102	0.21m	81.34m – 81.13m	Mid brown sandy clay with small to medium sized limestone inclusions. Moderate compaction SUBSOIL.
103	-	81.13m+	Mixture of yellow sandy clay with deposits of Cornbrash Formation limestone bedrock throughout entire trench. NATURAL.

- 5.1 Trench 1 lay to the eastern of site, was 50m by 2m, and was oriented broadly in an east-west direction.
- 5.2 The earliest deposit encountered in Trench 1 was sandy clay and Cornbrash Formation limestone bedrock (103) seen at a height of 81.13mOD. This was overlain by (102), a 0.21m thick layer of mid brown sandy clay interpreted as subsoil. The final deposit recorded in the trenches was (101), a 0.24m thick deposit of light brown silty clay recorded as topsoil.
- 5.3 No archaeological remains or finds were recorded in Trench 1.



Plate 1: South facing section of Trench 1



**Plate 2: Post excavation of Trench 1 from west**

#### **Trench 2 (Figure 2 & 3 and Plates 3 & 4)**

##### **Table of the Stratigraphic Sequence**

<b>Context Number</b>	<b>Thickness</b>	<b>Height of Deposit (mOD)</b>	<b>Description / Interpretation</b>
201	0.19m	81.39m – 81.20m	Dark brown silty loam. Friable compaction. TOPSOIL
202	0.23m	81.20m – 80.97m	Mid brown sandy clay with small to medium sized inclusions throughout. Moderately compacted. SUBSOIL
203	-	80.97m+	Mid brown sandy clay with deposits of Cornbrash Formation limestone bedrock throughout entire trench. NATURAL

- 5.4 Trench 2 lay to the immediate west of Trench 1, was 50m by 2m and was oriented broadly in an east-west direction. The earliest deposit encountered in Trench 2 was sandy clay and Cornbrash Formation limestone bedrock (203) seen at a height of 80.97m OD.
- 5.5 Overlying the above was (202), a 0.23m thick layer of mid brown sandy clay interpreted as subsoil. The final deposit recorded in the trenches was (201), a 0.19m thick deposit of light brown silty clay recorded as topsoil.
- 5.6 No archaeological remains or finds were recorded in Trench 2.





**Plate 3: South facing section of Trench 2**



**Plate 4: Post excavation of Trench 2**

### Trench 3 (Figure 2 & 3 and Plates 5 & 6)

**Table of the Stratigraphic Sequence**

Context Number	Thickness	Height of Deposit (mOD)	Description / Interpretation
301	0.30m	81.85m – 81.55m	Dark brown silty loam. Friable compaction. TOPSOIL.
302	0.25m	81.55m – 81.30m	Light brown sandy clay with small to medium sized inclusions throughout. SUBSOIL.
303	-	81.30m	Mid brown sandy clay with deposits of Cornbrash Formation limestone bedrock throughout entire trench. NATURAL

- 5.7 Trench 3 lay to the immediate west of Trench 2, was 25m by 2m, and was oriented broadly in an east-west direction.
- 5.8 The earliest deposit encountered in Trench 3 was sandy clay and Cornbrash Formation limestone bedrock (303) seen at an average height of 81.30mOD. Overlying the above was (302), a 0.25m thick layer of light brown sandy clay interpreted as subsoil. The final deposit recorded in the trenches was (301), a 0.30m thick deposit of light brown silty clay recorded as topsoil.
- 5.9 No archaeological remains or finds were recorded in Trench 3.



**Plate 5: South facing section of Trench 3**





**Plate 6: Post excavation of Trench 3**

#### **Trench 4 (Figure 2 & 3 and Plates 7 & 8)**

##### **Table of the Stratigraphic Sequence**

<b>Context Number</b>	<b>Thickness</b>	<b>Height of Deposit (mOD)</b>	<b>Description / Interpretation</b>
401	0.38m	82.16m – 81.78m	Mid brown silty loam. Friable compaction. TOPSOIL.
402	0.28m	81.78m – 81.50m	Light brown sandy clay with small to medium sized inclusions throughout. Moderately compacted. SUBSOIL.
403	-	81.50m+	Mixture of mid brown and yellow sandy clay with deposits of Cornbrash Formation limestone bedrock throughout the entire trench. NATURAL

- 5.10 Trench 4 lay to the immediate west of Trench 3 of site, was 25m by 2m, and was oriented broadly in a north-south direction. The earliest deposit encountered in Trench 4 was yellow sandy clay and Cornbrash Formation limestone bedrock (403) seen at a height of 81.50m OD.
- 5.11 Overlying the above was (402), a 0.28m thick layer of light brown sandy clay interpreted as subsoil. The final deposit recorded in the trenches was (401), a 0.38m thick deposit of light brown silty clay recorded as topsoil.
- 5.12 No archaeological remains or finds were recorded in Trench 4.



**Plate 7: West facing section of Trench 4**



**Plate 8: Post excavation of Trench 4**



## Trench 5 (Figure 2 & 3 and Plates 9 & 10)

**Table of the Stratigraphic Sequence**

Context Number	Thickness	Height of Deposit (mOD)	Description / Interpretation
501	0.25m	80.10m – 79.85m	Light brown silty loam. TOPSOIL
502	0.05m	79.85m – 79.80m	Mid brown sandy clay with medium sized inclusions throughout. SUBSOIL
503	-	79.80m+	Mixture of mid brown sandy clay with deposits of Cornbrash Formation limestone bedrock throughout the entire trench. NATURAL

- 5.13 Trench 5 lay to the west of Trench 4 at the southwest corner of the site, was 25m by 2m and was orientated on a broadly northeast-southwest orientation.
- 5.14 The earliest deposit encountered in Trench 5 was a mid brown sandy clay and Cornbrash Formation limestone bedrock (503) seen at a height of 79.80m OD. Overlying the natural bedrock was (502), a 0.05m thick layer of mid brown sandy clay interpreted as subsoil. The final deposit recorded was (501), a 0.25m thick deposit of light brown silty clay recorded as topsoil.
- 5.15 No archaeological remains or finds were recorded in Trench 5.



**Plate 9: Southeast facing section of Trench 5**



**Plate 10: Post excavation of Trench 5**

**Trench 6 (Figure 2 & 3 and Plates 11 & 12)**

**Table of the Stratigraphic Sequence**

Context Number	Thickness	Height of Deposit (mOD)	Description / Interpretation
601	0.38m	82.52m – 82.14m	Mid brown silty loam. TOPOSIL
602	0.10m	82.14m – 82.04m	Light brown sandy clay with medium sized inclusions throughout. SUBSOIL
603	-	82.04m+	Mixture of light brown and yellow sandy clay with occasional deposits of Cornbrash Formation limestone bedrock. NATURAL

- 5.16 Trench 6 lay to northwest of Trench 5 along the western edge of the site, was 25m by 2m and orientated in a northeast-southwest direction. The earliest deposit encountered was sandy clay and Cornbrash Formation limestone bedrock (603) seen at a height of 82.04mOD.
- 5.17 Overlying the natural bedrock was (602), a 0.10m thick layer of light brown sandy clay interpreted as subsoil. The final deposit recorded was (601), a 0.38m thick deposit of mid brown silty clay recorded as topsoil.
- 5.18 No archaeological remains or finds were recorded in Trench 6.





**Plate 11: Northwest facing section of Trench 6**



**Plate 12: Post excavation of Trench 6**



## Trench 7 (Figure 2 & 3 and Plates 13 & 14)

**Table of the Stratigraphic Sequence**

Context Number	Thickness	Height of Deposit (mOD)	Description / Interpretation
701	0.30m	82.73m – 82.43m	Mid brown silty loam. TOPSOIL
702	0.18m	82.43m – 82.25m	Dark brown sandy clay with medium sized inclusions throughout. SUBSOIL
703	-	82.25m+	Light brown sandy clay with occasional patches of yellow clay and deposits of Cornbrash Formation limestone bedrock throughout. NATURAL

- 5.19 Trench 7 lay to the immediate east of Trench 6, measured 50m by 2m and orientated on a broadly east-west orientation. The earliest deposit encountered was sandy clay and Cornbrash Formation limestone bedrock (703) encountered at a height of 82.25mOD.
- 5.20 Overlying the natural bedrock was (702), a 0.18m thick layer of dark brown sandy clay interpreted as subsoil. The final deposit recorded was (701), a 0.30m thick deposit of mid brown silty clay recorded as topsoil.
- 5.21 No archaeological remains or finds were recorded in Trench 7.



**Plate 13: North facing section of Trench 7**



**Plate 14: Post excavation of Trench 7**

### **Trench 8 (Figure 2 & 3 and Plates 15 & 16)**

#### **Table of the Stratigraphic Sequence**

<b>Context Number</b>	<b>Thickness</b>	<b>Height of Deposit (mOD)</b>	<b>Description / Interpretation</b>
801	0.30m	82.12m – 81.82m	Mid brown silty loam. TOPSOIL
802	0.17m	81.82m – 81.65m	Light brown sandy clay with medium sized inclusions throughout. SUBSOIL
803	-	81.65m+	Light brown sandy clay with occasional patches of yellow clay and deposits of Cornbrash Formation limestone bedrock throughout. NATURAL

- 5.22 Trench 8 lay to the immediate east of Trench 7, measured 50m by 2m and orientated on a broadly east-west orientation. The earliest deposit encountered was sandy clay and Cornbrash Formation limestone bedrock (803) encountered at a height of 81.65mOD.
- 5.23 Overlying the natural bedrock was (802), a 0.17m thick layer of light brown sandy clay interpreted as subsoil. The final deposit recorded was (801), a 0.30m thick deposit of mid brown silty clay recorded as topsoil.
- 5.24 No archaeological remains or finds were recorded in Trench 8.





**Plate 15: South facing section of Trench 8**



**Plate 16: Post excavation of Trench 8**

## Trench 9 (Figure 2 & 3 and Plates 17 & 18)

Table of the Stratigraphic Sequence

Context Number	Thickness	Height of Deposit (mOD)	Description / Interpretation
901	0.35m	81.91m – 81.56m	Mid brown silty clay. TOPSOIL
902	0.20m	81.56m – 81.36m	Mixture of red brown/yellow clayey sand with deposits of bedrock. SUBSOIL
903	-	81.36m+	Light brown sandy clay with occasional patches of yellow clay and deposits of Cornbrash Formation limestone bedrock throughout. NATURAL

- 5.25 Trench 9 lay to the immediate east of Trench 8, measured 50m by 2m and orientated on a broadly east-west orientation. The earliest deposit encountered was sandy clay and Cornbrash Formation limestone bedrock (903) encountered at a height of 81.36mOD.
- 5.26 Overlying the natural bedrock was (902), a 0.20m thick layer of mixed red brown/yellow clay sand with inclusions limestone fragments interpreted as subsoil. The final deposit recorded was (901), a 0.35m thick deposit of mid brown silty clay recorded as topsoil.
- 5.27 No archaeological remains or finds were recorded in Trench 9.



Plate 17: North facing section of Trench 9





**Plate 18: Post excavation of Trench 9**

### **Trench 10 (Figure 2 & 3 and Plates 19 & 20)**

#### **Table of the Stratigraphic Sequence**

<b>Context Number</b>	<b>Thickness</b>	<b>Height of Deposit (mOD)</b>	<b>Description / Interpretation</b>
1001	0.21m	81.50m – 81.29m	Mid brown silty loam. TOPSOIL
1002	0.20m	81.29m – 81.09m	Light brown sandy clay with medium sized inclusions throughout. SUBSOIL
1003	-	81.09m+	Mixture of mid brown and yellow sandy clay with deposits of Cornbrash Formation limestone bedrock throughout

- 5.28 Trench 10 lay to the north of Trench 9, measured 50m by 2m and orientated on a broadly northwest-southeast orientation. The earliest deposit encountered was sandy clay and Cornbrash Formation limestone bedrock (1003) encountered at a height of 81.09mOD.
- 5.29 Overlying the natural bedrock was (1002), a 0.20m thick layer of light brown sandy clay interpreted as subsoil. The final deposit recorded was (1001), a 0.21m thick deposit of mid brown silty clay recorded as topsoil.
- 5.30 No archaeological remains or finds were recorded in Trench 10.



**Plate 19: North facing section of Trench 10**



**Plate 20: Post excavation of Trench 10**



## Trench 11 (Figure 2 & 3 and Plates 21 & 22)

Table of the Stratigraphic Sequence

Context Number	Thickness	Height of Deposit (mOD)	Description / Interpretation
1101	0.20m	82.97m – 82.77m	Dark brown silty loam. TOPSOIL
1102	0.19m	82.77m – 82.58m	Mid brown sandy clay with medium sized inclusions throughout. SUBSOIL
1103	-	82.58m+	Light brown sandy clay with deposits of Cornbrash Formation limestone bedrock throughout. NATURAL

- 5.31 Trench 11 lay to the immediate north of Trench 10, measured 50m by 2m and orientated on a broadly northwest-southeast orientation. The earliest deposit encountered was light brown sandy clay and Cornbrash Formation limestone bedrock (1103) encountered at a height of 82.58mOD.
- 5.32 Overlying the natural bedrock was (1102), a 0.19m thick layer of mid brown sandy clay interpreted as subsoil. The final deposit recorded was (1101), a 0.20m thick deposit of dark brown silty clay recorded as topsoil.
- 5.33 No archaeological remains or finds were recorded in Trench 11.



Plate 21: South facing section of Trench 11



**Plate 22: Post excavation of Trench 11**

### **Trench 12 (Figure 2 & 3 and Plates 23 & 24)**

#### **Table of the Stratigraphic Sequence**

<b>Context Number</b>	<b>Thickness</b>	<b>Height of Deposit (mOD)</b>	<b>Description / Interpretation</b>
1200	0.32m	83.63m – 83.31m	Mid brown silty loam. TOPSOIL
1202	0.21m	83.31m – 83.10m	Light brown sandy clay with medium sized inclusions throughout. SUBSOIL
1203	-	83.10m+	Yellow sandy clay with deposits of Cornbrash Formation limestone bedrock throughout. NATURAL

- 5.34 Trench 12 lay to the west of Trench 11, measured 50m by 2m and orientated on a broadly northwest-southeast orientation. The earliest deposit encountered was sandy clay and Cornbrash Formation limestone bedrock (1203) encountered at a height of 83.10mOD.
- 5.35 Overlying the natural bedrock was (1202), a 0.21m thick layer of light brown sandy clay interpreted as subsoil. The final deposit recorded was (1200), a 0.32m thick deposit of mid brown silty clay recorded as topsoil.
- 5.36 No archaeological remains or finds were recorded in Trench 12.





**Plate 23: South facing section of Trench 12**



**Plate 24: Post excavation of Trench 12**



## Trench 13 (Figure 2 & 3 and Plates 25 & 26)

Table of the Stratigraphic Sequence

Context Number	Thickness	Height of Deposit (mOD)	Description / Interpretation
1301	0.25m	83.22m – 82.97m	Mid brown silty loam. TOPSOIL
1302	0.16m	82.97m – 82.81m	Light brown sandy clay with medium sized inclusions throughout. SUBSOIL
1303	-	82.81m+	Mid brown clay with deposits of Cornbrash Formation limestone bedrock throughout. NATURAL

- 5.37 Trench 13 lay to the south of Trench 12, measured 50m by 2m and orientated on a broadly east-west orientation. The earliest deposit encountered was mid brown sandy clay and Cornbrash Formation limestone bedrock (1303) encountered at a height of 82.81mOD.
- 5.38 Overlying the natural bedrock was (1302), a 0.16m thick layer of light brown sandy clay interpreted as subsoil. The final deposit recorded was (1301), a 0.25m thick deposit of mid brown silty clay recorded as topsoil.
- 5.39 No archaeological remains or finds were recorded in Trench 13.



Plate 25: North facing section of Trench 13



**Plate 26: Post excavation of Trench 13**

#### **Trench 14 (Figure 2 & 3 and Plates 27 & 28)**

##### **Table of the Stratigraphic Sequence**

<b>Context Number</b>	<b>Thickness</b>	<b>Height of Deposit (mOD)</b>	<b>Description / Interpretation</b>
1401	0.20m	83.05m – 82.85m	Dark brown silty loam. TOPSOIL
1402	0.19m	82.85m – 82.66m	Mid brown sandy clay with medium sized inclusions throughout. SUBSOIL
1403	-	82.66m+	Light brown sandy clay with deposits of Cornbrash Formation limestone bedrock throughout. NATURAL

- 5.40 Trench 14 lay to the southwest of Trench 13 and to the north of Trench 6. The trench was orientated on a broadly northeast-southwest orientation and measured 50m by 2m. The earliest deposit encountered was a sandy clay and Cornbrash Formation limestone bedrock (1403) encountered at a height of 82.66mOD.
- 5.41 Overlying the natural bedrock was (1402), a 0.19m thick layer of mid brown sandy clay interpreted as subsoil. The final deposit recorded was (1401), a 0.20m thick deposit of dark brown silty clay recorded as topsoil.
- 5.42 No archaeological remains or finds were recorded in Trench 14.





**Plate 27: Northwest shot facing Trench 14**



**Plate 28: Post excavation of Trench 14**



## **6 Finds**

- 6.1 No finds were recovered during the archaeological evaluation.

## **7 Conclusion**

- 7.1 The archaeological evaluation has successfully characterised the archaeological potential of the site. No archaeological remains were observed during the archaeological evaluation.
- 7.2 The natural was observed in all trenches and recorded as a mixture of yellow clay and light brown sandy clay and Cornbrash Formation limestone bedrock recorded at heights of between 79.80mOD to 83.10mOD. The natural was overlain by a subsoil composed of light, mid to dark brown sandy clay, with the exception of Trench 9, where the subsoil was observed as a mixture of red brown/yellow clayey sand with inclusions of limestone bedrock that measured between 0.05m to 0.28m in thickness.
- 7.3 Overlying the site was a 0.20m to 0.39m thick mid-brown silty clay interpreted as topsoil.
- 7.4 The site was fairly uniform in deposits and it is likely that the ground level of the site had undergone alteration and landscaping during the creation of the golf course which could have had a significant impact on the presence of archaeological features or buried deposits. It is therefore likely that the entire area encompassing the golf course is entirely archaeologically sterile.

## **8 Publication and Archive Deposition**

- 8.1 Copies of the draft evaluation report will be issued to Planning Archaeologist at Oxfordshire County Council for comments and approval prior to the production of the final report. A copy of the final report, once approved, will also be issued to Cherwell District Council on the understanding that it will become a public document after an appropriate period of time.
- 8.2 Copies of the final report will be issued to the client, the Archaeology Advisor, to the local Planning Authority and – ultimately – the local studies library, on the understanding that it will become a public document. A digital copy of the final report will also be submitted to the HER and the NRHE as maintained by Historic England. A summary of the evaluation will be submitted to the Archaeological Data Service (ADS) (Appendix C).
- 8.3 The site archive will comprise all written and drawn records. It is to be consolidated after completion of the whole project, with records and finds collated and ordered as a permanent record. Archaeological finds rarely have any monetary value, but they are an important source of information for future research, included in museum exhibits and teaching collections. The Chartered Institute of Archaeologists (CIfA 2015) and the Society of Museum Archaeologists (SMA 1993) recommend that finds are publicly accessible and that landowners donate archaeological finds to a local museum.
- 8.4 On completion of the project AOC will discuss arrangements with the developer/landowner for the archive to be deposited with the Oxfordshire Museum Services. Following completion of each stage or the full extent of the fieldwork (as appropriate) the site archive will be prepared in the format agreed with the recipient museum.
- 8.5 In the case where finds are retained, landowner consent will be required to allow transfer of the finds to Oxfordshire Museum Services. This will require the completion of a Deed of Transfer form (Appendix D) accompanied by a Legal Title Consent Request Letter from the landowner. A complete finds inventory and further finds information can be provided to the landowner on request.

- 8.6 The site archive will be deposited with Oxfordshire Museum Services within one year of the completion of fieldwork (if no further work is required). It will then become publicly accessible.

## 9 Bibliography

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Historic England (2015a) *Project Management for Heritage* <https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/technical-advice/project-management-for-heritage/>

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Historic England (2015c) *Archaeological Guidance Paper 3: Standards and Practices in Archaeological Fieldwork*. <https://content.historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/glaas-standards-for-archaeological-work/glaas-archaeological-standards-apr15.pdf/>

Historic England (2015d) *Archaeological Guidance Paper 4: Post-excavation analysis, publication and museum archiving* (<https://content.historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/glaas-standards-for-archaeological-work/glaas-archaeological-standards-apr15.pdf/>)

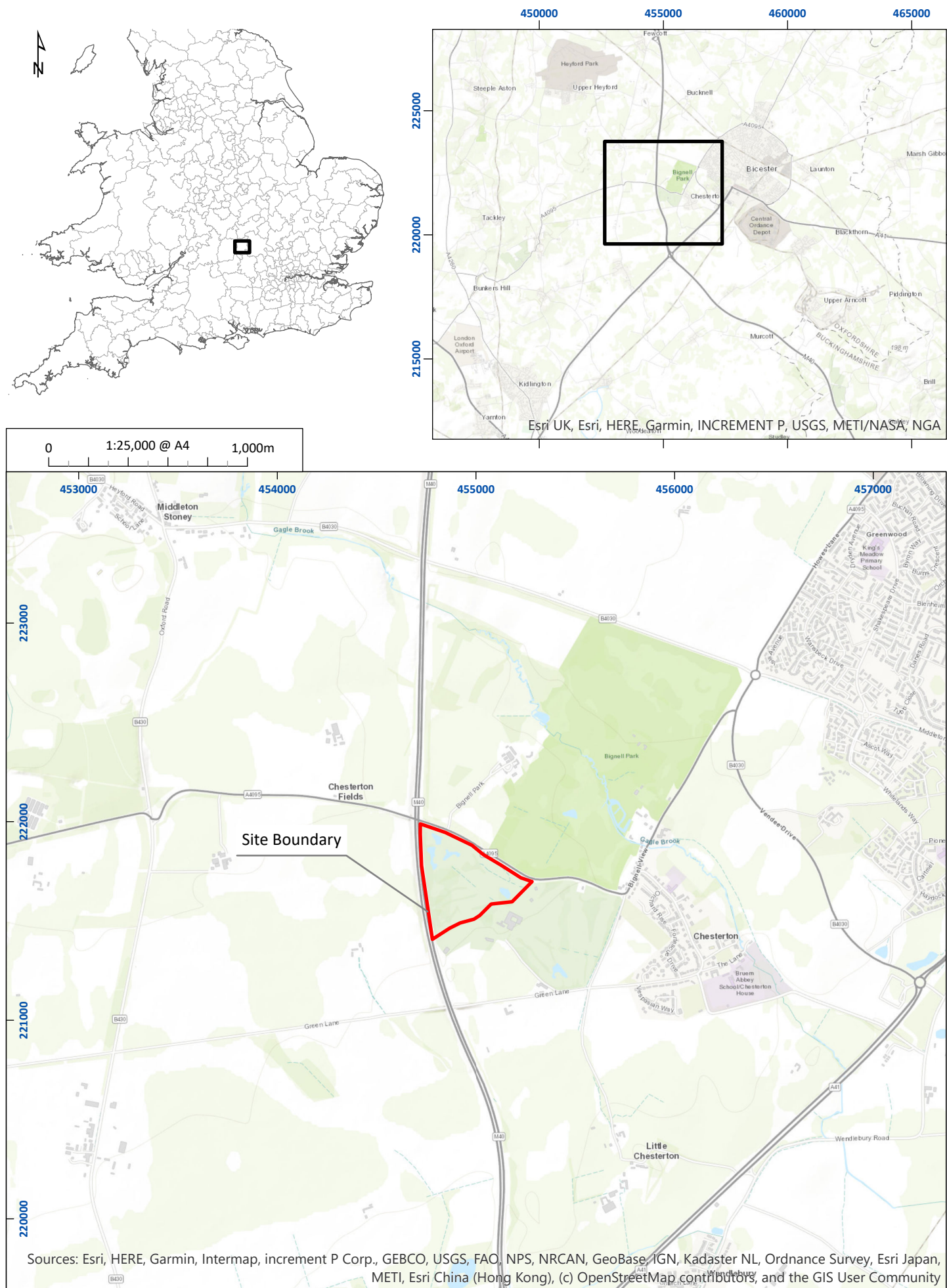


Figure 1: Site location plan

01/33941/DSR/01/01





Figure 2: Trench location plan

01/33941/DSR/02/01

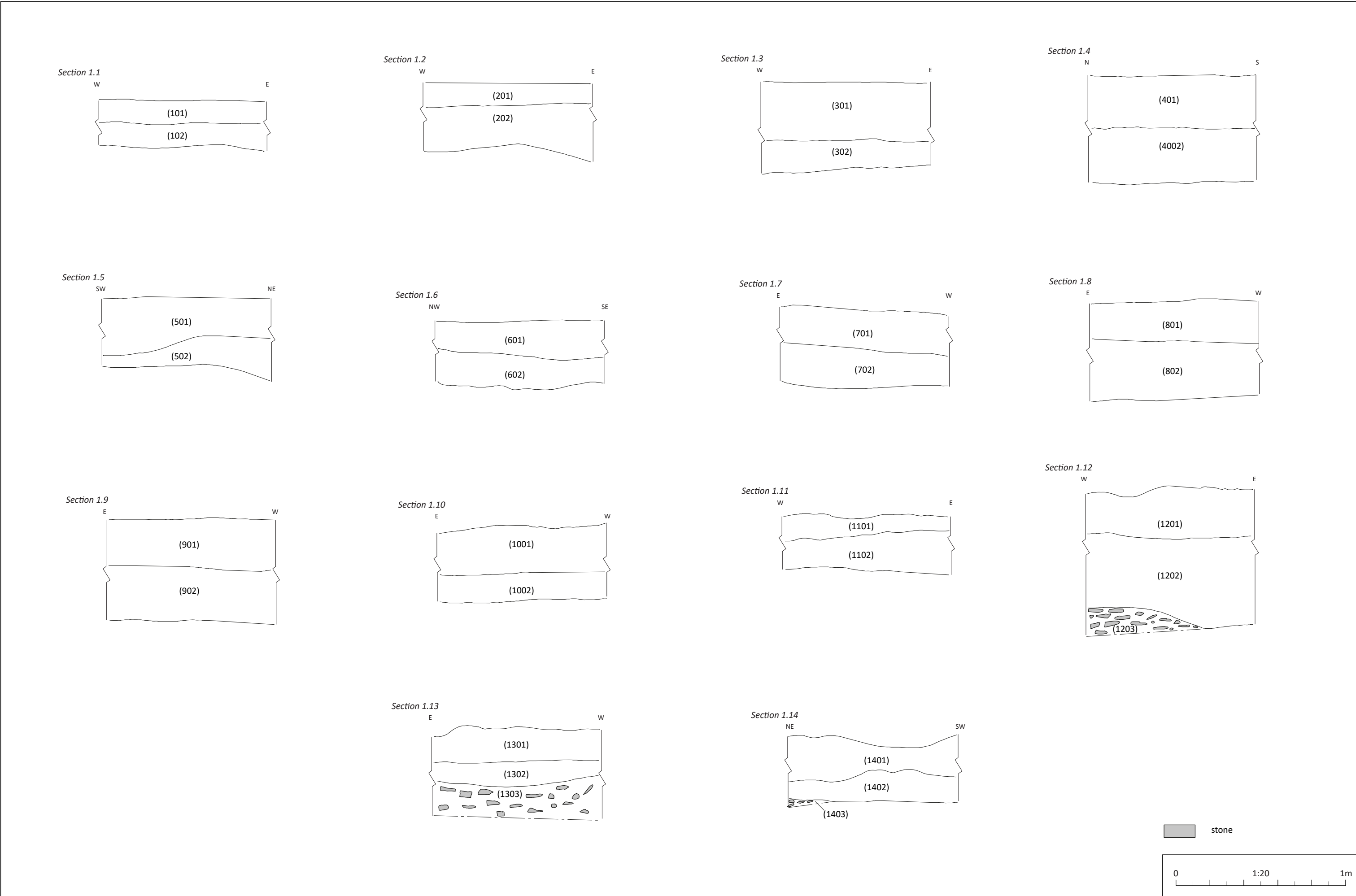


Figure 3: Sample sections

## Appendix A – Context Register

Context	Description	Length	Width	Depth
1001	Topsoil	50m	2.0m	0.24m
1002	Subsoil	50m	2.0m	0.21m
1003	Natural	50m	2.0m	NE
2001	Topsoil	50m	2.0m	0.39m
2002	Subsoil	50m	2.0m	0.23m
2003	Natural	50m	2.0m	NE
3001	Topsoil	25m	2.0m	0.3m
3002	Subsoil	25m	2.0m	0.25m
3003	Natural	25m	2.0m	NE
4001	Topsoil	25m	2.0m	0.38m
4002	Subsoil	25m	2.0m	0.28m
4003	Natural	25m	2.0m	NE
5001	Topsoil	25m	2.0m	0.25m
5002	Subsoil	25m	2.0m	0.05m
5003	Natural	25m	2.0m	NE
6001	Topsoil	25m	2.0m	0.38m
6002	Subsoil	25m	2.0m	0.1m
6003	Natural	25m	2.0m	NE
7001	Topsoil	50m	2.0m	0.3m
7002	Subsoil	50m	2.0m	0.18m
7003	Natural	50m	2.0m	NE
8001	Topsoil	50m	2.0m	0.3m
8002	Subsoil	50m	2.0m	0.17m
8003	Natural	50m	2.0m	NE
9001	Topsoil	50m	2.0m	0.35m
9002	Subsoil	50m	2.0m	0.2m
9003	Natural	50m	2.0m	NE
10001	Topsoil	50m	2.0m	0.21m
10002	Subsoil	50m	2.0m	0.2m
10003	Natural	50m	2.0m	NE
11001	Topsoil	50m	2.0m	0.2m
11002	Subsoil	50m	2.0m	0.19m
11003	Natural	50m	2.0m	NE
12001	Topsoil	50m	2.0m	0.32m
12002	Subsoil	50m	2.0m	0.21m
12003	Natural	50m	2.0m	NE
13001	Topsoil	50m	2.0m	0.25m
13002	Subsoil	50m	2.0m	0.16m
13003	Natural	50m	2.0m	NE
14001	Topsoil	50m	2.0m	0.2m
14002	Subsoil	50m	2.0m	0.19m
14003	Natural	50m	2.0m	NE

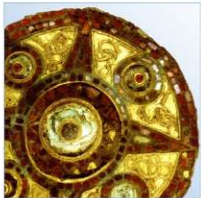
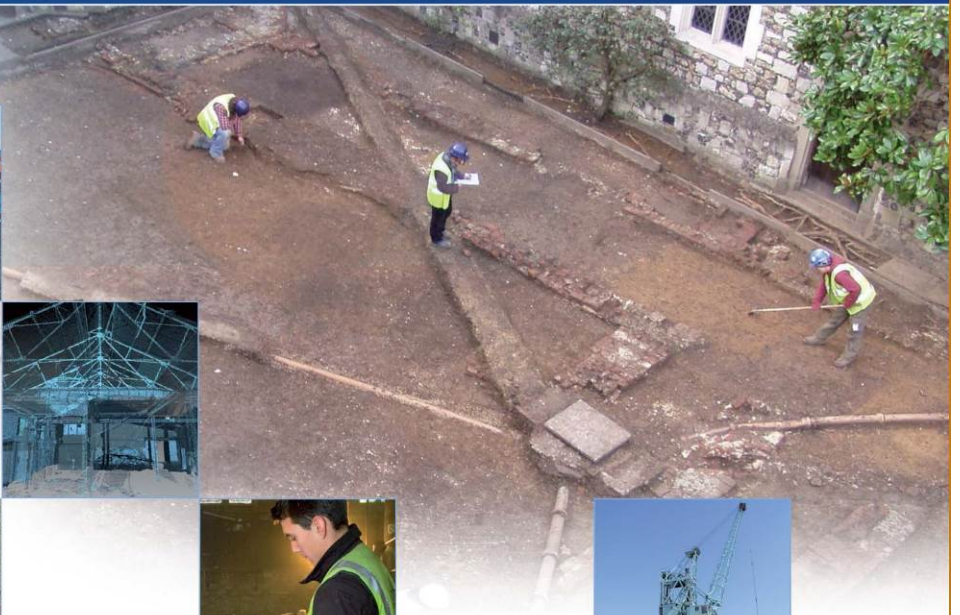


## Appendix B - OASIS Form

### OASIS ID: aocarcha1-364324

#### Project details

Project name	Bicester Hotel and Golf Club
Short description of the project	Archaeological evaluation
Previous/future work	Yes / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	33941 - Contracting Unit No.
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	Local Authority Designated Archaeological Area
Current Land use	Other 14 - Recreational usage
Methods & techniques	"Sample Trenches"
Development type	Golf course
Development type	Rural commercial
Prompt	National Planning Policy Framework - NPPF
Position in the planning process	Between deposition of an application and determination
Project location	
Country	England
Site location	OXFORDSHIRE CHERWELL CHESTERTON Bicester Hotel and Golf Club
Site coordinates	SP 54933 21714 51.890833333333 -1.201666666667 51 53 27 N 001 12 06 W Point



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