

Hybrid Application Site Catalyst Bicester Bicester Oxfordshire

Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Excavation



for
Albion Land Ltd

CA Project: MK0254

July 2020



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Figure 1 Site Location and Excavation area

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This document sets out details of a *Written Scheme of Investigation* (WSI) by Cotswold Archaeology (CA) for an archaeological excavation (of land) at the Hybrid Application Site, Catalyst Bicester, Bicester, Oxfordshire centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) 457521 221039 at the request of Albion Land Ltd.
- 1.2 Planning permission (ref: 19/01740/HYBRID) for housing and associated drainage and roads was granted by Cherwell District Council (CDC) conditional on a programme of archaeological work etc. Cotswold archaeology conducted an Evaluation (CA 2019) during which 27 (of 57) trenches contained archaeology indicative of farming, settlement and burial activity. Due to the high water table and the flooding of many of the trenches it was not possible to fully assess the significance of the archaeological potential identified within the impact zone (western half) of the development footprint.
- 1.3 This WSI has been guided in its composition by the *Brief, Standard and guidance: Archaeological excavation* (ClfA 2014, June 2020), the *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MORPHE): Project Manager's Guide* and the accompanying *PPN 3: Archaeological Excavation* (Historic England 2015) and any other relevant standards or guidance contained within Appendix B. This WSI has also been informed by the previous evaluation of the site and that of other neighbouring investigations.

The site

- 1.4 The site comprises agricultural land located at Promised Land Farm, within the parish of Chesterton, to the south of Bicester in Oxfordshire. The area of the site to be stripped equates to that which is to be subsequently to undergo construction impact – i.e. the western part of the development, with the eastern part of the site falling within the floodplain and being left as green space habitat.
- 1.5 The underlying geology within the site is mapped as Kellaways Sand Member, comprising interbedded sandstone and siltstone of the Jurassic Period. This is overlain by superficial Quaternary river terrace deposits, and by superficial alluvial deposit, comprising clay, silt, sand and gravel across the remainder of the site (BGS 2019).

- 1.6 The topography of the site, ranges from 66m above Ordnance Datum (aOD) in the north to 63m aOD in the centre of the site to 65m aOD in the east; so relatively flat over such a large area with a slight dip at the centre.

2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The archaeological and historical background of the site has been presented in a heritage desk-based assessment (CA 2016a). The archaeological evaluation undertaken in 2019 was preceded by a geophysical survey (AS 2018). The following section is summarised from these sources.

Prehistoric (pre-43 AD)

- 2.2 A Mesolithic flint scatter, comprising worked flints and cores was recovered approximately 500m to the north-east of the site, with a Neolithic axe recorded, approximately 620m to the north-east.
- 2.3 Two interrupted ring ditches representing possible Bronze Age barrows are located c. 440m north of site. A further two ring ditches are located approximately 910m to the south-east of the site, which produced Early Bronze Age pottery.
- 2.4 Approximately 50m to the north-west of the site an Early Bronze Age barrow and evidence of Late Iron Age settlement with associated field systems have been excavated (WA, 2009).
- 2.5 Further Iron Age evidence comprises a banjo enclosure and possible hut circles and trackways, located approximately 840m south-west of the site.
- 2.6 Material spanning the Late Neolithic to Late Iron Age was recorded as part of the excavations outside Roman Alchester, at the crossroads between the A421 and Chesterton Lane approximately 360m south-west of the site.

Roman (AD 43–AD 410)

- 2.7 Alchester Roman Town is a Scheduled monument, comprising a small town with a defended area of approximately 10.5ha. Several known Roman roads enter Alchester and more are suspected although undiscovered. The southern and eastern boundaries of the development are coincidental with the boundaries of the scheduled area of Alchester Roman Town.

- 2.8 The town probably originated in the early first century AD, with activity continuing through until the fourth century. The defences of the Roman Town are almost square in plan, with each of its sides c. 350 yards in length. Originally bounded by a wall-faced rampart and ditch, remains of the ditch are well preserved to the west, where they still form a field boundary, while the earthwork rampart remains are easily distinguishable on the eastern and western sides. The northern rampart has disappeared as a result of road construction, and the course of the Chesterton Brook to the south has replaced the former ditch.
- 2.9 Excavations 1km to the north of the current site revealed the extent of the Roman hinterland surrounding the town. Evidence broadly dated to the Roman period included small rectangular enclosures delineated by narrow deep ditches. A number of corn drying kilns were recorded within these enclosures. A single wide shallow ditch was interpreted as a drainage channel, moving water off site to the south-west, towards a tributary of the River Ray suggesting an engineered solution to water management. However, the proximity of water was clearly important for industrial processes on the site, the evidence for which included stone lined tanks, a possible sluice and system of water channels. Together with the corn drying kilns these features were interpreted as the remains of a malting and brewing site (WA, 2009).
- 2.10 Targeted evaluation at the Faccenda Chicken Farm was carried out in 1983 by the Oxford University Department for External Studies (Foreman & Rahtz, 1984). The trenches recorded first century drainage channels, 'part of a wider scheme to utilise the River Ray wetlands associated with the major settlement at Alchester' (Foreman & Rahtz, 1984). Evidence for wood and stone revetment and a fragment of possible sluiceway recovered from a pit, suggested a level of investment in land reclamation and water management. Excavation of pits, some of which contained crop processing waste, was interpreted as further evidence for agricultural activity within the hinterland to the north of Alchester. Second century activity was sealed by a deposit of dredged river sediment approximately 1.2m thick, marking the abandonment of the site.
- 2.11 An evaluation trench excavated west of the entrance to the Faccenda chicken farm located the metalled surface and underpinning of a north/south aligned Roman road approximately 1.1m below the modern road surface (TVAS 2010). This was interpreted as the original route running between the north gates of Alchester towards Towcester (hereafter Alchester to Towcester Road; Margary, 1973: 163).

The surface was sealed by material containing a single residual fragment of first-century pottery and several fragments of second to fourth century pottery, with the interpretation that the metalled surface had fallen out of use by the late second to third centuries. A second trench adjacent to the northern end of the current site found no trace of a Roman road surface.

- 2.12 Excavations in the extramural settlement of Roman Alchester (1991) in advance of road construction on the A421 (Oxford Road), immediately to the west, and approximately 30m south-west of the site recorded extensive evidence of Roman, and earlier, activity (Booth et al 2002). The investigations identified evidence for activity dating from the first to second century AD, characterised by ditches on alignments relating to Akeman Street, while a complex system of ditched plots developed later, on each side of the lane running parallel to, and north of, Akeman Street. South of the lane, the earliest structures dated to the mid-second century. North of the lane, plots contained Roman structures of various plan and construction, and the character of this settlement appeared to indicate a predominantly agricultural use. Settlement and agricultural activity appeared to have continued into the post-Roman period. A late Roman cemetery was recorded, alongside a large pottery assemblage, with numerous other finds.
- 2.13 Archaeological investigations in the area approximately 650m south-west of the site, recorded details of an internal road, alongside evidence of a workshop, granary, an early fort, a tower, gate and water channel. Plans of buildings have also been recorded elsewhere within the Scheduled Monument and during the construction of the railway line, in 1848, sixteen skeletons were recorded approximately 660m to the south of the proposed development site. The remains of a further 28 inhumation burials, along with pottery sherds and demolition material, were located approximately 560m to the south, and a single inhumation, Samian pottery and a cremation burial were uncovered during non-archaeological trenching approximately 260m south of the site.

Early medieval (AD 410–1066) and medieval (1066–1539)

- 2.14 Bicester is recorded in the Domesday Survey of 1086. The earliest account of King's End comes from the record for the Prioress of Markyate, who held a small manor, with eleven villeins holding six virgates between them (Victoria County History 1959; Craig 2009).

- 2.15 Bicester House, formerly known as Burcester Hall, is located on the site of the former manor-house of the nuns of Markyate. The nuns are suggested to have leased their estate in 1530, which in 1584 was purchased with the house by John Coker.
- 2.16 Further evidence of medieval activity within the environs of the site includes evidence of agricultural activity and settlement in the form of miscellaneous findspots, including tokens, pottery and coins, and recorded features such as ditches, pits and postholes, ridge and furrow earthworks, trackways and quarries located immediately to the west of the site, c. 800m to the north, c. 970m to the north-east, c. 310m and 900m to the east, c. 760m to the south-west and 1km to the west, and c. 50m, 70m and 740 to the north-west.

Post-medieval (1539–1800) and modern (1801-present)

- 2.17 Post-medieval evidence within the wider area largely comprises evidence of agricultural activity and quarrying immediately to the west of the site, and c. 740m to the north-west.
- 2.18 During this period, the site is likely to have comprised agricultural farmland. The 1793 Enclosure Map for King's End and the Bryant Map of Oxfordshire of 1824 indicate that, during the late 18th century, the site and its surroundings formed part of King's End Inclosure and King's End Mead, and that the former Roman road from Alchester to Towcester ran through the western margins of the site.
- 2.19 Further evidence of post-medieval activity comprises finds of pottery and demolition material associated with farm buildings, boundary ditches, and demolition material recorded approximately 800m to the north, and 530m to the north-east of the site.
- 2.20 The Buckinghamshire Railway, located approximately 140m east of the site, was established through the merging of two companies proposing lines from Bletchley to Banbury, and Aylesbury to Oxford. The Bletchley-Banbury section opened in 1850 and the Oxford-Verney Junction on the Bletchley-Banbury line opened a year later. The Banbury line remained a branch-line throughout the late 19th and early 20th century, while the Oxford Line developed into a major cross-county link, until its closure to passengers in 1968. The Banbury line closed to passengers in 1961, although a truncated spur to Buckingham remained open for a further three years.

The use of Banbury line for goods traffic ceased in 1963, while the Oxford section remains fully operational.

- 2.21 Britain's largest military railway system, the Bicester Military Railway, is located approximately 200m to the east of the site, and functions as the primary mode of transport at the Central Ordnance Depot, Bicester. Surveyed prior to construction in August 1942, six passenger platforms were built around the Graven Hill depot, although all except the Graven Hill platform have since been demolished.
- 2.22 The site underwent only limited alterations during the 20th century, as depicted on the 1900 and 1922 Ordnance Survey maps. By 1952, the A41 (Oxford Road) was constructed and by the late 20th century, the chicken farm to the east, Bicester Village to the north and the sewage works to the north-east, had all been established. Within the wider landscape, Bicester to the north, Chesterton to the east and Wendlebury to the south-west were subject to rapid expansion, with agricultural land remaining to the south, south-west and north-west of the site.

Undated

- 2.23 Two possible hearths, located approximately 110m to the west of the site, and several small, burnt deposits located approximately 500m to the north-east have been recorded (Network Archaeology 2007).
- 2.24 Within the wider environs of the site, a series of cropmarks, suggesting possible ring ditches and/or curvilinear ditches are located approximately 410m and 840m to the north of the site, 1km to the north-east and 500m to the north-west.
- 2.25 Within the south-western corner of the central portion of the site, a linear earthwork, orientated north/south, may possibly represent the line of the Alchester-Towcester Road, with the modern roadway diverted slightly to the west. This earthwork has not been recorded by the RCHME aerial photographic interpretation project (1990). A spread of stone recorded to the east of the modern bridge across the A41 (Oxford Road) may represent a former ford or a road crossing over the brook, although excavations at Faccenda Farm (1983) did not record any evidence of the road in this area. However, excavations at Wendlebury Road, Bicester: Phase 2 excavation (2010), and excavations within the extramural settlement of the Roman Town (Site B: 1991) recorded evidence of this road to the west and south-west of the site. There is a possibility that this linear earthwork represents a Roman ditch, which was

either originally located adjacent to the Roman road, or was otherwise utilised for agricultural purposes.

- 2.26 A number of cropmarks visible on the aerial photographs, to the east of the current site, appear to represent earlier activity, as they do not conform to the alignment of the modern field pattern. Prominent amongst these is a reasonably large, rectilinear enclosure within the central portion of the site, which is aligned west/east. This appears to be associated with a series of smaller enclosures aligned north/south, which is typical of a late Romano-British or medieval nucleated settlement. A number of other linear features crossing the site on a north/south alignment are also not aligned with the modern field system, and could represent former trackways. The enclosure and ditches within the central portion of the site are visible on the Environment Agency Lidar coverage of this area, and have been recorded as part of the RCHME Alchester aerial photography interpretation project.

Recent Works

- 2.27 In September 2016, Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out an archaeological evaluation of land at Bicester Gateway, Bicester, Oxfordshire, adjacent to the current site. The fieldwork was undertaken to inform a forthcoming planning application for the commercial development of the site. The fieldwork comprised the excavation of twenty one trenches.
- 2.28 The evaluation identified a concentration of archaeological remains within the southwestern part of the site. The archaeological remains dated to the Roman period, spanning the 1st to 4th centuries AD, with activity concentrated in the 2nd to 4th centuries AD. An isolated and undated ditch was recorded within the central part of the site and a Roman pit was also recorded within the northern part of the site. The earliest features encountered comprised two ditches containing pottery dating to the 1st to 2nd centuries AD. Overlying these early ditches was a substantial deposit of made-ground identified across approximately one hectare of land at the southern end of the site. This would have raised the local ground level above the seasonal floodplain of the River Ray and the evaluation results suggest that this allowed for the construction of a new road surface during the to the middle second century AD. No definitive structural evidence was identified; however, floor surfaces were recorded along with a possible cereal drying oven/kiln, which appear to indicate small scale roadside settlement during the late 2nd to 3rd-centuries AD. In addition

the evaluation also recorded an undated ditch which followed the alignment of the ridge and furrow ploughing identified by the geophysical survey.

Geophysical Survey

- 2.30 A geophysical survey undertaken in October and November 2018 by Archaeological Surveys Ltd (AS 2018), comprising detailed magnetometry, was carried out over 14ha on land outlined for Phase 2 of the Bicester Gateway (Catalyst Bicester) development. The results indicated the presence of a number of positive linear, rectilinear and discrete anomalies that may relate to cut features with archaeological potential in the northern and western parts of the site. Elsewhere, clusters of discrete positive responses have also been located, although it is not possible to determine if these relate to modern anthropogenic features, or if they have archaeological potential or whether they relate to possible natural features. Numerous naturally formed pit-like anomalies could be seen in the centre of the site. Ridge and furrow in the north western part of the site has also been identified, with possible land drainage elsewhere and infilling of former meanders in the watercourse adjacent to the eastern edge of the site.

3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 3.1 The objectives of the archaeological mitigation are to:

- record the nature of the main stratigraphic units encountered
- assess the overall presence, survival and potential of structural and industrial remains
- assess the overall presence, survival, condition, and potential of artefactual and ecofactual remains
- A further objective of the project is to compile a stable, ordered, accessible project archive (see Section 7).

- 3.2 The specific aims of the work are to:

- record any evidence of past settlement or other land use

- recover artefactual evidence to date any evidence of past settlement that may be identified
- sample and analyse environmental remains to create a better understanding of past land use and economy *Early Neolithic*
- Identifying and investigating sites with both late Mesolithic and early Neolithic material present, especially where these can be linked to environmental and datable sequences.
- Establishing the extent and character of settlement away from monument complexes, especially in areas where early settlement has traditionally been thought to be thin

Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age

- Better dating of key sites and deposits in order to improve an understanding of chronological sequences across the region.
- Investigating sites with good environmental sequences with potential for environmental reconstruction
- Establishing the extent and character of settlement away from monument complexes, especially in areas where early settlement has traditionally been thought to be thin

Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age

- The location and exploitation of woodland should be explored through palaeo-environmental data.
- For field systems in the Solent-Thames area, their origin and purpose, including the reason for co-axial fields and the form taken by field boundaries, would merit further study.
- Changes in the relationship of fields to settlements across the region should also be investigated.
- Reasons for increases in the intensity of settlement should be explored, for example whether this reflects a switch from family to more communal management of animals and crops, and the role of land-use divisions in this process
- More remains to be learnt about storage pits, such as the establishment of a minimum size, their reuse as latrines and the implications of this for burials in pits.

Late Iron Age/Early Romano-British

- Identify any evidence for Late Iron Age/Early Romano British transition evidenced through changing material culture and evolving new forms of habitation
- Identify evidence of changing landscape management in the hinterland of Alchester in the early Romano-British period and its relationship with the adjacent Roman road
- Identify evidence of early Romano-British crop processing in the hinterland of Alchester
- Identify any evidence of smithing in the suburbs of Alchester

Conquest to Decline

- Assess evidence for change and development of the hinterland of Alchester through the Roman period
- Assess evidence for changes in the local economy during the Roman period
- Assess evidence for light industry and smithing in the hinterland
- Assess evidence for the decline of activity in the hinterland of Alchester in the late Roman period

Early medieval

- There is little evidence from the immediate area of the site for early medieval activity and it will be very important to assess whether there is any settlement activity which predates the Domesday Book

3.3 Research aims identified from the regional research framework *Solent-Thames Archaeological Research Framework* (Chapters published 2006-2009) [further details of the regional research frameworks available can be found at http://www.algao.org.uk/england/research_frameworks] include:

4. METHODOLOGY

Excavation and recording

4.1 As the site is proposed for commercial development rather than housing, there is a need for the developer to strip the construction footprint of all overburden (see Figure 1). For the purposes of the archaeological works both topsoil and subsoil will be removed and stored on site in the eastern part of the site, which is to be set aside

for green space. The archaeologically monitored strip of the overburden will be undertaken throughout the construction footprint totalling some 74,773m². As areas of the site are cleaned to bedrock, the extent of any excavation areas will be agreed with Richard Oram. The level of recording in each of these will be agreed with Richard Oram and reflect the level of significance of the archaeology uncovered. For example, where furrows are identified, these will be mapped only, in order to understand their relationship and impact on any earlier remains that might survive. In addition, as indicated below an iterative approach to investigating the archaeology will be deployed, whereby, where sufficient understanding/characterisation/phasing/dating has been evidenced, a reduced level of recording may be agreed with Richard Oram. Note in the area of the floodplain, where suds/attenuation ponds are proposed (see Figure 1), these will need to be monitored during their subsequent excavation by the main contractor, and any archaeological remains recorded as set out for the main strip, map and record excavation areas. Excavation areas will be set out on OS National Grid (NGR) co-ordinates using a Leica GPS and scanned for live services by trained staff using CAT and Genny equipment in accordance with the Cotswold Archaeology *Safe System of Work for avoiding underground services*. The position and size of excavation areas may be adjusted on site to account for services and other constraints, with the approval of Richard Oram (the archaeological advisor to CDC). The final 'as dug' areas will be recorded with GPS.

- 4.2 Initially works will comprise the mechanical removal of non-archaeologically significant soils, under constant archaeological supervision, using a toothless ditching bucket. The generated spoil will be monitored in order to recover artefacts, including systematic sweeping with a metal detector. Metal detecting and hand-cleaning of the stripped surface, to better define any identified archaeological deposits/features and record the distribution of unstratified/surface artefacts, will be undertaken if deemed appropriate. All machining will be conducted under archaeological supervision and will cease when the first archaeological horizon or natural substrate is revealed (whichever is encountered first). All archaeological features will be recorded in plan using Leica GPS.
- 4.3 Examination of features will concentrate on recovering the plan and any structural sequences. Particular emphasis will be placed upon gaining a secure understanding of the stratigraphic and chronological development of the site, including the recovery

of samples suitable for radiocarbon dating where appropriate, and on upon obtaining details of the phasing of the site.

- 4.4 An iterative, reflexive, question-driven, approach to sampling levels will be adopted, rather than setting rigid, mechanistic, sampling percentages from the outset. However, All funerary/ritual activity and domestic/industrial deposits will be **100%** excavated. All discrete features (post holes, pits) will be sampled by hand excavation (average sample unlikely to exceed **50%**) unless their common/repetitious nature suggests they are unlikely to yield significant new information. All linear features (ditches, pathways etc) will be sampled to a maximum of **10%**. Bulk horizontal deposits will as a minimum be **10% by area** hand excavated, after which a decision may be taken (in conjunction with Richard Oram) to remove the remainder with machinery. Priority will be attached to features which yield sealed assemblages which can be related to the chronological sequence of the site. Features and bulk deposits will be sampled initially by hand in order to recover sufficient artefactual and biological assemblages and feature profiles/sections/elevations with which to date and phase them, after which systematic mechanical excavation of additional sections, and coarse inspection and metal detecting of the arisings for finds recovery, may be applied, to recover additional data (or more secure dating evidence where finds are meagre). Priority for hand-investigation will be attached to features which yield sealed assemblages which can be related to the chronological sequence of the site.
- 4.5 Throughout the course of fieldwork this reflexive strategy will continually utilise new information recovered from the site (and where necessary subject to preliminary assessment by appropriate specialists during the course of the fieldwork) to further inform and develop the site investigation strategy and methodology – which are in turn dictated by a desire to address the research questions set out in section 3. This will require a collaborative approach to strategy formulation between curator, consultant, CA site staff and specialists. The strategy will be driven by a series of principles:
- Our emphasis is on collecting **high-quality** data, rather than large quantities of less good evidence. It is the quality of the evidence, not just the quantity that matters.
 - We will collect, and analyse, data in a format that permits comparison with that recovered from comparable sites, both locally and nationally, and also evidence that will accrue from future work. We will institute a programme of volumetric analysis

which will allow the quantities of artefacts and ecofacts recovered from cut features (ditches; pits) to be related to the volume of fill from which they have been recovered (eg. X kg pottery per m³).

- Amend as necessary - We will seek to establish a total quantification of all metal-work recovered from the site, and look for intra-site distribution patterns. We will put an emphasis on metal-work recovery through the controlled use of a metal-detector and will plot the locations of recovered finds with a GPS.
- Whilst there are no universally accepted sample sizes, we will as a rule take the view that a sample of more than ten sherds of pottery should be sufficient to date major features. Where hand sampling produces a meagre return of artefacts, we will consider as a second stage the machine removal of fill and the careful scanning of the excavated spoil for artefact recovery.
- We will look to recover assemblages of animal bones in excess of 100 NISP per principal site phase.
- Amend as necessary - We will prioritise sealed deposits resting upon any surviving floors or surfaces for the application of scientific techniques which might provide insights into the formation of those deposits, and any activities or processes that occurred nearby.

- 4.6 All archaeological features revealed will be planned and recorded in accordance with CA Technical Manual 1 *Fieldwork Recording Manual*. Each context will be recorded on a pro-forma context sheet by written and measured description; principal deposits will be recorded by drawn plans (scale 1:20 or 1:50, or electronically using Leica GPS or Total Station (TST) as appropriate) and drawn sections (scale 1:10 or 1:20 as appropriate). Where detailed feature planning is undertaken using GPS/TST this will be carried out in accordance with CA Technical Manual 4 *Survey Manual*. Photographs (digital colour) will be taken as appropriate. All finds and samples will be bagged separately and related to the context record. All artefacts will be recovered and retained for processing and analysis in accordance with CA Technical Manual 3 *Treatment of Finds Immediately after Excavation*.

Artefact retention and discard

- 4.7 Artefacts from topsoil and subsoil and un-stratified contexts will normally be noted but not retained unless they are of intrinsic interest (e.g. worked flint or flint debitage, featured pottery sherds, and other potential ‘registered artefacts’). All artefacts will be collected from stratified excavated contexts except for large assemblages of post-medieval or modern material. Such material may be noted and not retained, or, if appropriate, a representative sample may be collected and retained.

Human remains

- 4.8 If human remains are encountered, the client and the Richard Oram will be informed immediately. Where excavation of human remains is undertaken, this will be conducted following the provisions of the Coroners Unit in the Ministry of Justice.

Environmental remains

- 4.9 Due care will be taken to identify deposits which may have environmental potential, and where appropriate, a programme of environmental sampling will be initiated. This will follow the Historic England environmental sampling guidelines outlined in *Environmental Archaeology, A guide to the Theory and Practice of Methods, from Sampling and Recovery to Post-excavation* (English Heritage 2011), and *CA Technical Manual 2: The Taking and Processing of Environmental and Other Samples from Archaeological Sites*. The sampling strategy will be adapted for the specific circumstances of this site, in close consultation with the CA Environmental Officer, but will follow the general selection parameters set out in the following paragraphs.
- 4.10 Secure and phased deposits, especially those related to settlement activity and/or structures will be considered for sampling for the recovery of charred plant remains, charcoal and mineralised remains. Any cremation-related deposits will be sampled appropriately for the recovery of cremated human bone and charred remains. If any evidence of *in situ* metal working is found, suitable samples for the recovery of slag and hammer scale will be taken.
- 4.11 Where sealed waterlogged deposits are encountered, samples for the recovery of waterlogged remains, insects, molluscs and pollen, as well as any charred remains, will be considered. The taking of sequences of samples for the recovery of molluscs and/or waterlogged remains will be considered through any suitable deposits such as deep enclosure ditches, barrow ditches, palaeo-channels, or buried soils. Monolith samples will also be taken from this kind of deposit as appropriate to allow

soil and sediment description/interpretation as well as sub-sampling for pollen and other micro/macrofossils such as diatoms, foraminifera and ostracods.

- 4.12 The need for any more specialist samples, such as OSL, archaeomagnetic dating and dendrochronology will be evaluated and will be taken under the direction of the relevant specialist.
- 4.13 The processing of the samples will be done in conjunction with the relevant specialist following the Historic England general environmental processing guidelines (English Heritage 2011). Flotation or wet sieve samples will be processed to 0.25mm. Other more specialist samples such as those for pollen will be prepared by the relevant specialist. Further details of the general sampling policy and the methods of taking and processing specific sample types are contained within *CA Technical Manual 2: The Taking and Processing of Environmental and Other Samples from Archaeological Sites*.

Treasure

- 4.14 Upon discovery of Treasure CA will notify the client and the curator immediately. CA will comply fully with the provisions of the Treasure Act 1996 and the Code of Practice referred to therein. Findings will be reported to the coroner within 14 days.

5. STAFF AND TIMETABLE

- 5.1 This project will be under the management of Richard Greatorex, Principal Fieldwork Manager, CA.
- 5.2 The staffing structure will be organised thus: the Project Manager will direct the overall conduct of the evaluation as required during the period of fieldwork. Day to day responsibility however will rest with the Project Leader who will be on-site throughout the project.
- 5.3 The field team will consist of a maximum of 15 staff (e.g. 1 Project Officer; 2 Project Supervisors and 12 Archaeologists).

5.4 It is envisaged that the project will require approximately 6-8 weeks of fieldwork. The production of a post-ex assessment\ of the results and subsequent reporting will take up to a further 6 to 12 months.

5.5 Specialists who will be invited to provide advice and report on specific aspects of the project as necessary are:

Ceramics	Ed McSloy MCIfA (CA)
Metalwork	Ed McSloy MCIfA (CA)
Flint	Jacky Sommerville PCIfA (CA)
Animal Bone	Andy Clarke BA (Hons) MA (CA)/ Matty Holmes BSc MSc ACIfA (freelance)
Human Bone	Sharon Clough MCIfA (CA)
Environmental Remains	Sarah Wyles PCIfA (CA)
Conservation	Pieta Greeves BSc MSc ACR (Drakon Heritage and Conservation)
Geoarchaeology	Dr Keith Wilkinson (ARCA)

5.6 Depending upon the nature of the deposits and artefacts encountered it may be necessary to consult other specialists not listed here. A full list of specialists currently used by Cotswold Archaeology is contained within Appendix A.

6. POST-EXCAVATION, ARCHIVING AND REPORTING

6.1 Following completion of fieldwork, all artefacts and environmental samples will be processed, assessed, conserved and packaged in accordance with CA Technical Manuals and Oxfordshire Museums Service guidelines. A recommendation will be made regarding material deemed suitable for disposal/dispersal in line with the relevant recipient Museums' collection policy.

6.2 A post-excavation assessment will be undertaken following completion of all site works. This will be prepared in accordance with the specification given in Appendices 4 and 5 of *Management of Archaeological Projects 2* (English Heritage 1991). Any variations

to these post-excavation requirements will require the written approval of the Richard Oram. The post-excavation assessment report will include:

- (i) an abstract containing the essential elements of the results preceding the main body of the report and a summary of the project's background;
- (ii) description and illustration of the site location;
- (iii) a methodology of the works undertaken;
- (iv) include plans and reports of all documentary and other research undertaken;
- (v) a description of the project's results;
- (vi) an interpretation of the results in the appropriate context;
- (vii) a summary of the contents of the project archive and its location (including summary catalogues of finds and samples);
- (viii) a site location plan at an appropriate scale on an Ordnance Survey, or equivalent, base-map;
- (ix) a plan showing the location of the trenches and exposed archaeological features and deposits in relation to the site boundaries;
- (x) plans of each trench, or part of trench, in which archaeological features are recognised. These will be at an appropriate scale to allow the nature of the features exposed to be shown and understood. Plans will show the orientation of trenches in relation to north. Section drawing locations will be shown on these plans. Archaeologically sterile areas will not be illustrated unless this can provide information on the development of the site stratigraphy or show palaeo-environmental deposits that have influenced the site stratigraphy;
- (xi) appropriate section drawings of trenches and features will be included, with OD heights and at scales appropriate to the stratigraphic detail being represented. These will show the orientation of the drawing in relation to north/south/east/west. Archaeologically sterile trenches will not be illustrated unless they provide significant information on the development of the site stratigraphy or show palaeo-environmental deposits that have influenced the site stratigraphy;
- (xii) site matrices, if appropriate;
- (xiii) photographs showing significant features and deposits that are referred to in the text. All photographs will contain appropriate scales, the size of which will be noted in the illustration's caption;
- (xiv) a consideration of evidence within its wider local/regional context;
- (xv) a summary table and descriptive text showing the features, classes and numbers of artefacts recovered and soil profiles with interpretation;
- (xvi) specialist assessment or analysis reports where undertaken;

(xvii) an evaluation of the methodology employed, and the results obtained (i.e. a confidence rating).

6.3 Specialist artefact and palaeo-environmental assessment will take into account the wider local/regional context of the archaeology and will include:

- (i) specialist aims and objectives
- (ii) processing methodologies (where relevant)
- (iii) any known biases in recovery, or problems of contamination/residuality
- (iv) quantity of material; types of material present; distribution of material
- (v) for environmental material, a statement on abundance, diversity and preservation
- (vi) summary and discussion of the results to include significance in a local and regional context

6.4 Copies of the draft post-excavation assessment report will be distributed to the Client or their Representative and to the CDC's Archaeological Advisor thereafter for verification and approval. Thereafter, copies of the approved report will be issued to the Client, CDC's Archaeological Advisor and the local Historic Environment Record (HER). Reports will be issued in digital format (PDF/PDFA as appropriate) except where hard copies have been specifically requested, and will be supplied to the HER along with shapefiles containing location data for the areas investigated, if required.

Academic dissemination

6.5 Should the post-excavation assessment identify the potential for further analysis, an updated project design will be prepared for agreement by the Richard Greatorex prior to the commencement of the detailed analysis and reporting. Arrangements will be made for an appropriate level of academic publication of the results of the excavations. A summary report will also be published in the Oxoniensia Journal.

6.6 Copies of any reports arising from the fieldwork will be deposited with the Oxford Historic Environment Record (HER). A summary of information from the project will also be entered onto the OASIS online database of archaeological projects in Britain, including the upload of a digital (PDF) copy of the final report, which will appear on the Archaeology Data Service (ADS) website once the OASIS record has been verified.

Public dissemination

- 6.7 In addition to the ADS website, a digital (PDF) copy of the final report will also be made available for public viewing via Cotswold Archaeology's *Archaeological Reports Online* web page, generally within 12 months of completion of the project (<http://reports.cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk/>).

Archive preparation and deposition

- 6.8 An ordered, indexed, and internally consistent site archive will be prepared in accordance with *Standard and guidance for the creation, compilation, transfer and deposition of archaeological archives* (ClfA 2014; updated June 2020), *Archaeological Archives: A Guide to Best Practice in Creation, Compilation, Transfer and Curation* (Archaeological Archives Forum 2007) and *Standard and Guide to Best Practice for Archaeological Archiving in Europe: EAC Guidelines 1* (Europae Archaeologia Consilium 2019), as well as Oxfordshire Museum's Service guidelines.
- 6.9 CA will make arrangements with the Oxfordshire Museums Service for the deposition of the site archive and, subject to agreement with the legal landowner(s), the artefact collection. Oxfordshire Museum Service will be consulted at this stage concerning their requirements and notified in advance of the expected time limits for deposition of the archive.

Selection strategy

- 6.10 As noted in para. 4.8, artefacts from topsoil, subsoil and unstratified contexts will normally be noted but not retained unless they are of intrinsic interest. All artefacts from stratified excavated contexts will be collected, except for large assemblages of post-medieval or modern material. Such material may be noted and not retained or, if appropriate, a representative sample may be collected and retained.
- 6.11 The site-selected material archive returned to the CA offices will be reviewed following analysis. Stakeholders will make selection decisions based on CA Finds Manager/Officer reports and selection recommendations. The selection will take place during archive compilation. After discussion with the relevant museum Curator and the CA Finds Managers/Officers, it is possible that no material postdating AD 1800 will be retained for inclusion in the preserved archive.

Digital archive

- 6.12 A digital archive will be deposited with the Archaeology Data Service (ADS). This archive will be compiled in accordance with the *ADS Guidelines for Depositors*.

Data management

- 6.13 All born-digital and digitally transferred project data created during fieldwork and post-excavation (other than duplicated files) will be stored by CA. Upon project completion and deposition, the data will be transferred to a secure external server. Data will be selected for inclusion in the final digital archive, as detailed below. It is proposed that data selection will occur following completion of post-excavation work.
- 6.14 Selected digital files will be transferred to Oxfordshire Museum's Service with the documentary and material archive and to the ADS, in line with the relevant guidance and standards for both organisations. In adherence to CA's Digital Data Guidance, it is proposed that the selected files will include final versions only. Digital photographs will be selected for inclusion in the archive in line with CAs Digital Data Guidance and *Digital Image Capture and File Storage: Guidelines for Best Practice* (Historic England 2015). Data produced by external specialists or sub-contractors will be granted under license to CA to allow inclusion in the digital archive as required.

7. HEALTH, SAFETY AND ENVIRONMENT

- 7.1 CA will conduct all works in accordance with the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and all subsequent Health and Safety legislation, CA Health and Safety and Environmental policies and the CA Safety, Health and Environmental Management System (SHE), as well as any Albion Land policies or procedures. A site-specific Construction Phase Plan (form SHE 017) will be formulated prior to commencement of fieldwork.

8. INSURANCES

- 8.1 CA holds Public Liability Insurance to a limit of £10,000,000 and Professional Indemnity Insurance to a limit of £10,000,000.

9. MONITORING

- 9.1 Notification of the start of site works will be made to CDC's Archaeological Advisor, Richard Oram, so that there will be opportunities to visit the excavation and check on the quality and progress of the work. It is currently anticipated that fieldwork (initially monitoring of the site strip) will commence from the 20th July 2020.

10. QUALITY ASSURANCE

- 10.1 CA is a Registered Organisation (RO) with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (RO Ref. No. 8). As a RO, CA endorses the *Code of Conduct* (CIfA 2014) and the *Code of Approved Practice for the Regulation of Contractual Arrangements in Field Archaeology* (CIfA 2014). All CA Project Managers and Project Officers hold either full Member or Associate status within the CIfA.
- 10.2 CA operates an internal quality assurance system in the following manner. Projects are overseen by a Project Manager who is responsible for the quality of the project. The Project Manager reports to the Chief Executive who bears ultimate responsibility for the conduct of all CA operations. Matters of policy and corporate strategy are determined by the Board of Directors, and in cases of dispute recourse may be made to the Chairman of the Board.

11. PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT, PARTICIPATION AND BENEFIT

- 11.1 It is not envisaged that this project will afford opportunities for public engagement or participation during the course of the fieldwork. However, the results will be made publicly available on the ADS and Cotswold Archaeology websites, as set out in Section 6 above, in due course.

12. STAFF TRAINING AND CPD

- 12.1 CA has a fully documented mandatory Performance Management system for all staff which reviews personal performance, identifies areas for improvement, sets targets and ensures the provision of appropriate training within CA's adopted training policy. In addition, CA has developed an award-winning Career Development Programme for its staff, which ensures a consistent and high quality approach to the development of appropriate skills.
- 12.2 As part of the company's requirement for Continuing Professional Development, all members of staff are also required to maintain a Personal Development Plan and an associated log which is reviewed within the Performance Management system. All staff are subject to probationary periods on appointment, with monthly review; for site-based staff additional monthly Employee Performance Evaluations measure and record skills and identify training needs.

13. REFERENCES

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CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2018, Bicester Gateway Phase 2, Bicester, Oxfordshire: Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Watching Brief

CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2019 Catalyst Bicester, Bicester, Oxfordshire: Archaeological Evaluation. CA typescript report Ref 770893_01

APPENDIX A: COTSWOLD ARCHAEOLOGY SPECIALISTS***Ceramics***

Neolithic/Bronze Age	Ed McSloy BA MCIFA (CA) Emily Edwards (freelance) Dr Elaine Morris BA PhD FSA MCIFA (University of Southampton)
Iron Age/Roman (Samian) (Amphorae stamps)	Ed McSloy BA MCIFA (CA) Kayt Marter Brown BA MSc MCIFA (freelance) Gwladys Montell MA PhD (freelance) Dr David Williams PhD FSA (freelance)
Anglo-Saxon	Paul Blinkhorn BTech (freelance) Dr Jane Timby BA PhD FSA MCIFA (freelance)
Medieval/post-medieval	Ed McSloy BA MCIFA (CA) Kayt Marter Brown BA MSc MCIFA (freelance) Stephanie Ratkai BA (freelance) Paul Blinkhorn BTech (freelance) John Allan BA MPhil FSA (freelance)
South West	Henrietta Quinnell BA FSA MCIFA (University of Exeter)
Clay tobacco pipe	Reg Jackson MLitt MCIFA (freelance) Marek Lewcun (freelance)
Ceramic Building Material	Ed McSloy MCIFA (CA) Dr Peter Warry PhD (freelance)

Other Finds

Small Finds	Ed McSloy BA MCIFA (CA)
Metal Artefacts	Katie Marsden BSc (CA) Dr Jörn Schuster MA DPhil FSA MCIFA (freelance) Dr Hilary Cool BA PhD FSA (freelance)
Lithics (Palaeolithic)	Ed McSloy BA MCIFA (CA) Jacky Sommerville BSc MA PCIFA (CA) Dr Francis Wenban-Smith BA MA PhD (University of Southampton)
Worked Stone	Dr Ruth Shaffrey BA PhD MCIFA (freelance) Dr Kevin Hayward FSA BSc MSc PhD PCIFA (freelance)
Inscriptions	Dr Roger Tomlin MA DPhil, FSA (Oxford)
Glass	Ed McSloy MCIFA (CA) Dr Hilary Cool BA PhD FSA (freelance) Dr David Dungworth BA PhD (freelance; English Heritage)
Coins	Ed McSloy BA MCIFA (CA) Dr Peter Guest BA PhD FSA (Cardiff University) Dr Richard Reece BSc PhD FSA (freelance)
Leather	Quita Mould MA FSA (freelance)
Textiles	Penelope Walton Rogers FSA Dip Acc. (freelance)
Iron slag/metal technology	Dr Tim Young MA PhD (Cardiff University) Dr David Starley BSc PhD
Worked wood	Michael Bamforth BSc MCIFA (freelance)

Biological Remains

Animal bone	Dr Philip Armitage MSc PhD MCIFA (freelance) Dr Matilda Holmes BSc MSc ACIFA (freelance)
Human Bone	Sharon Clough BA MSc MCIFA (CA)
Environmental sampling	Sarah Wyles BA PCIFA (CA) Sarah Cobain BSc MSc ACIFA (CA) Dr Keith Wilkinson BSc PhD MCIFA (ARCA)
Pollen	Dr Michael Grant BSc MSc PhD (University of Southampton) Dr Rob Batchelor BSc MSc PhD MCIFA (QUEST, University of Reading)
Diatoms	Dr Tom Hill BSc PhD CPLHE (Natural History Museum) Dr Nigel Cameron BSc MSc PhD (University College London)
Charred Plant Remains	Sarah Wyles BA PCIFA (CA) Sarah Cobain BSc MSc ACIFA (CA)
Wood/Charcoal	Sarah Cobain BSc MSc ACIFA(CA) Dana Challinor MA (freelance)
Insects	Enid Allison BSc D.Phil (Canterbury Archaeological Trust) Dr David Smith MA PhD (University of Birmingham)
Mollusca	Sarah Wyles BA PCIFA (CA) Dr Keith Wilkinson BSc PhD MCIFA (ARCA)
Ostracods and Foraminifera	Dr John Whittaker BSc PhD (freelance)
Fish bones	Dr Philip Armitage MSc PhD MCIFA (freelance)

Geoarchaeology

Soil micromorphology	Dr Keith Wilkinson BSc PhD MCIFA (ARCA) Dr Richard Macphail BSc MSc PhD (University College London)
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Scientific Dating

Dendrochronology	Robert Howard BA (NTRDL Nottingham)
Radiocarbon dating	SUERC (East Kilbride, Scotland) Beta Analytic (Florida, USA)
Archaeomagnetic dating	Dr Cathy Batt BSc PhD (University of Bradford)
TL/OSL Dating	Dr Phil Toms BSc PhD (University of Gloucestershire)

Conservation

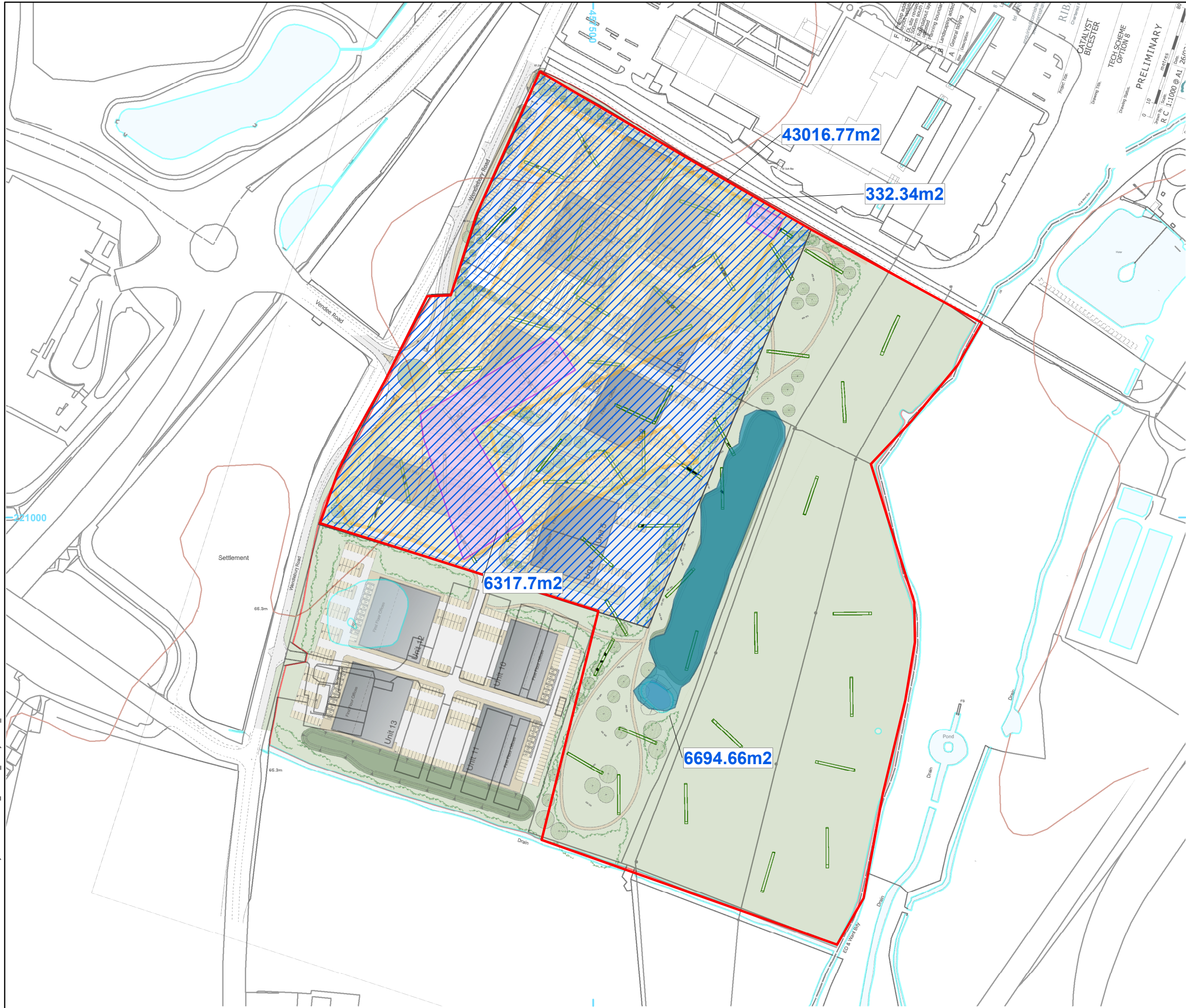
Karen Barker BSc (freelance) Pieta Greaves BSc MSc ACR (Drakon Heritage and Conservation)
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APPENDIX B: ARCHAEOLOGICAL STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES

- AAF 2007 *Archaeological Archives. A guide to best practice in creation, compilation, transfer and curation*. Archaeological Archives Forum
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- ClfA, 2014, *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Excavation*. Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (Reading)
- ClfA, 2014, *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Investigation and Recording of Standing Buildings or Structures*. Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (Reading)
- ClfA, 2014, *Standard and Guidance for the Collection, Documentation, Conservation and Research of Archaeological Materials*. Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (Reading)
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Legend

- Site Boundary
- Attenuation sud and pond to be monitored
- Area to be stripped of overburden (topsoil and subsoil)
- Known areas of higher archaeological potential/significance
- Area of archaeological potential of unknown significance
- Limit of excavation top
- Burial
- Cut feature



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PROJECT TITLE
Bicester Gateway Phase 2

FIGURE TITLE
Proposed excavation areas

DRAWN BY	KW	PROJECT NO	770893	FIGURE NO.
CHECKED BY	JSJ	DATE	17/07/2020	1
APPROVED BY	RK	SCALE@A3	1:2,500	

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