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## **6.1 INTRODUCTION**

- 6.1.1 This chapter has been produced by an Associate heritage consultant at EDP Ltd, with over 15 years' experience in providing professional archaeology and heritage services and who is an Associate member of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists. Their experience has included the production of assessments considering the affect of residential, retail, solar power and infrastructure projects, in both rural and urban environments, on built heritage and buried archaeological remains.
- 6.1.2 The following chapter assesses the effects of the Proposed Development on cultural heritage, including buried archaeological remains. In doing so, it draws on the results of technical reports, including an archaeological and heritage assessment, included as Appendix 6.1. In addition, a Specification for Archaeological Mitigation to address any buried remains at the Application Site is included as Appendix 6.2. The fieldwork reports for previous fieldwork investigations within the Application Site are also included in Appendix 6.2.
- 6.1.3 The chapter describes the relevant planning policy context; the assessment methodology; the baseline conditions at the Application Site and its surroundings; the likely significant environmental effects; the mitigation measures required to prevent, reduce or offset any significant adverse effects; and the likely residual effects after these measures have been employed, as well as any cumulative effects arising in combination with other similar development sites.

## 6.2 RELEVANT POLICY

### National Planning Policy Framework

- 6.2.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), revised in 2019, sets out national guidance concerning archaeological remains and other elements of the historic environment in Section 16. Those policies which are applicable to the development of the Site are presented in Appendix 6.1. Of particular relevance to this chapter is the recognition in the NPPF that development proposals should be assessed in their totality, so that the public benefits which they deliver are weighed against any harm to designated heritage assets resulting from their implementation.
- 6.2.2 Whilst Paragraph 194 states that any harm to designated heritage assets requires clear and convincing justification, it, and the subsequent paragraphs (Paragraphs 195 and 196), differentiates between substantial harm and less than substantial harm in respect of the tests to be applied by the decision maker in weighing the acceptability of a particular development proposal where harm to designated heritage assets occur.
- 6.2.3 Paragraph 197 provides the government's guidance for the determination of development proposals involving 'non-designated' heritage assets; in doing so requiring a balanced judgement to be made regarding the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset in question.

### Planning Practice Guidance

- 6.2.4 Planning practice guidance (PPG) to support the NPPF, which is of relevance to this ES chapter, is contained within National Planning Practice Guidance: Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment.
- 6.2.5 This guidance augments and provides clarification to the various heritage policies contained within the NPPF; in particular regarding the threshold for 'substantial harm' and evaluation of setting effects across the historic environment. The PPG has been used and applied in preparing the baseline assessments and drafting this chapter.
- 6.2.6 Key elements of the guidance relate to assessing harm. An important consideration should be whether the proposed works adversely affect a key element of the heritage asset's special architectural or historic merit. It is the degree of harm rather than the scale of development that is to be assessed. Substantial harm is stated to be a high test, so it may not arise in many cases. Whether a proposal causes substantial harm will be a judgment for the decision taker, having regard to the circumstances of the case and the NPPF.

- 6.2.7 Harm may arise from works to the heritage asset or from development within its setting. Setting is stated to include the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced and may be more extensive than its curtilage. A thorough assessment of the impact on setting needs to take into account, and be proportionate to, the significance of the heritage asset and the degree to which proposed changes enhance or detract from that significance and the ability to appreciate it.

#### Adopted Local Plan

- 6.2.8 The Adopted Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 includes Policy ESD15: The Character of the Built and Historic Environment. This broadly reflects the NPPF, in that it expects new development to positively contribute to local character and distinctiveness; and encourages the conservation and enhancement of designated and non-designated heritage assets. Whilst it reflects the approach to planning applications for development that would affect non-designated heritage assets outlined in Paragraph 197 of the NPPF, it is silent on the approach to proposals that would adversely affect designated heritage assets. The policy contains further detail on the desirability of sustainability and well-designed development.

#### Any Other Relevant Policy, Legislation or Guidance

- 6.2.9 There are two primary Acts governing the conservation and management of the historic environment in England; The Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act (1979), and The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act (1990).
- 6.2.10 In summary, the 1979 Act covers the conservation and management of nationally important archaeological sites and remains, whilst in addition the 1990 Act details the designation and management of listed buildings and conservation areas, as well as the statutory duties of the Local Planning Authority (LPA) (or other decision makers) insofar as development is concerned. The aspects of the Acts of relevance to this Chapter are set out in detail in Appendix 6.1.

### 6.3 ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

#### Scope

- 6.3.1 A scoping report was submitted to CDC in September 2020, within which an outline scope or assessing the effects of the Proposed Development upon Cultural Heritage was included. In the first instance, this scope envisaged the preparation of a desk-based assessment to establish the baseline situation in terms of archaeology and heritage (included here as Appendix 6.1). This largely involved updating a previous archaeological and heritage assessment for the site undertaken in 2014 (EDP 2014) through obtaining and analysing refreshed data sets from the Oxfordshire Historic Environment Record, amongst other repositories, which would be augmented by a new site walkover. The site walkover also considered the historic landscape character of the site, compared to datasets from elsewhere in the county and region.
- 6.3.2 When considering the archaeological potential of the site within the assessment, a study area of 1km radius from the site boundary was identified as appropriate.
- 6.3.3 It was proposed that the previous fieldwork investigations within the site, including a geophysical survey and two phases of trial trench evaluation, and the agreement of a Specification for Archaeological Mitigation with the CDC's archaeological advisor, would be sufficient to demonstrate that archaeological fieldwork investigation was a suitable form of mitigation for the archaeological remains within the Application Site.
- 6.3.4 Thereafter, the ES chapter drew upon this baseline and set out the legislative and planning policy context surrounding the conservation and management of the historic environment, the methodology employed in the identification and assessment of potentially significant effects, the baseline conditions pertaining to the site and its immediate environs, the nature and significance of any predicted effects, the scope of any mitigation and/or enhancement measures required to eliminate, minimise or offset those predicted effects and finally the significance of any long term residual effects persisting following their implementation.
- 6.3.5 The CDC Scoping Opinion (dated 11 November 2020) broadly confirmed this proposed approach, but with some further requirements for additional data to be considered in the archaeological and heritage assessment. This was specified by CDC's archaeological advisor as including the analysis of LiDAR data, the Oxfordshire Historic Landscape Character project, and the results of nearby fieldwork investigations, all of which have been included in the Archaeological and Heritage Assessment. In addition, it was identified that a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) should be agreed in advance with CDC's archaeological advisor to ensure that the scope of assessment is agreed. This WSI was submitted by EDP directly to CDC's archaeological advisor on 19<sup>th</sup> February 2021.

## Data Sources

6.3.6 The following sources of data were consulted as part of the assessment process:

- Information held by the Oxfordshire Historic Environment Record (HER) on known archaeological sites, monuments and findspots, within the vicinity of the site.
- Information from the Oxfordshire Historic Landscape Character project;
- Information from the Portable Antiquities Scheme;
- Fieldwork reports from previous phases of investigation within the site, including monitoring of geotechnical test pits and trial trench evaluation. Also the results of Northamptonshire Archaeology's excavation in 2004, c. 125m to the north of the site, and a trial trench evaluation at Wretchwick Green to the east of the site by Oxford Archaeology in 2017;
- Information from the British Geological Society online maps;
- Maps and documents held by the Oxfordshire History Centre and online sources, including all editions of the Ordnance Survey;
- Available LiDAR coverage of the site and its environs, if available and at a suitably high resolution;
- The National Heritage List for England curated by Historic England; and
- Aerial photographs held by the Historic England Archive. The National Mapping Programme data did not cover the Application Site.

## Assessment Approach

6.3.7 The following section outline the assessment process which was employed in determining the archaeological and heritage interest of heritage assets within the Application Site and its wider environs, and in assessing the magnitude and significance of potential effects upon those assets.

6.3.8 Cultural Heritage, or the 'historic environment' and 'heritage assets' as termed under the NPPF, includes a wide range of features resulting from human intervention in the landscape, varying in scope from buried archaeological remains up to late 20th century industrial

structures. In this case, archaeology and heritage receptors can be divided into the following categories:

- World Heritage Sites;
- Scheduled Monuments;
- Listed Buildings (Grades I, II\* and II);
- Registered Parks and Gardens (Grades I, II\* and II);
- Conservation Areas;
- Registered historic battlefields; and
- Non-designated buildings, archaeological finds and sites.

6.3.9 Preparation of the Archaeological and Heritage Assessment (Appendix 6.1) involved the consultation of readily available archaeological and historical information from documentary and cartographic sources augmented with an Application Site walkover.

6.3.10 The Archaeological and Heritage Assessment was produced in accordance with relevant best practice guidance, comprising the Standard and Guidance for Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment issued by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA, 2020); as well as the guidance issued by Historic England, comprising Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets (Second edition) (HE 2017), Historic England Advice Note 1: Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management (HE 2016) and Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning, Note 2: Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment (HE 2015).

6.3.11 Information was gathered from the repositories discussed above (see 'Data Sources') and was augmented through an Application Site walkover in March 2021.

#### Significance Criteria

6.3.12 To assess the effect on cultural heritage, Tables 6.1, 6.2 and 6.3 set out the criteria that have been employed in attributing 'sensitivity' to archaeological and cultural heritage assets, identifying the magnitude of any changes to them and assessing the likely significance of the resulting impacts in EIA terms.

6.3.13 The sensitivity of the heritage assets identified has been assessed on the basis of Table 6.1. The magnitude and significance of potential effects on archaeological remains and cultural heritage resources, arising from the implementation of the Proposed Development, have been identified and appropriately assessed, based on Tables 6.2 and 6.3.

6.3.14 The significance of effects is assessed with reference to the receptor’s (i.e. the heritage asset) sensitivity and the magnitude of impact. The criteria in Table 6.1 are based on those established by the Highways Agency in its Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (HA 2020), which is an industry standard assessment methodology. The attribution of the sensitivity is a question of professional judgement.

Table 6.1: Sensitivity of Receptor

Receptor	Sensitivity of receptor			
	High	Medium	Low	Negligible
World Heritage Site				
Scheduled Monument				
Grade I or II* listed building				
Grade I or II* registered park or *garden				
Other nationally important archaeological asset				
Grade II listed building				
Grade II registered park or garden				
Conservation area				
Other asset of regional or county importance				
Locally important asset with cultural or educational value				
Heritage site or feature with very limited value or interest				

6.3.15 The classification of the magnitude of impact on heritage assets is rigorous and based on consistent criteria. This takes account of such factors as the physical scale and type of disturbance to them and whether features or evidence would be lost that are fundamental to their heritage interest and therefore significance. The magnitude of impact is assessed using the criteria in Table 6.2.

Table 6.2: Magnitude of Impacts



Large	Moderate	Small	Negligible
Change to the significance of a heritage asset so that it is completely altered or destroyed			
	Change to the significance of a heritage asset so that it is significantly modified		
		Change to the significance of a heritage asset so that it is noticeably different	
			Change to the significance of a heritage asset that hardly affects it

6.3.16 Following the evaluation of sensitivity for specific archaeology and cultural heritage receptors and the magnitude of impact, the significance of effect is assessed using the criteria shown in Table 6.3 below.

Table 6.3: Significance of Effects

MAGNITUDE	SENSITIVITY			
	High	Medium	Low	Negligible
Large	Major	Major	Moderate	Minor
Moderate	Major	Moderate	Minor	Negligible
Small	Moderate	Minor	Minor	Negligible
Negligible	Minor	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible

6.3.17 The assessment matrix defined in Table 6.3 is not intended to be 'prescriptive', but rather it allows for the employment of professional judgement to determine the most appropriate level of effect for each heritage asset that is identified.

6.3.18 Effects are categorised with regard to their nature (adverse, beneficial or neutral) and their permanence (permanent, temporary or reversible). For all forms of heritage asset

(receptor), the sensitivity of the receptor is combined with the predicted magnitude of change to arrive at the significance of effect.

6.3.19 The combination of sensitivity and magnitude of change is undertaken with reference to the matrix in Table 6.3, with those effects defined as major being deemed 'significant'. All other effects are determined to be not significant in EIA terms.

#### Uncertainties and Limitations

6.3.20 Due to ground conditions and ecological constraints, the footprint of the Proposed Development parcel in the south east of the Application Site could not be investigated through trial trench evaluation. However, it is considered that a sufficient proportion of the Application Site has been investigated in order to characterise the archaeological potential.

6.3.21 Indeed, a robust mitigation strategy has been agreed with the CDC's archaeological advisor, which envisages any affected remains being dealt with through fieldwork investigation, rather than retention (see Appendix 6.2).

6.3.22 No other uncertainties or limitations are identified.

## 6.4 BASELINE CONDITIONS

### The Current Baseline

- 6.4.1 The following section provides a summary of key findings from the Archaeological and Heritage Assessment (Appendix 6.1).

### *Designated Heritage Assets*

- 6.4.2 The Application Site does not contain any designated heritage assets, as defined in Annex 2 of the NPPF. In the wider area, the Wretchwick deserted medieval settlement scheduled monument (1015549) is located c. 350m to the south, and two clusters of listed buildings which are concentrated at Launton c. 500m to the east and within the Bicester Conservation Area and its immediate area c. 400m to the west.
- 6.4.3 The Wretchwick scheduled monument comprises a series of earthworks and buried archaeological remains related to a former medieval settlement, which was recorded in the Domesday Book (1086) and was largely deserted by the end of the medieval period. It is considered to be of high sensitivity.
- 6.4.4 This asset was identified as deriving the majority of its significance from the archaeological and historic interests of its physical remains, as a relatively well preserved deserted medieval settlement that has good potential to contain deposits and features that could further elucidate the lives of such rural communities. In terms of its setting, the immediately surrounding farmland is considered to make a positive contribution to this asset by demonstrating its original rural setting and the link between the settlement and the land that it cultivated. Otherwise, the scheduled monument lies adjacent to the modern Wretchwick Way, beyond which to the north west is the modern urban edge of Bicester, which influences its experience today.
- 6.4.5 Whilst the south east edge of the Application Site may have historic connections with the settlement at Wretchwick, as it may have fallen within the same parish, today it is physically and visually separated by modern development and any former links are intangible. As such the Application Site is not considered to contribute to the significance of this asset.
- 6.4.6 With regard the more distant listed buildings at Launton and Bicester, these are a mix of high and medium sensitivity receptors. They largely derive their significance from the architectural and historic interest of their built fabric, with the positive aspects of their setting deriving from their location within the settlements and individual street scenes.

- 6.4.7 Similarly, the Bicester Conservation Area, which is of medium sensitivity, largely derives its character and appearance from its built form and the post-medieval street layout. There is little in its setting that contributes to its significance, surrounded as it is by Victorian and modern development that separates it from the wider landscape (including the Application Site).
- 6.4.8 Indeed, there are no visual or other known links between the Application Site and these listed buildings and the conservation area, and it is not considered to form part of their setting or contribute to their significance.

*Non-Designated Heritage Assets*

- 6.4.9 With regard to non-designated heritage assets, the site has been subject to four phases of archaeological investigation and a small number of remains have been identified from the prehistoric to Georgian periods.
- 6.4.10 The earliest archaeological remains recorded within the wider study area comprised of a large assemblage of Mesolithic flintwork (28310), which were identified during an evaluation (EOX5519) c. 900m to the south west of the site. Bronze Age activity includes stray pottery finds (29211) c. 845m to the north east and a possible barrow cemetery (5629) c. 950 to the north.
- 6.4.11 In terms of the Application Site itself, the earliest recorded archaeological remains within it comprises a single Iron Age pit (16071) in the north west. No other datable prehistoric remains were found during the other fieldwork investigations within the Application Site and therefore it appears to largely fall outside of known areas of settlement and activity at this time, such as the settlement (16120) located c. 250m to the south and a field system (26122) c. 125m to the north.
- 6.4.12 Part of a Roman enclosure was found on the north east edge of the Application Site and appeared to extend beyond the boundaries to the north east. A total of 17 undated ditches and gullies were also found in the south east which may relate to a Roman or later field systems. These remains may be associated with evidence for a small 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> century farming settlement (26122) located c. 125m to the north. Whilst wells and enclosures were found during the investigation to the north, no evidence for domestic structures were recorded and it was postulated that these may have been located within the footprint of the later railway embankment that separates the Application Site from this area of investigation.
- 6.4.13 Similarly, a trial trench evaluation to the south east of the Application Site (EOX6407), c. 20m to the south east at its closest, found a lattice work of largely undated ditches that may be part of the wider field system that the undated gullies and ditches within the south east

of the Application Site may be associated with. Where these could be dated, the ditches were of 2<sup>nd</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> century AD. This investigation also found two areas of Roman settlement c. 700m to the south east of the Application Site.

- 6.4.14 A small amount of unstratified Anglo-Saxon pottery was found in topsoil, a tree throw and a natural hollow in the south east of the Application Site (EOX103). This is similar to stray contemporary pottery found during the investigation (26122) c. 125m to the north of the Application Site. Otherwise, evidence for Anglo-Saxon settlement is concentrated within the historic core of Bicester, further to the west.
- 6.4.15 The Application Site was most likely farmland throughout the medieval to modern periods. The archaeological trial trench evaluation (EOX1936) in the north west of the Application Site identified a post-medieval stone spread and some of those undated ditches and gullies found during additional trenching (EOX103) in the south east may date from these periods. Therefore, the Application Site has a low potential to contain remains from these periods, other than those related to former agricultural regimes and demolition deposits related to a Victorian farmstead that was formerly located within the south east corner.
- 6.4.16 In summary, the buried archaeological remains within the Application Site are likely to comprise (1) Roman edge of settlement activity on the north east edge, to the south east of the brook that divides the Application Site, related to the activity found on the opposite side of the railway line to the north (26122); and (2) late prehistoric/Roman agricultural remains (such as residual remains related to field systems and stock enclosures). With regard to the former, the edge of settlement activity is likely to be truncated by the railway line and later activity (most recently noted during the March 2021 Application Site walkover, which showed a c. 20m wide area of disturbance adjacent to the railway line resulting from recent infrastructure works), and isolated by the loss of the related settlement beneath the railway line and to the north. These two receptors are considered to be of no more than low sensitivity.
- 6.4.17 Also, there is the potential for (1) medieval and later agricultural remains (such as plough furrows and former field boundaries); and (2) demolition deposits related to a late Victorian farmstead in the south east of the Application Site. These are considered to be of no more than negligible sensitivity.

#### *Historic Landscape Character*

- 6.4.18 The Application Site is categorised by the Oxfordshire Historic Landscape Character (HLC) project as 're-organised enclosures' that resulted from the railway line having been superimposed upon them. They are noted as broadly dating to between 1882 and 1920.

- 6.4.19 This is a common type in Oxfordshire, with the HLC project noting this type as 'abundant' and constituting 27.3% of the county. The 'reorganised enclosures'-type is itself a sub-category of the broader 'enclosure' HLC-type, which constitutes 73.8% of the county.
- 6.4.20 The individual components of the landscape within the Application Site includes ridge and furrow earthworks, trackways and hedgerows of various dates. The north west of the Application Site has very few historic landscape features, as it is utilised as a single modern arable field. By comparison, the south east of the Application Site contains the majority of historic landscape features, as it has been least altered.
- 6.4.21 The visually verifiable areas of extant ridge and furrow, and headlands, as noted on an Application Site walkover in March 2021, are shown on Plan EDP 6 in Appendix 6.1. Whilst all but no ridge and furrow survive in the north west, better survival is noted in the central and south-east part of the Application Site, although in places these features are truncated and are the residual remains of larger furlongs. Two headlands were noted, which were used as trackways during later periods.
- 6.4.22 Internal trackways that may date to the 17th century and only occur in the south east of the site, form an 'H'-shaped access arrangement which is linked to the village of Launton. These trackways are now heavily overgrown with scrub and are in places impassable.
- 6.4.23 The hedgerows date to between the 17<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, and the earliest examples are depicted on a map of 1607 and one marks the Launton/Wretchwick parish boundary. The earliest examples of hedgerows parallel the arrangement of the ridge and furrow and therefore reflect earlier land divisions.
- 6.4.24 A Victorian farmstead was previously located in the south east of the Application Site, but was demolished in the 20th century and today has no above ground presence.
- 6.4.25 Whilst the historic landscape character of the site has been categorised as the common 're-organised enclosure'-type, the individual elements retain some interest. Indeed, the system of field division in the south east mirrors the layout of the medieval furlongs and thus preserves the layout of an earlier field system. However, it is also recognised that the Application Site has undergone sustained attrition by modern impacts, including the loss of ridge and furrow earthworks, the loss and rearrangement of hedgerows, the imposition of the railway, and the demolition of the Victorian farmstead of Frogley's Farm.
- 6.4.26 Therefore, the historic landscape character of the Application Site is considered to be of low sensitivity.

The Projected Future Baseline

- 6.4.27 With regard to designated heritage assets, their setting is likely to change in the future as development proposals are implemented in their immediate and wider surroundings. Such development could be beneficial, adverse or neutral.
- 6.4.28 In terms of the buried archaeological remains within the Application Site, those located within the agricultural field to the north west of the brook are likely to be gradually eroded through the process of modern ploughing. As such, over time, even without the Proposed Development, the significance of the buried remains could gradually lessen until they are altogether removed. It is recognised that this process may take many decades.
- 6.4.29 In terms of those archaeological remains within the south east of the Application Site, in the present ground conditions, they would remain relatively undisturbed, apart from animal burrowing and rooting which may cause very limited damage over time. The effect of wind throw on trees may cause more noticeable but localised damage to the buried remains, as whole root pads may be pulled up. If this part of the Application Site were to revert to a managed agricultural use in the future, this could expose the archaeological remains to the risk of plough damage.
- 6.4.30 With regard to the historic landscape character, if the Application Site were to continue in its current state, with minimal management of the hedgerows and scrub growth, it may be expected that the definition of the individual hedgerows and the historic land divisions they denote would become more obscure as the hedgerows colonise the land around, as has already begun (in places the hedgerows are up to 8m wide). Invasive scrub and undergrowth may also largely cover the fields and obscure such features as the ridge and furrow. This would de-value the historic landscape character over time, as the distinct historic features are lost as the south east of the Application Site becomes woodland.
- 6.4.31 If the Application Site were to revert to a managed agricultural regime, this would put the hedgerows at risk of loss through field amalgamation and the ridge and furrow at risk of being ploughed out if the land was used for arable. This would also de-value the historic landscape character over time. Alternatively, if the land were used for grazing, there may be some cutting back of the hedgerows to their former extent and removal of scrub, with invasive undergrowth managed through grazing, all of which would be beneficial to the historic landscape character.

## 6.5 POTENTIAL EFFECTS

### Construction Stage

#### *Designated Heritage Assets*

- 6.5.1 Given that the Application Site does not contribute to the significance of any designated heritage assets in the wider area and has no visual connections with such assets, there are no identified effects during the Construction Stage on any designated heritage assets.

#### *Non-Designated Heritage Assets*

- 6.5.2 There is not expected to be any impact on the possible Roman edge of settlement activity, considered to be of low sensitivity, located on the north east edge of the south eastern part of the Application Site. This is due to this area being retained as public open space within the Proposed Development. The only possible impacts in this area are pathways, the typical impact depth of which would be sufficiently shallow to stay within the disturbed upper layers of soil. However, the paths may be mown grass pedestrian ways instead, which would have no impact whatsoever.
- 6.5.3 The majority of the previously identified late prehistoric/Roman agricultural remains, considered to be of low sensitivity, and medieval and later agricultural remains, considered to be of negligible sensitivity, are within the south east of the Application Site, where large areas will be preserved as open space. As such, it is considered that the impact of the Construction Stage will be limited to only those parts of these wider spreads of archaeological remains where they overlap with the Proposed Development footprints for housing, roads, and attenuation ponds and other substantial landscaping, in the north west and south east of the Application Site.
- 6.5.4 The late prehistoric/Roman agricultural remains would receive a permanent, direct and moderate impact, resulting in a minor adverse effect. The medieval and later agricultural remains would receive a permanent, direct and moderate impact, resulting in a negligible adverse effect.
- 6.5.5 The demolition deposits related to a late Victorian farmstead, located in the south east corner of the Application Site and considered to be of negligible sensitivity, would be entirely removed by the Proposed Development. This would result in a permanent, direct and large impact, of minor adverse effect.

#### *Historic Landscape Character*



- 6.5.6 The Application Site has a low sensitivity in terms of historic landscape character, with the most valuable elements located in the south east. The Proposed Development would involve the development of the modern agricultural field in the north west, and a small portion of the south east. With regard to the latter, this would largely be contained within the current field layout and involve only minimal hedge removal, with the resultant loss of a short 19<sup>th</sup> century hedge and some small gaps in others to allow for pedestrian access. All of the best surviving elements of the ridge and furrow would be retained, expect where a limited number of small ecological ponds would be created in some field margins/corners.
- 6.5.7 To balance against these adverse impacts, the scrub and tree growth would be cut back to more clearly define hedgerows that have begun to colonise areas either side of them. This would also remove some growth over the ridge and furrow fields, reducing the risk of root and animal burrowing damage, and clearing and re-opening historic 17<sup>th</sup> century trackways that have become overgrown. These impacts would be beneficial to the historic landscape character of the Application Site.
- 6.5.8 Balancing these adverse and beneficial impacts, it is considered that the Construction Stage would have a direct, permanent and small impact resulting in a minor beneficial effect.
- 6.5.9 This conclusion takes account of inherent mitigation within the construction process. Specifically, this would involve a construction management plan that would ensure that best practice is implemented to prevent accidental damage of hedgerows, ridge and furrow and other sensitive features that contribute to the historic landscape character of the site. Such measures would include temporary protective fencing to prevent access to more sensitive areas, the use of appropriately sized machinery, careful consideration of the locations for spoil and material storage, the routing of on-site traffic and the siting of work compounds.

#### Post-completion Stage

##### *Designated Heritage Assets*

- 6.5.10 Given that the Application Site does not contribute to the significance of any designated heritage assets in the wider area and has no visual connections with such assets, there are no identified effects during the Post-Completion Stage on any designated heritage assets.

##### *Non-designated Heritage Assets*

- 6.5.11 On completion, there is not expected to be any further adverse effects on buried archaeological remains. Instead, those remains that are preserved beneath public open space are expected to benefit from the improved management regime which would reduce occurrences of root damage, animal burrowing and the effects of wind thrown trees.

6.5.12 These remains would comprise (1) possible Roman edge of settlement activity, considered to be of low sensitivity; (2) part of the late prehistoric/Roman agricultural remains, considered to be of low sensitivity; and, (3) part of the medieval and later agricultural remains, considered to be of negligible sensitivity.

6.5.13 This would result in direct, permanent and negligible impacts, which would translate into negligible beneficial effects on the possible Roman edge of settlement activity, the late prehistoric/Roman agricultural remains, and the medieval and later agricultural remains.

*Historic Landscape Character*

6.5.14 The Post-Completion Stage would result in a long term management of the land within the Application Site, which would ensure preservation and maintenance of the hedgerows, ridge and furrow and trackways. This would result in a direct, permanent and small impact of minor beneficial effect.

## 6.6 MITIGATION MEASURES

### Construction Stage

#### *Designated Heritage Assets*

- 6.6.1 There are no effects identified on designated heritage assets during the Construction Stage and therefore no mitigation is identified as necessary.

#### *Non-Designated Heritage Assets*

- 6.6.2 A Specification for Archaeological Mitigation (Appendix 6.2) has been agreed with CDC's archaeological advisor. This proposes a combination of 'strip and map', trenching and archaeological ground monitoring to make a record of the archaeological remains that would be impacted (as opposed to those that would be preserved within the proposed public open space) prior to their removal through the construction process.

- 6.6.3 Those receptors that would be mitigated by these measures are (1) part of the late prehistoric/Roman agricultural remains; (2) part of the medieval and later agricultural activity remains; and (3) the demolition deposits related to a late Victorian farmstead in the south east corner of the Application Site.

#### *Historic Landscape Character*

- 6.6.4 There are no further mitigation measures proposed for the historic landscape character of the Application Site, beyond the inherent mitigation built into the Proposed Development.

### Post-completion Stage

#### *Designated Heritage Assets*

- 6.6.5 There are no effects identified on designated heritage assets during the Post-Construction Stage and therefore no mitigation is identified as necessary.

#### *Non-Designated Heritage Assets*

- 6.6.6 No additional mitigation, beyond that inherent in the masterplan, is proposed at the Post-Completion Stage for the buried archaeological remains within the Application Site.

#### *Historic Landscape Character*

- 6.6.7 No additional mitigation, beyond that inherent in the masterplan, is proposed at the Post-Completion Stage for the historic landscape character of the Application Site.

## 6.7 RESIDUAL EFFECTS

### Construction stage

#### *Designated Heritage Assets*

- 6.7.1 There are no identified residual effects on designated heritage assets during the Construction Stage.

#### *Non-Designated Heritage Assets*

- 6.7.2 Whilst the late prehistoric/Roman agricultural remains would be recorded through the mitigation process, there would be a base level of impact due to the loss of the physical remains. Therefore, after the implementation of the proposed Archaeological Mitigation Strategy, there would be a negligible adverse residual effect on this receptor.

- 6.7.3 In terms of the medieval and later agricultural activity remains and the demolition deposits related to a late Victorian farmstead, they are of no more than negligible sensitivity, such that they would not necessarily be proposed for mitigation. The Specification for Archaeological Mitigation would result in their mitigation due to the overlap between their locations and that of the late prehistoric/Roman agricultural remains discussed above. There would still be a base level of harm from the removal of the remains, resulting in a negligible adverse residual effect on these receptors.

#### *Historic Landscape Character*

- 6.7.4 There would be a minor beneficial residual effect on the historic landscape character of the Application Site. This is not significant in EIA terms.

### Post-completion Stage

#### *Designated Heritage Assets*

- 6.7.5 There are no identified residual effects on designated heritage assets during the Post-completion Stage.

#### *Non-Designated Heritage Assets*

- 6.7.6 There would be negligible beneficial residual effects on the possible Roman edge of settlement activity, the late prehistoric/Roman agricultural remains, and the medieval and

later agricultural remains during the Post-completion Stage. These are not significant in EIA terms.

*Historic Landscape Character*

6.7.7 There would be a minor beneficial residual effect on the historic landscape character of the Application Site. This is not significant in EIA terms.

Summary of Effects

6.7.8 The effects identified are summarised in Table 6.4, all of which are not significant in EIA terms. Where there would be no effect on a receptor, this is not included below.

Table 6.4: Summary of Effects

Potential effect	Significance (pre-mitigation)	Mitigation measure	Significance of residual effect
Construction stage			
Late prehistoric/Roman agricultural remains	Minor Adverse	Implementation of Specification for Archaeological Mitigation (Appendix 6.2).	Negligible Adverse
Medieval and later agricultural remains	Negligible Adverse	Implementation of Specification for Archaeological Mitigation (Appendix 6.2).	Negligible Adverse
Demolition deposits related to late Victorian farmstead	Minor Adverse	Implementation of Specification for Archaeological Mitigation (Appendix 6.2).	Negligible Adverse
Historic Landscape Character	Minor Beneficial	None proposed.	Minor Beneficial
Post-completion stage			
Possible Roman edge of settlement activity	Negligible Beneficial	None proposed.	Negligible Beneficial
Late prehistoric/Roman agricultural activity	Negligible Beneficial	None proposed.	Negligible Beneficial

Medieval and later agricultural activity remains	Negligible Beneficial	None proposed.	Negligible Beneficial
Historic Landscape Character	Minor Beneficial	None proposed.	Minor Beneficial

## 6.8 CUMULATIVE EFFECTS

### Designated Heritage Assets

- 6.8.1 As there are no effects during the Construction or Post-Completion Stages on designated heritage assets, there are no cumulative effects either.

### Non-designated Heritage Assets

- 6.8.2 The proximity of the proposed Wretchwick Green development (Planning Ref: 16/01268/OUT) suggests that some of the archaeological remains within the Application Site may extend toward or into this neighbouring development.
- 6.8.3 A trial trench evaluation of Wretchwick Green identified, amongst other features (such as an Iron age enclosure and two areas of Roman settlement), 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> century field boundaries and a lattice work of undated ditches. These may relate to those undated gullies and ditches found in the south east of the Application Site, which themselves may be of late prehistoric/Roman or later date.
- 6.8.4 Whilst a negative cumulative effect is possible during the Construction Stage, this relates to the late prehistoric/Roman agricultural remains, considered to be of low sensitivity, this can be mitigated through fieldwork and would result in a negligible adverse residual effect. Assuming that a similar mitigation strategy is enacted on Wretchwick Green, it is likely that there would be a similar negligible adverse cumulative effect. This would be not significant in EIA terms.
- 6.8.5 The preservation of much of the Application Site, and any underlying archaeological remains, as public open space would have a beneficial effect, so it is unlikely that there would be an adverse cumulative effect with other development sites during the Post-Completion Stage.

### Historic Landscape Character

- 6.8.6 The Wretchwick Green (Planning Application Ref: 16/01268/OUT), South East Bicester (Planning Application Ref: 16/00861/HYBRID) and Bicester Gateway (Planning Application Ref: 16/02586/OUT) developments would involve the loss of piecemeal enclosure from the 18<sup>th</sup> and/or 19<sup>th</sup> century, albeit which has already been affected by the construction of modern infrastructure or later field reorganisation.
- 6.8.7 Whilst not of the same specific type of historic landscape character-type as the Application Site, they fall within the broad 'enclosure' category that covers 73.8% of the county. However, as identified above, the Proposed Development would have beneficial effects



during both Construction and Post-Completion Stages, and therefore there would be no adverse cumulative effect with these other development sites.