

Himley Village, Bicester  
Written Scheme of Investigation for Archaeological Excavation  
February 2023

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**Report**

Written Scheme of Investigation for Archaeological Excavation

**Site**

Himley Village, Bicester

**Date**

February 2023

**Planning Authority**

Cherwell District Council

**Approximate Site Centre**

SP 55656 23353

**Planning Reference**

21/02337/DISC (Condition 33 of 14/02121/OUT)

**Prepared By**

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**Approved By**

Cathy Patrick MCIfA

**Report Status**

Final

**Issue Date**

February 2023

**Orion Reference**

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## 1.0 Introduction

### Background

- 1.1 Orion Heritage has been commissioned by Cala Homes Ltd to produce a Written Scheme of Investigation to support a Reserved Matters Planning Application to Cherwell District Council for housing development at Himley Village.
- 1.2 Archaeological evaluation works were undertaken in November 2021 which identified the need for further mitigation works. Discussions between Orion Heritage and the Planning Archaeologist for Oxfordshire County Council have established the scope of archaeological mitigation work required. This document outlines the agreed scope of works and it includes a design brief from the archaeological advisor to Cherwell District Council (Appendix A).
- 1.3 The Application Site forms part of Himley Village North West Bicester, which received outline planning permission on the 30<sup>th</sup> January 2020 for:

*Development to provide up to 1,700 residential dwellings (Class C3), a retirement village (Class C2), flexible commercial floorspace (Classes A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, B1, C1 and D1), social and community facilities (Class D1), land to accommodate one energy centre and land to accommodate one new primary school (up to 2FE) (Class D1). Such development to include provision of strategic landscape, provision of new vehicular, cycle and pedestrian access routes, infrastructure and other operations (including demolition of farm buildings on Middleton Stoney Road) (OUTLINE 14/02121/OUT)*

- 1.4 The Outline Planning application was supported by an Environmental Statement (Waterman 2014), Desk Based Assessment (Waterman 2014), Aerial Photographic Assessment (Air Photo Services 2010), Geophysical Survey (Northamptonshire Archaeology 2012), and Archaeological Evaluation (Oxford Archaeology 2014).
- 1.5 Himley Village, 20.5 ha in size, forms part of the wider outline planning permission. The site is being redeveloped for a mixed end-use comprising 500 residential properties and associated development (Figure 2). The following archaeological conditions have been placed on outline planning permission:

*Condition 32:*

*Prior to any demolition on the site, the commencement of the development and any archaeological investigation, a professional archaeological organisation acceptable to the Local Planning Authority shall prepare a first stage archaeological Written Scheme of Investigation, relating to the application area, which shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.*

*Condition 33:*

*Prior to any demolition on the site (other than in accordance with the agreed Written Scheme of Investigation) and prior to the commencement of the development and following the approval of the first stage Written Scheme of Investigation referred to in condition 32, a programme of archaeological evaluation, investigation and recording of the application area shall be carried out by the commissioned archaeological organisation in accordance with the approved first stage Written Scheme of Investigation and shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The programme shall be followed throughout the construction of the development.*

- 1.6 It is anticipated that an archaeological condition mirroring condition 33 will be placed on the reserved matters consent. In line with condition 33, further archaeological investigation will be implemented and will be achieved by means of the following staged scope of archaeological works:

1. Production of a Written Scheme of Investigation;

2. Strip, map and sample;
3. Reporting, archiving and publication.

- 1.7 This document will be submitted to Cherwell District Council's archaeological advisor for approval. The contractors' Written Scheme of Investigation must also be agreed with the OCC Archaeological Service prior to the archaeological works being undertaken.
- 1.8 This Mitigation Strategy has been guided in its composition by the Standard and guidance: Archaeological field excavation (ClfA 2014a), and the Management of Archaeological Projects 2 (English Heritage 1991), the Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MORPHE): Project Manager's Guide (Historic England 2015), the OCC brief and local and national planning policies.

## 2.0 Site Location and Description

- 2.1 The application site is sub-rectangular in shape with an approximate area of around 20.5 ha. The site is located on the western edge of Bicester, to the north of the B4030 and south of Himley Farm. Himley Farmhouse and Lovelynych House are located adjacent to the study site. The application site comprises two large enclosed agricultural fields with no building stock.
- 2.2 The study site is underlain by Cornbrash Formation (limestone). No superficial deposits are recorded (GeoIndex 2021). The evaluation report records shallow topsoil and subsoil deposits overlying the natural of approximately 0.25 – 0.43m depth (Oxford Archaeology 2014, v.3 10-25).
- 2.3 The topography of the study site slopes gently from c. 90m OD in the north-west corner to c. 85m OD in the south-east.

### 3.0 Archaeological and Historical Background

#### Previous archaeological works

- 3.1 The study site has been subject to the following previous investigations:
- Archaeological Desk Based Assessment (Waterman 2014) (ES Technical Appendix 15.1)
  - Interpretation of Aerial Photographs for Archaeology (Air Photo Services 2010) (ES Technical Appendix 15.2)
  - Archaeological Geophysical Survey for the Proposed Bicester Eco Development Oxfordshire December 2011 – February 2012 (Northamptonshire Archaeology 2012) (ES Technical Appendix 15.3) (Figure 3)
  - Archaeological Evaluation Report Volume 1: Main Report and Appendices (Oxford Archaeology 2014) (ES Technical Appendix 15.4) (Figure 4)
  - Trial trench evaluation in November 2021 (Headland Archaeology 2021)
- 3.2 The 2014 archaeological evaluation involved the excavation of a total of fifty 50m x 1.8m trenches (trenches 27-76) within two fields in which the study site is located. Of these 50 trenches, 40 lie within the study site itself. This constitutes a 1.75% evaluation of the study site. A total of 10 trenches within the study site contained archaeological remains; these trenches are located in the centre and north-east of the study site. The western and south-eastern trenches contained no archaeological remains.
- 3.3 The following provides a summary of the archaeological features identified within the study site. An area of Early to Middle Age Iron Age occupation evidence has been identified in the southern part, comprising a single, albeit substantial, pit. The remaining features comprise undated linear ditches.
- Trench 36: Undated E-W aligned ditch or field boundary recorded by geophysical survey (s/a tr 55)
  - Trench 45: Two undated furrows.
  - Trench 47: Undated NE-SW ditch recorded by geophysical survey.
  - Trench 48: Iron Age pit large 10m across and 1m deep pit. Ceramics all dated to the Early to Middle Iron Age. Corresponded to geophysical survey.
  - Trench 53: One E-W aligned ditch, containing heat affected material but no finds.
  - Trench 55: Undated NW-SE ditch recorded by geophysical survey.
  - Trench 69: Two undated E-W aligned ditches.
  - Trench 70: Single undated NE-SW ditches.
  - Trench 75: Single undated E-W ditch. Corresponds to feature on AP's.
  - Trench 76: Two undated NW-SE aligned ditches towards its northern end.
- 3.4 The 2014 DBA provides an overview of the historical and archaeological background to the study site. Further to this, the 2014 evaluation concluded that the wider Eco village site contained 'scattered activity dating to the prehistoric period: a single feature contained pottery dating to the Neolithic period, a small group of trenches contained deposits which, while undated, may date to the Bronze Age, and a scatter of features, including a substantial enclosure, contained material of early-middle Iron Age date. There were two main areas of Roman activity, well represented by the geophysical survey as well as a third, less extensive area' (Oxford Archaeology 2014 v.1, 30). With the exception of the previously discussed Iron Age pit, no significant prehistoric or Romano-British finds or features were identified within the study site itself.
- 3.5 The study site lies south of Himley Farm which contains two grade II Listed 18<sup>th</sup> century barns. A review of readily available historic mapping indicates that the study site has been enclosed agricultural land since the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, containing no building stock (1881-1993 OS Old-maps.co.uk). The 2014 evaluation of the wider Eco village site concluded, 'medieval and post-medieval activity was primarily related to the agricultural use of the area and was widespread across the site' (Oxford Archaeology 2014 v.1, 30). No significant medieval or post-medieval finds or features were identified within the study site itself.



- 3.6 Between 1<sup>st</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> of November 2021 39 additional trenches were excavated across the study site. These works were undertaken in accordance with an approved Written Scheme of Investigation (October 2021) and were monitored by Cherwell District Council. The evaluation revealed the remains of 15 small ditches and termini, spread across the development area with a slight concentration in the south-west corner of the western field. Apart from the ditch spanning across trenches 35 and 37, there is no direct evidence that any of the other ditches are physically or stratigraphically related (Headland Archaeology 2021).
- 3.7 This trial trenching phase showed continuity with the results from 2014 as shown by the ditch in trench 1 and 26 being same as those in trenches 53 and 47 respectively in 2014. Ditches in trenches 75 and 76 from 2014 were also found in 35,37 and 39. All the other ditches were recorded in the geophysical survey (Headland Archaeology 2021).
- 3.8 The finds assemblage numbered three sherds of Iron Age and Romano-British date and 8g of industrial waste. The original trial trenching in 2014 suggested that the date for the features was early to middle Iron Age whereas the dating evidence for this phase of trenching suggests a later date of Iron Age to Roman. These dates come from three features making it difficult to characterise the archaeology in terms of date while the nature and extent of the evidence points towards the remains of an agricultural field boundary (Headland Archaeology 2021).
- 3.9 The majority of the features found were categorised as undated. No evidence for earlier prehistoric Neolithic or Bronze Age activity was found. The nature of the features and paucity of material culture means that there is no evidence for dense settlement within the site from any period (Headland Archaeology 2021, 9).
- Archaeological potential**
- 3.10 The results of the two phases of evaluation on the site have identified the presence of undated remains and late prehistoric and Romano-British occupation evidence on the site; there is potential for further remains of this type and date.

#### 4.0 Aims and Objectives

4.1 The general aims of the excavation are to mitigate the impacts of the development through achieving an understanding of the nature, function and character of the archaeological remains within their cultural and environmental setting.

4.2 The principal aims of the archaeological investigation are:

- To establish the function and dating of any late Iron Age/Roman features within excavation area and establish any continuity of activity between the Iron Age and early Roman features;
- To determine or confirm the approximate date or date range of any other remains, by means of artefactual or other evidence;
- Assess the environmental remains present on site to help inform understanding of changing land-use and rural local economies;
- To place the revealed archaeological remains within the wider landscape with reference to the Solent-Thames Research Framework for the Historic Environment.
- To generate an accessible and useable archive which will allow future research of the evidence to be undertaken if appropriate.
- To disseminate the results of the work in a format and manner proportionate to the significance of the findings.

4.3 The specific aims and objectives of the evaluation are:

- To establish the character of the Iron Age and Roman activity on the site: what is its form and function, at what date did it commence and how did it develop?
- Evidence of post-Iron Age activity, was the site abandoned or did settlement activity continue within the area?
- To consider the significance of the late Iron Age/early Roman remains within their wider landscape settings, particularly in relation to the archaeology recorded immediately to the east at Howes Lane.

4.4 Further, more detailed, research aims may be generated from the results of the evaluation and specifically in relation to regional research frameworks (Solent Thames Archaeological Research Framework (Hey and Hind 2014)). These will be reviewed during an on-site meeting with Cherwell District Council's archaeological advisor.

4.5 This document conforms to the requirements of current national and local planning policy (including *National Planning Policy Framework 2021*). It has been designed in accordance with current best archaeological practice, and the appropriate national and local standards and guidelines, including:

- *Management of Recording Projects in the Historic Environment: MORPHE* (English Heritage 2006);
- *Code of Conduct* (Chartered Institute for Archaeologists [‘CIfA’] [revised edition] 2014); and
- *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Excavation* (CIfA [revised edition] 2014)

## 5.0 Methodology

### Programme of Archaeological Works

#### Strip, Map and Record

- 5.1 The scope of the mitigation phase of archaeological works has been discussed with the Archaeological Advisor to Cherwell District Council following the completion of the 2021 evaluation and reporting. The scope of works has been confirmed with the Archaeological Advisor again in February 2023.
- 5.2 The works will comprise the excavation of three areas with a combined size of c. 6.5ha, as defined in Figure 2.
- 5.3 It is noted that overhead cables are located in Areas 1 and 2. Provision for excavating under the overhead cables will need to be considered.
- 5.4 If significant archaeological features or deposits are revealed extending beyond the excavation area, the limit of excavation can be extended to expose the full extent of the remains. Any extensions will be agreed in consultation with the Archaeological Consultant and OCC Archaeologist following the initial monitoring visit and will be limited to 20% of the total mitigation area.
- 5.5 No parts of the excavation areas will be handed back to the developer until written confirmation that they have been signed off is obtained from County Archaeological Services. A post excavation plan showing the features and interventions along with grid references will need to be provided for any sign off areas in advance of this written confirmation.
- 5.6 Prior to implementation of the archaeological programme of works, the appointed archaeological contractor will produce a detailed document specifying the methodology, including for example the sampling strategies and specialist personnel to be employed. The contractors' Written Scheme of Investigation must be agreed with the OCC Archaeological Service prior to the archaeological works being undertaken. All work will be undertaken to the satisfaction of Cherwell District Council.

#### General

- 5.7 The areas subject to archaeological investigation will be accurately tied into the National Grid, preferably by GPS and will be located onto a 1: 2,500 map of the area.
- 5.8 Topsoil and subsoil will be machine-excavated using a flat toothless bucket under continuous archaeological supervision to expose the uppermost horizon of archaeological remains or, where absent, the upper interface of geological deposits. Topsoil and subsoil will be stockpiled separately and trenches will be backfilled in reverse order. Spoil will be monitored in order to recover artefacts.
- 5.9 The Archaeological Consultant and OCC Archaeologist will be regularly updated about any new archaeological discoveries made during the initial strip. Regular site plans will be provided.
- 5.10 The areas will be hand-cleaned to define archaeological features sufficient to produce a base plan. The base plan, recorded digitally using a GPS, of all features will be produced at an appropriate scale and provided for the Consultant and OCC Archaeologist for the first monitoring meeting.
- 5.11 The sub-contractors' method statement will provide details of the standard sampling strategy and will be compliant with OCC and ClfA standards and guidance. Following the initial strip, the proposed intervention strategy will be assessed by the Archaeological Consultant and the OCC Archaeologist, and a site visit will be made to determine the

sampling strategy. The sampling strategy will not be finalised until approved by the Archaeological Consultant and OCC Archaeologist. Additional monitoring visits will likely be required throughout the works.

- 5.12 When archaeological deposits are encountered excavation will continue by hand. All archaeological deposits will be excavated and recorded stratigraphically in accordance with the approved recording system unless otherwise agreed. The recording system will be detailed in the sub-contractors' method statement and will be compliant with OCC and ClfA standards and guidance.
- 5.13 Archaeological features will be plotted on an overall plan at a scale of either 1:100 or 1:50. Areas of significant remains or areas of complex stratigraphy will be planned in greater detail at 1:20 or 1:10 scale as appropriate. Plans and sections will include context numbers and Ordnance Datum ('OD') spot heights for all principal strata and features.
- 5.14 A photographic record of the project will be maintained. The images will illustrate the detail and context of the principal features and finds discovered. The photographic record will also include working shots to illustrate more generally the progress of the programme of archaeological works.

#### Finds and Samples

- 5.15 A high priority will be given to dating any finds exposed. All artefactual and ecofactual material revealed during the excavation will be retained for recording and assessment and, where appropriate, further analysis and will be treated in accordance with the ClfA *Guidelines for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological material* ([revised edition] 2014).
- 5.16 Environmental samples up to 40 litres in volume will be taken from suitable deposits. A sub-sample of the most productive looking samples will be selected by the archaeological contractor's environmental specialist for processing, sorting, assessment and discussion in the evaluation report, with a statement as to the potential for further analysis. The Regional Science Advisor for Historic England will be consulted, as appropriate and Cherwell District Council's archaeological advisor will also be consulted on the scope of environmental sampling.
- 5.17 All finds will be exposed, lifted, cleaned, conserved, marked, bagged and boxed in accordance with the guidelines set out in the UK Institute for Conservation's *Conservation Guideline No 2* (1983). Appropriate guidelines set out in the Museums and Galleries Commission's *Standards in the Museum Care of Archaeological Collections* (1991) will also be followed.
- 5.18 Should finds and features be made that might constitute 'Treasure' under the definition of the *Treasure Act* (1996), these will, if possible, be archaeologically excavated and removed to a safe place. Such finds will also be reported immediately to the local coroner (within 14 days, in accordance with the Act). OCC Archaeological Service will be informed of any treasure finds.
- 5.19 Any human remains that are discovered will initially be left in-situ, covered and protected. At evaluation stage human remains will not be removed. If removal is necessary at mitigation stage, this will comply with the relevant legislation, any Ministry of Justice and local environmental health regulations, and the appropriate Historic England advice. OCC Archaeological Service will be informed of any human remains encountered during the archaeological works.

#### Report and Archive

- 5.20 Details of style and format will be determined by the archaeological contractor. In any event, it will include:

- An executive summary of the work undertaken and the results obtained;
- The aims and methods adopted during the programme of archaeological works;
- The nature, location, extent, date, significance and quality of any archaeological deposits and material uncovered;
- The nature and location of the features and deposits encountered;
- Appropriate illustrative material such as maps, plans, sections, drawings and photographs; including a site location plan at 1:2500, a site plan at 1:1250, and where appropriate, large-scale specific plans;
- A summary of results; and
- A description of the archive contents and details of its location for long-term storage.

- 5.21 The PXA report will include a finds report, including: all pottery, glass and clay tobacco pipes discovered during the works, as well as all other artefacts that may be discovered. A specialist report on all animal or human bone discovered during the excavation will be included. Pottery and ceramic building material will be recorded by sherd count and weight, by ware type, and if appropriate, from within context groups, in line with the relevant fabric series.
- 5.22 The discussion of the archaeological evidence will include reference to the potential indicated by finds and environmental evidence.
- 5.23 A draft copy of the PX Assessment Report will be sent to Cherwell District Council's archaeological advisor for comment, prior to a final copy being submitted. Digital copies of the final report will be submitted to Cherwell District Council to demonstrate compliance with the requirements of the archaeological programme of works. One digital copy of the report will also be provided to the Historic Environment Record ('HER'). A copy will also be uploaded as part of the Archaeology Data Service Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations ('ADR OASIS') database record.
- 5.24 The PXA report will make recommendations for analysis and publication.
- 5.25 The site archive, to include all project records and cultural material produced by the archaeological works, is to be prepared in accordance with guidance issued by the Archaeological Archives Forum ('AAF') (*Archaeological Archives. A guide to best practice in creation, compilation, transfer and curation* [Brown 2011]).
- 5.26 All artefacts and environmental samples will be processed, assessed, conserved and packaged in accordance with U.K.I.C. Guideline Standards.
- 5.27 The archive will also be prepared in line with the *CifA Standard and Guidance for the creation, compilation, transfer and deposition of archaeological archives* ([revised edition] 2014) and in accordance with the procedures specified in "Required Procedures for Transference of Archaeological Archives to Oxfordshire Museums; 1995". The County Museums Service Collections Management section shall be contacted at least one month before the site work has begun.
- 5.28 The contracted archaeological organisation will be responsible for ensuring that all digital data generated by the excavation is archived with the Archaeological Data Service (ADS) and an OASIS record (Online Access to the Index of archaeological investigations) created.

### Consideration of Outreach and Engagement

- 5.29 The implementation of community outreach programme will be explored as the project progresses. This may take the form of intermittent updates presenting the results of the archaeological investigations via the archaeological contractor's social media platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, Instagram. In the event of significant archaeological remains being identified, further in-person outreach opportunities will be explored, subject to health and safety considerations.

## 6.0 Timetable and Personnel

- 6.1 The timing of the archaeological mitigation works is subject to the RM application and ongoing discussions with Cherwell Archaeological Advisor.
- 6.2 The archaeological works will be undertaken under the overall supervision of Helen MacQuarrie (Principal Consultant, Orion Heritage). Helen is a ClfA Member and Orion Heritage is a Registered Archaeological Organisation with ClfA. The archaeological contracting organisation appointed to implement the works detailed in this WSI, will be a Registered Archaeological Organisation with ClfA.
- 6.3 Curriculum Vitae of key personnel will be provided to Cherwell District Council in advance of the archaeological works commencing, if required.

## 7.0 Monitoring

- 7.1 The aim of monitoring is to ensure that the archaeological works are undertaken within the limits set out in this WSI, and to the satisfaction of Cherwell District Council.
- 7.2 Helen MacQuarrie (Principal Consultant, Orion Heritage) will monitor the implementation of the archaeological works on behalf of the developers.
- 7.3 Representatives from the Cherwell District Council will monitor the evaluation and ten working days' notice will be given to arrange a site meeting.
- 7.4 It is understood that a planning charge will be made to cover attendance of the monitoring meetings by Cherwell District Council's archaeological advisor.
- 7.5 No parts of the excavation areas will be handed back to the developer until written confirmation that they have been signed off is obtained from County Archaeological Services.
- 7.6 Any alterations to this document should be agreed in writing with the relevant parties prior to commencement of on-site works, or at the earliest available opportunity thereafter.

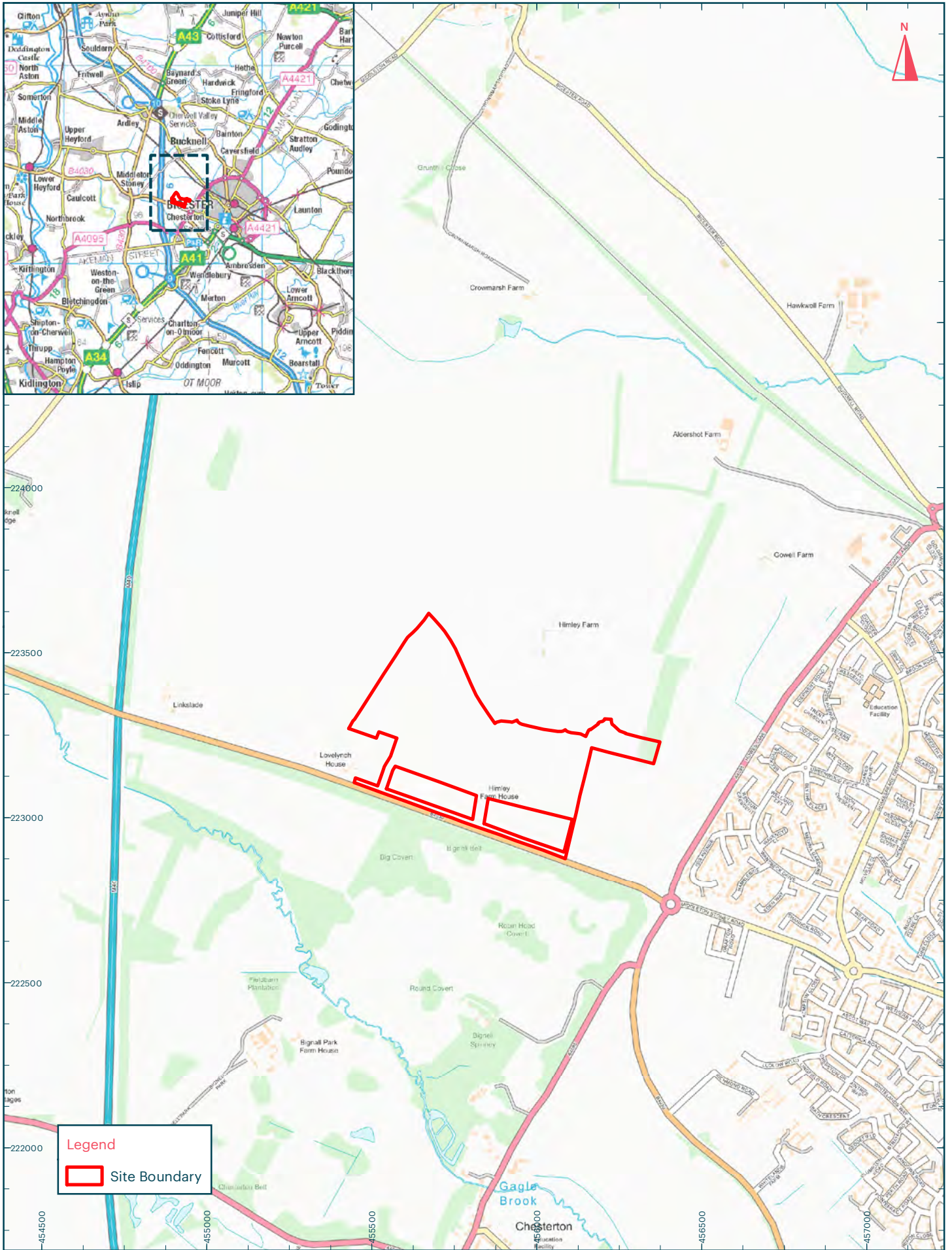
8.0 Insurance

- 8.1 Both Orion Heritage and the appointed archaeological contractor can produce evidence of Public Liability and Professional Indemnity Insurance.



## 9.0 Health and Safety

- 9.1 All works will follow the *Health and Safety at Work Act* (1974), applicable regulations and codes of practice, and recommendations of the Standing Conference of Archaeological Unit Managers ('SCAUM') *Health and Safety in Field Archaeology* (1986).
- 9.2 All archaeological staff will undertake their operations with safe working practices.
- 9.3 All staff will be made aware of the hazards and any necessary measures which need to be taken regarding those hazards.
- 9.4 A site-specific Risk Assessment will be prepared by the appointed archaeological contractor.



**Title:**  
Figure 1: Site Location  
**Address:**  
Himley Village

Scale at A4: 1:15,000





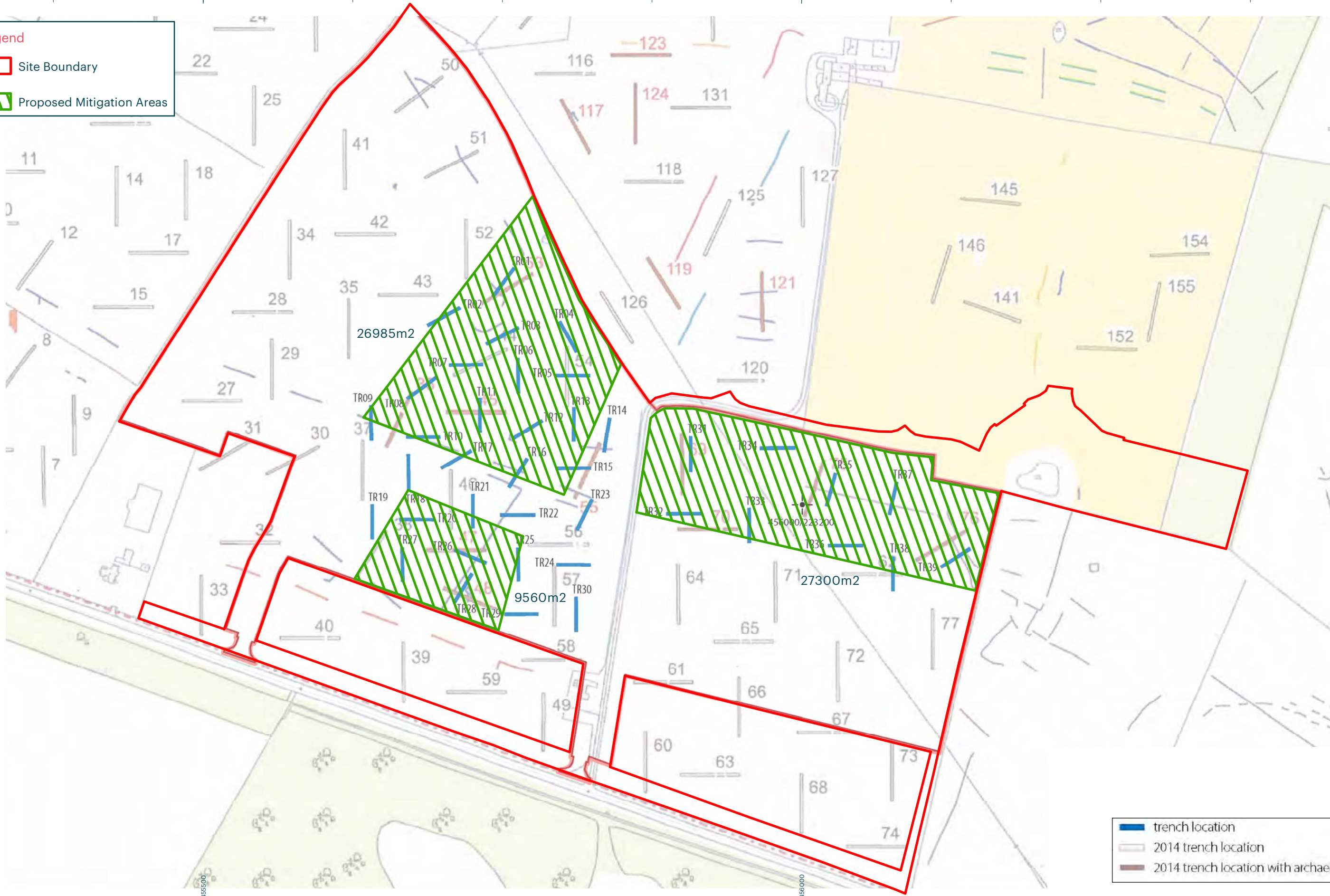
**Legend**

- Site Boundary
- Proposed Mitigation Areas



223500

223000



- trench location
- 2014 trench location
- 2014 trench location with archaeology

**Title:**  
Proposed Mitigation Areas  
**Address:**  
Himley Village

Scale at A3: 1:3,000  
0 100m



## **Himley Village, Middleton Stoney Rd, Bicester**

### **Design Brief for Evaluation and a Staged Mitigation**

- 1.1 This Project Brief provides the outline framework for an overarching WSI for a staged programme of archaeological investigation as required by condition.
- 1.2 The overarching WSI will detail the first phase of this staged programme, an archaeological evaluation, as set out below and set out a general approach to any subsequent mitigation. Any subsequent mitigation will require the submission of a detailed method statement.

## **2. BACKGROUND:**

### **2.1 Site Location and Description**

- 2.1.1 The site is located on the western side of Bicester, north of the B4030 (SP 5586 2318). The site lies at approximately 87m OD and the underlying geology is shown as Cornbrash.

### **2.2 Planning Background**

- 2.2.1 Outline planning permission has been granted from Cherwell district council for the development to provide up to 1,700 residential dwellings (Class C3), a retirement village (Class C2), flexible commercial floorspace (Classes A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, B1 and C1), social and community facilities (Class D1), land to accommodate one energy centre and land to accommodate one new primary school (up to 2FE) (Class D1) (14/02121/OUT). Due to the potential presence of archaeological features two condition has been attached to this permission that requires a staged programme of archaeological evaluation and mitigation is undertaken during any development.

This brief sets out the required evaluation and mitigation for a portion of this site only and as such a WSI based on this brief would not be suitable to fully discharge the pre-commencement condition on this permission.

### **2.3 Archaeological Background**

- 2.3.1 The site is located in an area of archaeological interest as identified by a desk-based assessment, a geophysical survey and a trenched evaluation. The geophysical survey and evaluation identified a number of areas of possible archaeological features. The evaluation recorded a number of archaeological features across the site including a Neolithic Pit, an area of Bronze Age activity including two possible 'burnt mound' deposits, a number of areas of Iron Age activity and a number of areas of Roman activity. The evaluation in this specific area recorded a number of linear features and pits mainly dated to the Iron Age or Roman period. This development will therefore disturb these surviving features and a further programme of archaeological investigation and mitigation will need to be undertaken ahead of any development.

### **3. REQUIREMENT FOR WORK:**

- 3.1 A programme of field evaluation and mitigation has been required in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) because of the presence of known sites of archaeological interest within the immediate vicinity of the development. Should important archaeological remains be revealed, this evaluation will form the first stage of a mitigation procedure.
- 3.2 The evaluation should aim to gather sufficient information to establish the presence/absence, extent, condition, character, quality and date of any archaeological deposits within those areas affected. The evaluation report produced will present a digest of information on the character and significance of the deposits under review and this report will form the basis of any proposals for appropriate further action. The evaluation should also aim to define any research priorities that may be relevant should further field investigation be required.
- 3.3 The aims and objectives for the archaeological works must take account of the material contained within the Solent-Thames Research Framework for the Historic Environment Resource Assessments and Research Agendas (<https://library.thehumanjourney.net/2597/>). In particular the themes and questions in the Research agendas for periods should be included where relevant.

This is as required by the:

Standard and guidance: for archaeological excavation (CIfA 2014, para 3.2.8)  
Standard and guidance: for archaeological field evaluation (CIfA 2020, para 3.2.9)

- 3.4 Any mitigation resulting from the evaluation report will seek to limit the damage to significant archaeological deposits. The developer will be responsible for accommodating the archaeological remains by:-
  - a) Physical preservation in situ, which can often be achieved through design adaptations, or, if this is not possible;
  - b) By preserving the archaeology on record through a full recording action. Less significant archaeological deposits may be dealt with through a monitoring and recording exercise carried out during the construction programme.
- 3.5 An overarching WSI for evaluation and mitigation should be submitted for approval to the CAS in order to discharge a planning condition. This should clearly state that at both evaluation and mitigation stages a detailed method statement will be submitted to CAS for approval in advance of all fieldwork.

### **4. SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS:**

## **Evaluation phase**

- 4.1 A trenching sample equivalent to a thirty-nine 30 x 1.8m trench will be undertaken within the site to inform the extent of mitigation that will be required on the site. Provision should be made for taking environmental/organic samples where appropriate. The method statement should include a trench location plan.
- 4.2 The excavation under the supervision of a competent archaeologist is to be taken down to the top of 'natural' or the top of any significant archaeological level, whichever is the higher. While the surface of the exposed archaeological horizon should be cleaned for the purpose of clarifying the remains, archaeological features should generally only be sampled sufficiently to characterise and date them. Full excavation of features should not be undertaken at this stage. Care should be taken not to damage archaeological deposits through excessive use of mechanical excavation.

**The trenches should not be backfilled until after they have been monitored in line with the supporting annexes.**

## **Mitigation phase**

- 4.3. Following the completion of the evaluation a report of it will be provided to CAS. This will form the basis upon which mitigation will be based. The applicant should consult CAS as to the extent and scope of the mitigation.
- 4.4 A detailed method statement should be submitted to CAS for written approval in advance of the commencement of any excavations.
- 4.5 Research aims should be in line with the Solent-Thames Research Framework and should aim to investigate and inform our understanding of the wider historical landscape.
- 4.6 Summary reports of each phase should be submitted in pdf form to the planning archaeologist and the HER in digital form within twelve months of the completion of fieldwork within each phase of extraction.
- 4.7 No parts of the excavation areas will be handed back to the developer until written confirmation that they have been signed off is obtained from County Archaeological Services. A post excavation plan showing the features and interventions along with grid references will need to be provided for any sign off areas in advance of this written confirmation.



## **PROJECT METHODOLOGY AND DATA COLLECTION - FIELD EVALUATION**

1. The project shall be under the control of a suitably qualified archaeologist who should preferably be a member of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA). The evaluation should be undertaken in accordance with the CIfA's ['Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation, 2020'](#).
2. Include an agreed list of specialist consultants who might be required to conserve and/or report on finds and advise, or report on, other aspects of the investigation. An agreed allowance should be made for their fees.
3. The whole range of investigative/recording techniques should be considered. These should be presented and, if discounted, a supporting statement should provide an explanation.
4. A plan at an appropriate scale showing the proposed location and extent of survey works/trenches/test pits etc. should be supplied. An indication of whether trenches will be machine or hand dug should be given.
5. When machine-opened trial trenches are employed:
  - a) An appropriate machine must be used, with an appropriate bucket, usually a wide toothless ditching blade. Choice should be influenced by prevailing site conditions, and the machine must be able to carry out a clean job.
  - b) All machine work must be carried out under the direct supervision of an archaeologist.
  - c) All topsoil or recent overburden must be removed down to the first significant archaeological horizon in successive level spits. The continued use of machinery beyond this point should only take place when specifically agreed with the planning archaeologist as necessary for the particular type of evaluation.
  - d) The top of the first significant archaeological horizon may be cleared by the machine, but must then be cleaned by hand and inspected for features.
6. Sufficient of the archaeological features and deposits identified must be excavated by hand through a specified or agreed sampling procedure to enable their date, nature, extent and condition to be described. No archaeological deposits should be entirely removed unless this is unavoidable. It is not necessarily expected that all trial trenches will be fully excavated to natural subsoil, but the depth of archaeological deposits across the whole site must be assessed. The stratigraphy of all trial trenches should be recorded even where no archaeological deposits have been identified. Spoil heaps shall be monitored to allow analysis of the spatial distribution of artefacts.

7. All excavation, either by machine and by hand, must be undertaken with a view to avoiding damage to any archaeological features or deposits, which appear to be worthy of preservation in situ.
8. Any human remains, which are encountered, must initially be left in situ. If removal is necessary this must comply with relevant Ministry of Justice licence regulations.
9. The data collection strategy should be part of a structured academic research agenda based on local and national research priorities. Data management, recovery and recording levels should be clearly defined and should be appropriate to the particular stratified deposits under investigation. This Selection Strategy and Data Management Plan should be specifically set out in the written scheme of investigation.

## ANNEX 2

### **MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS:**

- 1 Oxfordshire County Council Archaeological Services will monitor progress and standards throughout the project. To facilitate this, the project design should include a projected timetable on site (indicating staff grades, members and machine hire time if appropriate etc).

The County Archaeological Officer shall be notified of the start date at least two weeks **prior to commencement of work** in order to arrange a date for the monitoring visit(s).

- 2 A charge of £54 will be made per monitoring visit.

## ANNEX 3

### **POST EXCAVATION AND REPORTING REQUIREMENTS:**

1. The post excavation work should include the processing and primary research, analysis and investigative conservation necessary to prepare the site archive for preservation in a usable form and to produce a full report for publication. Incorporate provision for the long-term storage of both finds and site archive with the County Museums Service. On completion of the fieldwork the site archive will be prepared in the format agreed with the Oxfordshire County Museum Service, who should be consulted at this stage concerning their requirements.
2. For most evaluation projects the preparation of the report should be relatively simple following on directly from the fieldwork and achieved within a standard format. Details of styles and format are to be determined by the Unit. In any event, the report should include as a minimum:
  - a) a plan(s), at an appropriate scale, showing trench layout (as dug) and features located;



- b) a table summarising any descriptive text showing, per trench, the features, classes and numbers of artefacts located and their interpretation;
- c) a reconsideration of the methodology used, i.e. a confidence rating;
- d) a plan, at an appropriate scale, showing both actual and, where possible, predicted archaeological deposits; and
- e) a consideration of the archaeological evidence from within the site set in its broader landscape setting.
- f) The report should not give an opinion on whether preservation or investigation is considered appropriate. (However, the client may wish to commission separately a Unit's opinion on an appropriate treatment of the archaeological resource.)

For more extensive and complicated evaluation projects, especially where they are part of large-scale programmes of work in historic urban centres, the procedures outlined in English Heritage's Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE) should be followed for immediate post-field archive preparation and initial assessment. Agreement should then be reached, in collaboration with the CAO, about what aspects need to be taken forward to provide a report in the required format containing the information needed for planning purposes.

#### ANNEX 4

##### **ARCHIVE DEPOSITION:**

1. The archive should be prepared to the minimum acceptable standard defined in MoRPHE. The integrity of the archive should be maintained.
2. The contracted archaeological organisation will endeavour to ensure that the full integrated site archive including all finds shall, with the agreement of the owners, be deposited after completion of post-excavation work with the County Museums Service (Oxfordshire Museums) unless another repository is indicated. If, during the course of excavation, items are found that may be potentially defined as 'Treasure' under the Code of Practice of the Treasure Act 1996, the archaeological contractor will be responsible for ensuring that the County Coroner is informed.
3. Oxfordshire Museums requires that deposited archives from developer-led archaeological work shall be accompanied by funding equivalent to the current HBMC Box Storage Grant. Archaeological organisations shall therefore include an estimate of the costs of deposition for this project in their tender. The estimated cost will be clearly shown and shall be calculated in accordance with the procedures set out in "Charge for Archaeological Archives Deposited with Oxfordshire Museums" *Oxfordshire Museums 1995*.

4. The contracted archaeological organisation will be responsible for ensuring that all digital data generated by the excavation is archived with the [Archaeological Data Service](#) (ADS) and an [OASIS](#) record (Online Access to the Index of archaeological investigationS) created.
5. In the event of the legal owner(s) resolving to retain all or part of the site archive, they shall be responsible for the future preservation and maintenance of any material element of that archive. That part of the site archive in question, shall be transferred to the legal owner only after; all necessary processing, research, analysis and investigative/stabilising conservation and correct packing necessary to prepare the archive for preservation and storage in a usable, accessible form, and to produce a full report for publication, has been completed. The owner shall ensure that all necessary provision is made for the long-term preservation of the archive in a satisfactory environment, and that it is accessible for future research. The contracted archaeological organisation will ensure that a proper record of material kept by the landowner shall be included in the written archive, and the location and ownership of the material shall be stated in the written archive and public record. The explicit (written) permission of the owner shall be obtained for the latter in order that the *Data Protection Act 1984* is not contravened.
6. A summary report and details of archive deposition shall be submitted to the County HER and NMR, and a limited selection of representative photographic slides from the site archive shall be duplicated and deposited with the HER.
7. The County Museums Service shall be notified in advance, of the expected time limits for deposition of the archive.

## ANNEX 5

### **PUBLICATION AND DISSEMINATION:**

1. A digital copy of the summary report (either in pdf or .doc format) shall be supplied to the office of the County Archaeological Officer; for verification and assessment by the CAO or his representative before a final version is produced or submitted for planning; when the report has been agreed a final digital copy will then be supplied to the County Historic Environment Record (HER) at [archaeology@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:archaeology@oxfordshire.gov.uk) on the understanding that it will become a public document after an appropriate period of time (generally not exceeding six months).

**GIS (shape) files of the final phased excavated trench plan should be provided to the office of the County Archaeological Officer.**

2. All archaeological organisations should ensure that an abstract containing the essential elements of the results precedes the main body of the report.
3. Publication of the results (even if limited to one-line reports on work done with negative results) should be pursued, and should take place within a reasonable length of time (normally not more than five years after completion of the work). Style and format to be determined by the archaeological organisation, with

regard to agreed standards of archaeological publication, and the house style of the appropriate local, regional or national publication.

- 4 The report should state the location of the archive and acknowledge the curatorial role played in the project by Oxfordshire County Council Archaeological Services. It should also acknowledge any provision of information from the County Historic Environment Record, which is copyright of Oxfordshire County Council. Any secondary reports or articles generated by this project shall similarly acknowledge County Archaeological Services and the HER.
- 5 With regard to publication; the level of the report should take into account the scale of the evaluation, the overall importance of the site based on English Heritage characterisation criteria, and its status within local and regional research strategies. We would suggest that, unless evidence of national or special local significance is revealed, a summary report conforming to the minimum requirements defined in MoRPHE, should be produced for publication.

ANNEX 1

**1. OBJECTIVES:**

- 1.1 This integrated programme of archaeological mitigation work has been required in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (2012) and has been secured through a negative condition attached to the planning permission. The archaeological works will be carried out in accordance with a Project Design that shall provide a comprehensive mitigation strategy and project planning programme to MORPHE standard based on clearly defined research objectives.
- 1.2 The mitigation strategy will seek to alleviate damage to significant archaeological deposits/features, and the developer will be responsible for ensuring this by:-
  - a) implementing a full set-piece excavation to deal with all significant remains. If areas of low significance are revealed during the programme these may be dealt with, if agreed by the planning archaeologist, through selective recording action or smaller scale sampling. A watching brief may also be implemented during construction if deemed necessary.
  - b) and where practical and feasible, or where the status and survival quality of the remains is deemed to be of national importance (using the Secretary of States Non-Statutory Criteria), physical preservation in situ.

**2. PROJECT METHODOLOGY AND DATA COLLECTION:**

- 2.1 All stages of the project shall be carried out in accordance with the procedures laid down in English Heritage's Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE).
- 2.2 The project shall be under the control of a named, qualified archaeologist. The excavation should be undertaken in accordance with the ClfA's '[Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Excavation, 2020](#)'.
- 2.3 The data collection strategy should be part of a structured academic research agenda based on local and national research priorities. Data management, recovery and recording levels should be clearly defined and should be appropriate to the particular stratified deposits under investigation. This Selection Strategy and Data Management Plan should be specifically set out in the written scheme of investigation.
- 2.4 Include an agreed list of specialist consultants who might be required to conserve and/or report on finds and advise, or report on, other aspects of the investigation including environmental sampling and analysis. An agreed allowance should be made for their fees.

- 2.5 Topsoil stripping, under the supervision of a competent archaeologist, shall be taken down to the significant archaeological horizon in level spits. Spoil will be monitored in order to recover artefacts.
- 2.6 Appropriate machinery must be used, with an appropriate bucket e.g. a 360° excavator with a toothless ditching bucket/blade. Choice should be influenced by prevailing site conditions, and the machine must be able to carry out a clean job.
- 2.7 Should any human remains be encountered, they shall only be removed in accordance with the relevant Home Office regulations.

### **3. MONITORING AND LIAISON ARRANGEMENTS:**

- 3.1 Oxfordshire County Archaeological Services Officers, shall monitor progress and standards throughout the project. To facilitate this, the Project Design will include, in addition to a full projected timetable, staffing details etc.

**OCAS shall be notified of the official start date at least 2 weeks prior to the commencement of work in order to arrange a date for monitoring visits. A number of site visits will be required and the area of excavation will need to be formally signed off before any development commences.**

- 3.2 A charge of £54 will be made for each site visit.

### **4. POST-EXCAVATION/SITE ARCHIVE REQUIREMENT:**

- 4.1 All post excavation/site archive work shall be carried out according to the standards and procedures defined in MoRPHE. The developer shall be responsible for all processing, research, analysis, and investigative/stabilising conservation necessary to prepare the site archive for preservation and storage in a usable, accessible form, and to produce a full report for publication. All conservation shall be carried out to U.K.I.C. Guideline Standards, and the site archive will be prepared according to the procedures specified in "Required Procedures for Transference of Archaeological Archives to Oxfordshire Museums; 1995". The County Museums Service Collections Management section shall be contacted before the site work has begun. A PX Assessment Report shall be sent to County Archaeological Service for verification and comments.

### **5. ARCHIVE DEPOSITION:**

- 5.1 The contracted archaeological organisation will endeavour to ensure that the full integrated site archive including all finds shall be deposited after completion of post-excavation work with the County Museums Service (Oxfordshire Museums) unless another repository is indicated. If, during the course of excavation, items are found that may be potentially defined as 'Treasure' under the Code of Practice for the Treasure Act 1996, the archaeological contractor will be responsible for ensuring that the County Coroner is informed.

- 5.2 The contracted archaeological organisation will be responsible for ensuring that all digital data generated by the excavation is archived with the [Archaeological Data Service](#) (ADS) and an [OASIS](#) record (Online Access to the Index of archaeological investigationS) created.
- 5.3 Oxfordshire Museums requires that deposited archives from developer-led archaeological work shall be accompanied by funding equivalent to the current English Heritage Box Storage Grant. Archaeological organisations shall therefore include an estimate of the costs of deposition for this project in their tender. The estimated cost will be clearly shown and shall be calculated in accordance with the procedures set out in "Charge for Archaeological Archives Deposited with Oxfordshire Museums" *Oxfordshire Museums* 1995.
- 5.4 In the event of the legal owner(s) resolving to retain all or part of the site archive, they shall be responsible for the future preservation and maintenance of any material element of that archive. That part of the site archive in question, shall be transferred to the legal owner only after; all necessary processing, research, analysis and investigative/stabilising conservation and correct packing necessary to prepare the archive for preservation and in a usable, accessible form, and to produce a full report for publication, has been completed. The owner shall ensure that all necessary provision is made for the long-term preservation of the archive in a satisfactory environment, and that it is accessible for future research. The contracted archaeological organisation will ensure that a proper record of material is kept by the landowner shall be included in the written archive and public record. The explicit (written) permission of the owner shall be obtained for the latter in order that the *Data Protection Act 1984* is not contravened.
- 5.5 A digital copy of the summary report (either in pdf or .doc format) and any digital data generated as a part of the work (such as GIS or CAD files) shall be supplied to the office of the County Archaeological Officer; for verification and assessment by the CAO or his representative before a final version is produced or submitted for planning; when the report has been agreed a final digital copy will then be supplied to the County Historic Environment Record (HER), along with a selection of digital images showing the main features, at [archaeology@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:archaeology@oxfordshire.gov.uk) on the understanding that it will become a public document after an appropriate period of time (generally not exceeding six months).
- 5.6 GIS (shape) files of the final phased excavated site plan should be provided to the office of the County Archaeological Officer.
- 5.7 The County Museums Service shall be notified of the excavation and an accession number obtained at least one month in advance of the commencement of fieldwork and should be informed of the expected time limits for deposition of the archive.

## 6. PUBLICATION AND DISSEMINATION:

- 6.1 Full publication of the results should be guaranteed, and should take place within a reasonable length of time (normally not more than five years after completion of the work). Style and format to be determined by the archaeological organisation, with regard to agreed standards of archaeological publication, and the house style of the appropriate local, regional or national publication.
- 6.2 The report should state the location of the archive and acknowledge the curatorial role played in the project by Oxfordshire County Council Archaeological Services. It should also acknowledge any provision of information from the County Historic Environment Record which is copyright of Oxfordshire County Council. Any secondary reports or articles generated by this project shall similarly acknowledge County Archaeological Services and the HER.
- 6.3 With regard to publication; the level of the report should take into account the scale of the project, the overall importance of the site based on English Heritage characterisation criteria, and its status within local and regional research strategies. It should also be commensurate with the level of results obtained.

## 7. OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL Environment & Economy

COUNTY MUSEUM AND ARCHIVE STORE

Witney Road, Standlake, Oxon OX8 7QG

**Archaeological Curator: Angie Bolton** - [Angie.Bolton@Oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:Angie.Bolton@Oxfordshire.gov.uk)

**01865 300557**

**Conservation Laboratory: -**

**01865 300937**

COUNTY ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICES CONTACTS:

### **DEVELOPMENT CONTROL**

**Lead Archaeologist: Richard Oram**

**Tel: 07917001026**

**Email: [Richard.oram@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:Richard.oram@oxfordshire.gov.uk)**

**Planning Archaeologist: Steven Weaver**

**Tel:      Email: [steven.weaver@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:steven.weaver@oxfordshire.gov.uk)**

## County Historic Environment Record

County Historic Environment Record

County Historic Environment Record Officer: **Jacqueline Pitt**

**Tel: 07741 607816      Email: [archaeology@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:archaeology@oxfordshire.gov.uk)**

Responsible for management, development and access to the HER.