

# East West Rail Phase 2

## Development Stage 2A2: 2A0326/5.2/FH (West) Flood Alleviation Area at Land West of Station Road, Oxfordshire (CFSA A2)

### Post-Excavation Assessment

EWR Alliance

November 2021

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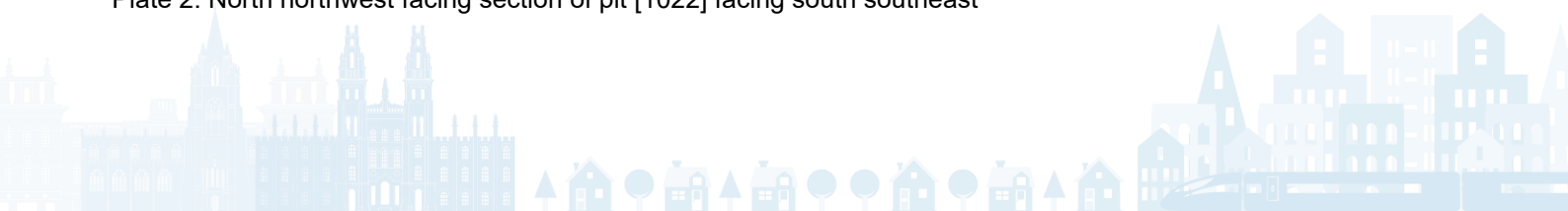


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## Executive Summary

Between March and April 2021, an archaeological Strip, Map and Sample (SMS) was undertaken at 2A0326/5.2/FH on land west of Station Road, to the north-east of Launton, Oxfordshire (CFSA A2) (centred on National Grid Reference (NGR): SP 61810 23725; Figure 1; 'the Site'), on behalf of the East West Rail Alliance. The Site lies within the local authority administrative area of Oxfordshire Council. The SMS was undertaken as part of a phase of archaeological works at the Site.

The SMS at 2A0326 (CFSA A2) has shown a number of archaeological features comprising pits and postholes that formed no obvious patterns or structures. The datable material retrieved is indicative of prehistoric activity, likely Mid to Late Iron Age. The exact function of the pits and postholes is unknown, however their discovery, as mostly isolated features with no certain structural elements, suggests they may have been refuse pits or part of temporary shelters that are evidence of a short term occupation of this area or a seasonal revisiting of the Site. The presence of activity dating to these periods is in keeping with the scatterings of known prehistoric and later activity in the Oxfordshire landscape.

The presence of extant ridge and furrows within the Site also attests to the longevity of agricultural practices at the Site.

In light of the results, plans for further research and analysis have been laid out, including illustration and narrative of the site results within a local journal. It is envisaged that the results of this site will be disseminated together with all archaeologically investigated East West Rail (EWR) sites in Oxfordshire within the archaeological journal *Oxoniensia Volumes*. The archive, consisting of paper records, drawings and digital photographs, will be collated and deposited with the Oxfordshire Museum under accession number OXCMS: 2021.32. An OASIS form (OASIS ID: aocarcha1-502872) has also been completed and an electronic copy of all reports will be deposited with the Archaeological Data Service (ADS).

## 1. Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological Strip, Map and Sample (SMS) undertaken during construction work for a flood alleviation area 2A0326/5.2/FH at land west of Station Road, Oxfordshire (CFSA A2) ('the Site'). The Site is located within Development Stage 2A2 of the EWR2 scheme (centred on NGR Ref: SP 61810 23725, Figure 1). The Site lies within the local authority administrative area of Cherwell District Council.

All works were undertaken by a team of professional archaeologists and were recorded using current Chartered Institute of Archaeologists (CIfA) standards. The fieldwork took place in March and April 2021.

## 2. Planning Background

The local planning authority is Oxfordshire County Council (Cherwell Area). Archaeological advice to the Council is provided by Richard Oram, Oxfordshire County Council Archaeological Services (OCCAS).

Prior to the works within the Site, a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI)<sup>1</sup> was prepared by East West Rail Alliance. This report will help inform the need for any future programmes of mitigation works within the Site; the results and interpretation include the site narrative as well as assessment of any archaeological finds and environmental samples.

All works were carried out in accordance with the WSI and current best archaeological practice and local and national standards and guidelines<sup>2</sup>.

## 3. Site Location, Geology and Topography

The Site is located within Development Stage 2A2 of the EWR2 scheme (centred on NGR Ref: SP 61810 23725; Figure 1). The Site comprises a roughly sub-rectangular parcel of land of approximately 3.4 ha located west of station road and approximately 1.4km north-east of Launton. Prior to construction work starting the Site was used for pasture and contains hedgerows and trees. The Site lies within the local authority administrative area of Oxfordshire Council (Cherwell Area).

Topographically, the Site is undulating, ranging from approximately 70m aOD (above Ordnance Datum) in the west, sloping down towards the east to approximately 67m aOD. The underlying bedrock of the Site is Peterborough Member, a sedimentary bedrock formed in the Jurassic period, c.164 to 166 million years ago<sup>3</sup>. No superficial deposits were recorded on the Site.

<sup>1</sup> EWR Alliance 2020. *Development Stage 2A2: 2A0326/5.2/FH (West) Flood Alleviation Area at Land West of Station Road, Oxfordshire*. Unpublished Report.

<sup>2</sup> Historic England, 2015. *Archaeological Guidance Paper 3: Standards and Practices in Archaeological Fieldwork*; Campbell, G., Moffett, L., and Straker, S., 2011. *Environmental Archaeology: A guide to the theory and practice of methods, from sampling and recovery to post-excavation*; Chartered Institute for Archaeologists 2020a. *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Excavations*; Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, 2020b. *Standard and Guidance for the Creation, Compilation, Transfer and Deposition of Archaeological Archives*; Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, 2019. *Code of Conduct*; Museum of London, 1994. *Archaeological Site Manual*; MHCLG, 2021. *National Planning Policy Framework*; RESCUE & ICON, 2001. *First Aid for Finds*; United Kingdom Institute for Conservation, 1983. *Conservation Guidelines No.2*; United Kingdom Institute for Conservation, 1990. *Guidance for Archaeological Conservation Practice*.

<sup>3</sup> British Geological Survey Website, 2019

## 4. Archaeological and Historical Background

### Prehistoric (c. 500,000BC – AD43)

There was an absence of evidence for Palaeolithic activity in the vicinity of the Site. This was thought to be due to alluvial deposits masking early prehistoric remains in this area<sup>4</sup>; bands of which are recorded along the north-western and south-eastern extents of the Site. However, there has been little identified evidence for Lower Palaeolithic remains on the gravel terraces of the River Cherwell in the area around Bicester<sup>5</sup>. There was also no evidence for Mesolithic activity in the vicinity of the Site; although, lithic scatters have been found during archaeological investigations near Bicester.

No evidence for Neolithic activity was recorded close to the Site, with Neolithic activity within Oxfordshire primarily based within the Thames valley close to the river's confluence with the River Thames approximately 17km south-west of the Site<sup>6</sup>. However, activity had been found further afield and the absence of known Neolithic sites may be a result of limited archaeological investigation rather than limited activity during this period.

Despite a wealth of Bronze Age activity in the county of Oxfordshire, there has been no evidence of Bronze Age activity in proximity of the Site. There was an observable bias in Bronze Age occupation towards Milton Keynes and Aylesbury and as a result, Bronze Age remains within the region appear to be primarily focused within the Ouzel river valley, c. 25 km to the east between Bletchley and Leighton Buzzard.

Oxfordshire had been subject to extensive woodland clearance carried out in the Middle/Late Iron Age, with environmental data corroborating the rise in open grassland environments<sup>7</sup>. Iron Age enclosed settlement and land management has been observable in the wider landscape, with Late Iron Age remains recorded 2.5km west of the Site.

At Compound A2, c.250m south-east of the Site, two features dating to the Late Bronze Age to Early Iron Age and the Middle to Late Iron Age were recorded. Also, scatterings of artefacts in areas suggest activity within the vicinity of the finds dating to the Neolithic, the Early Bronze Age and the Romano-British period<sup>8</sup>.

### Roman Period (AD 43 – AD 410)

The Romano-British period saw widespread activity across the EWR route and the wider landscape<sup>9</sup>. Dispersed rural settlement had been encountered beyond the limits of the major Romano-British centres such as Alchester in the region of Oxfordshire and along the 2A EWR route. Remains to the west of the Site were found in 2002 during an excavation at Bicester Perimeter Road, c.2km from the Site (MOX12667; SMR Ref: 16540). A ditch and posthole were recorded which contained bone and Iron Age and Romano-British pottery. Further Late Iron Age to Romano-British evidence was then encountered in 2004, c. 2.5km south-west of the Site (MOX23494; SMR Ref: 26122). A farmstead and field system dated to the 2nd and 3rd centuries AD was excavated with trackways and field ditches as well as two wells. During archaeological works at

<sup>4</sup> Hardaker, T. (2014) The Lower and Middle Palaeolithic of Oxfordshire. In Hey, G and J, Hinds (eds) Solent-Thames Research Framework

<sup>5</sup> EWR Alliance, 2019c. *Network Rail (East West Rail Bicester to Bedford Improvements) Order Heritage Delivery Strategy*. Unpublished Report

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Lambrick, G. (2014) The Later Bronze Age and Iron Age: Resource assessment. In G. Hey, and J. Hind, (eds) Solent-Thames Research Framework

<sup>8</sup> EWR Alliance, 2021a. Development Stage 2A2: Compound 2A2 and Access at Land East of Station Road, Oxfordshire: Post-Excavation Assessment

<sup>9</sup> EWR Alliance, 2019c. *Network Rail (East West Rail Bicester to Bedford Improvements) Order Heritage Delivery Strategy*. Unpublished Report

Compound A1<sup>10</sup> c.1.6km west of the Site, remains of Late Iron Age and Romano-British settlement and land management was encountered which appears to be the northern periphery of the settlement<sup>11</sup>. At Site Compound A4, 3.8km east of the Site, archaeological works recorded features dating to the Romano-British period and suggestive of a rural farmstead<sup>12</sup>.

### Early Medieval (AD 410 – AD1066)

There was no current archaeological evidence recorded within the Site or surrounding area which dates to the early medieval period; much of the activity at that time centred around Marsh Gibbon, c. 2km southeast of the Site, and Bicester, c. 2km to the south-west<sup>13</sup>.

### Late Medieval (AD1066 –AD1540)

The manorial estate of Marsh [Gibbon] within the Hundred of Mow was recorded in the Domesday Book (1086)<sup>14</sup> and based on the Site's current position, over c. 2km north of Marsh Gibbon, it was likely that it lay beyond the limits of settlement within the associated ploughlands. This is further evidenced by the presence of ridge and furrow, visible on LiDAR imagery and ridge and furrow visible on aerial photographs in the Site.

Extensive medieval ridge and furrow was recorded during archaeological works at Compound A2, c.250m south-east of the Site<sup>15</sup>

### Post Medieval (AD 1540 – AD1901)

Early mapping depicts the settlements of 'Mershe Gibbon', 'Bicester' and 'Launton' in the vicinity of the Site although minimal detail of the settlements or surrounding land is given<sup>16</sup>. In the late 18th century, more detailed mapping of the Site shows Station Road to the east of the Site, aligned south-west to north-east between Launton and Poundon; no structures were depicted within the Site<sup>17</sup>. Ordnance Survey mapping from the 19th century illustrates the Site within a landscape of enclosed fields with the Site shown as arable land<sup>18</sup>.

The line of the existing railway, established in the mid-19th century, runs c. 100 m to the south of the Site. The site of Launton Station (MOX5012; SMR Ref: 5870) is recorded located 350 m to the south of the Site on the railway line.

### Modern Period (Post – AD1901)

There had been minimal change to the Site throughout the 20th and 21st centuries, as exemplified by cartographic evidence<sup>19</sup> and aerial imagery. The Site has continued to occupy agricultural land throughout the modern period.

<sup>10</sup> EWR Alliance, 2019a. Compound A1: Land East of Bicester Road, Bicester, Oxfordshire: An Archaeological Evaluation Report. Unpublished report.

<sup>11</sup> EWR Alliance, forthcoming. Launton Landscape Post-Excavation Assessment

<sup>12</sup> EWR Alliance, 2021b. Compound A4: Land East of Station Road, Buckinghamshire: Post-Excavation Assessment. Unpublished Report

<sup>13</sup> National Grid, 2018. Order Environmental Statement. Volume 2ii - Route Section 2

<sup>14</sup> Domesday Book Online, 2019

<sup>15</sup> EWR Alliance, 2021a. Development Stage 2A2: Compound 2A2 and Access at Land East of Station Road, Oxfordshire: Post-Excavation Assessment

<sup>16</sup> Saxton, 1574. Oxonii, buckinghamiae et berceeriae Comitatum.

<sup>17</sup> Cary, J., 1794. Cary's England, Wales and Scotland (Sheets 23-24).

<sup>18</sup> Ordnance Survey, 1815. Bicester; OS, 1881. Oxfordshire XXIII.3. 25 inch to the mile; OS, 1885. Oxfordshire XXIII. Six inch to the mile; OS

<sup>19</sup> OS, 1900. Buckinghamshire XXI.NE. Six inch; 25 inch. OS, 1922. Oxfordshire XXIII.3. 25 inch to the mile. OS, 1923.

Buckinghamshire XXI.NE. Six inch; OS, 1952. Buckinghamshire XXI.NE. Six inch; OS, 1968. OS Plan, 1: 2,500.



## Historic Landscape Character

The present character of the Site can be defined as 18<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> century parliamentary type enclosures with a late 19th century railway to the south.

### Previous work

Geophysical survey was undertaken in 2019<sup>20</sup>. The results did not identify any anomalies of a definitive archaeological origin. Two magnetically weak linear trends were identified in the west of the dataset which form a rectilinear anomaly which has unclear origins. A large area of geological variations was visible in the northern half of the dataset and magnetic disturbance was visible around the peripheries of the dataset which are most likely modern in origin, relating to trackways and metallic boundary fencing<sup>21</sup>.

## 5. Research Aims and Objectives

The aims of the archaeological works were defined as being:

- To establish the presence/absence and significance of archaeological remains within the Site.
- To determine the extent, condition, nature, character, quality and date of any archaeological remains encountered.
- To record and sample excavate any archaeological remains encountered.
- To assess the eco-factual and environmental potential of any archaeological features and deposits.

The Site was considered to have medium potential for remains of Romano-British date to be present. Features associated with the British-Romano period may have potential to contribute to:

- **SRO09:** What is the evidence for pre-Iron Age phases of enclosure, and to what extent were Iron Age and Romano-British field systems and settlement influenced by earlier structuring of the landscape?
- **SRO18:** Can we investigate continuity of local traditions by excavating sites with well-preserved deposits of both Late Iron Age and Roman date?
- **SRO22:** Can we provide new insight into Roman crafts, trade and industries, particularly pottery, ironworking and stone?
- **SRO23:** The Romano-British period saw the beginning of more established infrastructure network. Can we investigate the development of these routes, trackways and roads and the influence they had on landscape change?
- **SRO25:** Identify evidence for late Roman occupation and attempt to identify any continuity in settlement patterns between the end of the Romano-British period and the early medieval period.

Given the location of the Site within an area of known medieval to post-medieval ridge and furrow, there was considered a high potential for medieval and post-medieval remains, particularly agricultural remains, to survive within the Site. Further remains may have potential to contribute to:

<sup>20</sup> EWR Alliance, 2019b. 2A 0326 – 5.2 – FH (West); Archaeological Geophysical Survey Report. Unpublished Report.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

- **SRO29:** Understand the chronology of development and character of later medieval field systems and their relationship to settlement across the region
- **SRO30:** Better understand the character and organisation of later medieval ridge and furrow and field systems
- **SRO39:** How did post-medieval rural industries impact on the landscape, and what was their contribution to society over the period of the urban-centred industrial revolution?
- **SRO40:** What was the impact of the agricultural revolution on the post-medieval landscape?

Any other remains encountered at the Site could have potentially contributed to and/or further the understanding of the patterns of land use, settlement and/or economy of the period to which they belong. These remains were to be considered in the context of Section 4 of Heritage Delivery Strategy and Solent-Thames Framework<sup>22</sup>.

## 6. Methodology

This post-excavation assessment report provides a stratigraphic summary of the archaeological mitigation required. It has been designed in accordance with the Written Schemes of Investigation<sup>23</sup>, current best archaeological practice and local and national standards and guidelines:

- Historic England (2015a). Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment: The MoRPHE Project Managers Guide.
- Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA 2020a). Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Excavations.
- Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA 2020b). Standard and Guidance for the Creation, Compilation, Transfer and Deposition of Archaeological Archives.
- Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA 2019). Code of Conduct.
- National Planning Policy Framework (MHCLG 2021).

A unique site code EWR20-2A03 was assigned by AOC Archaeology. The archaeological works were carried out between March and April 2021 and were supervised by Leonie Teufel under the overall direction of Nuala C. Woodley (Project Manager).

Prior to any work commencing, the area was CAT scanned by the construction team. All topsoil stripping was monitored and directed by the supervising archaeologist. The archaeological supervision of topsoil stripping was at a ratio of one archaeologist per mechanical excavator. The topsoil and subsoil were removed in successive level spits down to the subsoil with a mechanical excavator utilising a flat bladed bucket (toothless).

Due to waterlogged ground condition, the area was split into two areas, the northern half (SMS#1) and the southern half (SMS#2). Two areas on the Site were only topsoil stripped due to construction design requirements (Figure 2). As each area was completed, information was submitted for sign-off to Richard Oram of Oxfordshire County Council.

In this report, cuts and structural remains are shown in square brackets '[000]' and fills and layers are shown in rounded brackets '(000)'.

<sup>22</sup> Hey, G. and Hind, J., 2014. Solent-Thames Research Framework for the Historic Environment Resource Assessments and Research Agendas. Oxford Wessex Monograph Series.

<sup>23</sup> EWR Alliance 2020. Development Stage 2A2: 2A0326/5.2/FH (West) Flood Alleviation Area at Land West of Station Road, Oxfordshire. Unpublished Report.

The research aims outlined prior to excavation (Section 5) are discussed with reference to the results of archaeological works in Section 10. Quantification of resources needed to fulfil the project design and discussion of the revised research objectives is presented in Section 11.

## 7. Results

### *Period 1: Natural*

Across the Site, the natural geology (1002) comprised hard mid-blueish grey yellow clay. The natural geology was observed at undulating heights across the Site from 67.01m aOD to 67.87m aOD (Figures 3.1-3.3; Plate 1).

Three test pits confirmed the natural geology was consistent down to the level of construction, c. 0.70m below ground level (Figure 3.2).



Plate 1: General view of the Site, looking northeast

### *Period 2: Middle to Late Iron Age Activity*

A number of pits were recorded across the Site, no pattern of activity was apparent in the location and placement of pits, with the exception of three pits located towards the north-west of the Site; pits [1016], [1020] and [1022], which formed a small arc in plan (Figure 4.1).

All three pits were observed at a height of c. 67.55m aOD and had a similar shape and profile being sub-circular in shape with gradually sloping sides to a concave base. Pit [1022] was the largest of the pits, measuring 0.8m x 0.75m x 0.13m, and was observed at a height of 67.55m aOD (Figure 4.1, 5.1; Section 3.3, 3.4, 5.1; Plate 2-3). It was filled by a single deposit of firm mid greyish brown silty clay with charcoal flecks (1021) which contained fragments of oak charcoal (Appendix E). Pit [1020] was 0.55m x 0.45m x 0.09m and similarly was filled by a firm mid greyish brown silty clay (1019), however, it was sterile. Pit [1016] was 0.8m x 0.55m x 0.1m and was filled by a firm mid greyish brown silty

clay which contained oak charcoal, fragments of fired clay likely prehistoric in date, and a fragment of unidentified animal bone (Appendix E, C, F)

The similarities of the three pits suggest they were part of a contemporary event and the pits forming an arc in plan could be the truncated remains of a small structure. The shallow nature of the pits, however, makes it hard to determine their true function and purpose.



Plate 2: North northwest facing section of pit [1022] facing south southeast



Plate 3: South facing section of pit [1016] looking north

Further to the west, two pits [1018] and [1014] were observed at a height of 67.70m aOD (Figure 4.2, 5.1; Section 2.5, 4.1). Pit [1018] was sub-circular in plan and measured 0.88m x 0.55 x 0.18m. The pit has a profile of near vertical side at the east and moderate steep sloping side at the west, with an irregular base. It was filled by a deposit of light grey silty clay (1017) which contained a single fragment of flint (Appendix H). Pit [1014] was oval in plan and measured 0.36m x 0.32m x 0.14m. It had gradually sloping sides and a concave base and was filled by a similar single deposit of firm light grey silty clay (1013) containing fragments of oak charcoal (Appendix E).

At the northern limit of excavation, an isolated pit [1012] was observed at a height of 67.88m aOD (Figure 4.3, 5.1; Section 3.1). The pit measured 0.9m x 0.5m x 0.1m, was oblong in plan with gradually sloping sides to a rounded base. It was filled by dark black silty clay which contained fragments of fired clay, a cereal grain and fragments of alder charcoal (Appendix C, E). The shallow nature of the pit suggested it had been heavily truncated.

To the east of Pit [1012], were two postholes and a pit, [1006], [1008], and [1010], in proximity to each other (Figure 4.3). Posthole [1008] was circular in shape with vertical sides and a flat base, observed at a height of 67.91m aOD (Figure 4.3, 5.1; Sections 2.3). It had a diameter of 0.24m, was 0.19m deep and contained a single fill of black grey silt clay with fragments of fired clay and fragments of apple, alder and oak charcoal (Appendix C, E). Posthole [1010] was observed at a height of 67.95m aOD, was oval in shape with vertical sides and flat base (Figure 4.3, 5.1; Sections 2.4; Plate 4). It measured 0.38m x 0.32m x 0.17m and was filled by a single fill of mid-black silt clay (1009) that contained fragments of alder, oak and cherry charcoal and fragments of unworked burnt stone which may be suggestive of packing material within the posthole (Appendix E, H).



Plate 4: Northwest facing section of posthole [1010] looking southeast

Pit [1006] was one of the largest pits recorded on the Site. It was observed at a height of 67.84m aOD, was circular in shape with steep sloping sides and a mostly flat base, measuring 1.22m x 1.3m x 0.24m (Plate 5). The pit contained two fill deposits; the primary fill was a friable mid reddish grey silty clay (1028) which contained fragments of alder and oak charcoal (Appendix E); the upper fill comprised a friable mid-brownish grey silty clay

(1005) which contained fragments of fired clay, glass, oak charcoal and a large quantity (59 fragments) of Iron Age shell-tempered ware pottery (Appendix C, E, I).



Plate 5: East facing section of pit [1006] (contained pre-historic pottery) looking west

To the east of pit [1006] on the northern limit of excavation, a similar pit [1004] was observed at a height of 67.52m aOD (Figure 4.4, 5.1; Sections 2.1; Plate 6). Pit [1004] was oval in plan with steeply sloping side and rounded base. It measured 1.36m x 1.28m x 0.29m and was filled by a single deposit of soft mid to light blueish grey silty clay (1003) which contained fragments of alder, hazel and oak charcoal, some industrial waste which was thought to be naturally occurring, and one fragment of Iron Age shell-tempered ware (Appendix C, E, J).



Plate 6: North facing section of pit [1004] looking south

Located beside Linear [1062] (see Period 3), a large pit [1074] was observed at a height of 67.50m aOD (Figure 4.6, 5.2; Section 10.3). It was oval in plan with a slightly irregular profile, measuring 1.4m x 0.65m x 0.13m, and was filled by a sterile deposit of dark grey silty clay (1073).



Plate 7: South facing section of pit [1072] looking north

To the east of [1074], a large pit [1072] was observed at a height of 67.51m aOD (Figure 4.6, 5.2; Section 9.5; Plate 7). The pit was sub-oval in plan with steeply sloping side and a flat base and measured 1.23m x 1.0m x 0.46m. It was filled by a single deposit of soft mid

to light blueish grey silty clay (1071) which contained fragments of oak charcoal and naturally occurring iron rich stone (Appendix E, J).

South-east of pit [1072], a further large pit [1061] was observed at a height of 67.56m aOD (Figure 4.7, 5.2; Section 7.2; Plate 8). It was sub-oval in plan, had a steep sloping side on the western edge and a gradually sloping side on the east, and a flat base. The pit measured 2.47m x 2.13m x 0.25m and contained two fill deposits. The primary fill was a firm light greyish blue silty clay (1060) which contained iron rich stone and fragments of alder and oak charcoal (Appendix E, J). The upper fill was a firm dark greyish brown silty clay (1059) which also contained iron rich stone with fragments of hazel, apple and oak charcoal (Appendix E, J). Three sherds of Middle to Late Iron Age sand-tempered ware were also recovered from the upper fill (Appendix C).



Plate 8: Southwest facing section of pit [1061] looking northeast

Three further pits were recorded to the north-east of pit [1061]; pits [1052], [1056] and [1058]. Pit [1052] was observed at a height of 67.52m aOD and was sub-circular in plan with gradually sloping sides and a concave base (Figure 4.7, 5.2; Section 9.4). It measured 0.6m x 0.32m x 0.08m and contained a single fill of light brownish grey silty clay (1051) which contained fragments of oak charcoal (Appendix E).

Pit [1056] was observed at a height of 67.57m aOD, was oval in shape with steep sloping sides and a flat base (Figure 4.7, 5.2; Section 8.6). It measured 0.60m x 0.32m x 0.07m and was filled by a soft mid-brownish grey silty clay (1055) which was sterile.

Pit [1058] was observed at a height of 67.66m aOD and was irregular in plan and profile with gradually sloping sides and an undulating base (Figure 4.7, 5.2; Sections 10.1, 10.2). It measured 1.5m x 0.8m x 0.15m and was filled by a firm dark greyish black silty clay (1057) which contained fragments of oak charcoal (Appendix E).

Further to the east, two pits were recorded in proximity, [1054] and [1050], which were quite different in character. Pit [1054] was observed at a height of 67.60m aOD, was sub-circular in plan with gradually sloping sides and a flat base (Figure 4.8, 5.2; Section 8.5). It measured 0.24m x 0.22m x 0.07m and was filled by a soft light brownish grey silty clay (1053) which contained some naturally occurring iron rich stone (Appendix J). Pit [1050] was located to the east of pit [1054] and was observed at a height of 67.62m aOD (Figure



4.8, 5.2; Section 8.4; Plate 9). It was sub-circular in plan with gradually sloping sides and a rounded base, measuring 1.0m x 0.60m x 0.28m. The pit contained two fills; the primary fill was a soft light yellowish grey silty clay (1049) which contained oak charcoal and a flint flake (Appendix E, H); the upper fill was a soft mid greyish black silt clay (1048) which contained oak charcoal fragments, fired clay and iron rich stone (Appendix C, E, J).



Plate 9: East facing section of pit [1050] looking west

Towards the southern limit of excavation, an isolated posthole, [1047], was observed at a height of 67.57m aOD (Figure 4.8, 5.2; Section 8.3; Plate 10). The posthole was sub-oval in shape with vertical sides and a flat base. It measured 0.25m x 0.20m x 0.14m and was filled by a soft mid grey silty clay (1046) which contained hazel and oak charcoal fragments and small chips of heat affected flint (Appendix E, H).



Plate 10: Southwest facing section of posthole [1047] looking northeast

Another isolated posthole, [1040], was recorded towards the centre of the Site (Figure 4.9, 5.2; Section 8.2). It was observed at a height of 67.84m aOD and measured c.0.40m in diameter and 0.06m in depth. The posthole had steep sloping sides and a flat base and was filled by soft mid black greyish clay silt (1039) which contained alder, hazel, cherry and oak charcoal fragments (Appendix E).

South of posthole [1040], pit [1038] was observed at a height of 67.57m aOD (Figure 4.9, 5.2; Section 9.1; Plate11). It was sub-circular in plan with gradually sloping sides, an undulating base, and measured 1.13m x 1.10m x 0.1m. The pit was filled by a single deposit of light brownish grey silty clay which contained a cereal grains, alder and oak charcoal and an iron hobnail (Appendix E, K). Whilst the hobnail is indicative of Roman activity, it is likely due to a casual loss as opposed to deposited within the pit.



Plate 11: Northwest facing section of pit [1038] looking southeast

Pit [1032] was observed at a height of 67.56m aOD, was oval in plan and had a profile of gradually sloping sides and a flat base (Figure 4.9, 5.2; Section 7.1; Plate 12). It measured 0.7m x 0.4m x 0.08m and was filled by soft light brownish grey silty clay (1031) which contained iron rich stone and fragments of oak charcoal (Appendix E, J).



Plate 12: Northwest facing section of pit [1032], looking southwest

To the north-east of pit [1032], pit [1036] was very similar in character and observed at a height of 67.52m aOD (Figure 4.9, 5.2; Section 8.1). It was oval in plan and had a profile of gradually sloping sides and a convex base, measuring measured 0.57m x 0.30m x

0.05m. The pit was filled by soft light brownish grey silty clay (1035) which contained iron rich stone and fragments of oak charcoal (Appendix E, J).

### *Period 3: Medieval to Post-medieval*

Across the majority of the Site, extant ridge and furrow was visible (Plates 13-14) and were most pronounced on the southern half of the Site. The furrows were not visible toward the east end of the Site which was likely due to the natural slope in this area.

The furrows were aligned northwest to southeast and measured between 2m and 3m wide with the ridges wider at 4m to 5m. From the bottom of the furrow to the top of the ridge measured 0.65m in section. The basal remains of four furrows were recorded within the stripped area (Figure 2, 3.2, 5.1; Section 1.1).



Plate 13: Ridge and furrow sample section looking southwest



Plate 14: Close up of ridge and furrow in section, looking southwest

Linear [1045] was located towards the east of the Site, orientated northeast to southwest, and observed at a height between 67.4m and 67.52m aOD (Figure 4.4, 4.9, 4.10). The linear measured 54m in length and continued beyond the limit of excavation so its full extent was unknown. The linear was investigated by four interventions; three of which, [1030], [1034] and [1042], showed the linear to be consistent in shape and size, measuring 0.85m in width and 0.26m in depth (Figure 4.4, 4.9, 4.10, 5.1; Sections 6.1-6.3, 9.2, 9.3; Plate 15). The profile of the linear comprised a sharp break of slope top with gradual sloping sides to a flat base. The terminus of the linear, [1044], was shallower at 0.10m in depth before sloping up gradually (Plate 16).

Linear [1045] was filled by a deposit of firm mid greyish brown silty clay [(1029), (1033), (1041), (1043)] which contained one fragment of cattle animal bone, one stem fragment of clay tobacco pipe, and industrial material that was thought to be naturally occurring (Appendix F, G, J).

The orientation of the linear on a right angle to the furrows present on Site, suggested it may have been a ditch representing a boundary within the medieval agricultural landscape. LiDAR data of the Site shows a linear to be present within this area at a right angle to the ridge and furrow which supports this interpretation (Plate 17).



Plate 15: Southwest facing section of linear [1030], Group [1045] looking northeast



Plate 16: Northwest facing section of linear terminal [1044], Group [1045] looking southeast

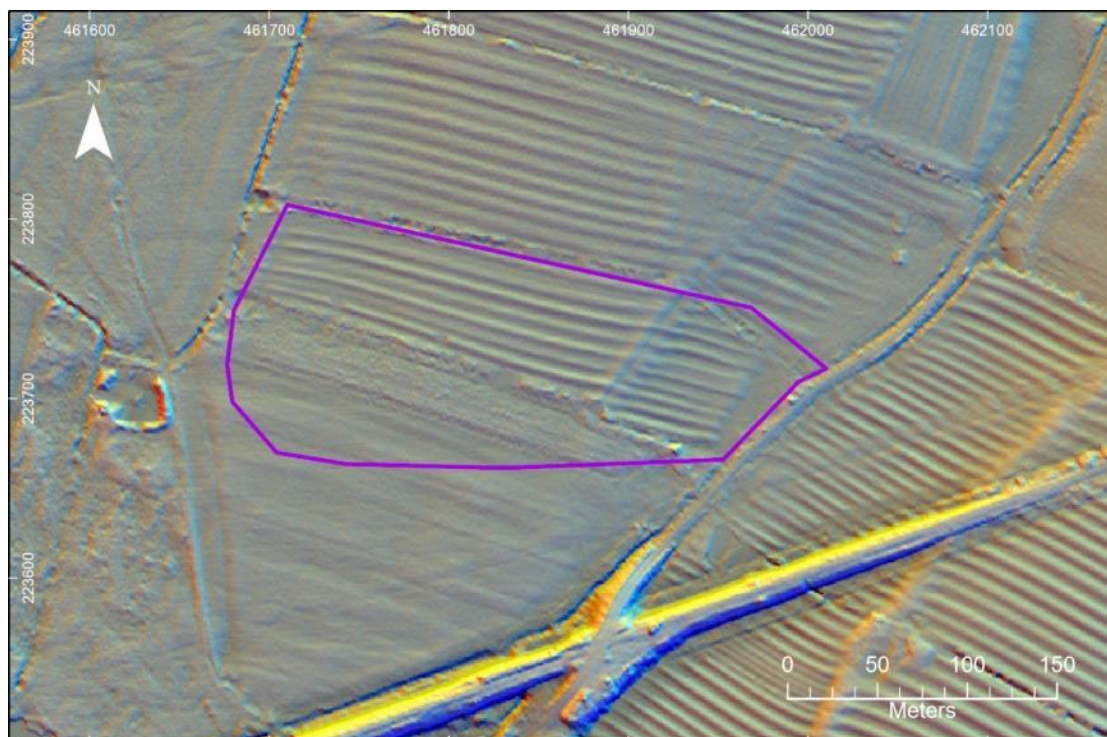


Plate 17: LiDAR showing ridge and furrow and boundary (likely linear [1045])

*LiDAR simple local relief over 16-directional hillshade, produced using Environment Agency LiDAR Composite DTM, used under Open Government License (Crown and Database Copyright 2021).*

The natural geology and features recorded on the Site were overlain with a subsoil (1001), c. 0.25m to 0.40m thick, comprising a firm light grey brown silty clay. The subsoil was overlain by topsoil (1000) which was a maximum of 0.25m thick and comprised a loose mid greyish brown clay silt (Figure 5.1; Section 1.1).

The topsoil and subsoil contained a substantial amount of artefactual material comprising pottery, ceramic building material (CBM), flint and metal. Post-medieval pottery was retrieved from the topsoil and subsoil dating from the 15<sup>th</sup> to the 19<sup>th</sup> century, including creamware, Surrey-Hampshire border white ware, redware and pearlware. The assemblage was poorly stratified and provides little archaeological value (Appendix D).

The CBM and metal assemblage related to post-medieval and modern agricultural activities whilst the flint likely represents no more than low level 'background noise' but does demonstrate the presence of prehistoric communities within the locality (Appendix C, H, K).

#### ***Period 4: Undated***

Towards the western end of the Site, two linears were observed; [1023] and [1062]. During excavation it was thought [1062] was a continuation of [1023], however the limit of excavation meant this could not be confirmed (Figure 2).

Linear [1023] was the northernmost linear and was oriented roughly north-northwest to south-southeast but had a slight curve in it. It was observed at a height of 67.48m aOD and measured on average 16m+ x 0.30m x 0.1m. The linear was investigated by two interventions [1027] and [1025], and both showed the linear to have a profile of very steep sloping sides to a flat base (Figure 2, 4.1, 5.1; Sections 5.2 – 5.4; Plate 18). The fill

deposit (1024), (1026) comprised a firm dark greyish blue mottled clay with lenses of light yellow orange silty clay. The fill deposits were sterile of datable material.

Linear [1062] was located to the south of linear [1023] and was on a slightly different alignment, orientated north to south, but again with a slight curve (Figure 4.6, 5.2; Sections 7.3-7.7; Plate 19-20). It measured on average 20m+ x 0.50m x 0.15m and was observed at a height of 67.40m aOD. Linear [1062] was investigated by three interventions, [1064], [1066], [1068], and a relationship slot [1070] with a furrow which truncated the linear. The profile of the linear was observed as the same as linear [1023], having steep sloping sides to a flat base. The fill deposit [(1063), (1065), (1067)] was also similar comprising a firm dark greyish blue mottled clay with lenses of light yellow orange silty clay, however within linear [1062] the fill contained fragments of oak charcoal which are indicative of re-deposited fuel due to their abraded nature (Appendix E).

There is no morphological or contextual information to associate both linear [1023] and [1062] with either the pit activity on Site or the later agricultural use of the Site, and therefore they remain undated.



Plate 18: North facing section of linear group [1023] slot [1027] looking south





Plate 19: South facing section of linear terminal [1064], Group [1062] looking north



Plate 20: South facing section of linear [1066], Group [1062] looking north

## 8. Quantification of the Archive

The site records have been completed and checked (see Table 1). A context register has been completed (Appendix A) and a draft stratigraphic matrix has been compiled for the site. Contexts have been placed into preliminary phases using stratigraphic information and provisional dating. Illustrations have been constructed to accompany the results

showing the location and character of the features (Appendix B, Figures 3.1 to 5.2). Assessment of the finds has been undertaken (Appendices C to K). The photographic archive has been checked and will be reassessed prior to deposition.

The archive will be deposited with Oxfordshire Museum under accession number OXCMS: 2021.32

**Table 8: Quantification of the Archive**

| Archive                              | Quantification |
|--------------------------------------|----------------|
| Context Checklist                    | 3              |
| Context Record Sheets                | 74             |
| Finds                                | 340            |
| Environmental Sample List            | 2              |
| Environmental Samples Taken          | 35             |
| Primary Drawing Register             | 2              |
| Registered Finds List                | 0              |
| Plan and Section Sheets (Permatrace) | 10             |
| Photographic Record Sheet            | 6              |
| Digital Photographs (JPEG)           | 193            |

## 9. Finds

All of the finds have been washed and catalogued as appropriate. The finds have been assessed by specialists in accordance with current guidance<sup>24</sup>. All finds have been examined for this report. They comprise pottery, CBM, fired clay, animal bone, flint, glass, clay tobacco pipe, metal objects, industrial residues and environmental samples. Table 2 presents the frequencies of each find type, excluding archaeobotanical remains. Full specialist assessments are presented in Appendices C to K.

**Table 2: A Breakdown of the Finds Recovered**

| Find Type            | Fragment Count |
|----------------------|----------------|
| Prehistoric Pottery  | 63             |
| Roman Pottery        | 2              |
| Medieval Pottery     | 2              |
| Post-medieval/Modern | 29             |
| CBM                  | 62             |
| Macroplant           | 2              |
| Charcoal             | 160            |
| Animal Bone          | 2              |

<sup>24</sup> RESCUE & ICON, 2001. *First Aid for Finds*

|                     |         |
|---------------------|---------|
| Clay Tobacco Pipe   | 1       |
| Flint               | 9       |
| Glass               | 1       |
| Industrial residues | 419.60g |
| Metal               | 7       |

### *Prehistoric Pottery*

Pit [1006] contained a group of 59 sherds (126g) of IASH, limited to small, highly fragmented body and basal sherds. The fabric was highly vesiculated with limited extant external surfaces but appears handmade and has soot residue adhering to the internal surfaces, suggesting it had a function as a cooking pot or related heating vessel. This type of fabric is typical of the Middle to Late Iron Age in the region.

A further isolated body sherd of IASH in pit [1004] may be derived from the same vessel, but due to the vesiculated and friable fabric, no cross-joins could be identified. The very small body sherds of Q1 contained in pit [1061] are likely to be contemporary in the middle to late Iron Age.

### *Roman Pottery*

Topsoil (1000) contained two re-deposited plain body sherds of OXGROG, a coarse ware probably derived from a large jar, and postulated to have been produced in the area surrounding Bicester. It typically has a distribution to the north and east of Oxford, extending over northern Buckinghamshire until the 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD.

### *Medieval Pottery*

Subsoil (1001) contained a single rim sherd of a cooking pot in a coarse ware produced around Oxford, and a small body sherd of generic sandy coarse ware (MS3) was also recovered from topsoil (1000). The OXY vessel is a cooking pot or jar with an everted, flat-topped bead rim and a slightly cupped neck, consistent with common types produced in a range of kilns in and around Oxford from the mid-11<sup>th</sup> to the mid-13<sup>th</sup> centuries.

### *Post-medieval Pottery*

Topsoil (1000) and subsoil (1001) contained isolated sherds of un-glazed red earthenware (TLMS11), with the former including the horizontal ledged rim of a shallow dish or platter, likely produced in the 17<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. Other fabrics in the assemblage are German stoneware (GERST, 1480-1900), Surrey Hampshire border wares in green (BORDG, 1550-1700) and yellow (BORDY, 1550-1700) glaze and unsourced post-medieval redwares (1580-1900).

Later industrial wares include creamware (CREA, 1740-1830), English porcelain (1745-1900) and pearlware with blue transfer-printed decoration (PEAR TR, 1700-1840), banded slip decoration (PEAR SLIP, 1775-1840) and with no-decoration present (PEAR, 1700-1900).

### *Ceramic Building Materials*

A small group of 14 fragments (128g) was contained in pit [1006], whilst 'crumbs' of comparable material were contained in posthole [1008], pits [1012], [1016] and [1050]. No surfaces, edges or technological traits were preserved, and the fired clay was limited to small amorphous lumps. It is possible that these formed part of clay objects or were used as daub or oven/hearth lining but the evidence remains inconclusive.

### *The Macroplant*

There were two cereal caryopses recovered from contexts (1011) and (1037). These were both poorly preserved and could not be identified to species.

### *The Charcoal*

The charcoal assemblage contained species of alder (*Alnus glutinosa* L), hazel (*Corylus avellana* L), cherry (*Prunus* sp), apple/pear/hawthorn/rowan (*Maloideae/Rowan* sp) and oak (*Quercus* sp). Preservation of the charcoal ranged from poor to excellent. Those fragments described as poor were either friable or noticeably vitrified. The charcoal was concentrated within eight deposits (1003), (1005), (1009), (1007), (1011), (1057), (1059) and (1071) with the rest of the assemblage scattered throughout the site in small quantities. The charcoal assemblage was composed of fuel debris and small structural elements such as posts and stakes. There was no evidence that any artefacts were burnt in-situ or disposed of on Site.

### *Animal Bone*

Two fragments of bone were recovered, neither of which could be identified to element or taxon. The fragments from context (1041) were probably originally from a single cattle long bone.

### *Flint*

None of the features produced more than three flints; these include those recovered from the lower fill of pit [1050]. The burnt stone within post hole [1010] may have been used as packing material.

### *Glass*

The glass sherd was retrieved during the processing of soil sample retent from the upper fill (1005) of pit [1006]. It has been identified as a tiny, clear and colourless shatter sherd which is considered to be non-classifiable. The small size of the shatter sherd also allows for the possibility that they may be intrusive to its context of discovery through the effects of bioturbation.

### *Industrial Residues*

The industrial material assemblage comprises small amorphous fragments of manganese rich, heat-affected soil (Mass: 96.7g), tiny fragments of coal (Mass: 0.4g), and quantities of iron-rich mudstone (Mass: 300.9g). The material was mainly retrieved from the fills of pits [1032, 1034, 1036, 1050, 1054, 1061, 1072], as well as the fill of ditch [1042] and fill of ditch terminus [1004]. All of these materials are likely to be naturally occurring within their contexts of discovery.

### *Metal*

The metal assemblage comprises seven ferrous metal objects, and includes a hobnail (RT 17), one large horseshoe (1000a), one smaller horseshoe (1001a), a horseshoe nail (1001b), a possible loop headed hitch pin (1000b), a fragment of a sickle (1000c), and a small rectangular cross-sectioned spike (1000d). The hobnail was recovered from the fill (1037) of pit [1038], while the remainder of the finds were recovered from the topsoil (1000) and subsoil (1001) deposits.

The only well-stratified find retrieved is the likely Roman hobnail (RT 17) that was recovered during the processing of soil sample retent from the fill (1037) of pit [1038]. This small find likely represents a casual loss through use and may be indicative of Roman activity in the area, however due to its small size may be intrusive within its context of discovery.

## 10. Conclusions

The SMS undertaken at 2A0326/5.2/FH (West) Flood Alleviation Area (CFSA A2) revealed a number of archaeological features comprising pits and postholes from which the datable material retrieved is indicative of prehistoric activity, likely Mid to Late Iron Age. There was also evidence of agricultural use of the Site within the medieval to post-medieval periods.

Eighteen pits and four post holes were recorded across the Site. They formed no obvious patterns with the exception of three pits towards the west of the Site, [1016], [1020] and [1022], which formed a slight arc. The similarities of the three pits suggest they were part of a similar event and the pits forming an arc in plan could be the truncated remains of a small structure or barrier, however with no other features present to the north of the arc, the function remains unknown.

Little dating material was retrieved during the excavation within features. Pit [1006] contained the largest assemblage with 59 sherds of Iron Age shell-tempered ware that likely had a function as a cooking pot or related heating vessel. This type of fabric is typical of the Middle to Late Iron Age. The pit also contained oak charcoal, glass and fired clay, but this was debris material and there was no evidence of burning in-situ to suggest this was a cooking pit. A further isolated body sherd of IASH in pit [1004], recorded to the west of pit [1006], may be derived from the same vessel, but due to the vesiculated and friable fabric, no cross-joins could be identified. The only other datable material recovered from features came from pit [1061] in the south of the Site which was a small body sherds of hand sand-tempered ware which was likely contemporary in the Middle to Late Iron Age.

The exact function of the pits and postholes is unknown, however their discovery as mostly isolated features with no certain structural elements, suggests they may have been refuse pits and temporary shelters that are evidence of a short term occupation of this area or a seasonal revisiting of the Site.

The charcoal assemblage was composed of both mixed fuel debris and the remains of small structural elements such as stakes or posts; however, the latter did not originate in the posthole features present on the Site and instead were retrieved from two of the larger pits ([1058] and [1072]). The refuse material in the pits likely represent prehistoric activity within the vicinity of the Site. Some of the non-oak charcoal may be suitable for radiocarbon dating which may determine the date of more of the pits and will contribute to understanding whether all the pit and postholes present on Site are contemporary or are evidence of an area of the landscape utilised throughout prehistory and beyond.

The charcoal assemblage has indicated the tree species present in the near vicinity of the Site. All are common finds throughout Britain. Alder usually favours damper habitats, hazel, cherry, apple/pear/hawthorn are usually found in hedgerows, scrub or more open woods with rowan more likely to grow in rocky habitats, whereas oak is adaptable to a variety of growing conditions<sup>25</sup>.

Overall, the shallow nature of the pit and posthole features, and the lack of substantial subsoil across the Site is suggestive of truncation across the Site, likely as a result of post-medieval to modern agricultural activity. It may be that features have been truncated away so we are no longer seeing the full picture of what activity was taking place on the Site. With the exception of the pottery in pit [1006], further artefactual and ecofactual material may have been disturbed or lost in any truncation. Having said that, the lack of structural evidence may suggest the activity on the Site was of a temporary nature and artefacts may not have been discarded in the same way as they would within a settlement environment. Where there is artefactual evidence, this is likely the result of a casual loss.

<sup>25</sup> Stace, C. (2010). *New Flora of the British Isles*. 3rd Edition. Cambridge University Press.

Similar to the findings at the Site, at Compound A2, c.250m to the south-east<sup>26</sup>, isolated activity of Late Bronze Age to Early Iron Age and the Middle to Late Iron Age was recorded. Also, scatterings of artefacts in areas suggest activity within the vicinity of the finds dating to the Neolithic, the Early Bronze Age and the Romano-British period. It is presumed that the Oxfordshire region would have had a continued use of settlement and land use from prehistory onwards and discoveries at this Site and Compound A2 start to contribute to proving this presumption.

Extant ridge and furrow were visible on Site prior to the investigation and the base of some of those furrows were visible within the strip area. The LiDAR data of the Site shows the presence of the classic 'reversed-S pattern' of ridge and furrow within the Site and beyond its boundaries, including at Compound A2 c.250m to the south-east<sup>27</sup>. The 'reversed-S pattern' is evident of medieval ploughing<sup>28</sup> and medieval open field systems. It is likely that the furrows persisted in use from the medieval period onwards.

Linear [1045] was orientated on a right angle to the furrows present on Site and seemed to respect the eastern end of the ridge and furrow. Its location suggested it may have been intended as a ditch that was dug along the natural slope to help encourage drainage. Its location matches a linear visible on LiDAR along with the ridge and furrow, so would suggest it is likely it was part of the medieval agricultural landscape also.

There was no morphological or contextual information to associate linear [1023/1062] with either the prehistoric activity on Site or the later agricultural use of the Site, and therefore remains undated, however it was truncated by the furrows so it likely pre-dated the medieval period.

The SMS at 2A0326 (CFSA A2) has shown prehistoric activity, likely Mid-Late Iron Age, took place on the Site, although a full understanding of the nature of this activity has not been possible to establish. The Site has also been part of the agricultural landscape that is still present today since the medieval period with the Site demonstrating medieval cultivation. The presence of the extant ridge and furrow on the Site also attests to the longevity of agricultural practices at the Site and in the surrounding landscape.

## Realisation of the Research Aims

As detailed above, the SMS at 2A0326 (CFSA A2) has revealed prehistoric activity, likely Mid-Late Iron Age, taking place on the Site, along with agricultural activity dating from the Medieval and post-medieval periods. The results of the SMS has contributed to the research aims as set out in Section 5. The activity does not largely contribute directly to any research aims set out within the Heritage Delivery Strategy<sup>29</sup>, however the presence of these remains can contribute to a wider landscape study and the mapping of activity of these dates within Oxfordshire. Table 3 details where research aims have been realised:

**Table 3: Contribution to Research Aims**

| Research aim  | Contribution   |
|---|--|
| SRO09: What is the evidence for pre-Iron Age phases of enclosure, and to what extent were Iron Age and Romano-British field systems | No evidence retrieved from the Site to contribute to this SRO. |

<sup>26</sup> EWR Alliance, 2021a. Development Stage 2A2: Compound 2A2 and Access at Land East of Station Road, Oxfordshire: Post-Excavation Assessment

<sup>27</sup> ibid

<sup>28</sup> Eyre, S.R. 1955 'The Curving Plough-strop and its Historical Implications'. *Agr Hist Rev* 3 (2). Vol 3(2), pp. 80-94.

<sup>29</sup> EWR Alliance, 2019c. *Network Rail (East West Rail Bicester to Bedford Improvements) Order Heritage Delivery Strategy*. Unpublished Report

|  |   |
|--|---|
| and settlement influenced by earlier structuring of the landscape?   |   |
| SRO18: Can we investigate continuity of local traditions by excavating sites with well-preserved deposits of both Late Iron Age and Roman date?  | There is limited evidence from the Site to contribute to this SRO. The presence of Iron Age activity within the Site may contribute to a wider study of local traditions between the Iron Age and Romano-British period, however with the lack of artefacts and the function of the activity being unknown, the contribution is very limited. |
| SRO22: Can we provide new insight into Roman crafts, trade and industries, particularly pottery, ironworking and stone?  | Artefacts of Roman date were retrieved from the Site but not as secure dating with the majority retrieved from topsoil/subsoil or residual within features. Therefore, no evidence retrieved from the Site to contribute to this SRO.   |
| SRO23: The Romano-British period saw the beginning of more established infrastructure network. Can we investigate the development of these routes, trackways and roads and the influence they had on landscape change? | No evidence retrieved from the Site to contribute to this SRO.  |
| SRO25: Identify evidence for late Roman occupation and attempt to identify any continuity in settlement patterns between the end of the Romano-British period and the Early Medieval period.                           | No evidence retrieved from the Site to contribute to this SRO.  |
| SRO29: Understand the chronology of development and character of later medieval field systems and their relationship to settlement across the region   | Medieval ridge and furrow is present on Site. Whilst there may not be evidence of field systems relating to nearby settlement, the results will contribute to the knowledge of how the land was used and developed from the medieval period onwards.  |
| SRO30: Better understand the character and organisation of later medieval ridge and furrow and field systems   | The exact date of the ridge and furrow has not been established, however its presence, when looked at within the landscape, can contribute to establishing the larger narrative of the region.  |
| SRO39: How did post-medieval rural industries impact on the landscape, and what was their contribution to society over the period of the urban-centred industrial revolution?  | No evidence retrieved from the Site to contribute to this SRO.  |
| SRO40: What was the impact of the agricultural revolution on the post-medieval landscape?  | No evidence retrieved from the Site to contribute to this SRO.  |

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|--|--|

## Statement of Significance

The archaeological remains recorded at 2A0326 (CFSA A2) represents prehistoric activity, likely Mid to Late Iron Age, along with medieval agricultural activity. The features recorded, along with the ecofactual and artefactual evidence are considered to be of local significance with the potential to provide information on activities in the area during prehistory and the medieval period onwards.

Considering the SMS was one of multiple excavations taking place along the route of East West Rail, when looked at together, the wider results may be able to contribute to multiple research aims and establish a more detailed narrative of land use from prehistory to the present day. These results together may be considered regionally significant.

## 11. Updated Project Design

Recommended further work on this project includes analysis of contextual data and integrating the results of this investigation together with all archaeologically investigated EWR sites in Oxfordshire, as well as the archiving of materials related to the project.

The aims of this further work will be:

- To set the Site in its local and regional context through further documentary research.
- To relate the findings to the EWR Heritage Delivery Strategy and the Solent-Thames Framework.
- To disseminate this synthesis together with all archaeologically investigated EWR sites in Oxfordshire within the archaeological journal *Oxoniensia Volumes*.
- To deposit a digital copy of the site archive with the Archaeology Data Service (ADS).
- To prepare for the deposition of the physical archive with Oxfordshire County Museum.

The research questions to be addressed during further work are as follows:

- Can the activity dating to the prehistoric period, when looked at together with other excavated sites within the vicinity, contribute to our understanding of the use of the landscape in these periods?
- How do the features contribute to the understanding of the chronology of development and character of medieval field systems? (SRO29, 30)

Recommendations for the further analysis of ecofact assemblage from the archaeological investigation has been recommended. It is recognised that both the macroplant and charcoal assemblages are small and poorly preserved but further analysis will allow for a record to be produced of what crops and woodland resources were exploited in this location from prehistory onwards and can also provide radiocarbon dating for currently undated pits, to establish their date.

No further work is recommended on the pottery, CBM, animal bone, clay tobacco pipe, flint, glass, industrial materials or metal. However, the assessments of this material will be



referred to in further research and considered in the context of the full site assemblage from both phases of work.

Further documentary research will be carried out in order to place the Site into its regional context and compare its features and finds with those from other sites. In particular, sites with evidence of medieval agricultural activity.

The results merit further research, illustration, and dissemination. A narrative of the results will be integrated with documentary research and published together with all archaeologically investigated EWR sites in Oxfordshire. This will include detailed plans of the Site along with illustrations and photographs of a sample of finds from the Site.

The Site archive will be deposited with Oxfordshire County Museum under accession number OXCMS: 2021.32.

The further work to be undertaken is set out in the Table of Recommendations (see Table 4, below).

**Table 4: Table of Recommendations**

| Task                                     | Description  | Resource    | Days |
|--|--|-------------|------|
| <b>General</b>                           |  |             |      |
| 1  | Documentary research   | NCW         | 2    |
| 2  | Checking and completion of site phasing and digital plans                                      | NCW         | 1    |
| <b>Report, Publication and Archiving</b> |  |             |      |
| 9  | Completion of drawings for publication, including site plan with background topography and HER | SD/AC       | 2    |
| 10                                       | Liaison with illustrator   | NCW         | 0.25 |
| 11                                       | Preparation of publication text  | NCW         | 4    |
| 12                                       | Editing of publication text  | MM          | 1    |
| 13                                       | Amendment resulting from external editor's comments  | NCW         | 1.5  |
| 14                                       | Proof reading and liaison with monograph editor  | NCW         | 1    |
| 15                                       | Page costs of monograph  | FIXED PRICE |      |
| 16                                       | Project Management and quality assurance   | NCW/MM      | 2    |
| 17                                       | Archiving  | KM          | 1    |
| 18                                       | Materials and deposition   | FIXED PRICE |      |

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## Appendix A

### A.1 Context Register

| Context | Context Description  | Depth (m)  | Length (m) | Width (m)  |
|---------|--|------------|------------|------------|
| 1000    | Deposit: Loose mid greyish brown clay silt which had a depth of 0.25m. Some roots, particularly along edges of field.  | 0.25m      | Whole area | Whole area |
| 1001    | Deposit: Firm light grey brown silty clay, with a thickness of 0.25-0.4m. The subsoil was formed into ENE-WSW aligned ridge and furrow across most of the SMS area. From the bottom of the furrow to the top of the ridge measured 0.65m and the elevation difference from the base of the furrow to top of the ridge was 0.25m. | 0.25m-0.4m | Whole area | Whole area |
| 1002    | Deposit: hard mid-blueish grey yellow clay.  | NFE        | Whole area | Whole area |
| 1003    | Fill: Moderately compacted light blueish grey silty clay with occasional angular stone inclusion and occasional charcoal.  | 0.29       | 1.36       | 1.28       |
| 1004    | Cut: Oval cut of pit with moderately sharp break of slope-top, steep sides, sudden break of slope-base and rounded base. Orientated NE-SW.   | 0.29       | 1.36       | 1.28       |
| 1005    | Fill: Friable mid-brownish grey silty clay with charcoal inclusions.   | 0.17       | 0.97       | 1          |
| 1006    | Cut: Circular cut of pit with sharp break of slope-top, steep sloping sides, gradual break of slope-base and mostly flat base with some undulations. Orientated E-W.   | 0.24       | 1.22       | 1.3        |
| 1007    | Fill: Soft mid black greyish clay silt with frequent charcoal inclusions and occasional fragments of burnt stone.  | 0.19       | 0.24       | 0.24       |
| 1008    | Cut: Circular cut with sharp break of slope-top, vertical sides, gradual break of slope-base and flat base.  | 0.19       | 0.24       | 0.24       |
| 1009    | Fill: Soft mid-black clayey silt with occasional small fragments of sandstone, some charcoal and some fragments of burnt stone.  | 0.17       | 0.38       | 0.32       |
| 1010    | Cut: Oval cut with sharp break of slope-top, almost vertical sides, gradual break of slope-base and flat base. Orientated S-N.   | 0.17       | 0.38       | 0.32       |
| 1011    | Fill: Loose dark black silty clay with extremely occasional cbm and frequent charcoal.   | 0.1        | 0.9        | 0.5        |
| 1012    | Cut: Sub-oblong cut with sharp break of slope-top, gradually sloping side, not perceptible break of  | 0.1        | 0.9        | 0.5        |

|      |  |           |                 |      |
|------|--|-----------|-----------------|------|
|      | slope-base and a rounded base. Orientated SE-NW. Truncated on the NE edge, no clear shape in plane, re-investigated after 100% excavation.   |           |                 |      |
| 1013 | Fill: Firm light grey greenish silty clay.   | 0.14      | 0.36            | 0.32 |
| 1014 | Cut: Oval cut with sharp break of slope-top, gradually sloping side, gradual break of slope-base and concave base. Orientated N-S.   | 0.14      | 0.36            | 0.32 |
| 1015 | Fill: Firm mid brownish grey silty clay. Disturbed by roots.   | 0.1       | 0.8             | 0.55 |
| 1016 | Cut: Oval cut with sharp break of slope-top, gradually sloping sides, not perceptible break of slope-base and flat base. Orientated NE-SW.   | 0.1       | 0.8             | 0.55 |
| 1017 | Fill: Firm light grey greenish silty clay.   | 0.18      | 0.88            | 0.55 |
| 1018 | Cut: Oval cut with sharp break of slope-top, near vertical side (E) and moderate slope side (W), sharp break of slope-base and irregular base. Orientated S-N.                       | 0.18      | 0.88            | 0.55 |
| 1019 | Fill: Firm mid greyish brown silty clay with charcoal flakes and very occasional stone inclusions.   | 0.09      | 0.55            | 0.45 |
| 1020 | Cut: Sub-circular cut with sharp break of slope-top, shallow gradually sloping sides, not perceptible break of slope-base and flat base. Orientated E-W.                             | 0.09      | 0.55            | 0.45 |
| 1021 | Fill: Soft mid greyish brown silty clay with charcoal flakes.  | 0.13      | 0.8             | 0.75 |
| 1022 | Cut: Sub-oval cut with sharp break of slope-top, gradual sloping sides, gradual break of slope-base and flat base. Orientated NNE-SSW.   | 0.13      | 0.8             | 0.75 |
| 1023 | Feature: Linear ditch with sharp break of slope-top, vertical sides, sharp break of slope-base and flat base. Orientated N-S. It comprises contexts (1024)-[1025] and (1026)-[1027]. | 0.05-0.13 | 16+             | 0.3  |
| 1024 | Fill: Moderately compact mottled dark brown blueish-grey mixed with light yellow orange silty clay.  | 0.05-0.13 | 1m slot in 16m+ | 0.37 |
| 1025 | Cut: Linear cut with sharp break of slope-top, vertical sides sharp break of slope-base and flat base. Orientated N-S. The terminal is gradual sloping out.                          | 0.05-0.13 | 1m slot in 16m+ | 0.37 |
| 1026 | Fill: Moderately compact mottled dark brown blueish-grey mixed with light yellow orange silty clay. Very occasional charcoal inclusions.   | 0.13      | 1m slot in 16m+ | 0.32 |
| 1027 | Cut: Linear cut with sharp break of slope-top, vertical sides, sharp break of slope-base and flat base. Orientated N-S.  | 0.13      | 1m slot in 16m+ | 0.32 |
| 1028 | Fill: Friable mid reddish grey silty clay with ironized stone and ochre(?) inclusions.   | 0.2       | 1.22            | 1.3  |
| 1029 | Fill: Firm mid greyish brown silty clay.   | 0.26      | 1m slot in 54m+ | 0.85 |
| 1030 | Cut: Linear cut with sharp break of slope at top, moderately steep sides sharp break of slope-base and flat base. Orientated NE-SW.  | 0.26      | 1m slot in 54m+ | 0.85 |
| 1031 | Fill: Soft light brownish grey silty clay with occasional charcoal and slag.   | 0.08      | 0.7             | 0.4  |
| 1032 | Cut: Sub-oval cut with sharp break of slope at top, very gradually sloping sides, gradual break of slope-base and flat base. Orientated NW-SE.                                       | 0.08      | 0.7             | 0.4  |

|      |   |           |                 |           |
|------|---|-----------|-----------------|-----------|
| 1033 | Fill: Firm mid greyish brown silty clay very occasional small stones and charcoal.  | 0.26      | 1m slot in 54m+ | 0.86      |
| 1034 | Cut: Linear cut with sharp break of slope at top, moderately steep sides, gradual break of slope-base and flat base. Orientated NE-SW.  | 0.26      | 1m slot in 54m+ | 0.86      |
| 1035 | Fill: Soft light yellowish brown with light grey spots silty clay. A single fragment of slag and very occasional charcoal flakes.   | 0.04-0.07 | 0.57            | 0.3       |
| 1036 | Cut: Sub-oval cut with sharp break of slope at top on E and NE side and not perceivable on the W and SW side, very gradually sloping sides, gradual break of slope-base and mostly flat base some undulation. Orientated NW-SE.                           | 0.04-0.07 | 0.57            | 0.3       |
| 1037 | Fill: Firm light brownish grey silty clay, some charcoal flecks.  | 0.1       | 1.13            | 1.1       |
| 1038 | Cut: Sub-circular cut of pit with sharp break of slope at top, gradually sloping sides, gradual break of slope-base and undulating base.  | 0.1       | 1.13            | 1.1       |
| 1039 | Fill: Soft mid brownish orange silty clay with frequent charcoal inclusions.  | 0.06      | 0.4             | 0.34      |
| 1040 | Cut: Sub-circular cut of pit with sharp break of slope at top, steep sloping sides, gradual break of slope-base and flat base.  | 0.06      | 0.4             | 0.34      |
| 1041 | Fill: Firm mid greyish brown silty clay very occasional charcoal and some conglomerate stones.  | 0.27      | 1m slot in 54m+ | 0.75      |
| 1042 | Cut: Linear cut with sharp break of slope at top, moderately steep sides, gradual break of slope-base and flat base. Orientated NE-SW.  | 0.27      | 1m slot in 54m+ | 0.75      |
| 1043 | Fill: Firm mid brownish grey silty clay with some iron panning.   | 0.14      | 1m slot in 54m+ | 0.55      |
| 1044 | Cut: Linear cut of irregular shaped terminal with sharp break of slope at top, steep sides, gradual break of slope-base and undulating flat. Orientated NE-SW. Terminal slopes gradually up, likely not original terminal.                                | 0.14      | 1m slot in 54m+ | 0.55      |
| 1045 | Feature: Linear ditch, orientated NE-SW. Terminates at the north east end and continues out with development area at the southwest end. Generally moderate-steep sloping sides and flat base. Group number includes slots [1029], [1033], [1041], [1043]. | 0.14-0.26 | 54+             | 0.55-0.75 |
| 1046 | Fill: Soft mid grey and yellow silty clay with some charcoal.   | 0.14      | 0.25            | 0.2       |
| 1047 | Cut: Sub-oval cut with sharp break of slope-top, vertical side, sharp break of slope-base and flat base.  | 0.14      | 0.25            | 0.2       |
| 1048 | Fill: Soft mid greyish black with frequent charcoal inclusions and some possible slag.  | 0.150.25  | 0.63            | 0.3       |
| 1049 | Fill: Soft light yellowish grey silty clay with some charcoal.  | 0.5-0.2   | 0.95-1          | 0.55-0.6  |
| 1050 | Cut: Irregular cut with sharp break of slope-top, gradually sloping sides, gradual break of slope-base and rounded base. Orientated N-S.  | 0.28      | 1               | 0.55-0.6  |
| 1051 | Fill: Firm mid-greyish brown silty clay with occasional charcoal flecks.  | 0.08      | 0.65            | 0.32      |

|      |  |           |                 |           |
|------|--|-----------|-----------------|-----------|
| 1052 | Cut: Sub-circular cut sharp break of slope-top, very shallow sloping side, gradual break of slope-base and mostly flat base. Orientated NE-SW.   | 0.08      | 0.65            | 0.32      |
| 1053 | Fill: Soft mid-reddish grey silty clay with very few fragment of possible slag.  | 0.06-0.07 | 0.24            | 0.22      |
| 1054 | Cut: Circular cut with gradual break of slope-top, gradually sloping side, imperceptible break of slope-base and a rounded base.   | 0.06-0.07 | 0.24            | 0.22      |
| 1055 | Fill: Soft mid-brownish grey silty clay with very occasional charcoal.   | 0.06-0.07 | 0.6             | 0.32      |
| 1056 | Cut: Oval cut with imperceptible break of slope-top, with steep sloping sides, imperceptible break of slope-base and flat base. Orientated N-S.  | 0.06-0.07 | 0.6             | 0.32      |
| 1057 | Fill: Firm dark greyish black silty clay with frequent charcoal.   | 0.15      | 1.5             | 0.8       |
| 1058 | Cut: Irregular shaped cut with gradual to imperceptible break of slope-top, gradually sloping sides, imperceptible break of slope-base and irregular base. Orientated WNW-ESE.   | 0.15      | 1.5             | 0.8       |
| 1059 | Fill: Firm dark greyish brown silty clay with occasional charcoal flake and chunks.  | 0.1       | 1.5             | 0.8       |
| 1060 | Fill: Firm light greyish blue silty clay with charcoal flakes and frequent chunks.   | 0.15      | 2.47            | 2.13      |
| 1061 | Cut: sub-oval cut with sharp break of slope-top, west side steeply sloping and east side gradually sloping, shape break of slope-base west and gradual break of slope-base east and flat base. Orientated W-E.   | 0.25      | 2.47            | 2.13      |
| 1062 | Feature: Linear ditch, orientated N-S. Terminates at the south end is the real terminal, the linear continues to the north and likely is the same as Group [1023]. Sharpe break of slope-top, very steep sloping side, sharp break of slope-base and flat base. Group number includes slots [1064], [1066], [1068] and [1070]. [1070] was a relation ship slot that showed that the Ridge and furrow truncated the linear. | 0.08-0.2  | 20+             | 0.45-0.93 |
| 1063 | Fill: Soft mid greyish blue with patches of orange silty clay.   | 0.08      | 1m slot in 20+m | 0.93m     |
| 1064 | Cut: Linear cut with sharp break of slope-top, very steep almost vertical side, sharp break of slope-base and flat base. Orientated N-S. Terminal slot that is rounded and steeply slopes at the end.  | 0.08      | 1m slot in 20+m | 0.93m     |
| 1065 | Fill: Firm mid-greyish blue with patches of orange silty clay and very occasional charcoal.  | 0.12      | 1m slot in 20+m | 0.45      |
| 1066 | Cut: Linear cut with sharp break of slope-top, very steep sloping side, sharp break of slope-base and flat base. Orientated N-S.   | 0.12      | 1m slot in 20+m | 0.45      |
| 1067 | Fill: Firm dark greyish blue with patch of orange silty clay with very occasional charcoal.  | 0.2       | 1m slot in 20+m | 0.55      |
| 1068 | Cut: Linear cut with sharp break of slope-top, W side very steep sloping side and east side steep sloping, sharp break of slope-base and flat base. Orientated N-S.  | 0.2       | 1m slot in 20+m | 0.55      |
| 1069 | Fill: At the south end, firm dark greyish blue with patch of orange silty clay (linear group [1062] fill). At the north end firm light grey brown silty clay (furrow fill (1001)).   | -         | -               | -         |

|      |  |               |      |               |
|------|--|---------------|------|---------------|
| 1070 | Cut: A rectangular shaped slot at the junction of linear [1062] (N-S) and the furrow (1001) (ENE-WSW). The cut of [1062] was 0.45m wide E-W and 0.1m deep with steep sloping side and a flat base. Furrow (1001) was 0.12m deep and 0.8m wide N-S. The Furrow truncated the linear [1062]. | -             | -    | -             |
| 1071 | Fill: Soft mid-blueish grey silty clay with frequent charcoal and occasional slag.   | 0.46          | 1.23 | 1             |
| 1072 | Cut: Sub-oval cut with sharp break of slope-top, steeply sloping sides, gradual break of slope-base and flat base. Orientated W-E.   | 0.46          | 1.23 | 1             |
| 1073 | Fill: Firm dark blackish grey silty clay with very occasional charcoal.  | 0.03-<br>0.13 | 1.4  | 0.55-<br>0.65 |
| 1074 | Cut: Irregular cut with gradual break of slope-top, gradually sloping sides, imperceptible break of slope-base and undulating base. Orientated W-E.  | 0.03-<br>0.13 | 1.4  | 0.55-<br>0.65 |

## Appendix B

### B.1 Figures



## Appendix C

### C.1 Pottery & Ceramic Building Materials Assessment

Andrew Peachey

#### Pottery

Archaeological investigations recovered a total of 69 sherds (249g) of pottery; of which the bulk was accounted for by a small group of hand-made shell-tempered ware, likely from a single vessel of middle to late Iron Age date (Table C1), but the vessel is highly fragmented, abraded and vesiculated with no diagnostic rim or decoration types present. A very sparse scatter of Roman, medieval and post-medieval sherds were recovered from the topsoil and subsoil.

**Table C.1: Quantification of pottery by feature group/type**

| Date                 | Sherd Count | Weight (g) |
|----------------------|-------------|------------|
| Iron Age (?)         | 63          | 146        |
| Roman                | 2           | 25         |
| Medieval             | 2           | 38         |
| Post-medieval/Modern | 2           | 40         |
| <i>Total</i>         | <b>69</b>   | <b>248</b> |

#### *Methodology*

The pottery was quantified by sherd count and weight (g), with fabrics analysed at x20 magnification and all data entered into a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet that forms part of the site archive; in accordance with the *Standard for Pottery Studies in Archaeology* (Barclay *et al* 2016). Where possible, fabric types have been cross-referenced with the type series developed for Milton Keynes, both for Roman pottery<sup>30</sup> and medieval and later pottery<sup>31</sup>. The pottery fabrics are described and quantified below in Table C2.

**Table C.2: Description and quantification of fabric groups**

| Report Code               | MK Code* | Fabric Name/Description  | Sherd Count | Weight (g) |
|---------------------------|----------|--|-------------|------------|
| <b><i>Prehistoric</i></b> |          |  |             |            |
| IASH                      | (1a?)    | Iron Age Shell-tempered ware. Mid-orange-brown surfaces over a mid to dark grey core. Inclusions comprise common-abundant plate-like shell, some fossiliferous (0.5-8mm, but | 60          | 136        |

<sup>30</sup> Marney, P. 1989 *Roman & Belgic Pottery from excavations in Milton Keynes, 1972-82*. Bucks. Arch. Soc. Mon. Ser. No.2

<sup>31</sup> Mynard, D. & Zeepvat, R. 1992 *Great Linford*. Buckinghamshire Archaeological Society Monograph Series No.3

|                      |        |   |           |            |
|----------------------|--------|---|-----------|------------|
|                      |        | represented by voids as highly vesiculated). Could be abraded robust jar sherds of Belgic/early Roman type (Marney 1989, 174: fabric 1a).   |           |            |
| Q1                   | \      | Handmade sand-tempered ware. Dark red-brown to black surfaces over a thick dark grey core. Inclusions comprise common-abundant sub-angular quartz (0.25-0.5mm), sparse voids (burnt-out grass/organics), shell and clay pellets (<3mm). | 3         | 10         |
| <b>Roman</b>         |        |   |           |            |
| OXGROG               | 2a     | Oxidised grog-tempered ware (Marney 1989: fabric 2a). Pale to mid orange, sometimes with a mid grey core. Inclusions comprise common fine silty sand (<0.2mm) and sparse to common grog (<0.25-3mm).                                    | 2         | 25         |
| <b>Medieval</b>      |        |   |           |            |
| OXY                  | \      | Late Saxon to Medieval Oxford Ware (M11th-L13th C)  | 1         | 35         |
| MS3                  | MS3    | Medieval grey sandy ware (11th-14th C)  | 1         | 3          |
| <b>Post-medieval</b> |        |   |           |            |
|                      |        |   |           |            |
| TLMS11               | TLMS11 | Red earthen ware (16th-19th C)  | 2         | 40         |
| <b>Total</b>         |        |   | <b>69</b> | <b>136</b> |

\*After Marney 1989; Mynard & Zeepvat 1992; Mynard 1994

### Discussion by Period/Fabric Groups

#### Prehistoric

Pit [1006] (1005) contained a group of 59 sherds (126g) of IASH, limited to small, highly fragmented body and basal sherds with a wall-thickness of 15mm. The fabric was highly vesiculated with limited extant external surfaces but appears handmade and has soot residue adhering to the internal surfaces, suggesting it had a function as a cooking pot or related heating vessel. This type of fabric is typical of the middle to late iron Age in the region, but it is conceivable given the absence of further diagnostic traits that it could have a currency spanning the early Iron Age to the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD. A further isolated body sherd of IASH in pit [1004] (1003) may be derived from the same vessel, but due to the vesiculated and friable fabric, no cross-joins could be identified. Very small body sherds of Q1 contained in pit [1061] (1059) are likely to be contemporary in the middle to late Iron Age.

### Roman

Topsoil (1000) contained two re-deposited plain body sherds of OXGROG, a coarse ware probably derived from a large jar, and postulated to have been produced in the area surrounding Bicester. It typically has a distribution to the north and east of Oxford, extending over northern Buckinghamshire until the 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD.

### Medieval

Subsoil (1001) contained a single rim sherd of a cooking pot in a coarse ware produced around Oxford (OXY); while a small body sherd of generic sandy coarse ware (MS3) was also recovered from topsoil (1000). The OXY vessel is a cooking pot or jar with an everted, flat-topped bead rim and a slightly cupped neck, consistent with common types produced in a range of kilns in and around Oxford from the mid-11<sup>th</sup> to the mid-13<sup>th</sup> centuries (i.e. Mellor 1994: fig.17.8<sup>32</sup>).

### Post-medieval

Topsoil (1000) and subsoil (1001) contained isolated sherds of un-glazed red earthenware (TLMS11), with the former including the horizontal ledged rim of a shallow dish or platter, likely produced in the 17<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> centuries

## Statement of Potential

The assemblage has been fully recorded with a dataset generated to archive standard.

The high level of fragmentation, vesiculation, and paucity of diagnostic sherds amongst the prehistoric pottery, and residual/un-stratified context of the post-prehistoric sherds dictate that this small assemblage does not have any potential for further analysis or reporting. No further work is recommended.

## Ceramic Building Materials (CBM)

Excavations recorded a total of 48 small fragments (171g) of fired clay, potentially of prehistoric date, and 14 fragments (925g) of highly fragmented post-medieval to modern CBM (Table C3).

| CBM type     | Period        | Fragment Count | Weight (g) |
|--------------|---------------|----------------|------------|
| Fired clay   | ?Prehistoric  | 48             | 171        |
| Peg tile     | Post-medieval | 12             | 424        |
| Brick        | Early modern  | 2              | 501        |
| <i>Total</i> |               | 62             | 1096       |

Table C3: Quantification of CBM & Fired Clay

The fired clay was manufactured in a pale orange, fine silty fabric that has been exposed to, or dried at a low heat. A small group of 14 fragments (128g) was contained in pit

<sup>32</sup> Mellor M 1994 'A Synthesis of Middle and Late Saxon, Medieval and Early Post-medieval Pottery in the Oxford Region', *Oxoniensia* 59, 17–217

[1006] (1028), while 'crumbs' of comparable material were contained in posthole [1008], pits [1012], [1016] and [1050]. No surfaces, edges or technological traits were preserved, and the fired clay was limited to small amorphous lumps. It is possible that these formed part of clay objects or were used as daub or oven/hearth lining but the evidence remains inconclusive.

Topsoil (1000) and subsoil (1001) contained sparse small fragments of post-medieval peg tile, manufactured in a high-fired red-orange sandy fabric; probably in the 18<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, prior to being re-distributed through agricultural processes such as manuring for soil/drainage improvement. Topsoil (1000) also contained isolated fragments of Fletton brick, stamped by the London brick Company, which produced millions of such bricks in the early to mid-20<sup>th</sup> century and beyond.

### *Statement of Potential*

The limited evidence provided by the fired clay and CBM assemblage does not warrant any further work.

## Appendix D

### D.1 Post-Medieval Pottery Assessment

*Kylie McDermott*

#### *Introduction and Methodology*

A small assemblage of post-medieval pottery was recovered during a strip, map and sample at EWR Development Stage 2A2 (Land West of Station Road, Oxfordshire) (EWR20-2A03). The pottery has been examined for this report to identify, spot date and to understand the nature of the material in context of the overall site.

The pottery has been quantified using sherd count (sc) and weight (g), whilst the fabric has been examined under x20 magnification and identified and spot dated with reference to the Museum of London Code Expansions<sup>33</sup> (medieval and post medieval pottery codes) (Table D1). All data has been recorded on an excel spreadsheet, to be included with the site archive.

The assemblage consists of a total 27 sherds (274g). All sherds were recovered from topsoil and subsoil

#### *Discussion*

The earliest fabrics in the assemblage include German stoneware (GERST, 1480-1900), Surrey Hampshire border wares in green (BORDG, 1550-1700) and yellow (BORDY, 1550-1700) glaze and unsourced post-medieval redwares (1580-1900)- all were recovered from topsoil deposit (1000), except for two sherds (71g) of redware recovered from subsoil (1001).

Later industrial wares, also recovered from topsoil (1000), include creamware (CREA, 1740-1830), English porcelain (1745-1900) and pearlware with blue transfer-printed decoration (PEAR TR, 1700-1840), banded slip decoration (PEAR SLIP, 1775-1840) and with no-decoration present (PEAR, 1700-1900).

#### *Significance and Potential*

The assemblage of post-medieval pottery is poorly stratified and provides little archaeological value beyond dating evidence. The assemblage is not of local or national significance.

**Table D.1: The Post-Roman Pottery Assemblage by context, fabric, count, weight and spot date (early to late).**

<sup>33</sup> MOLA., (2014). *Medieval and post-medieval pottery codes*, London: Museum of London Archaeology.

| Context | Fabric    | Expansion  | Dec  | S<br>C | wt<br>(g) | E_L Dates |
|---------|-----------|--|------|--------|-----------|-----------|
| 1000    | CREA      | Creamware  |      | 8      | 68        | 1740-1830 |
| 1000    | BORDY     | Surrey-Hampshire border<br>white ware with clear<br>(yellow) glaze |      | 1      | 15        | 1550-1700 |
| 1000    | BORDG     | Surrey-Hampshire border<br>white ware with green<br>glaze          |      | 1      | 23        | 1550-1700 |
| 1000    | unsourced | Post-medieval redware  |      | 4      | 42        | 1580-1900 |
| 1000    | PEAR      | Pearlware  | BAND | 2      | 12        | 1775-1840 |
| 1000    | ENPO      | English porcelain  |      | 1      | 11        | 1745-1900 |
| 1000    | GERST     | Unsourced German<br>stoneware                                      |      | 1      | 8         | 1480-1900 |
| 1000    | PEAR      | Pearlware transfer print   | TRB  | 6      | 23        | 1770-1840 |
| 1000    | PEAR TR   | pearlware  |      | 1      | 1         | 1770-1840 |
| 1001    | unsourced | Post-medieval redware  |      | 2      | 71        | 1580-1900 |

## Appendix E

### E.1 Charcoal and Macroplant Assessment

*Jackaline Robertson*

#### *Introduction*

A total of 33 washovers, two bags of macroplants and 23 charcoal samples extracted from the bulk samples. The main aim of this assessment was to identify the ecofacts to species, assess their potential for further study and their suitability for radiocarbon dating.

#### *Methodology*

The bulk samples were processed in their entirety in laboratory conditions at AOC archaeology London using a floatation method designed to retrieve both ecofacts and artefacts<sup>34</sup>. The wash overs were assessed and were scanned using a high-powered microscope at x10-x40 magnification.

All plant macrofossils were subsequently examined at magnifications of x10 and up to x450. Macroplant identifications were confirmed using modern reference material and seed atlases stored at AOC Edinburgh<sup>35 36</sup>. Taxonomy and nomenclature for plants follows Stace<sup>37</sup>.

A maximum of ten charcoal fragments larger than 4mm were selected from each sample for further analysis. Species identifications were confirmed by analysing the transverse, tangential and radial sections at x70-x450 magnification and using keys and texts stored at AOC Edinburgh<sup>38 39</sup>.

#### *Results*

##### ***The macroplant***

There were two cereal caryopses recovered from contexts (1011) and (1037). These were both poorly preserved and could not be identified to species.

##### ***The charcoal***

The charcoal assemblage totalled 376.7g and 160 fragments were identified to species from 23 samples. The species were alder (*Alnus glutinosa* L), hazel (*Corylus avellana* L),

<sup>34</sup> Kenward, H. K., Hall, A.R. and Jones, A.K.G (1980). A tested set of techniques for the extraction of plant and animal macrofossils from waterlogged archaeological deposits. *Science and Archaeology* 22, 3-15.

<sup>35</sup> Cappers R.T.J., Bekker R.M. and Jans J.E.A. (2006). *Digital seed atlas of the Netherlands* (Barkhuis Publishing and Groningen University Library, Groningen).

<sup>36</sup> Jacomet, S. (2006). Identification of cereal remains from archaeological sites. (2nd ed) Archaeobotany Lab IPAS, Basel University.

<sup>37</sup> Stace, C. (2010). *New Flora of the British Isles*. 3rd Edition. Cambridge University Press.

<sup>38</sup> Hather, J G, (2000). *The identification of the Northern European Woods: a guide for archaeologists and conservators*. London.

<sup>39</sup> Schweingruber, F H, (1990). *Microscopic wood anatomy*. Birmensdorf.

cherry (*Prunus* sp), apple/pear/hawthorn/rowan (*Maloideae/Rowan* sp) and oak (*Quercus* sp). The dominant species was oak (72%) followed by alder (20%), hazel (3%), apple/pear/hawthorn/rowan (3%) and cherry (2%). There were ten pieces of roundwood identified as oak (60%), alder (20%) and hazel (20%).

Preservation of the charcoal ranged from poor to excellent. Those fragments described as poor were either friable or noticeably vitrified. The charcoal was concentrated within eight deposits (1003), (1005), (1009), (1007), (1011), (1057), (1059) and (1071) with the rest of the assemblage scattered throughout the site in small quantities. The charcoal assemblage was composed of fuel debris and small structural elements such as posts and stakes. There was no evidence that any artefacts were burnt in-situ or disposed of on site.

### ***Modern contamination***

Modern contamination was noted in all samples and was composed of roots, weeds and insects. It is possible that the roots and insects may have undermined the archaeological security of some of these samples.

### ***Summary of the contextual units***

#### **Context: (1003) Sample <1>**

The charcoal (18.2g) was a mix of oak (50%), alder (40%) and hazel (10%). Roundwood was identified as oak (20%) and hazel (10%). These finds are fuel debris.

#### **Context: (1005) Sample <2>**

The wood species was composed entirely of oak (38.5g) which may have originally formed part of a small structural post or stake.

#### **Context: (1009) Sample <3>**

The charcoal species (115.9g) were alder (60%), oak (30%) and cherry (10%). Alder roundwood formed 10% of the assemblage. This large accumulation of charcoal is fuel waste.

#### **Context: (1007) Sample <4>**

The charcoal (35.8g) was composed of oak (40%), alder (30%) and apple/pear/hawthorn/rowan (30%). Oak roundwood (10%) was noted. The charcoal is fuel debris.

#### **Context: (1011) Sample <5>**

There was a single cereal caryopsis and the charcoal assemblage (15.1g) is composed of alder. The cereal is re-deposited food waste of little interpretive value. The concentration of alder charcoal is possibly from a small structural post or stake.

#### **Context: (1013) Sample <6>**

There was small accumulation of oak charcoal (0.9g) which is probably re-deposited fuel debris.

#### **Context: (1015) Sample <7>**



The only find was two fragments of oak (1.9g) which are likely re-deposited fuel waste of little archaeological significance.

**Context: (1021) Sample <10>**

There were two fragments of oak (0.4g) of little interpretive value.

**Context: (1028) Sample <13>**

The charcoal (3.7g) was a mix of oak (60%) and alder (40%) which is re-deposited fuel debris.

**Context: (1031) Sample <15>**

There was a single fragment of oak (0.3g) which is of little archaeological value.

**Context: (1037) Sample <17>**

A single cereal caryopsis was recovered alongside charcoal (2.2g) identified as fragments of oak (90%) and alder roundwood (10%). The cereal and charcoal are likely re-deposited domestic food and fuel waste.

**Context: (1035) Sample <18>**

There was a single fragment of oak (1.1g) of little archaeological interest.

**Context: (1039) Sample <19>**

The charcoal (4.0g) was a mix of alder (30%), cherry (30%), hazel (20%) and oak (20%). The oak was composed entirely of roundwood. These finds are a small accumulation of fuel waste.

**Context: (1046) Sample <22>**

The charcoal (3.2g) was dominated by oak fragments (90%) and hazel roundwood (10%). The charcoal is fuel debris.

**Context: (1048) Sample <23>**

There was a small accumulation of oak charcoal (3.8g) which is possibly re-deposited fuel residue.

**Context: (1049) Sample <24>**

The charcoal was composed entirely of oak (1.7g) that is likely re-deposited fuel waste.

**Context: (1051) Sample <25>**

There were two fragments of oak charcoal (1.4g) which are probably re-worked fuel debris.

**Context: (1057) Sample <28>**

The charcoal (83.7g) was composed of oak which may have originally formed part of a stake or post.

**Context: (1059) Sample <29>**

The charcoal (16.4g) was dominated by oak (70%), apple/pear/hawthorn/rowan (20%) and hazel (10%). These fragments are the remains of fuel debris.

**Context: (1060) Sample <30>**

The charcoal (5.4g) was oak (90%) and alder (10%) which are re-deposited fuel.

**Context: (1065) Sample <32>**

There were two fragments of oak (0.2g) that are re-deposited fuel.

**Context: (1067) Sample <33>**

There was a single fragment of oak (0.7g) which is of little archaeological interest.

**Context: (1071) Sample <34>**

The charcoal (22.1g) was composed entirely of oak which may have formed part of a small structural element such as a post or stake.

### *Discussion and Statement of Significance*

#### *Crops*

A total of two cereal caryopses were recovered from contexts (1011) and (1037). These caryopses were both poorly preserved and could not be identified further. Given the small size of the cereal assemblage it is not possible to draw any useful conclusions concerning exploitation of crops and what their dietary contribution if any may have been at this site.

#### *The charcoal*

The charcoal assemblage was composed of both mixed fuel debris and the remains of small structural elements such as stakes or posts. The formation of the charcoal assemblage suggests that all species were used for fuel whereas oak was preferred for construction. There was no evidence that any wooden artefacts were burnt or disposed of within the excavated area. Further analysis of the charcoal assemblage may make it possible to establish if the wood species used at this site changed over time.

The tree species are all common finds throughout Britain and probably grew in the near vicinity of the site. Alder usually favours damper habitats, hazel, cherry, apple/pear/hawthorn are usually found in hedgerows, scrub or more open woods with rowan more likely to grow in rocky habitats, whereas oak is adaptable to a variety of growing conditions (Stace 2010, Linford 2009).

#### *Recommended further work*

The macroplant and charcoal assemblages have been identified in full and no further species identifications are required. The small size and poor preservation of the macroplant assemblage limits its archaeological potential for additional study so no further work is recommended for the cereal caryopses. However, once the chronology of the site has been established and only if it is found to be of archaeological interest a short report focusing exclusively on the charcoal assemblage is recommended. Any such charcoal report should focus on the following research questions.

- What wood species were used as a fuel, which for building materials and did this change over a chronologically recognised period.

- How do the results from Land West of Station Road compare to other sites of a similar date in Oxfordshire.
- Completion of this charcoal report will take one day.

If material is needed for radiocarbon dating, then charcoal except for the oak is suitable. Where possible oak should be avoided for dating as it is a slow growing species which can prove unreliable. The cereal caryopses are unlikely to be archaeologically secure and should be avoided for dating. The ecofact assemblage is stored in a stable and dry condition at AOC Archaeology and is suitable for long term storage.

**Table E1 : Carbonised macroplant**

| Sample no.          |        |              | 5    | 17   |
|---------------------|--------|--------------|------|------|
| Context             |        |              | 1011 | 1037 |
| Sample Vol (L)      |        |              | 10   | 40   |
| % Analysed          |        |              | 100  | 100  |
| Species             | Name   | Part         |      |      |
| <i>Cerealia</i> sp. | Cereal | Caryopsis/es | 1    | 1    |

**Table E2: Charcoal species**

| Sample | Context | Species                     | Name                      | Frag | RW | Weight(g) |
|--------|---------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|------|----|-----------|
| 1      | 1003    | <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> L.   | Alder                     | 4    |    |           |
| 1      | 1003    | <i>Corylus avellana</i> L.  | Hazel                     |      | 1  |           |
| 1      | 1003    | <i>Quercus</i> sp.          | Oak                       | 3    | 2  | 18.2      |
| 2      | 1005    | <i>Quercus</i> sp.          | Oak                       | 9    | 1  | 38.5      |
| 3      | 1009    | <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> L.   | Alder                     | 5    | 1  |           |
| 3      | 1009    | <i>Prunus</i> sp.           | Cherry                    | 1    |    |           |
| 3      | 1009    | <i>Quercus</i> sp.          | Oak                       | 3    |    | 115.97    |
| 4      | 1007    | <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> L.   | Alder                     | 3    |    |           |
| 4      | 1007    | <i>Maloideae/Sorbus</i> sp. | Apple/pear/hawthorn/rowan | 3    |    |           |
| 4      | 1007    | <i>Quercus</i> sp.          | Oak                       | 3    | 1  | 35.8      |
| 5      | 1011    | <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> L.   | Alder                     | 10   |    | 15.1      |
| 6      | 1013    | <i>Quercus</i> sp.          | Oak                       | 5    |    | 0.9       |
| 7      | 1015    | <i>Quercus</i> sp.          | Oak                       | 2    |    | 1.9       |
| 10     | 1021    | <i>Quercus</i> sp.          | Oak                       | 2    |    | 0.4       |
| 13     | 1028    | <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> L.   | Alder                     | 4    |    |           |
| 13     | 1028    | <i>Quercus</i> sp.          | Oak                       | 6    |    | 3.7       |
| 15     | 1031    | <i>Quercus</i> sp.          | Oak                       | 1    |    | 0.3       |
| 17     | 1037    | <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> L.   | Alder                     |      | 1  |           |
| 17     | 1037    | <i>Quercus</i> sp.          | Oak                       | 9    |    | 2.2       |
| 18     | 1035    | <i>Quercus</i> sp.          | Oak                       | 1    |    | 1.1       |
| 19     | 1039    | <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> L.   | Alder                     | 3    |    |           |
| 19     | 1039    | <i>Corylus avellana</i> L.  | Hazel                     | 2    |    |           |
| 19     | 1039    | <i>Prunus</i> sp.           | Cherry                    | 3    |    |           |
| 19     | 1039    | <i>Quercus</i> sp.          | Oak                       |      | 2  | 4         |
| 22     | 1046    | <i>Corylus avellana</i> L.  | Hazel                     |      | 1  |           |

|    |      |                             |                           |    |  |      |
|----|------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|----|--|------|
| 22 | 1046 | <i>Quercus</i> sp.          | Oak                       | 9  |  | 3.2  |
| 23 | 1048 | <i>Quercus</i> sp.          | Oak                       | 10 |  | 3.8  |
| 24 | 1049 | <i>Quercus</i> sp.          | Oak                       | 4  |  | 1.7  |
| 25 | 1051 | <i>Quercus</i> sp.          | Oak                       | 2  |  | 1.4  |
| 28 | 1057 | <i>Quercus</i> sp.          | Oak                       | 10 |  | 83.7 |
| 29 | 1059 | <i>Corylus avellana</i> L.  | Hazel                     | 1  |  |      |
| 29 | 1059 | <i>Maloideae/Sorbus</i> sp. | Apple/pear/hawthorn/rowan | 2  |  |      |
| 29 | 1059 | <i>Quercus</i> sp.          | Oak                       | 7  |  | 16.4 |
| 30 | 1060 | <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> L.   | Alder                     | 1  |  |      |
| 30 | 1060 | <i>Quercus</i> sp.          | Oak                       | 9  |  | 5.4  |
| 32 | 1065 | <i>Quercus</i> sp.          | Oak                       | 2  |  | 0.2  |
| 33 | 1067 | <i>Quercus</i> sp.          | Oak                       | 1  |  | 0.7  |
| 34 | 1071 | <i>Quercus</i> sp.          | Oak                       | 10 |  | 22.1 |

## Appendix F

### F.1 Animal Bone Assessment

*Matilda Holmes*

Two fragments of bone were recovered from contexts 1015 and 1041, neither of which could be identified to element or taxon. The fragments from context 1041 were probably originally from a single cattle long bone.

No further work is recommended.

## Appendix G

### G.1 Clay Tobacco Pipe Assessment

*Daniel Paul Bateman*

## Introduction

A total of one clay tobacco pipe fragment (Mass: 3.8g) was submitted for assessment following the excavations at the Land West of Station Road, Oxfordshire. Visual assessment has confirmed the artefact to be a small stem fragment of clay tobacco pipe, dating from the late 17<sup>th</sup> – late 18<sup>th</sup> century. This was recovered from context (1029) during the processing of soil sample retent. The following report records the surface details of the object and aims to set it within its wider context in terms of date, function and archaeological significance.

## Methodology

The artefact was examined with the aid of a low-powered binocular microscope to reveal its form and help clarify surface details, with the aim of identifying the object type, function, and date, and to compile an inventory entry for assessment purposes. The fragment was retrieved during the processing of soil sample retent and is identified by RT followed by the sample number (e.g. RT 14). The object's weight was registered using a Sartorius digital scale accurate to 0.1g, and measurements of the bore hole was taken using carbon dial callipers accurate to 0.1mm then converted into 1/64". The clay tobacco pipe fragment has been identified and recorded according to National Standards laid out in *Guidelines for the Recovery and Processing of Clay Tobacco Pipes from Archaeological Projects*<sup>40</sup>.

## The Assemblage

The clay tobacco pipe fragment recovered from the single fill (1029) of ditch [1030] has been identified as a heavily abraded stem fragment bearing no maker's marks, stamps or mouldings. Based on the measurement of the bore diameter (6.3/64"), the fragment has an estimated date range from the late 17<sup>th</sup> to the late 18<sup>th</sup> century<sup>41</sup>. As it was found within the single fill (1029) of a ditch that is associated with the discarding and loss of waste materials, the stem is considered to be a residual find. The fact the fragment is incomplete, implies that it was fragmentary at the time of discard; the breakage perhaps leading to the disposal.

## Summary of the contextual units

The table below (Table G1) summarises the types of industrial materials (including weight) recovered from each contextual unit across the site.

**Table G2 : Summary of the contextual units**

| Context no | Context Description         | Material                        | Mass (g): |
|------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------|
| 1029       | Single fill of ditch [1030] | Clay Tobacco Pipe stem fragment | 3.8       |

<sup>40</sup> Higgins, D., (2017). *Guidelines for the Recovery and Processing of Clay Tobacco Pipes from Archaeological Projects*. Version 1.2. London: Historic England

<sup>41</sup> *ibid*

The clay tobacco pipe fragment from the excavations at the Land West of Station Road, Oxfordshire represents a common post-medieval artefact type that is regularly recovered on archaeological excavations, particularly in urban areas. The recovery of a single, small fragment of clay tobacco pipe stem which lacks any further dating evidence to narrow down the broad, late 17<sup>th</sup> – late 18<sup>th</sup> century date range given, as well as the context in which the artefact was found being associated with discard of material, is considered to be of limited archaeological significance and provides limited information to assist in the chronological and interpretive narrative of the features uncovered during the archaeological works.

#### *Recommended Further Work*

Due to the lack of identifiable stamps or mouldings present on the single of clay tobacco pipe fragment, no further useful dating evidence can be gathered. As such, no further examination or reporting is recommended.

## Appendix H

### H.1 Flint Assessment

*Jon Cotton*

#### *Introduction*

Small assemblages of struck flint and burnt stone from a site west of Station Road north-east of Launton, Oxon (centred NGR SP 61810 23725) were presented for assessment by AOC Archaeology Group. These assemblages had been recovered from a series of contexts identified during evaluation works conducted ahead of a flood alleviation scheme forming part of the EWR2 Scheme

#### *The struck flint and burnt stone*

A total of nine pieces of struck flint were recovered from four contexts including subsoil context (1001) and the fills of pits (1018), (1047) and (1050). The raw material appears to have been obtained from secondary sources (such as local gravel deposits). These nine pieces comprised a single tertiary flake, two parallel sided blades/bladelets and six chips/spalls, three of which had been affected by fire (see Table H1).

The burnt stone comprised 30 piece of coarse sandstone ('sarsen'), all of which were recovered from the fill of post hole (1010).

**Table H1: All lithics from all contexts**

| Context No | Context Type           | Flake | Blade | Spall | Comment  | Total |
|------------|------------------------|-------|-------|-------|--|-------|
| 1001       | Subsoil                |       | 1     |       | Parallel sided blade of orange-brown flint, distal tip broken, shallow notch L 39mm W 11mm | 1     |
| 1009       | Fill of post hole 1010 |       |       |       | 30 fragments of unworked burnt stone (sarsen?)<br>wt: 627g                                 | -     |
| 1017       | Fill of pit 1018       |       |       | 2     | orange-brown flint   | 2     |
| 1046       | Fill of pit 1047       |       |       | 3     | small chips, heat affected   | 3     |



|              |                        |          |          |          |  |          |
|--------------|------------------------|----------|----------|----------|--|----------|
| 1049         | Lower fill of pit 1050 | 1        | 1        | 1        | 1 tertiary flake, orange-brown flint; 1 parallel sided bladelet of grey-brown flint, distal tip broken L 28mm W 7mm; 1 spall/splinter orange-brown flint | 3        |
| <b>Total</b> |                        | <b>1</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>5</b> |  | <b>9</b> |

### *Distribution*

None of the features produced more than three flints; these include those recovered from the lower fill of pit [1050]. The burnt stone within post hole [1010] may have been used as packing material.

### *Dating and Affinities*

The assemblage is too small for meaningful comment, but the presence of two parallel sided blade/bladelets hints at a Mesolithic or early Neolithic date for these elements.

### *Significance of the Assemblages*

There is no evidence for Mesolithic activity in the vicinity of the site although lithic scatters have reportedly been found during archaeological investigations near Bicester to the west. The few pieces of struck flint assessed here probably represent no more than low level 'background noise' but they do demonstrate the presence of prehistoric communities within the locality.

### *Potential for Further Work*

Given the small size and restricted nature of the struck flint and burnt stone assemblages there is currently little need for further work on the existing material. However, should a larger sample become available this conclusion will require re-assessment.

## Appendix I

### I.1 Glass Assessment

*Daniel Paul Bateman*

#### *Introduction*

One tiny fragment of glass (<0.1g) was submitted for assessment following the excavations at the Land West of Station Road, Oxfordshire (Site code: EWR20 2A03; AOC 34415). Visual assessment has confirmed the artefact to be a tiny clear and colourless shatter glass sherd, which was recovered during the processing of soil sample retent and has the potential to be intrusive to the context of discovery owing to the tiny size and the effects of bioturbation. The following report records the surface details of the object and aims to set it within its wider context in terms of date, function, and archaeological significance.

#### *Methodology*

The object was examined with the aid of a low-powered binocular microscope to reveal their form and help clarify surface details, with the aim of identifying the object type, function, and date, and to compile an inventory entry for assessment purposes. The object was retrieved during the processing of soil sample retent and is identified by RT followed by its sample number (e.g. RT 2). The object's weight was registered using a Sartorius digital scale accurate to 0.1g.

#### *The Assemblage*

The glass sherd was retrieved during the processing of soil sample retent from the upper fill (1005) of pit [1006]. It has been identified as a tiny, clear and colourless shatter sherd which is considered to be non-classifiable owing to its tiny size and the lack of diagnostic features present, which means it is not possible to determine the date or type of object the sherd once belonged to. The small size of the shatter sherd also allows for the possibility that they may be intrusive to its context of discovery through the effects of bioturbation.

#### *Summary of Contextual Units*

The table below (Table I1) summarises the type of glass (including weight) recovered from each contextual unit across the site.

**Table I3 : Summary of the contextual units**

| <i>Context no</i> | <i>Context Description</i> | <i>Object</i>       | <i>Mass (g):</i> |
|-------------------|----------------------------|---------------------|------------------|
| 1005              | Fill of pit [1006]         | Glass shatter sherd | <0.1             |

#### *Discussion and Statement of Significance*

The glass retrieved during the excavations at the Land West of Station Road, Oxfordshire comprises a single clear and colourless shatter sherd, which is considered to be of limited archaeological significance due to it being non-classifiable and non-diagnostic, as well as

the potential that it may be intrusive within the context of discovery due to the size and the effects of bioturbation. As such, this assemblage can provide little further information about site activities or chronology and possesses limited scope for further research.

#### *Recommended Further Work*

The glass assemblage is considered to be of limited archaeological significance and, as a result, no further work on this assemblage is required. No conservation or illustration is merited, and it is recommended that the find be considered for eventual discard.



## Appendix J

### J.1 Industrial Materials Assessment

*Daniel Paul Bateman*

#### *Introduction*

A total of 144 fragments of industrial material (Mass: 398.0g) was submitted for assessment following the excavations at the Land West of Station Road, Oxfordshire (Site code: EWR20 2A03; AOC 34415). Visual assessment has confirmed that the assemblage comprises fragments of heat-affected soil, tiny coal fragments and iron-rich mud stone. The following report records the surface details of the objects and aims to set them within the wider context in terms of date, function and archaeological significance.

#### *Methodology*

The artefacts were examined with the aid of a low-powered binocular microscope to reveal their form and help clarify surface details, with the aim of identifying the object type, function, and date, and to compile an inventory entry for assessment purposes. The material was both hand-retrieved in the field and also during the processing of soil sample retent, with bulk finds identified by their context of discovery (e.g. 1003) and retent finds identified by RT followed by their sample number (e.g. RT 16). The material's weight was registered using a Sartorius digital scale accurate to 0.1g.

#### *The Assemblage*

The industrial material assemblage comprises small amorphous fragments of manganese rich, heat-affected soil (Mass: 96.7g), tiny fragments of coal (Mass: 0.4g), and quantities of iron-rich mudstone (Mass: 300.9g). The material was mainly retrieved from the fills of pits [1032, 1034, 1036, 1050, 1054, 1061, 1072], as well as the fill of ditch [1042] and fill of ditch terminus [1004]. All of these materials are likely to be naturally occurring within their contexts of discovery.

#### *Summary of the Contextual Units*

The table below (Table J1) summarises the types of industrial materials (including weight) recovered from each contextual unit across the site.

**Table J4 : Summary of the contextual units**

| <i>Context no</i> | <i>Context Description</i>    | <i>Material</i>    | <i>Mass (g):</i> |
|-------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------|------------------|
| 1003              | Fill of Ditch Terminus [1004] | Stone              | 28.5             |
| 1031              | Single fill of pit [1032]     | Heat Affected Soil | 96.7             |
| 1033              | Single fill of pit [1034]     | Coal               | 0.3              |
| 1035              | Single fill of pit [1036]     | Stone              | 2.4              |
| 1041              | Single fill of ditch [1042]   | Coal               | <0.1             |

|      |                          |       |       |
|------|--------------------------|-------|-------|
| 1048 | Upper fill of pit [1050] | Stone | 15.5  |
| 1053 | Fill of pit [1054]       | Stone | 4.1   |
| 1059 | Upper fill of pit [1061] | Stone | 8.4   |
| 1060 | Lower fill of pit [1061] | Stone | 21.4  |
| 1071 | Fill of pit [1072]       | Stone | 220.6 |

### *Discussion and Statement of Significance*

The industrial material assemblage recovered during the excavations at the Land West of Station Road, Oxfordshire has been identified to comprise fragments of natural coal, a fragment of iron-rich mudstone and quantities of heat-affected soil that is likely the result of naturally occurring processes. As such, these materials are considered to be of limited archaeological significance and can provide little further information about site activities or chronology and possesses limited scope for further research.

### *Recommended Further Work*

The industrial material assemblage has been identified to comprise of naturally occurring materials and is considered to be of limited archaeological significance, with no further work required. No conservation or illustration is merited and it is recommended that the finds be considered for eventual discard.

## Appendix K

### K.1 Metal Assessment

*Daniel Paul Bateman*

#### *Introduction*

A total of seven ferrous metal objects (Mass: 2.3kg) were submitted for assessment following the excavations at Land West of Station Road, Oxfordshire. Visual assessment has confirmed the assemblage to comprise a hobnail, two horseshoes, a horseshoe nail, a fragment of a sickle blade, a likely loop-headed hitch pin, and a small rectangular cross-sectioned spike. The hobnail was recovered from the fill (1037) of pit [1038] and may be Roman in date, while the remaining finds were retrieved as bulk finds from the topsoil (1000) and subsoil (1001) deposits and likely represent the residual remains of post-medieval or modern agricultural practices. The following report records the surface details of the objects and aims to set them within the wider context in terms of date, function, and archaeological significance.

#### *Methodology*

The artefacts were examined with the aid of x-radiography and a low-powered binocular microscope to reveal their form and help clarify surface details, with the aim of identifying the object type, function, and date, and to compile an inventory entry for assessment purposes. The finds display only light to moderate surface corrosion, and were readily identifiable, surviving largely intact or as large diagnostic fragments. The material was both hand-retrieved in the field as bulk finds, and also during the processing of soil sample retent. Bulk finds are identified by their context of discovery followed by a letter to differentiate between objects submitted within the same bulk finds bag (e.g. 1000a, 1000b), while the find from retent is identified by RT followed by its sample number (e.g. RT 17). The object's weight was registered using a Sartorius digital scale accurate to 0.1g, and measurements were taken using carbon dial callipers accurate to 0.1mm.

#### *The Assemblage*

The metal assemblage comprises seven ferrous metal objects, and includes a hobnail (RT 17), one large horseshoe (1000a), one smaller horseshoe (1001a), a horseshoe nail (1001b), a possible loop headed hitch pin (1000b), a fragment of a sickle (1000c), and a small rectangular cross-sectioned spike (1000d). The hobnail was recovered from the fill (1037) of pit [1038], while the remainder of the finds were recovered from the topsoil (1000) and subsoil (1001) deposits.

The partial hobnail (RT 17) displays a rounded and domed head slightly bent on one side, with a partial shank and missing tip. Hobnails are small, short iron nails with short stems and small domed or pyramidal heads which were inserted into the soles of leather boots to improve traction and to increase the durability and longevity of the footwear<sup>42</sup>. The hobnail shank does not retain any traces of mineralized organic material and the tip is missing, possibly suggesting that the nail represents a casual loss during use rather than deposition while still *in situ* within the footwear. The low-domed circular head (though worn) is consistent with Manning's Type 10 Roman hobnails<sup>43</sup>, and the rounded profile of the heads is suggestive of flattening though wear.

<sup>42</sup> Manning, W. H., (1985). *Catalogue of Romano-British tools, weapons and fittings in the British*

<sup>43</sup> *ibid*

*Museum*. London: British Museum Press

In an archaeological context, hobnails are most commonly attributed to Roman footwear (e.g. 'caligae'), or less so with late 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century work boots and military boots, and are not generally associated with medieval or post-medieval footwear which are typically single soled leather boots unsuitable for wear with metal hobnails or rivets (C Thomas, pers comm), although a few isolated examples are known (e.g. medieval hobnailed leather footwear was retrieved from a 14<sup>th</sup> century context and from a 17<sup>th</sup> century waterlogged pit at the Roman and medieval town of Staines, in Surrey<sup>44</sup>).

The horseshoe (1001a) recovered from the subsoil deposit survives intact and displays a smooth outer edge, broad branches containing three rectangular nail holes along each side (all of which retain nail fragments within), and folded-over caulkins on each heel. The interior profile is slightly V-shaped and there is visible wear at the toe. The shoe is similar in form to examples from the late 14<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> centuries, though may also be later in date<sup>45</sup>. The horseshoe nail (1001b) recovered from the same context has a clenched tip though the head form is largely obscured by corrosion and may be broken, which prevents a more precise chronological assessment.

The remaining finds were recovered from the topsoil deposit (1000) and represent the remains of post-medieval and modern agricultural practices; these comprise a larger, modern horseshoe with toe clip and five rectangular nail holes along each branch, most likely from a draught horse (1000a), a probable loop-headed hitch pin (1000b) with a looped head on one end and a hole for a cotter pin on the other end, a fragment of a sickle blade and tang (1000c) that is not considered to be closely dateable as sickles are a long-lived artefact types that saw very little change over time, and a small spike (1000d) with a flat rectangular head and a flaring wedge-shaped shank and a flat tip that is also not considered to be closely dateable and could have performed any number of different functions.

### Summary of the Contextual Units

The table below (Table K1) summarises the types of metals (including weight) recovered from each contextual unit across the site.

**Table K5 : Summary of the contextual units**

| Context no | Context Description | Object                | Bulk/ RT # |
|------------|---------------------|-----------------------|------------|
| 1000       | Topsoil             | Horseshoe             | 1000a      |
|            |                     | Loop-headed hitch pin | 1000b      |
|            |                     | Sickle fragment       | 1000c      |
|            |                     | Spike                 | 1000d      |
| 1001       | Subsoil             | Horseshoe             | 1001a      |
|            |                     | Horseshoe nail        | 1001b      |

<sup>44</sup> Hembrey, N., (2010). Leather. In: P. Jones and R. Poulton. *The Roman and Medieval Town of Staines*, Monograph 2. London: Spoil Heap Publications.

<sup>45</sup> Goodall, I. H., (2011). *Ironwork in Medieval Britain: an archaeological study*. The Society for Medieval Archaeology, Monograph 31. London: The Society for Medieval Archaeology.

|      |                    |         |       |
|------|--------------------|---------|-------|
| 1037 | Fill of pit [1038] | Hobnail | RT 17 |
|------|--------------------|---------|-------|

### *Discussion and Statement of Significance*

The metal assemblage from the excavations at the Land West of Station Road, Oxfordshire is considered to be of limited archaeological significance due to the majority of the objects having been retrieved from topsoil and subsoil deposits and most likely relating to post-medieval and modern agricultural activities. The only well-stratified find retrieved is the likely Roman hobnail (RT 17) that was recovered during the processing of soil sample retent from the fill (1037) of pit [1038]. This small find likely represents a casual loss through use and may be indicative of Roman activity in the area, however due to its small size may be intrusive within its context of discovery. As such, this assemblage can provide little further information about site activities or chronology and possesses limited scope for further research.

### *Recommended Further Work*

The metal assemblage is considered to be of limited archaeological significance and, as a result, no further work on this assemblage is required. No conservation or illustration is merited and it is recommended that the finds be considered for eventual discard, apart from the likely Roman hobnail (RT 17), which is recommended for retention along with the site archive.



## Appendix L

### L.1 OASIS FORM

OASIS ID (UID): **aocarcha1-502872**

Project Name: **EWR 2A0326/5.2/FH (West) Flood Alleviation Area at Land West of Station Road, Oxfordshire: Post-Excavation Assessment**

Activity type: **Open Area Excavation, Post Excavation Assessment**

Project Identifier(s): **EWR 2A0326/5.2/FH (West) Flood Alleviation Area at Land West of Station Road, Oxfordshire (CFSA A2) Post-Excavation Assessment**

Reason for Investigation: **Planning: Post determination**

Organisation Responsible for work: **AOC Archaeology Group**

Project Dates: **08-Mar-2021 - 23-Apr-2021**

HER: **Oxfordshire HER**

Site name: **EWR 2A0326/5.2/FH (West) Flood Alleviation Area at Land West of Station Road, Oxfordshire**

Coordinates: **SP 61810 23725**

Administrative Areas:

Country : **England**

County : **Oxfordshire**

District : **Cherwell OSONS**

Parish : **Launton**

Project Methodology: **An archaeological Strip, Map and Sample (SMS) was undertaken at 2A0326/5.2/FH on land west of Station Road, to the north-east of Launton, Oxfordshire (CFSA A2)**

Project Results: **The SMS at 2A0326 (CFSA A2) has shown a number of archaeological features comprising pits and postholes that formed no obvious patterns or structures. The datable material retrieved is indicative of prehistoric activity, likely Mid to Late Iron Age. The exact function of the pits and postholes is unknown, however their discovery as mostly isolated features with no certain structural elements, suggests they may have been refuse pits or part of temporary shelters that are evidence of a short term occupation of this area or a seasonal revisiting of the Site. The presence of activity dating to these periods is in keeping with the scatterings of known prehistoric and later activity in the Oxfordshire landscape. The presence of extant ridge and furrows within the Site also attests to the longevity of agricultural practices at the Site.**

Keywords:

Archive:

**Physical Archive, Documentary Archive - to be deposited with Oxfordshire Museums Service Reports in OASIS:**

**Woodley, N. and Teufel, L., (2021). *EWR 2A0326/5.2/FH (West) Flood Alleviation Area at Land West of Station Road, Oxfordshire: Post-Excavation Assessment*. London: EWR**

**Alliance. Embargo ends: 17/11/2022**