

Wykham Park Farm, Banbury, Oxfordshire

Addendum to Chapter 10 (Archaeology and Cultural Heritage) of the Environment Statement

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This addendum provides a supplementary assessment of potential effects of the Proposed Development on archaeology and cultural heritage. It provides additional information to and supports the assessment of the likely effects as reported in Chapter 10 of the ES (2014), prepared by Cotswold Archaeology Ltd. The original ES assessed the scale, scope, survival and value of identified and potential sub-surface archaeological remains, including elements of the built heritage and historic landscape resource.
- 1.2 The methodology employed to undertake the original assessment involved the assessment of the value of the cultural heritage resource, the assessment of the magnitude of impact, followed by the identification of the significance of effect. Proposed methods of mitigation and enhancement were identified, and an assessment of residual significance of effect was also provided. The methodology of assessment is described in detail in Sections 10.2.1 to 10.2.21 of the Environmental Statement (CA 2014). No change to this methodology, or to the scope, content or structure of the Chapter, or the conclusions reached, is considered necessary in the light of subsequent amendments to the masterplan and the further information to be submitted.
- 1.3 This chapter was originally informed by the results of a geophysical survey (WAA 2012, Appendix 10.1), and a subsequent archaeological field evaluation (CA 2013; Appendix 10.2), which were carried out in support of a previous planning application for the Site. The scope and methodology of these works was agreed through consultation with Richard Oram, Planning Archaeologist for Oxfordshire County

Council. Since submission of the original ES, additional field evaluation has been undertaken within Field 6, on the eastern margins of the site. This addendum provides the results of this evaluation, concluding that it is not considered that any amendment will be required to the assessments of buried archaeology, or the impact assessments and mitigation measures stated in the original ES Chapter pertaining to archaeology and heritage.

2. Changes to Policy, Legislation and Guidance

- 2.1 The principal change to policy, legislation and guidance in respect of this addendum concerns the adoption of the Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031, in July, 2015 (Cherwell District Council 2015). Land at Wykham Park Farm has been allocated as part of the Strategic Development of South West Banbury, which comprises two individual allocations, Ban 16 and Ban 17. Relevant policy prescriptions for these two allocated areas are set out in detail in Section C of the Local Plan, *Policies for Cherwell's Places*. While this formal adoption has no immediate implications for any of the policy criteria relating to archaeology and the historic environment described within Chapter 10 of the Environment Statement, the respective specific prescriptions and conditions of the Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 in respect of these two allocation areas are included below.

Policy Banbury 17: South of Salt Way – East

- 2.2 Development of land south of Salt Way – East will deliver a new neighbourhood of up to 1,345 dwellings with associated facilities and infrastructure, as part of south-west Banbury.

Key site-specific design and place-shaping principles

- 2.3 Development must respect the landscape setting, and provide an appropriate development interface with Salt Way (any buffer is likely to be 20 metres wide, in

accordance with the approach adopted at land east of Bloxham Road, and south of Salt Way).

- 2.4 Development proposals to be accompanied and influenced by landscape/visual and heritage impact assessments.
- 2.5 A comprehensive scheme, including on-site provision to enhance the settings of buildings on site, and to achieve limited visual intrusion into the wider landscape, particularly given the key views afforded into the site from higher ground in the wider vicinity.

Policy Banbury 16: South of Salt Way - West

- 2.6 The development area known as Banbury South-West is allocated for 150 units. Outline planning permission has been secured for 350 dwellings (LPA ref: 14/01188/OUT). This development area was assessed in the original ES as comprising some 400 units, so it is assumed that the assessment remains robust.

Conclusion

- 2.7 The amendment to the Development Framework Plan and the adoption of the Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 will have no additional implications for the scope, content or structure of the archaeology and heritage assessments contained within ES Chapter 10, or for the impact assessments and mitigation strategies detailed in that chapter.

3. *Change to baseline information : the Phase II Archaeological Evaluation*

- 3.1 A final stage of archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology at Wykham Park Farm, in January 2015 (CA 2015). The evaluation was undertaken within Field 6, within the north-eastern margins of the application site (centred on

NGR SP 4542 3850), and was targeted on anomalies identified by earlier geophysical survey (Wardell Armstrong 2012). The evaluation report is included as an appendix to this addendum document.

- 3.2 This evaluation represented the final stage of a programme of pre-application investigation across the application site, to supplement that already carried out in support of the application proposals.
- 3.3 This additional assessment was carried out on part of the site covering an area of c. 5ha, and comprising a rectangular field at the eastern end of the application site, situated immediately to the east of Wykham Park Farm, and bordered by the Salt Way, immediately to the north. At the time of the evaluation, the field was planted with asparagus beds.
- 3.4 The first phase of evaluation across the site had identified three areas of archaeological interest (CA 2013). The first of these comprised part of a Late Iron Age settlement, including elements of an enclosure ditch which had been previously investigated by Cotswold Archaeology within a field immediately adjacent to the site (CA 2011). The other two areas of archaeological interest comprised a small ditched enclosure adjacent to the northern margins of the site, and a concentration of features within the south-east corner, which included a possible third enclosure, and an otherwise undated section of ditch which may have formed part of a Neolithic Causewayed Enclosure. While undated, this feature clearly pre-dated the furrows of a medieval field system.
- 3.5 Within the area of the current evaluation, geophysical survey had identified a number of parallel, linear anomalies, spaced at intervals of c. 25m, which extended across the field on a north-east/south-west alignment (WA 2012). A number of anomalies of possible archaeological origin were also recorded within the north-east of the field, together with evidence of medieval furrows.

3.6 Fieldwork comprised the mechanical excavation of nine 30m trenches (CA 2015, Fig 2). These were positioned to provide a targeted investigation of features identified from cropmarks and geophysical survey, and also to test those parts of the field which were apparently devoid of such features. Machine excavation was undertaken to the top of the first significant archaeological horizon, or the geological subsoil, whichever was encountered first. Any archaeological features encountered were excavated by hand. No archaeological deposits which were considered suitable for environmental sampling were encountered in this case. Only modern finds were encountered, and these were not retained.

Trenches 1, 2, 4, 5, and 7-9

3.7 Geophysical survey identified a regular, grid-like pattern of parallel linear features extending across the site. Evaluation demonstrated that those anomalies on an east-west alignment represented the remains of medieval cultivation furrows, while those on a north/south alignment resulted from modern cultivation practices.

3.8 *Trench 5*

The eastern terminal of a small, undated ditch, measuring 0.4m wide by 0.16m depth, was recorded at the southern end of Trench 5.

Trench 7

3.9 Two undated ditches, which corresponded with geophysical anomalies, were investigated at the north-west end of Trench 7. No corresponding feature representing a parallel anomaly was found at the south-east end of this trench. Ditch 702, which was aligned north-west/south-east, measured 1.5m wide by 0.44m deep. An adjacent ditch, 704, was wider and shallower, and measured 3.0m wide and 0.14m deep.

Trench 8

- 3.10 Ditch 804 corresponded with a geophysical anomaly, and was cut by a medieval furrow. It was aligned north-east/south-west, and measured 2.8m deep and 0.26m deep.

Trench 9

- 3.11 Ditch 902 passed through the north-east end of Trench 9, and corresponded with a slightly curvilinear geophysical anomaly. It was aligned north-west/south-east and measured 2.8m wide by 0.26m deep.

The Finds

- 3.12 Finds were entirely early modern and modern in date, and included pottery, glass, clay tobacco pipe and an iron nail. Pottery and clay tobacco pipe was datable to the mid-eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Discussion and Interpretation

- 3.13 Evaluation demonstrated that the geophysical anomalies identified within the north-east of the site were of archaeological origin. These included two parallel, linear features, spaced 25m apart, which extended across the field on a north-east/south-west alignment. The dating of these features remains tentative, as no finds were recovered from the excavated fills. As some of the features were cut by medieval furrows, they evidently pre-date the medieval period. The parallel ditches were interpreted as the remains of a trackway of late prehistoric or Roman date, which in places had been ploughed-out. The ditch on the north-west side appeared to have been re-cut.
- 3.14 The slightly curvilinear ditch within the north-east corner of the site appears to pre-date the medieval furrows, although this was not confirmed by evaluation. This ditch, too, had been largely truncated by the effects of medieval and later cultivation.
- 3.15 A regular series of cultivation furrows were identified across the site by geophysical survey, and were investigated by several evaluation trenches. The furrows were

aligned east/west, parallel to Wykham Lane, and were spaced c. 10m apart. This spacing, together with the reverse-sigmoid curve evident in their form, confirms a medieval date, and the furrows are therefore likely to have comprised part of a much wider open-field system.

- 3.16 Regular lines of shallow, soil-filled hollows, cut into the subsoil, appear to represent an aspect of modern agricultural practice. None of the small dipolar magnetic anomalies were identified as archaeological features by the evaluation, and these may largely result from ferrous or thermoremanent material in the topsoil, which is likely to be of recent agricultural origin.
- 3.17 As evaluated, the identified archaeological features in Field 6 are poorly preserved, and only tentatively dated. The linear positive magnetic anomalies are of probable Roman or late prehistoric date, and represent landscape features which probably relate to agricultural activity. The medieval furrows represent the plough-degraded remains of a formerly extensive medieval farming landscape, and are commonly-encountered archaeological features. None of these archaeological features are associated with deep or complex stratigraphy, or with evidence of occupation.
- 3.18 As poorly-preserved and commonly-encountered archaeological features, with poor artefactual or palaeoenvironmental associations, these are of a low level of significance. In the circumstances, these would not be expected to represent a constraint to development within Field 6. While it is possible that the Local Planning Authority would request a condition for a watching brief in this case, it is unlikely that further archaeological work would result in any meaningful addition to our knowledge of this part of the site.

4. Changes to Mitigation Measures and Assessment of Effects

Potential Effects

- 4.1 There will be no change to the assessment of likely significant effects on archaeology and heritage identified in the absence of mitigation measures within Chapter 10 of the ES. This conclusion will relate to both construction and operational/occupation phases of the Proposed Development.

Residual Effects

- 4.2 There will be no change to the assessment of residual effects on archaeology and heritage identified within Chapter 10 of the ES, taking into account any mitigation measures.

Cumulative Effects

- 4.3 There will be no change to the assessment of any cumulative effects associated with the Proposed Development which have not already been identified within Chapter 10 of the ES.

Mitigation Measures

- 4.4 There will be no change to the proposed mitigation measures identified within Chapter 10 of the ES which would be necessary to avoid or reduce any significant potential adverse effects, beyond the measures inherent within the Proposed Development.

References

Cherwell District Council 2015 *Cherwell Local Plan* (Adopted July, 2015)

CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2011 *Land East of Bloxham Road, Banbury: Archaeological Evaluation*, report **11326**

CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2013a *Wykham Park Farm, Banbury, Oxfordshire: Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Evaluation*, unpublished document

CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2013b *Wykham Park Farm, Banbury, Oxfordshire: Archaeological Evaluation*, report **13581**

CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2014 *Land at Wykham Park Farm, Banbury – Outline Planning Application: Environmental Statement: Chapter 10: Historic Environment*

CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2015 *Wykham Park Farm, Banbury: Archaeological Evaluation (Phase II)* CA Typescript Report No. 15037

DCLG (Department of Communities and Local Government) 2012 *National Planning Policy Framework*

WA (Wardell Armstrong) 2012 *Geophysical Survey of Land at Wykham Park, Banbury, Oxfordshire*, report **CP10352**

WA (Wardell Armstrong) 2013 *Wykham Park Farm, Oxfordshire: Environmental Statement*, report **WM10671**