



CHERWELL DISTRICT COUNCIL

**DRAFT WRITTEN SCHEME OF INVESTIGATION FOR
ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATION, AT COTEFIELD
FARM, OXFORD ROAD,
BODICOTE OXFORDSHIRE**

Prepared on behalf of Mr Rowland Bratt

NGR: SP 4654 3600

05 December 2014

Our Ref: JLQ 0002

RPS
14 Cornhill
London
EC3V 3ND

Tel: 020 720 7280 3200
Fax: 020 7283 9248
Email: rpslp@rpsgroup.com



QUALITY MANAGEMENT

Prepared by:	Robert Masefield
Authorised by:	Barry O'Donnell
Date:	05 December 2014
Project Number/Document Reference:	JLQ0002 MITIGATION

COPYRIGHT © RPS

The material presented in this report is confidential. This report has been prepared for the exclusive use of Mr Bratt and shall not be distributed or made available to any other company or person without the knowledge and written consent of RPS.

CONTENTS

1	INTRODUCTION.....	1
2	HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT POLICY CONSIDERATIONS.....	3
3	TOPOGRAPHIC, GEOLOGICAL & CARTOGRAPHIC BACKGROUND.....	6
4	ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND.....	7
5	DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS.....	12
6	ARCHAEOLOGICAL STRATEGY.....	13
7	ARCHAEOLOGICAL AIMS, OBJECTIVES AND PROPOSALS.....	15
8	METHODOLOGY.....	17
9	LIAISON/MONITORING.....	24
10	POST FIELDWORK METHODOLOGY.....	25
11	COPYRIGHT.....	26
12	PROGRAMME/INSURANCES.....	27
13	ARCHIVE DEPOSITION.....	28
14	BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	30

FIGURES:

Figure 1: Site Location

Figure 2: Excavation Proposal

1 INTRODUCTION

a) Site Description

- 1.1 This document sets out a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) prepared by RPS on behalf of the landowner, Mr Bratt to accompany a Planning Application for residential development. The County Archaeological Officer has required an archaeological mitigation process comprising four archaeological excavation areas to be carried out at Blossom Fields, Cotefield Farm, Oxford Road, Bodicote, Oxfordshire (Fig. 1).
- 1.2 The mitigation requirements follow an evaluation, comprising magnetometer geophysical survey and eleven trial trenches that was agreed with the Oxfordshire County Archaeological Officer (advisor to Cherwell District Council) and conducted by Museum of London Archaeology in June 2014 (MoLA 2014). The geophysical survey identified a linear boundary and enclosure containing several curvilinear anomalies on the higher ground to the south side of a dry valley that crosses the site from west to east, whilst a small oval enclosure was noted to the north side of the valley. Eleven trenches were targeted on the geophysical survey anomalies and showed the main enclosure ditches to be substantial. Additionally, two potential cremation burials were noted. These features were difficult to date due to general paucity of artefacts. This lack of pottery and bone may suggest the enclosures were stock-related with their form suggestive of an Iron Age date. The small enclosure on the north side of the valley was undated and of apparent low archaeological significance, probably representing a small stock related feature.
- 1.3 The likely scope of mitigation was discussed during the fieldwork with the Oxfordshire County Archaeological Officer in June. A short proposal for the investigation was subsequently provided and agreed verbally on 4th December 2014. This proposal included suggested mitigation areas (Fig. 2). This WSI consolidates the requirements of excavation including assessment and analysis/publication of the results.

b) Planning Background

- 1.4 The site comprises agricultural land bounded by the approved (but not yet completed) residential development to the north, Cotefield Business Park to the east, and bounded to the south and west (broadly) by an established woodland belt.
- 1.5 The site is free from any environmental or Local Plan designations. For the purposes of the Local Plan the site is considered to be located in open countryside.

1.6 An earlier phase of archaeological investigation has been carried out on land to the north, which received planning permission for 82 houses on appeal, under reference APP/C3105/A/11/2159619. Following receipt of the associated report (NA November 2010) the Oxfordshire County Archaeological Officer advised RPS that in event that planning permission being granted on the site at a later date, a further stage of archaeological mitigation would be required.

1.7 A WSI for that mitigation process (RPS 2012) set out the principles for the archaeological work in accordance with Condition 11 of the planning decision notice which stated:

“No development shall take place within the site until the applicant, or their agents or successors in title, has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted by the applicant and approved in writing by the local planning authority”

1.8 In a communication of 11th March 2014 the County Archaeological Officer (Planning Archaeologist) confirmed that for the current application site the required evaluation process will be the same as the earlier evaluation [i.e. by NA in 2010]. Therefore the June 2014 evaluation was commenced in order to determine whether or not similar post-consent mitigation, as defined for the development proposal to the north, would be required at the site. The evaluation of the site has indeed provided positive results for its southern area and therefore this WSI for mitigation is now required in support of the planning application.

Standards

1.9 All required archaeological works will be undertaken by an Institute for Archaeologists (IfA) Registered Organisation. All works will be conducted in accordance with the procedural documents of English Heritage (1991; 2002; 2006) and the appropriate IfA standards and guidance for archaeological evaluation (IfA 2008). Where appropriate the research frameworks set out for the East Midlands and its wider region may be applied (EH 1997; Cooper 2006).

2 HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

a) National Planning Policy

i. The National Planning Policy Framework (Conserving and enhancing the historic environment)

2.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) indicates that in determining applications that have a Historic Environment dimension to them:

“...local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting.

Where a site on which development is proposed includes or has the potential to include heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation.”
(Section 12, Paragraph 128)

2.2 In addition to the information that is required to be submitted with a planning application, regarding the significance of heritage assets that may be affected by development, the NPPF indicates that:

“Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this assessment into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise conflict between the heritage asset’s conservation and any aspect of the proposal.” (Paragraph 129)

2.3 The NPPF also sets out that:

“When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be. Significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting. As heritage assets are irreplaceable, any harm or loss should require clear and convincing justification.”
(Paragraph 132)

2.4 Importantly the NPPF sets out:

“The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that affect directly or indirectly non designated heritage assets,

a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.” (Paragraph 135)

2.5 And;

“Non-designated heritage assets of archaeological interest that are demonstrably of equivalent significance to scheduled monuments, should be considered subject to the policies for designated heritage assets.” (Paragraph 139)

2.6 and that;

“Local planning authorities should not permit loss of the whole or part of a heritage asset without taking all reasonable steps to ensure the new development will proceed after the loss has occurred.” (Paragraph 136)

2.7 RPS considers this WSI to be in accordance with the requirements of the NPPF.

b) Local Planning Policy

2.8 According to the Cherwell DC website:

For the purposes of this application the Development Plan comprises saved policies from the Cherwell Local Plan 1996. Emerging policies are set out in the Cherwell Local Plan 2011 . 2031 which, now that it has been submitted to the Planning Inspectorate for examination, carries weight. Section 216 of the National Planning Policy Framework confirms that the amount of weight to be given to relevant emerging policies should accord with (a) the stage of preparation of the emerging plan, (b) the extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant policies, and (c) the degree of consistency of the relevant policies within the emerging plan to the policies within the Framework.

i. Cherwell District Adopted Local Plan 1996

2.9 Local plans provide the basis for making decisions on planning applications. Local plans are being replaced by the Local Development Framework (LDF) which will establish planning policy for the district to 2031 The existing planning policy for the district is contained in the saved policies of the Cherwell Local Plan, adopted 1996.

2.10 The saved policies include C25 Development affecting the site or setting of a schedule ancient monument and C27 Development in villages to respect historic settlement pattern The policies will continue to be used until they are replaced by the replacement Cherwell Local Plan 2006 to 2031.

ii. Cherwell Local Plan 2011 to 2031.

- 2.11 Cherwell District Council has submitted its Draft Local Plan 2011 . 2031 to the Planning Inspectorate for examination. Once adopted its policies will supersede those of the adopted Cherwell Local Plan 1996. Policy ESD16 The Character of the Built and Historic Environment will control the conservation of heritage assets, including archaeology.

3 TOPOGRAPHIC & GEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The site occupies a field on the edge of Bodicote, Oxfordshire to the west of Oxford Road (A4260) and comprises a roughly rectangular block of land of c. 4 hectares (Figs 1 and 2). The already consented Banner Homes development to the north comprises the northern half of same agricultural field and now represents the built edge of Bodicote village. The west and south sides of the present site (the remaining southern area of the field) are bordered by an established woodland belt.
- 3.2 The current land-use is arable and historical maps indicated this to have been the case since at least the 19th century. The field is flat, but slopes gradually to the south-east.
- 3.3 The land lies between 107m to 117m above Ordnance Datum. The underlying solid geology was identified as Middle Lias Marlestone with Middle Lias clays, silts and siltstones from the south-west (MoLA 2014).
- 3.4 During the evaluation of the site (MoLA 2014) the geology and soils were described as follows:

“The natural substrate consisted of light yellow-grey clay and blue-yellow silty clay with areas of high ironstone content. In the central trenches, Trenches 3-6 and 11, a layer of grey-brown clay silt colluvium was recorded. The natural or subsoil were overlain by light orange-yellow silty clay subsoil. The topsoil was mid grey-brown clay loam.”

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

a) Introduction

i. *Oxfordshire HER*

- 4.1 The 2006 brief by County Archaeology for the archaeological evaluation stage for the Phase 1 northern site stated:

“A Roman occupation site has been recorded south of Cotefield Farm and Cotefield House at SP 4693 3720 centroid (HBSMR 1747). Extensive remains of burnt stones, Roman pottery and inhumations were observed and reported in VCH Vol 1, and pottery was identified by the Ashmolean Museum. In addition, a cursus-like cropmark has been identified at SP 4733 3718 centroid (HBSMR 5700). Certain relatively recent features can be expected on the site. The 1st edition OS map shows that the far eastern side of the application area was crossed on a northeast – southwest alignment by two parallel field boundaries containing mature trees. A third boundary hedge lay further to the east just outside the application area. These hedgerows bounded two narrow linear closes that may have been the result of early enclosure by agreement. Similar narrow closes enclosed by agreement in the 16th century can be seen in Mansmoor Closes at Charlton on Otmoor. Traces of these boundaries should survive below ground, and should be sampled and recorded as part of the landscape history of this site.”

ii *Evaluation of the Phase 1 Site to the north*

- 4.2 The above HER information was enhanced by site specific archaeological information derived from the trial trenching by Northamptonshire Archaeology in 2010 (NA November 2010). The evaluation (site accession number OCCMS.2010.85) comprised the investigation of 26 trenches, the majority of which were 30m length by 1.6m in width. Several smaller trenches were used to trace ditch lines located during the works. The principal aim of the evaluation was *to quantify the extent, date, nature and significance of any cultural heritage features within the area affected by the proposed development.* Archaeological features were found to be present within 14 of the 26 trenches.

4.3 The earliest evidence consisted of two Neolithic pits, one within Trench 20 (pit 2007) in the central northern area and one within Trench 7 (pit 704) in the southern area of the site (Figure 3). The pit in Trench 7 was 0.95m in diameter by 0.25m in depth and contained a typical mixed assemblage of hazelnut shell fragments (27), animal bone (including two pig bone fragments) and an assemblage of worked flints including a retouched serrated blade and a retouched blade (13 other flakes and 9.8g of small debitage). The pit in Trench 20 was 0.6m in diameter by 0.17m in depth and contained three sherds of pottery (probably Neolithic) 14 flakes, three blades (one utilised) and 4.3g of small debitage in addition to small bone fragments. The total assemblage from the two pits also included burnt clay, burnt bone and a quantity of charcoal. In addition to these features 19 Neolithic worked flints were recovered from later features (ibid). The early-middle Neolithic date of the pits and background Neolithic flintwork is clearly of interest in the context of a possible Neolithic cursus monument in the vicinity.

4.4 The report discussion states:

“The early to middle Neolithic pits containing pottery, flint, hazel nut shells and other materials are known from a number of sites in central and eastern England such as Biggleswade (Jones 2009) and Kilverstone (Garrow et al 2007). Such features are generally associated with occupation. Neolithic occupation is considered largely temporary in character, though it may incorporate deliberate processes of artefact deposition...deliberately deposited artefacts and environmental remains such as hazel nut shell were often considered to signify pit decommissioning at the end of settlement phases (Garrow et al 2007). The potential for sporadic Neolithic pitting within the areas of investigation is considered to be moderate to high based on the evaluated sample.”

4.5 No evidence for Bronze Age activity was encountered within the trenches with the next period of activity being of Iron Age date and comprising evidence for at least two focal areas within Trenches 19 and 20 respectively. These comprised probable ring-ditch defined roundhouse sites typical of the midland region (e.g. as found in dense concentration at the Daventry International Rail Freight Terminal (DIRFT) centred on Crick in Northamptonshire. Such sites typically demonstrate no more than an eaves drip to evidence the actual presence of a roundhouse within a surrounding circular drainage ditch. Trench 19 was the more complex perhaps indicating a detailed sequence of phases or simply a complex arrangement, and included five Iron Age ditches, one exhibiting a Romano-British period recut (demonstrating use of the site into the Roman period). The Trench 20 ditch appeared to be a simple single phase c.14m ring-ditch extending north to the edge and just beyond the northern edge of the site. The majority of these features lies beyond the impact area and can therefore be preserved in situ. There is some potential for additional foci, particularly within the core area.

- 4.6 Two or three phases of wider enclosure or boundary ditch were also identified. The NA report (ibid, 23) also states:

“A series of ditches in the central part of the site appear to represent potentially late Iron Age boundary features. This was substantial in nature in Trench 19 and less substantial in Trench 16, thus possibly becoming less substantial away from the two main activity areas in Trenches 19 and 20. They were traced using cropmarks from Google Earth and confirmed by trial trenching. Although the features included domestic debris, there were few signs of occupation features associated with them.”

- 4.7 Like the Neolithic pits these Iron Age to early Roman features were sealed by subsoil. Finds included c.157 sherds (1058g) of hand-made Iron Age and occasionally specifically late Iron Age pottery with some wheel thrown vessels. The pottery specialist suggests an overall date range spanning the 1st century BC to the mid-1st century AD is suggested. In addition 5 locally produced grog-tempered wares of Roman date were recovered from Ditch [1919] in Trench 19.

- 4.8 Other finds included 23 fragments of vesicular fuel ash slag from Trench 23 and 1.3kg of animal bone largely from trenches 19 and 20 and including cattle, sheep/goat, pig and horse remains typical of a farming settlement. The specialist notes (Ibid, 21);

“Identifiable animal bone was recovered...which suggests, if more were collected during the course of any subsequent excavation, the animal husbandry of the site the site could be characterised.”

- 4.9 In terms of ecofacts from soil sampling the specialist reports;

“Assessment has shown a small range of well preserved ecofacts and indicates that further sampling during the course of any subsequent excavation could be viable. It could be possible to establish which crops, if any, grew at the site and to make basic comparisons with nearby contemporary sites and more regional sites.”

iii 2014 Evaluation of the application site

- 4.10 As noted above, a geophysical survey and trial trenching for the application site were conducted in the spring/early summer of 2014. The discussion of the 11 trench evaluation (MoLA 2014) is as follows:
- 4.11 The geophysical survey identified a number of anomalies, concentrating in the south-eastern end of the development area, which the archaeological evaluation confirmed to be archaeological in nature.

Early prehistoric activity was only evident through 56 pieces of worked flint dating to broadly to the Neolithic to early Bronze Age. The majority were recovered as surface finds with a few as residual finds from Iron Age and post-medieval contexts. Two early to middle Neolithic pits were uncovered in the northern part of the field in previous trial trenching (NA 2010); no further pits were uncovered during the present trial trenching.

- 4.12 In the centre of the northern border of the field the geophysical survey identified a circular anomaly. Initial investigation did not reveal the feature due to the overlying furrows, further trenching revealed a ditch [206] with a possible late Iron Age pottery sherd. The character of the ring ditch and lack of central feature is atypical of an earlier prehistoric (Neolithic or Bronze Age) funerary monument. This is confirmed by the presence of a sherd of Iron Age pottery. Conversely, the very low quantity of finds is not suggestive of a domestic use for the enclosure, whilst the slightly ovoid form would not suggest an eaves-drip function for a typical roundhouse as is suggested for the ring-gully defined Iron Age features from the evaluation to the immediate north-west (NA 2010). On balance a function as a small stock enclosure associated with the Iron Age settlement zone to the north-west seems most likely.
- 4.13 The geophysical survey revealed substantial rectangular enclosure and associated boundary within the southern part of the field flanking the south side of the dry valley. The survey suggests continues into the neighbouring field. The sampled ditch and associated boundary sections were substantial, measuring between 3.50m and 4.72m in width, and in excess of 1.60m in depth. Full depth could not be investigated in the scope of trial trenching due to health and safety. No direct dating evidence was recovered from the excavations (intrusive post-medieval material was present in one section) and the sections were generally sparse in inclusions of any type. The morphology of the enclosure suggests a probable Iron Age/early Roman date. There is both Iron Age and Roman activity in the vicinity to the north-west and south-east respectively. At present the simplest interpretation of the large enclosure, based upon the paucity of domestic material or clear internal domestic buildings, is use as a stock enclosure used for confining a substantial herd. The presence of cattle and sheep bone is of interest in this context although the very substantial scale of the ditches is somewhat unusual for such enclosures in the Midlands.
- 4.14 The sampling of the area of curvilinear anomalies noted in the eastern corner of the enclosure in the geophysical survey revealed the presence of three ditches. The shallow ditch [811] was the only ditch to include any substantial amount of inclusions. The charred plant analysis indicated it was possibly derived from a domestic context. The fill also included fired clay fragments; however, no dating evidence was recovered. The area may represent two intersecting phases of curvilinear ditches.

- 4.15 No evidence of the possible small square enclosure or the pits potentially identified during the geophysical survey was found during the evaluation within the enclosure.
- 4.16 Ditches identified outside of the enclosure during the geophysical survey were also recorded. Trench 11 found evidence of the possible curvilinear anomaly at its south-western end. Like with the other ditches identified in the trench they were all without finds or inclusions. The two parallel ditches in Trench 6 were undated and may be contemporary with the enclosure as the ditch in Trench 4. These may represent fragments of field systems pre- or post-dating the large enclosure and boundary.
- 4.17 Two potential cremation burials were identified in Trench 4; these respected the ditch and may be contemporary.
- 4.18 The geophysical survey identified the presence of two distinct ridge and furrow areas, separated by the dry valley in the centre of the field. The northern set of furrows was north-west to south-east orientated and the southern furrows were north-east to south-west orientated. Possible field boundaries or lines of trees lie between the field systems. The first edition Ordnance Survey map indicates lines of trees, but they are not an exact match. The evaluation excavated the northernmost field boundary which is dated by the clay tobacco-pipe bowl fragments to the late 19th and early 20th centuries.
- 4.19 The landowner, Mr Bratt, said that his father had a ha-ha backfilled in the second half of the 20th century that was in the south-eastern corner of the development area, in front of the large house. The wall of the ha-ha is still in place under the grass at the field edge. The topsoil is much stonier in the area and imported, the area uncovered in Trench 7 included brick. Services were also identified during the geophysical survey, three crossing the site and one was at a right angle. Care was taken not to disturb these during the trial trenching.

5 DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

- 5.1 The proposals relate to the development of 95 new houses, and associated access works, landscaping and public open space provision. The application proposals were under preparation at the time of writing this WSI.

6 ARCHAEOLOGICAL STRATEGY

- 6.1 The proposed excavation areas (Areas 1-4 on Fig. 2) amount to c.0.36ha. The adopted approach is designed to target key areas of interest suggested by the geophysical survey and the trial trenching in combination. The justification for the areas chosen is as follows:
- 6.2 **Area 1** . c. 1,000m² . The geophysical survey identified two east-west aligned ditches crossing or being crossed by the main enclosure and an internal ditch. The trenching showed the main ditch to be substantial (Trench 10), so much so that it could not be safely bottomed within the trench. The east-west ditches (within Trench 11) were not dated but were much shallower and probably represent an earlier (perhaps Bronze Age) or later (e.g. medieval) landscape. Two objectives here will therefore be to bottom the major ditch and retrieve sufficient artefacts to allow its closer dating (it is thought to be of likely Iron Age date presently) and to establish the relative date of the field-system. The excavation will also allow investigation of the parallel ditch within the enclosure interior and establish its possible function, in addition to exploring the interior of the enclosure to establish whether it is devoid of features (i.e. to confirm a stock association).
- 6.3 **Area 2** . 1,200m² . This area represents the busiest area as suggested by both geophysical survey and Trench 8. The north area would encounter the south-eastward return of the main (stock?) enclosure. The excavation will aim to establish whether the dimensions, date and function of the ditch are similar to those in Area 1. Three other curvilinear ditches were shown on the geophysical survey within this area. Two of these may relate to settlement enclosures or stock corals within the main enclosure, whilst the other may be an internal stock control division. The excavation would aim to establish the relative phasing of these elements and provide sufficient information to determine function and date.
- 6.4 **Area 3** . 625m² - This small square area is designed to intersect the NE corner of the main enclosure, corners often being areas of greatest archaeological complexity. This area is no exception as there are two shallow ditches connecting the corner from the north-east (Trench 6) and there is a large landscape boundary ditch linking it from the north. The aim will be to establish the sequence of development and in particular whether the boundary ditch was a later addition tacked onto the main enclosure, as seems likely.
- 6.5 **Area 4** . 800m² . The geophysical survey and trenching (Trench 4) identified a major landscape boundary that flanks the valley side running north-south and the latter identified several cremation pits alongside it plus another smaller parallel ditch. Area 4 has been designed to align with the ditch and the adjacent cremations with the aim of capturing any further cremations along the ditch line. The area will also provide a full depth investigation of the ditch for the purpose of characterising and dating it.

- 6.6 It has been verbally agreed that these areas (along with the contingency if required) will provide the full extent of mitigation so that watching brief would not be required during the construction phase (although the archaeological works may comprise part of an enabling works package).
- 6.7 The excavation will be undertaken by an IfA registered archaeological organisation (RAO) (MoLA have prepared proposals for consideration). In accepting a contract to undertake these excavation works on behalf of the landowner, Mr Bratt or the developer, the appointed archaeological contractor will adhere to the terms of this Written Scheme of Investigation as part of their contractual obligations.
- 6.8 All archaeological works will be managed /monitored by Robert Masefield BSc, MA, MIfA, FSA (subject to confirmation).

Contingency

- 6.9 A 0.2ha extension contingency (55% of the proposed area) is provided as a maximum extent of extension to capture any significant partially exposed elements. The agreed approach is to initially strip an evaluation style trench extending back from that point of interest to identify extent. If the archaeology defined merits further exposure the trench would be widened to expose the extent of the feature or area of interest which would be investigated to the same standards as the set-piece works.

7 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AIMS, OBJECTIVES AND PROPOSALS

a) Introduction

- 7.1 This detailed Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) has been prepared for approval by the Archaeological Advisor to Cherwell District Council prior to the commencement of archaeological works.

b) Aims and Objectives

- 7.2 The general aim of the investigations is to define the character, date, form and function of the targeted zones.

- 7.3 The broad archaeological objectives for the archaeological works are as follows:

A - To investigate the origin and development of domestic occupation by:

1. analysing the distribution of material culture
2. investigating the form and function of structural features
3. comparing the assemblages of rubbish disposal deposits by period

B - To investigate palaeo-economy and industry through time by:

1. examination and comparison of faunal remains
2. analysis and comparison of soil samples from industrial contexts
3. to identify possible crop regimes and staple food stuffs from environmental sampling

C - To investigate the origin and development of the agricultural landscape by:

1. determining the phasing of any extant field systems by excavation
2. investigate the changes in landscape flora by environmental sampling
3. consideration of the wider geological/hydrological landscape as a mechanism for catalyzing settlement

- 7.4 Specific research aims for the investigation are based on the background data that exists for the site and include the following:

- To provide open area exposure of anomalies identified during the geo-physical survey and trial trenching enabling

- To establish whether there are any pits or other features of Neolithic and Bronze Age date similar to those identified on the Phase 1 site to the north and/or associate with worked flints found on the field surface and residually during trial trenching.
- To establish the nature, date and function of narrow and shallow undated ditches within Areas 1 and 3 and in particular whether these pre- or post-date the large enclosure.
- To establish the form, date and function of the substantial ditched enclosure and whether the continuation north-west pre or post-dated it. In particular is the enclosure stock-related as appears the case from trenching and if so why are its ditches so substantial?
- To establish the nature and function of the curvilinear ditches within Area 2 and whether these suggest settlement extending southeast
- To establish the nature and date of the possible trackway ditches linking the corner of the enclosure ditch in Area 3.
- To confirm whether the burnt pit features within Area 4 are cremations via detailed analysis of the fills, define the extent of any associated burial zone and obtain dating information.
- To interpret and the overall results and place the findings within a regional context for the period/s represented.

7.5 Aims and Objectives are likely to be refined as the work progresses.

8 METHODOLOGY

- 8.1 The mitigation will consist of opening the four identified areas with a tracked mechanical excavator assisted by dumpers for transportation of spoil to the excavation sides.
- 8.2 At this stage it is assumed that the archaeological contractor will provide plant and welfare facilities for the site stripping, although the infilling of the site (if required) may be undertaken by others (subject to confirmation). Methodology is as follows:
- a) **Generic**
- 8.3 All work will be undertaken to Institute for Archaeologists Standards and Guidance for:
- Archaeological Excavation (1994, revised 2008)
- 8.4 In accepting a contract to undertake the works, the archaeological contractor (nominally MoLA) will take responsibility for the standards and levels of recording and reporting plus the preparation, if necessary, of Health and Safety documentation.
- 8.5 The archaeologists will follow the Code of Conduct of the Institute for Archaeologists.
- 8.6 An Archaeological Site Code will be obtained by the archaeological contractor from the Oxfordshire Museums Service at Standlake.
- 8.7 Service plans will be consulted prior to the works.
- 8.8 Excavation Areas 1-4 and any will be set out by means of survey grade GPS (Leica System 1200) operating to a tolerance of +/- 0.05m to Ordnance Survey National Grid.
- 8.9 Areas will be CAT scanned prior to excavation. If service runs are identified during the CAT scan they will be treated as ~~live~~+services+. As a result trench locations may be modified.
- 8.10 If services are encountered during the digging of any trenches they will be treated as ~~live~~+ and subject to hand digging. The archaeological contractor will ensure that any service runs exposed in the trenches are properly supported as required.
- 8.11 The areas will be opened by a mechanical excavator using a toothless ditching bucket (and breaker as required) under archaeological supervision. The areas will be machine stripped to the level of the highest archaeologically significant layer or in the absence of such layers, to the level of the undisturbed natural.

- 8.12 Overburden will be removed under direction of the nominated person in charge of fieldwork or delegated archaeologists. Mechanical excavators shall not track over an area once excavated to the upper archaeological horizon.
- 8.13 No potentially significant archaeological deposits will be removed by machine prior to recording and sampling (if necessary) to provide an adequate understanding of their character.
- 8.14 Cleaning of exposed areas of archaeology will be undertaken using appropriate hand tools as required to define the deposits present.
- 8.15 The site grid and all trenches will be accurately surveyed using differential GPS and will be related to the National Grid. The archaeological site grid will be marked on the site plans and will be marked on the ground. The area locations will be accurately placed on the site plan following the excavation and the corners of the excavations will be allocated grid references.
- 8.16 Plans and sections of all features and deposits will be related to their height above sea level by means of differential GPS (Leica System 1200). This operates by correcting the GPS signal using real-time data from Ordnance Survey base stations via Leica SMARTNET, providing a constant fix to Ordnance Survey National Grid (OSGB36) and Ordnance Datum. The default level of 3D accuracy is +/- 0.05m to Ordnance Survey National Grid. Accuracy will be tested against an OS bench mark.
- 8.17 The exposed surface of the natural will be hand cleaned sufficiently to define any archaeological features present.
- 8.18 Complex areas (areas of intercutting features, surviving layers, where features are complex in form or where surface finds may be plotted) will be planned by hand, usually at a scale 1:20. These plans will be located via total station, scanned, vectorised and imported via the archaeological contractor's CAD programme on the OS grid-based plan. Less complex areas of the site (where features are absent or rare and of simple form) will be planned using differential GPS (Leica System 1200) with the data input directly onto CAD and the OS tiles. There will be no site grid on the ground. All site plans will show OS grid points and spot levels and will be fully indexed and related to adjacent plans. It is not anticipated that single context recording will be appropriate. However, should particularly complex sequences of deposits or features be encountered, then single context recording will be undertaken. A uniform site plan will be produced showing all site features.
- 8.19 The OD height of all principal strata and features will be calculated and indicated on the appropriate plans and sections derived from GPS data.

- 8.20 Significant archaeological features and deposits will be sampled by hand. This will normally entail at least 20% of linear features and 50% of discrete features. Slots across linear features will be at least 1m in width.
- 8.21 The sampling requirements for the large enclosure and boundary ditch are as follows: The ditch will be sampled in three locations (once each within Area 1, 3 and 4). Hand excavation of the upper levels has been undertaken during the evaluation and produced few finds of interest. As such it is proposed that (with the exception of mini-slots cut to establish the stratigraphic relationships with intersecting ditches) sampling of the upper level of the ditch will be minimal comprising a hand dug slot for the upper 1.2m in one location only. Otherwise the ditch will be machine excavated to a depth of 1.2m for a length of 6m a central hand excavated slot across its width in order to extract primary finds and environmental samples.
- 8.22 In general organic deposits or fills containing burnt material ditch or pit fills will be sampled for environmental information.
- 8.23 All trenches, features and deposits will be photographed with both black and white and colour slide film. A scale and north arrow will be included in the photographs. Digital images will also be provided for use.
- 8.24 A full photographic register will be maintained, including direction of shot, location and context number. Contractors may find it convenient to produce digital photographs for ease of dissemination; however, conventional black and white and colour photography should be undertaken for inclusion within the project archive. Contractors will be expected to liaise with the archive repository over their photographic requirements **before** fieldwork starts.
- 8.25 A full photographic record of the investigations will be prepared illustrating in both detail and general context the principal features and finds discovered. The photographic record will also include working shots to illustrate more generally the nature of the archaeological investigation. The transparencies will be mounted in suitable frames for long-term curation in preparation for deposition with the archive.
- 8.26 Sections, including the half-sections of individual layers or features will be drawn as appropriate to 1:10 or 1:20.
- 8.27 A site location plan indicating the site north and based on the current Ordnance Survey 1:1250 map will be prepared. This will be supplemented by a plan at 1:200 (or 1:100), which will show the location of the areas investigated in relation to the investigation area and National Grid Reference. All sections should be located on plan with OS co-ordinates. The location of the OS bench marks used and the site TBM will also be indicated.

- 8.28 All finds will be bagged and labelled with their relevant context number for washing and processing.
- 8.29 The spoil heaps will be scanned for metal artefacts using a metal detector. A list of finds recovered by this technique will be included in the report.
- 8.30 A Harris Matrix stratification diagram will be used to record complex stratigraphic relationships. This record will be compiled and fully checked during the course of the evaluation. Spot dating should be incorporated where applicable during the course of the works.

b) Finds

- 8.31 All relevant finds will be retained, washed and where appropriate will be marked with the site code and context number (unless contamination evidence to the contrary is provided).

c) Environmental Sampling

- 8.32 Specialist staff will have a role in ensuring that appropriate deposits are sampled to retrieve palaeo-environmental and economic indicators to fulfil the project aims. Preparation, taking, processing and assessment of environmental samples will be in accordance with guidance provided by English Heritage.
- 8.33 The sampling strategy and methodology will be based on the following (subject to H&S considerations):
- All collected samples will be labelled with context and sequential sample numbers;
 - Appropriate contexts will be bulk sampled for the recovery of carbonised plant remains and insects. Assemblages of charred crop remains are of particular importance and will be used to provide data in addition to the associated weed flora on agricultural activities, the economy of the site and its relationship to the river valley;
 - If occupation surfaces are encountered, spatially controlled collection of environmental bulk samples may be taken to aid evaluation procedures. Spatial coordinates will be recorded for all samples, and the sampling grid related to the site grid and Ordnance Survey grid. Assessment of spatial information should be undertaken to enable the degree of resolution to be defined following appropriate consultation;
 - Environmental samples will be taken where organic remains survive in well-stratified, datable deposits. Bulk samples (40 litres or the whole context dependent upon size) will be taken for wet sieving and flotation where there is clear indication of good analytical potential and dating evidence for such material. Where there is potential for

spatial variation in the distribution of such remains, the sampling strategy will include a percentage sample of each feature/deposit type, distributed throughout the excavation area, sufficient to ensure that such variation is detected;

- Bulk samples may be taken, if appropriate, from significant datable waterlogged deposits for insects and macroscopic plant remains;
- Sub-samples or monolith samples of waterlogged deposits and sealed buried soils with potential for pollen preservation will be taken for assessment if appropriate and columns of such samples will be taken through deposits where there is clear potential for recovering a datable sequence of environmental information;
- Recovery of small animal bones, bird bone and large molluscs will normally be achieved through processing other bulk samples or 40 litre samples may be taken specifically to sample particularly rich deposits;
- Undisturbed kubiena tin or column samples of sediments will be taken for micro-morphology of buried soils where these are likely to shed light on the environmental development of the area;
- Where suitable deposit sequences are encountered (normally waterlogged deposits with high palaeo-environmental potential, in association with archaeological material), purposive radiocarbon sampling will be carried out at an appropriate interval.
- If samples are taken, a pilot study will be undertaken as an initial stage of environmental processing. This will enable an assessment of which groups of samples are likely to be most productive for complete processing and further study.

d) Treatment of Finds and Samples

- 8.34 Different sampling strategies may be employed according to the perceived importance of the deposit or feature under investigation and future mitigation strategies. Close attention will be given to sampling for date, structure and environment. Sample size should take into account the frequency with which material is likely to occur. Bulk sieving should be considered for recovery of environmental evidence to ensure that complete samples of artefactual evidence are collected for significant deposits.
- 8.35 The strategy for sampling archaeological and environmental deposits and structures (which can include soils, timbers, pollen, diatoms, animal bone and human burials) will be developed in consultation with the Scientific Advisor for the LPA.
- 8.36 All finds will be treated in a proper manner and to standards agreed in advance with the recipient museum. They will be exposed, lifted, cleaned, conserved, marked, bagged and boxed in accordance with best professional practice.

e) Human Remains

8.37 Human remains, including cremations (expected), will only be excavated after obtaining the relevant Ministry of Justice Licence, as required by the Burials Act of 1857 (amended 1981). The conditions of the licence will be fulfilled by the archaeological contractor.

f) Treasure Act or Potential Treasure

8.38 All finds of gold and silver will be recorded, removed to a safe place and reported to the Coroner in accordance with the Treasure Act 1996, updated by The Treasure (Designation) Order 2002. Where retrieval cannot be effected the same day, appropriate security measures will be put in place to safeguard the finds.

g) Finds and Environmental Specialists

8.39 Appropriate specialist staff will be used on this project depending on the type of artefacts and soil samples recovered during the course of the fieldwork. Details of specialists will be provided in the archaeological contractor's method statement.

h) Health & Safety

8.40 All relevant health and safety legislation and guidance will be adhered to. A Health & Safety Risk Assessment Method Statement (RAMS) will be prepared for archaeological works by MOLA and submitted to the client and RPS. The RAMS will detail staffing, programme and methodology.

8.41 No personnel will work in deep or unsupported excavations. The sides of all excavations or trenches deeper than 1.2 metres or less if the ground is considered by a competent person to be unstable will be stepped or battered. Due to the difficulty of working in shored trenches, shoring will be avoided wherever possible. Safety helmets will worn by personnel in deep trenches or other potentially unsafe positions. All deep trenches shall be fenced off and will be clearly indicated by ~~deep excavation~~ signs.

8.42 The archaeologist(s) will not enter an area under machine excavation without alerting the machine driver to his/her intention.

8.43 The archaeologist(s) shall remain alert and take due care not to impede the progress of moving machinery. He/she shall stand well back from the turning circle of an excavator's buckets and cabs.

8.44 Spoil will be stored at a safe distance away from trench edges at least 1.50 metres.

8.45 Suitable accommodation will be provided for staff to shelter from inclement weather and during breaks. Hand washing facilities and welfare will be provided.

8.46 As a minimum, the archaeology contractor will provide any necessary protective footwear, high-visibility jackets, and safety helmets. All staff and visitors to the site will be expected to wear full PPE at all times.

i) **Welfare Facilities**

8.47 Welfare facilities will be provided by the archaeological contractor.

9 LIAISON/MONITORING

- 9.1 Archaeological work will be monitored by RPS on behalf of the client.
- 9.2 The Archaeological Adviser to Cherwell District Council or his representative will be responsible for monitoring progress and standards throughout the project on behalf of the Local Planning Authority.
- 9.3 Monitoring meetings will be arranged by RPS.

10 POST FIELDWORK METHODOLOGY

- 10.1 All records and materials will be compiled in a structured archive in accordance with the guidelines of Appendix 3 in the English Heritage procedural document, Management of Archaeological Projects (1991).
- 10.2 Expert advice and reporting (in relation to cultural artefacts and ecofacts) will be provided by individual Specialists appointed as appropriate.
- 10.3 All finds will be cleaned, catalogued and prepared for storage prior to review by suitably qualified specialists (to be confirmed once the archaeological contract is awarded) who will assess their potential for further analysis.
- 10.4 Artefacts will be analysed, catalogued and quantified according to artefact type series currently in use in Oxfordshire.
- 10.5 The MoRPHE Project Managers Guide (EH 2006) will be adhered to with regard to post-excavation reporting. At the present time it is assumed that an assessment and updated project design reporting stage will be required. However, depending on the complexity of the archaeology (at present potentially of relatively low complexity) it may not be beneficial to produce a detailed assessment report ahead of final analysis and publication. In this event an interim report will contain sufficient assessment of finds and sub-sampling of environmental samples, combined with an overview of the structural remains, to satisfy the CAO and enable agreement of the scope of the final analysis report.
- 10.6 A final analysis report will include the completed results and will form the basis of the publication within a local or national journal. The length and form of the article will be commensurate with the significance of the results and as a minimum will consist of a note in a local archaeological journal.

11 COPYRIGHT

- 11.1 It is normal practice for both the copyright and ownership of the paper and any digital archive resulting from an archaeological project to rest with the originating body (usually the archaeological contractor). The originating body will deposit the archive in a museum or other appropriate repository on the completion of the project, and normally transfers title and/or licences for use of the archive at this stage.
- 11.2 However, until notified to the contrary, existing and future copyright and all other proprietary rights in all drawings, details, plans, specifications, schedules, reports, calculations and other work originated or made in the course of performing the scope of works will be assigned to the client.

12 PROGRAMME/INSURANCES

- 12.1 Programme details will be provided to the County Archaeological Officer at least 2 weeks prior to commencement of the archaeological works. The archaeological works are predicted to last between 4 and 6 weeks, not including reinstatement.
- 12.2 It is likely the programme of archaeological mitigation works (excavation) will be necessary before construction activities can take place (should consent be granted).
- 12.3 The archaeology contractor will be required to be insured against claims for:
- Public liability to the value of £10,000,000 any one occurrence and in the aggregate for products liability;
 - Professional indemnity to the value of £5,000,000 any one occurrence;
 - Employers liability to the value of £10,000,000 each and every loss.

13 ARCHIVE DEPOSITION

- 13.1 The site archive will be organised to be deposited with the County Museum store at Standlake, according to their current guidance (Museums Resource Centre, Cotswold Dene, Standlake, Witney, Oxfordshire OX29 7QG). It is the appointed contractor's duty to ensure that they conform to these standards.
- 13.2 Account must also be taken of the requirements of Standlake regarding the conservation, ordering, organisation, labelling, marking and storage of excavated material and the archive accession number.
- 13.3 Prior to the deposition of the artefacts with the Museum the following procedures will have been completed:
- Notification of the fieldwork and approximate quantity of finds will be given to the museum ahead of the fieldwork phase. A notification form will be supplied with the relevant details of the project at this stage;
 - Where possible the site code/accession number and context number shall be marked on all finds;
 - All finds packaging, including boxes and bags will be clearly marked with the assigned accession number;
 - Transfer of ownership from the landowner to the Museum will be agreed in principle prior to the fieldwork and a written transfer of ownership form will be forwarded to the museum ahead of deposition. Any other finds remain for the landowner to assess and dispose of;
 - The archive will be deposited complete and will include a full index of contents;
 - There may be a case for non retention of certain artefacts of low academic value. The selection of these will accord with SMA (1993, revised 1997); and
 - Further guidelines and requirements of the museum for the acceptance of finds and archive as outlined in the Museum's procedures for the deposit of archaeological archives will be adhered to.
- 13.4 A project's archive comprises every record relating to that project, from written records and illustrative material to the retained artefacts.

- 13.5 Digital archives must be prepared according to local requirements. A microform copy of the site archive and narrative will be made to RCHME standards and submitted to the National Archaeological Record. An OASIS form will be completed online.
- 13.6 The archaeology contractor project manager will ensure that every element of the archive is kept clean and secure, and that it is stored in a suitable environment.
- 13.7 The archive comprising written, drawn, photographic and electronic media, will be fully catalogued, indexed, cross referenced and checked for archival consistency.
- 13.8 RPS will be responsible for monitoring progress and standards throughout the project, and will be kept regularly informed during fieldwork, post-excavation and publication stages by the appointed archaeological contractor.

14 BIBLIOGRAPHY

Brown, N, and Glazebrook, P, 2000, Research and Archaeology: A Framework for the Eastern Counties 2: Research Agenda and Strategy. East Anglian Occasional Paper 8

CLG 2010a, PPS 5, Planning for the Historic Environment: Historic Environment Planning Practice Guide

CLG 2010b, Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment

Cooper, N J, (ed) 2006 The Archaeology of the East Midlands: an archaeological resource assessment and research agenda, University of Leicester/English Heritage

DCLG 2012 The National Planning Policy Framework, Department of Communities and Local Government

English Heritage, 1991, Management of Archaeological Projects

EH 1997 English Heritage Archaeology Division Research Agenda, English Heritage

English Heritage, 2006. Management of Research in the Historic Environment. The MoRPHE Project Managers Guide

English Heritage, 2011, Environmental Archaeology: A Guide to Theory and Practice for Methods, from sampling to post-excavation.

Oxfordshire County Council County Archaeology, 2006. 05/02180/OUT . Land South of Blackwood Place & Molyneux Drive & North West of Cotefield farm, Oxford Road, Bodicote. Design Brief for Archaeological Field Evaluation.

Institute for Archaeologists, 2008, Standard and Guidance for archaeological evaluation

Institute for Field Archaeologists, 2010, Code of Conduct

IfA 2000 Standards and Guidance for Finds Work, Institute for Archaeologists

IfA 2008b Standards and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials, Institute for Archaeologists

MGC 1992 Standards in the Museum care of Archaeological Collections, Museums and Galleries Commission

MoLA 2014. Geophysical survey and archaeological evaluation at Banbury Road, Bodicote Oxfordshire. June 2014. MoLA Report No. 14/143.

Northamptonshire Archaeology (Wolframm-Murray, Y.) 2010. An evaluation of land south of Blackwood Place and Molyneux Drive, and north-west of Cotefield Farm, Oxford Road, Bodicote, Oxfordshire. Unpub. Client report

RPS 2012. Written Scheme of Investigation for archaeological investigation, at land at Cotefield, Bodicote, Oxfordshire. Unpub. client report.

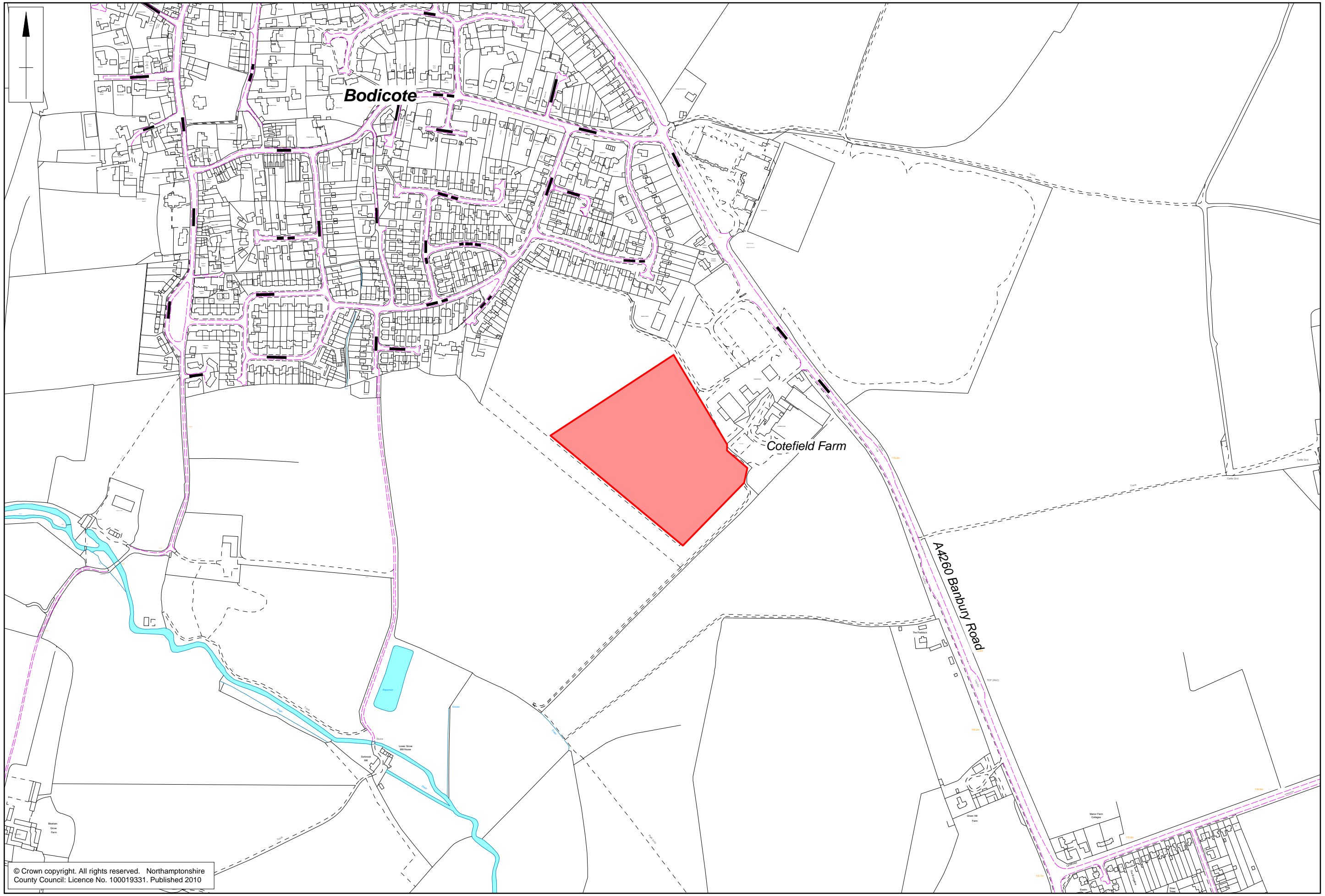
SMA 1993 Preparation of Archaeological Archives; Selection, Retention and Dispersal of Archaeological Collections, Society of Museum Archaeologists

Walker, K, 1990 Guidelines for the preparation of excavation archives for long term storage, United Kingdom Institute for Conservation

Watkinson, D, 1981 First Aid for Finds (3rd edition), United Kingdom Institute of Conservation

FIGURE 1

Site Location



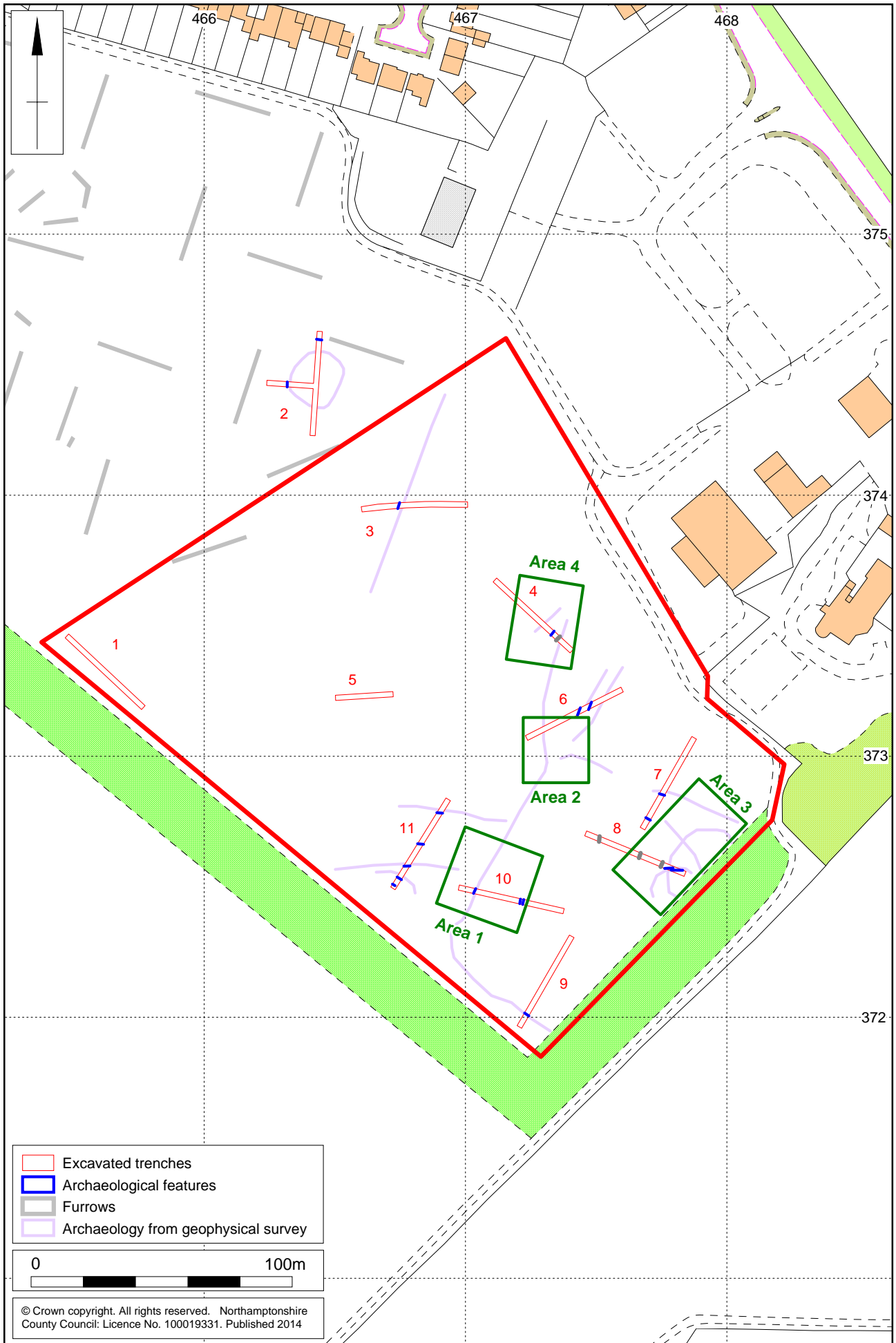
© Crown copyright. All rights reserved. Northamptonshire County Council: Licence No. 100019331. Published 2010

Scale 1:5000 @ A3

Site location Fig 1

FIGURE 2

Mitigation Proposal



Scale 1:2000 (A4)

The proposed areas Fig x