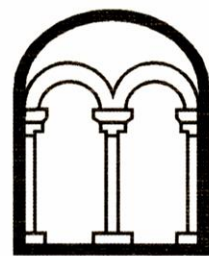


**LAND EAST OF 2 SCARP CLOSE
ASHWELL
HERTFORDSHIRE**

**WRITTEN SCHEME OF INVESTIGATION FOR
ARCHAEOLOGICAL STRIP MAP AND SAMPLE**

Albion
archaeology



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Produced for:
Graham Banks



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Preface

All statements and opinions in this document are offered in good faith. This document has been prepared for the titled project or named part thereof and was prepared solely for the benefit of the client. The material contained in this report does not necessarily stand on its own and should not be relied upon by any third party. This document should not be used for any other purpose without an independent check being carried out as to its suitability and the prior written authority of Albion Archaeology (a trading unit of Central Bedfordshire Council). Any person/party relying on the document for such other purposes agrees and will by such use or reliance be taken to confirm their agreement to indemnify Albion Archaeology for all loss or damage resulting therefrom. Albion Archaeology accepts no responsibility or liability for this document to any party other than the persons/party by whom it was commissioned. This document is limited by the state of knowledge at the time it was written.

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1.0	23/02/2026	n/a
2.0	09/07/2026	Revision to methodology due to presence of spoil heap on site

Key Terms

The following terms or abbreviations are used throughout this document:

ADS	Archaeology Data Service
Albion	Albion Archaeology
CIfA	Chartered Institute <i>for</i> Archaeologists
Client	Graham Banks
DA	Development Area
HER	Hertfordshire Historic Environment Record
HEA	Historic Environment Advisor (Hertfordshire County Council)
LPA	Local Planning Authority
NHLE	National Heritage List for England
WSI	Written Scheme of Investigation



1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Background

Planning permission has been granted (25/01929/FP) for erection of a detached dwelling and a detached garage at the site known as Land East of 2 Scarp Close, Ashwell, SG7 5FP.

Because of the archaeological potential of the development site, the Historic Environment Advisor (HEA) of Hertfordshire County Council's Natural, Historic and Built Environment Team advised that the planning consent should contain provision for the archaeological evaluation, via trial trenching, of the development area, prior to the commencement of any development.

This was in accordance with national planning guidelines in the form of the *National Planning Policy Framework – Policy 16: Conserving and enhancing the historic environment*.

The following conditions (nos. 3–5) was attached to the planning permission:

- 3) *No demolition/development shall take place/commence until an Archaeological Written Scheme of Investigation has been submitted to and approved by the local planning authority in writing. The scheme shall include an assessment of archaeological significance and research questions; and:*
 1. *The programme and methodology of site investigation and recording*
 2. *The programme and methodology of site investigation and recording as required by the evaluation*
 3. *The programme for post investigation assessment*
 4. *Provision to be made for analysis of the site investigation and recording*
 5. *Provision to be made for publication and dissemination of the analysis and records of the site investigation*
 6. *Provision to be made for archive deposition of the analysis and records of the site investigation*
 7. *Provision to be made for public engagement and interpretation*
 8. *Nomination of a competent person or persons/organisation to undertake the works set out within the Archaeological Written Scheme of Investigation.*
- 4) *The demolition/development shall take place/commence in accordance with the programme of archaeological works set out in the Written Scheme of Investigation approved under condition (A).*
- 5) *The development shall not be occupied/used until the site investigation and post investigation assessment has been completed in accordance with the programme set out in the Written Scheme of Investigation approved under condition (A) and the provision made for analysis and publication where appropriate.*



Albion Archaeology was commissioned to prepare this written scheme of investigation (WSI) for the approval of the local planning authority (LPA), as required by the condition, and to carry out the archaeological work.

The initial proposal was to carry out trial trenching on the site. However, on closer inspection the red line area was found to contain a large amount of spoil created during the construction of the dwelling on the adjacent plot some years previously. The spoil appears to have formed a layer at least 1.5m thick over large parts of the site making trenching impractical.

1.2 Status of the Written Scheme of Investigation

This WSI describes the circumstances of the project, the scope of the work required, and the procedures, methodologies and resources that are to be employed for its successful completion. This information is provided to assist the HEA in monitoring and assessing the archaeological work on behalf of the LPA. This is in line with Section 16, paragraphs 202–221 of the *National Planning Policy Framework* (MHCLG 2024).

This is an amendment to the existing WSI proposing strip map and sample of the house plot area after removal of the excess spoil from the site. The objectives of the work and the methodology for excavation and recording remain the same, although with additional provision to ensure exposed features are fully sampled and the results of the work are assessed, analysed and published to an appropriate level.

1.3 Site Location and Description

Ashwell is a village and civil parish, located on Hertfordshire's northern border with Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire. It lies 4 miles north of Baldock and 2.5 miles north-east of the A1.

The development area (DA) lies on the south-east margins of the village, south of Ashwell Street (Fig. 1). It is 0.1ha in extent and occupies a piece of scrubland between modern housing developments. To the south lies arable farmland.

Topographically Ashwell lies in an undulating landscape on the southern flanks of a chalk ridge that is a continuation of the Chiltern Hills to the southwest. The DA lies at a height of 70m OD on land that slopes down gently to the north towards the upper reaches of the River Rhee. It is centred on grid reference TL 26960 39430.

The underlying bedrock is chalk of the Holywell Nodular Chalk Formation. There are no recorded superficial deposits in the environs of the village¹.

¹ <https://geologyviewer.bgs.ac.uk> [accessed 19-01-2026]



1.4 Archaeological and Historical Background

1.4.1 Introduction

The DA lies within Area of Archaeological Significance no.142, as identified in the North Herts District Local Plan. It comprises the historic late Anglo-Saxon, medieval and post-medieval village core and the fields to the south and east, which are known to preserve earlier archaeological remains (Thompson 2002).

The following sections give a brief outline of the archaeological and historical background of the DA, based on the results of a search of the Historic Environment Record (HER) (enquiry no.: 180.25). Numbers given in brackets are numbers of heritage assets as listed in the HER. For designated monuments the asset number as listed on the National Heritage List for England (NHLE) is given.

1.4.2 Early prehistoric (before 800 BC)

The undulating hilly landscape of north Hertfordshire led to the construction of a large number of early prehistoric funerary monuments. These are usually located on elevated ground overlooking river valleys or lower ground. The burial monuments date from the Neolithic to Bronze Age period and either survive as earthworks, in which case they are often scheduled, or as negative features in the ground, which are visible from the air as cropmarks and soilmarks forming ring ditches.

A number of cropmarks in the fields around Ashwell probably represent late Neolithic to Bronze Age burial monuments and later prehistoric settlement enclosures (NHLE 1451703; HER 2468, 2469, 4717, 6113, 7687). A late Neolithic Class II henge monument (HER 30533) has been investigated 450m to the north-east of the DA: it is one of only a few monuments of this type in Hertfordshire. Artefacts from a range of periods, including prehistoric, Roman, medieval and post-medieval are known from the area around the source of the River Rhee, 625m to the north of the DA (HER 6979).

Two pits of late Bronze Age/early Iron date were excavated 20m west of the DA, one of which produced sufficient pottery fragments to indicate late Bronze Age/early Iron Age domestic activity in the vicinity (Albion Archaeology 2022b).

1.4.3 Iron Age, Roman and Anglo-Saxon (800 BC–AD 1066)

The Roman small town of Baldock is located at the crossing of the Icknield Way (HER4182) and another routeway on a north-south alignment, which developed into the road between Roman Braughing and Baldock (HER4190). The core of the Roman town is a designated scheduled ancient monument (NHLE 1016305). However, settlement evidence at Baldock spans the entire period from the late Iron Age to the Anglo-Saxon period. At this time, Ashwell lay in the hinterland of this important commercial and religious centre.



Thompson (2002) suggests that the line of Ashwell Street, to the north of the DA, may have been established in the Roman period (HER 4692). Otherwise, Roman finds from the village are relatively small in number. They include coins found to the east of Ashwell Springs (HER 4848) and to the south of High Street (HER 2973).

Previous archaeological investigations in the village have revealed a number of Roman features. The termini of two parallel ditches were found on Station Road, on the south-east margins of the village (HER 11397). Lengths of boundary/enclosure ditch were found at Moules Yard (HER 13707) and at 22 Lucas Lane (HER 17600).

Manorial holdings are recorded at Ashwell in Domesday Book (1086) and earlier Anglo-Saxon sunken-featured buildings (HER 1789) were recorded close to the spring at Ruddery End.

A possible Anglo-Saxon or early medieval post-built rectangular structure was excavated 15m west of the DA; although it produced no conclusive dating evidence, its form is indicative of buildings dating to the Anglo-Saxon and early medieval periods, whilst evidence of a charred weed seed (of a species not introduced until the late Anglo-Saxon/early medieval period) from one of the postholes tends to corroborate this interpretation – or at the very least suggests the building is no earlier than the late Anglo-Saxon/early medieval period (Albion Archaeology 2022b).

1.4.4 Medieval to post-medieval (1066–1900)

In 1086, Ashwell was described as a borough, a planned town with rights given to its burgesses, and intended as a place of trade; it was one of only five in the county (Thompson 2002, 6). The medieval market town of Baldock was not founded until the 1140s. Although Ashwell initially thrived as a market town, largely due to its good communication routes, it had lost its borough status by the end of the medieval period, outstripped by other towns such as Baldock, Royston and Hitchin. The parish church of St Mary (HER 4296), 420m north of the DA, is most significant survival of medieval Ashwell but a number of other buildings, often founded on the wealth of the wool trade, still exist. A watching brief at Ashwell Primary School (250m north-west of the DA) revealed two medieval or later ditches (HER 15270).

In the post-medieval period development at Ashwell was stimulated by the emergence of new coaching routes and the introduction of new agricultural practices. The village contains a large number of Grade II listed buildings dating from this period, principally lining the High Street and Lucas Lane to the north of the DA (NHLE 1175177 and 1102714).

Post-medieval industry is attested by the site of windmills (HER 4457, 11356) and 19th-century lime kilns (HER 11359). In the 19th and early 20th century chalk quarrying took place immediately north-east of the DA, which has also been identified 25m to the north-west during a watching brief (Albion Archaeology 2022a).



1.4.5 Undated

A watching brief on groundworks within land to the rear of 48 Ashwell Street, 250m to the west of the DA, revealed a number of undated ditches (HER 30325). Two ditches and two postholes, all undated, were recorded during a watching brief 25m to the north-west (Albion Archaeology 2022a).

1.5 Project Objectives

The general purpose of the investigation is to determine and understand the nature, function and character of an archaeological site in its cultural and environmental setting.

To achieve the above, the data collected during the fieldwork will aim to determine the following:

- the date, nature and extent of any remains of former activity or occupation within the site;
- the relationship of any remains found to the surrounding contemporary landscapes;
- the local environmental conditions (through the recovery of palaeo-environmental remains).

Dependent on the nature of any remains that are revealed, specific research aims will be derived from regional research frameworks that have been devised for the East Anglian region. These were assessed in 1997 (Glazebrook 1997) and a regional research agenda and strategy was produced in 2000 (Brown and Glazebrook 2000), before being revised and updated in 2011 (Medlycott 2011). The latest review was undertaken in 2018–20 by the Association of Local Government Archaeological Officers, supported by Historic England, and the resultant East of England Regional Research Framework has been available online since 2021².

The investigations at the DA have the potential to inform the following regional research questions:

- LBA-MIA 01: What can be done to refine the chronology of the Late Bronze Age to Middle Iron Age?
- LBA-MIA 09: Were settlements permanently or periodically occupied?
- LBA-MIA 25: How can we better understand depositional practices on LBA to MIA sites?
- MSax-Lsax 02: How can we better characterise Middle and Late Anglo-Saxon settlement types and forms?
- MSax-Lsax 13: How can we improve our understanding of Middle and Late Anglo-Saxon buildings?

Should the investigation produce evidence relevant to other objectives identified in the published research frameworks, they will be added to the objectives during the course of the project.

² <https://researchframeworks.org/eoc/> [accessed 19-01-2026]





2. METHOD STATEMENTS

The methodological approach to the project is summarised below and detailed in Appendix 1.

2.1 Methodological Standards

The project will adhere throughout to the standards set out in the following documents:

• Albion Archaeology	<i>Procedures Manual: Volume 1 Fieldwork</i> (3rd ed, 2017).
	<i>A Guide to GPS Survey</i> , report no. 2019/70 (2019)
• CIfA	<i>Charter and by-law</i> (2022); <i>Code of conduct</i> (2022)
	<i>Standard for archaeological excavation</i> (2023)
	<i>Universal guidance for archaeological field excavation</i> (2023)
	<i>Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials</i> (2020)
• Hertfordshire Association of Museums	<i>Standard and guidance for the creation, compilation, transfer and deposition of archaeological archives</i> (2020)
	<i>Hertfordshire Archaeological Archive Standards: A Countywide Standard for the Creation, Compilation and Transfer of Archaeological Archives in Hertfordshire</i> (2017)
• ARCHES	<i>The Standard and Guide to Best Practice in Archaeological Archiving in Europe</i> (2012)
• Dig Ventures	<i>Digital Archives in Archaeology</i> (2022)

Historic England's Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment: The MoRPHE Project Manager's Guide (2017) and other guidelines produce by Historic England will be used for guidance during the project.

2.2 Methodological Overview

CIfA defines excavation as “...a programme of intrusive fieldwork with defined research objectives which examines, records and interprets archaeological deposits, features and structures and, as appropriate, retrieves artefacts, ecofacts and other remains within a specified area or site on land, in an inter-tidal zone or under water.”

All archaeological work will result in a report, published accounts where appropriate, and a stable, ordered, accessible archive. Any further publication of the results in a format and detail which will be agreed with the HEA once results have been assessed. The material archive will be deposited with North Hertfordshire District Council Museum Service (unique identifier ASH/2SC '26). The digital archive will be deposited with the Archaeology Data Service (ADS).



Archaeological excavation and recording will be carried out by Albion Archaeology staff with sufficient levels of competence and supervision for the scope and complexity of works involved.

The site-specific methodological approach to the archaeological fieldwork is summarised below. Unless otherwise indicated work will be carried out in accordance with Albion Archaeology's Procedure Manual (2017), the project-specific methodology outlined below, and the generic methodology outlined in Appendix 1.

2.1 Strip map and sample excavation and recording

As an amendment to the existing WSI, the house plot area and any other areas of the site where ground reduction is proposed will be subject to strip, map and sample. An archaeologist will oversee the removal of the lower levels of spoil to ensure that former surfaces are machined to the top of archaeological deposits, or natural subsoil, whichever is encountered first. This will be done using a mechanical excavator fitted with a flat-edged bucket. All excavation and recording will be carried out by experienced Albion Archaeology staff with external specialists consulted as necessary. An appropriate level of environmental and other sampling will be undertaken in accordance with standard guidelines.

A detailed method statement for the excavation is provided in Section 6 (Appendix 1). All features will be investigated and sampled in accordance with standard excavation methodologies.

All finds found during fieldwork will be retained by context, with the exception of those recovered from topsoil (which will only be kept if they are of intrinsic interest). To maximise the metallic artefact assemblage a metal detector will be used routinely both to check spoil and to locate metal artefacts in advance of the excavation of features.

Recording, cleaning, and conservation of artefacts will follow CIfA and relevant guidelines.

All finds of gold and silver will be recorded, removed to a safe place and reported to the Coroner and HER in accordance with the Treasure Act 1996, the Treasure (Designation) Order (2002) and the revised Treasure Act 1996: Code of Practice (2023). They will also be reported to the Portable Antiquities Scheme officer.

Samples will be taken from the following types of deposits:

- those visibly containing charred plant remains,
- those where a significant animal bone assemblage has been recovered,
- where waterlogging is evident,
- irrespective of the above, as a sampling control (from the range of feature/deposit types, stratigraphic and spatial location etc.).



If a group of animal bones appears to be articulated, they will be exposed in their entirety. If appropriate, they will be recorded as an 'animal skeleton' in line with the Procedures Manual.

If excavation or disturbance of human remains is required, Albion Archaeology will liaise with the Ministry of Justice and acquire the appropriate Licence. All appropriate project stakeholders (e.g., client, curatorial team) will be informed.

2.2 Post-fieldwork Analysis and Reporting

During or immediately after fieldwork, all records will be checked and cross-referenced to ensure they are internally consistent. Recording, cleaning and conservation of finds will follow CIfA guidelines. Site drawings will be digitised and geo-referenced.

Data gathered during all stages of the excavation will be assessed evaluation will be analysed and synthesised into a final report. The analysis will be carried out using Albion Archaeology's database system and GIS.

The report will be sufficiently detailed to allow the results of the project to be interpreted without recourse to the site archive and where appropriate, place them in their local, regional and national context. It will include appropriate illustrative material, including copies of relevant parts of the drawn and photographic record.

The report will be sufficiently detailed to allow the results of all aspects of the fieldwork to be interpreted without recourse to the site archive (see Section 6.4 for summary contents). Where appropriate, it will place the results of the investigation in their local, regional, and national context. The report will include appropriate illustrative material including copies of relevant parts of the drawn and photographic record.

If significant and/or extensive archaeological remains are uncovered at the site requiring a higher level of analysis and reporting, it may be appropriate to prepare and interim assessment report with an updated project design. This may require further analysis and production of an article for publication. Any such work will be carried out in accordance with the updated project design and with the agreement of the HEA and the client.

2.3 Liaison with the HEA

The HEA is responsible for monitoring the project on behalf of the LPA to ensure adherence to this WSI and the maintenance of professional standards.

The HEA will be given advance notice of the commencement of fieldwork so that arrangements for monitoring can be made if required; two weeks' notice will be given (minimum of one week). Monitoring meetings will be arranged at the HEA's request.

Any variation to the WSI will be agreed with the client and the HEA in writing before its implementation.



2.4 Health and Safety

Albion staff will work to the site rules given during site induction. Work will be undertaken in accordance with Central Bedfordshire Council's *Health and Safety Policy* and Albion Archaeology's *Management of Health, Safety and the Environment* documentation

Health and safety must take priority over archaeological requirements.

A suitable and sufficient risk assessment will be carried out before the start of fieldwork. As part of the Project Briefing, all staff will be made aware of their responsibilities and the specific site hazards (identified by the risk assessment). The risk assessment will be reviewed dynamically as the project progresses.

2.5 Statement on carbon reduction

Albion Archaeology is a trading unit of Central Bedfordshire Council and is therefore included in the council's carbon reduction policies. Central Bedfordshire Council is working towards being carbon neutral in its own operations by 2030. Its carbon reduction strategy is set out in its Sustainability Plan 2020–2030, available on the Central Bedfordshire website³. Central Bedfordshire Council is a carbon literate organisation (bronze).

2.6 Statement on public benefit

Public benefit from this type of work is derived from the creation of knowledge and by ensuring the results of a project and its archive are available in an accessible format for future research. Sometimes public benefit can be facilitated and enhanced through direct community engagement during the project, although in most cases smaller pieces of work or projects on sites which are not generally accessible will not lend themselves to public access. Where appropriate, Albion Archaeology will seek to arrange activities which are either directly associated with the project or are part of the general programme of events undertaken as part of our ongoing community and outreach programme. Albion Archaeology has a track record of public benefit work across the wider region. Recent examples of this work include collaboration with local museums, talks and lectures, school visits and exhibitions.

2.7 Project Timetable

Fieldwork is expected to be completed within 2 weeks. If extensive or complex archaeological remains are encountered, additional time may be required. If results do not require further assessment, a final report can be issued within three months of the completion of the fieldwork, dependent on the level of specialist input required. The programme for production of an assessment/UPD would depend on the amount of work required.

³https://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/info/122/climate_change/672/climate_change_-_tackling_it_and_our_strategy [accessed 19-01-2026]



2.8 Contingencies

The works are small scale, however, contingencies covering some additional works have been allowed for, should that become necessary. The scope of any additional work would require agreement with HEA and the client, as would the release of contingency sums.



3. RESOURCES

3.1 **Albion Archaeology Company Profile**

Albion Archaeology, formerly called Bedfordshire County Archaeology Service was established in 1974. In keeping with its commitment to the maintenance of the highest standards of professional practice, it has been a Registered Organisation with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists since August 1997. Albion Archaeology is one of the region's leading archaeological organisations and for more than 50 years has undertaken major fieldwork and evaluation projects throughout Bedfordshire. It also now operates over a wider area, including the neighbouring counties of Northamptonshire, Cambridgeshire, Hertfordshire and Buckinghamshire. It offers a comprehensive service to local and national government, statutory bodies, and the private sector.

3.2 **Relevant Experience**

Albion Archaeology staff can draw on decades of experience of working on a wide range of archaeological sites within the eastern region and beyond. The excavation and recording will be undertaken by a team of professional, employed archaeologists. The team leader will be competent at archaeological evaluation and excavation techniques, with a proven track record. The team leader will directly supervise all site works and will be the main author of the report. Should the HEA wish to verify the professional capabilities of key members of the project team, CVs can be made available prior to the start of work.

3.3 **Albion Archaeology Staff Resources**

Albion Archaeology employs over 45 full-time, professional archaeological staff. Additional staff are recruited as required by the organisation's workload. The following individuals will be deployed on this project

Wesley Keir BSc MCIfA, Archaeological Manager: *day-to-day project management, budget management*

TBC, Archaeological Supervisor: *on-site supervision, report preparation*

Anna Rebisz-Niziolek MA, Finds Officer: *pottery and general finds*

Irene Sala MA, Finds Officer: *environmental remains*

Joan Lightning BA, Geomatics Technician: *archive digitisation and report illustrations*

Supporting Technicians will be assigned to the project team as necessary. Technical support will be provided by in-house specialist staff in the areas of finds analysis, surveying, illustration and computing.

3.4 **External Sub-contracted Specialists**

All sub-contracted specialists employed by Albion Archaeology are established and well respected in their respective fields of expertise. Each has a proven track record of providing quality services within set deadlines. *Pro forma* contracts are used to ensure work is correctly specified and delivered to time and budget. Albion Archaeology continually reviews the quality of work



received from sub-contractors and continually seeks competitive quotes in order to avoid over-reliance on a single supplier.

The following external specialists will be used, if required, on this project:

Artefact conservation	Drakon Heritage Ltd
Coinage	Dr. Peter Guest, Swansea University
Faunal remains	Dr. Mark Maltby
Human remains	Dr Corrine Duhig, Cambridge University
Plant, insect and molluscan remains	John Giorgi
Scientific dating	Scottish Universities Environmental Research Centre
Soil formation processes and micromorphology	Dr. Mike Allen



4. QUALITY ASSURANCE

Albion Archaeology's three principal organisational goals are:

- i. delivery of a first-class service to clients;
- ii. development of the highest professional standards;
- iii. rapid dissemination of the results of archaeological projects.

To meet these goals the following elements of Quality Management are under continuing development.

- All work is carried out in accordance with Albion Archaeology's Quality Management Procedures and Health, Safety and Environmental Protection Management Systems.
- Adherence to professional standards set out by the CIfA.
- Commitment to utilisation and development of regional and national research frameworks.
- Commitment to staff development to maintain professional expertise.
- A CRM system and client communication procedures which underpin our service delivery.
- Time and cost recording systems which underpins project budget management.
- Reviews at the completion of each project stage.
- Comprehensive Procedures Manual and quality procedures.
- Consistent approach to assessment, analysis and archiving by means of standardised database templates and procedures.
- Continual review of service standards provided by sub-contractors.
- Support for Albion Archaeology staff involved in national archaeological organisations.
- Regular publication of the results of fieldwork projects, in both stand alone format and as part of regional and period-based summaries.
- Safe and secure storage of project archives prior to deposition with relevant museum.
- Commitment to community engagement, including provision of "school visits" and regular talks to local groups.



5. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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6. APPENDIX 1: DETAILED METHOD STATEMENTS

6.1 *Excavation and recording*

1. All investigation will be carried out in accordance with Albion Archaeology's Procedures Manual (2017 & 2019)
2. Machine excavation will be carried out under archaeological control.
3. Any ground reduction in plan will be carried out by a machine with a toothless bucket.
4. Pre-excavation planning will commence at the earliest opportunity
5. Exposed archaeological features will be cleaned, and hand excavated, unless the area is deemed unsafe to enter.
6. A sufficient sample of identified archaeological features or deposits will be excavated in order to achieve project objectives. Features such as hearths, burials, surfaces, and key stratigraphic relationships will be fully investigated within the confines of the excavation area.
7. Spoil will be scanned for artefacts by both eye and metal detector.
8. All isolated features will be investigated (see more detailed strategy below).
9. All relationships between features and deposits will be investigated.
10. Deep and/or complex features, such as water-pits and wells, will be investigated to their base. Where this requires the appropriate use of a machine or measures to make the excavations safe, a strategy will be submitted to, and agreed with the curatorial authority in advance

11. *Pits*

- At least 50% of the fills of pits will be excavated.
- Where possible, all initial excavation will be located away from intersections with other features to obtain unmixed material.
- Additional excavation may take place:
 - if pits are adjacent to contemporary buildings and structures;
 - where the analysis of data from the Context Assemblage Table indicates that significant further artefactual or ecofactual remains can be recovered;
 - when the understanding of the form and function may be enhanced by full excavation;
 - where stratigraphic relationships with other features are uncertain.

12. *Postholes*

- Postholes will be half sectioned initially.
- Postholes that might represent parts of structures, are located adjacent to contemporary activity, or have evidence of post-packing or in-situ burning will be subject to full excavation.

13. *Linear features*

- A sufficient sample of linear features will be excavated, away from intersections with other features, to allow an informed interpretation of their date and function. A 25% sample of linear features associated with settlement, industrial structures or other specific activity will be excavated.
- Where the analysis of data from the initial sample indicates that significant further artefactual or ecofactual remains can be recovered, up to a further 25% sample will be excavated.



- Sampling of linear features in excess of the amounts detailed above may be carried out where justified.
- In the case of the additional sampling of large ditches, the bulk removal of spoil may be carried out by machine if appropriate.
- The amount, location and method of excavation of additional sampling of linear features will be agreed with the curatorial authority before being carried out.
- Excavation slots will be a minimum of 1m wide.
- All ditch terminals will be investigated.

14. “Special” features

- Unless agreed otherwise with curatorial authority, burials, hearths, wells, structural remains and other such features will automatically be subject to full (100%) hand excavation to assist in their understanding.
15. A photographic record in digital format will be compiled during the works. Digital files will be in accordance with the current ADS preferred file formats. Albion currently uses Olympus TD-6 digital cameras with BSI-CMOS sensors, raw image support and built-in GPS and compass to aid image location.
 16. The photographic record will include general site views, detailed feature shots and shots suitable for inclusion in the report. Where trenching evaluation is being undertaken, a photograph will be taken of each trench. Other than for general site views and working shots, scales will be used. Scales will be proportionate to the size of the feature/s being photographed. North arrows and information boards will be included if this is a requirement.
 17. A text register detailing the subject, direction, date, and author of each record photograph will also be kept.
 18. If required, a site grid will be established at 10m intervals. The grid will be accurately located in relation to the Ordnance Survey grid and topographical features.
 19. The pre-excavation plan of archaeological features will be plotted using RTK GPS or TST equipment.
 20. The pre-excavation plans will be digitised and used as the basis for the excavation strategy.
 21. All surveying and drawing will be undertaken following Albion Archaeology’s Procedures Manual (2017) and A Guide to GPS Survey (2019).
 22. Features will be recorded at an appropriate scale, generally 1:20 or 1:50 for plans and 1:10 or 1:20 for sections, with all plans tied into the National Grid.

6.2 Artefacts

1. Artefacts will be collected and treated in accordance with CIfA Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials (2020), and the Albion Archaeology Procedures Manual.
2. In summary, artefacts, including those recovered from spoil heaps, will be assigned to the relevant context number for the trench. Artefact processing will be undertaken concurrently with the investigation. This will comprise cleaning and marking, documenting and storing as appropriate. Documenting will comprise identification, dating and entry of data onto the Context Assemblage database. All ironwork, and other materials deemed suitable, will be submitted for x-radiography.



3. If human remains are encountered and their excavation is required, Albion Archaeology will liaise with the Ministry of Justice and acquire the appropriate Licence. Only in exceptional circumstances will human remains be removed during an evaluation.
4. Any finds which are identified as Treasure in accordance with the Treasure Act (1996), the Treasure (Designation) Order (2002) and the amendment Order (2023), will be reported to the district Coroner within 14 days of their discovery/identification. The Portable Antiquities Scheme officer for the area will be notified of relevant finds.

6.3 Environmental sampling

1. A programme of environmental sampling will be carried out in accordance with Historic England (2011) *Environmental Archaeology: A guide to the theory and practice of methods, from sampling and recovery to post-excavation*, and the Albion Archaeology Procedures Manual.
2. In summary, samples of at least 40 litres (where available) will be taken from a representative range of context types from each phase of identified archaeological activity. Samples will be taken from contexts that appear rich in environmental material and other key contexts identified within the excavations. The primary purpose of sampling will be to examine:
 - survival of material
 - key archaeological contexts
3. Processing will be undertaken at St Mary's Church Archaeology Centre in accordance with the Procedures Manual. Specialist advice will be sought as necessary.

6.4 Feedback into the excavation strategy

1. During the processing of artefacts and ecofacts, basic information will be recorded in the Context Assemblage Table (CAT), part of the standard site database.
2. Data is only input into the CAT once all hand excavation of a particular context is complete. This prevents only partial, and therefore potentially misleading, information from being fed back to the excavation. Basic contextual information will be input, such as context number, type and processual, feature number and type, and co-ordinates.
3. The Finds Officer will record and input basic quantification for the main types of artefacts, for example pottery, worked flint, fired clay etc. An overall spot date is also assigned for the context based on both the pottery spot date and other (possibly later) material (for example post-medieval tile). Registered Artefacts are recorded in a separate table within the site database.
4. The Finds Officer will input basic quantification for hand collected ecofacts, for example animal bone, shell etc., into the CAT. Ecofact sample processing will be undertaken during fieldwork, if possible, to ensure feedback. Information from samples is input into the Ecofact table, also within the site database.
5. The data in the CAT can be viewed in two main ways:
 - A) Lists - as a database table, the information in the CAT can be displayed in a variety of formats. The most common is simply a list in context order detailing the variety of artefacts that were recovered.



- B) Spatially - any of the data in the CAT can be plotted with the QGIS program. These plots can be overlain on a pre-excavation plan or any other digital information available for the site. At a very basic level, the plots will indicate which features have produced what material and broadly how much. Spatially significant distributions of material may be observable, for example pottery of a particular date.

6.5 Post-Fieldwork Analysis and Reporting

1. During or immediately after fieldwork all records will be checked and cross-referenced to ensure they are internally consistent.
2. Recording, cleaning and conservation of finds will follow ClfA guidelines.
3. Any soil samples will be processed and assessed as appropriate.
4. Site drawings will be digitised and geo-referenced.
5. Contextual, artefactual and ecofactual data will be entered onto a networked Access database. This will be used to analyse and report on the results of the fieldwork.
6. The data acquired during all stages of fieldwork will be analysed to a level that is appropriate to provide the information required to achieve the project objectives. Site drawings will be digitised and geo-referenced. Contextual, artefactual and ecofactual data will be entered onto a networked Access database. This will be used to analyse and report on the results of the fieldwork.
7. The report will contain sufficient detail to enable the results of the evaluation to be interpreted without recourse to the project archive. This will include the tabulation of contextual and finds information. The report will consider the significance of any archaeological deposits in local, regional and national terms.
8. The report will be laid out as follows:
 - Non-technical summary
 - Introduction (site location and description, planning background, archaeological background);
 - Description of each individual stage of investigation (method statement, results, limitations);
 - Summary of results and significance including reports on artefacts and environmental remains where appropriate;
 - Bibliography;
 - Appendix: summary of contexts and finds within each trench;
 - Figures will include a location plan, appropriate all features plans, sections and photographs.

6.6 Archive

1. A full project archive will be compiled in accordance with ClfA's *Standard and guidance for the creation, compilation, transfer and deposition of archaeological archives* (2020) and the Hertfordshire Association of Museums guidelines. The data management plan can be found in Appendix 5.
2. Albion Archaeology adheres to strict archiving standards and ensures that all archive is stored appropriately. All storage material is of archival-quality and includes archival-quality photographic storage sleeves. As part of the



archiving process all physical records are copied onto microfiche. The physical archive will be deposited with North Hertfordshire District Council Museum Service (unique identifier ASH/2SC '26). The digital archive will be deposited with the Archaeology Data Service (ADS). An appropriate online OASIS record will also be made (ref. no. albionar1-539859). On submission to the ADS the DOI will be sent to the HER Team.

3. Albion Archaeology employs a full time Archives Officer to ensure that all archives are completed to the correct standards and deposited according to the relevant guidelines.



7. APPENDIX 2: SITE CONSTRAINTS AND H&S CONSIDERATIONS

The following issues will be taken into consideration when planning the site works.

1. Potential ground contamination.
2. Potential underground services.
3. Staff welfare facilities.



8. APPENDIX 3: ARCHIVE SELECTION STRATEGY

LAND EAST OF 2 SCARP CLOSE, ASHWELL, HERTFORDSHIRE SELECTION STRATEGY (10th February 2026, vers. 1.0)		
Project Manager:	Wesley Keir	
Archaeological Archive Manager:	Helen Parslow	
Organisation:	Albion Archaeology	
STAKEHOLDERS		Date Contacted
Collecting Institution(s):	North Hertfordshire District Council Museum Service Archaeology Data Service (ADS)	
Project Assurance:	Hertfordshire County Council's Historic Environment Advisor (HEA)	
Landowner/Developer:	Graham Banks	
Other:	Project Finds Officer – Anna Rebisz-Niziolek Project Archives Officer – Helen Parslow Animal bone – Mark Maltby Ecofacts etc. – John Giorgi	To be informed as necessary
RESOURCES REQUIRED	Albion Staff time – 2 days External Contractors up to 1 day per specialist	
CONTEXT		
Background Planning permission has been granted (25/01929/FP) for erection of a detached dwelling and a detached garage at the site known as Land East of 2 Scarp Close, Ashwell, SG7 5FP. Because of the archaeological potential of the development site, the Historic Environment Advisor (HEA) of Hertfordshire County Council's Natural, Historic and Built Environment Team advised that the planning consent should contain provision for archaeological investigation of the development area, prior to the commencement of any development. Albion Archaeology was commissioned to carry out this work. Objectives and Relevant National, Regional and County Research Frameworks The general purpose of the investigation is to determine and understand the nature, function and character of an archaeological site in its cultural and environmental setting. To achieve the above, the data collected during the fieldwork will aim to determine the following:		



- the date, nature and extent of any remains of former activity or occupation within the site;
- the relationship of any remains found to the surrounding contemporary landscapes;
- the local environmental conditions (through the recovery of palaeo-environmental remains).

Dependent on the nature of any remains that are revealed, specific research aims will be derived from regional research frameworks that have been devised for the East Anglian region. These were assessed in 1997 (Glazebrook 1997) and a regional research agenda and strategy was produced in 2000 (Brown and Glazebrook 2000), before being revised and updated in 2011 (Medlycott 2011). The latest review was undertaken in 2018–20 by the Association of Local Government Archaeological Officers, supported by Historic England, and the resultant East of England Regional Research Framework has been available online since 2021.

The investigations at the DA have the potential to inform the following regional research questions:

- LBA-MIA 01: What can be done to refine the chronology of the Late Bronze Age to Middle Iron Age?
- LBA-MIA 09: Were settlements permanently or periodically occupied?
- LBA-MIA 25: How can we better understand depositional practices on LBA to MIA sites?
- MSax-Lsax 02: How can we better characterise Middle and Late Anglo-Saxon settlement types and forms?
- MSax-Lsax 13: How can we improve our understanding of Middle and Late Anglo-Saxon buildings?

Should the investigation produce evidence relevant to other objectives identified in the published research frameworks, they will be added to the objectives during the course of the project.

Archive

The archive of finds and records generated during the project will be kept secure at all stages of the operation. All records and materials produced will be archived to the standards outlined in CIFA's *Standard and guidance for the creation, compilation, transfer and deposition of archaeological archives* (2020) and the Hertfordshire Association of Museum guidelines. Albion Archaeology employs a full time Archives Officer to ensure that all archives are completed to the correct standards and deposited according to the relevant guidelines.

On publication of the final report, the archive of materials (subject to the landowner's permission) and accompanying records will be deposited with North Hertfordshire District Council Museum Service. Details of the project and its findings will be submitted to the OASIS database in accordance with the guidelines issued by Historic England and the Archaeology Data Service (albionar1-539859).

1. DIGITAL DATA

STAKEHOLDERS

Project Archives Officer – Helen Parslow
 Project Manager – Wesley Keir
 Digital Repository – ADS
 Project Assurance – HEA
 Repository – North Hertfordshire District Council Museum Service

SELECTION



Location of Data Management Plan (DMP):	Supplied with this document (Appendix 5).
Selection of digital data: Digital data will be selected for inclusion in the preserved archive by the Project Manager and Project Archives Officer in conjunction with the stakeholders. Any deviation from the below strategy will be discussed and agreed with the stakeholders. Selection strategy reviews will be undertaken at review points at the end of fieldwork and prior to final archiving. Digital data collected during the project will likely include: • Photographs (.JPEG, .TIFF) • Spatial Data (.DWG, .SHP) • Finds and context information (MS Excel) • Reports (MS Word, .PDF) Digital data selection will be based on factors such as: • Relevance • Uniqueness • Non-replicability • Cost It is envisaged that not all the born-digital photographs taken on site will be kept, for example multiple shots of the same feature or random shots not relevant to the site. Any digital data which could be in breach of GDPR will not be kept (or the relevant data redacted). No duplicate data created during the project, or data that duplicates data already in an archive (i.e. OASIS reports, scanned section drawings etc.) will be selected. Only final versions of documents and drawings will be selected unless draft versions are thought to hold special importance. Only the final, post-excavation version of the site plan, in .SHP or .DWG format, will be selected. Individual surveys or those drawings created during analysis will not be selected, unless they represent unique data relevant to the project. Digital versions of sections will not be selected, unless no physical drawing exists, to prevent the duplication of data. Database and spreadsheets will only contain the primary data; queries, analysis tables etc. will be removed before deposition. On completion of the project, the following will be supplied to the HEA: • ESRI shape files of the development and investigation area(s) • the ADS DOI Data (including metadata) will be managed in line with ADS guidelines (https://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/advice/guidelinesForDepositors.xhtml) Digital data will be managed in accordance with Albion Archaeology and Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC) procedures. See the DMP for further details.	
DE-SELECTED DIGITAL DATA	
The procedure for dealing with deselected digital data will be in line with Albion Archaeology and CBC procedures, e.g. CBC data management policies, IT policy, Data Protection Policy, Information Security Policy and Records Management Policy. De-selected data subject to GDPR retention rules will be deleted according to CBC policy. De-selected data not subject to GDPR may be retained by Albion Archaeology for any such period that it is deemed useful, after which it will be deleted.	



AMENDMENTS			
Date	Amendment	Rationale	Stakeholders Involved

2. DOCUMENTS			
STAKEHOLDERS		Project Archives Officer – Helen Parslow Project Manager – Wesley Keir Repository – North Hertfordshire District Council Museum Service Project Assurance – HEA	
SELECTION			
Analogue data will be selected for inclusion in the preserved archive by the Project Manager and Project Archives Officer in conjunction with the stakeholders. Any deviation from the below strategy will be discussed and agreed with the stakeholders. Analogue data will include the following: • The site drawings, all of which will be selected • Copies of any other data requested by the Repository (this should include all primary site records, copies of any finds records <i>etc.</i>) • Any original finds drawings, should any be drawn • Any relevant correspondence which does not breach GDPR All data not meeting the above criteria will be deselected. Selection strategy reviews will be undertaken at review points at the end of fieldwork and prior to final archiving. Standards and guidance: Analogue data will be managed in accordance with Albion Archaeology procedures and those standards outlined by Hertfordshire County Council (see Albion Archaeology <i>Procedures Manual</i> and <i>Hertfordshire Archaeological Archive Standards: A Countywide Standard for the Creation, Compilation and Transfer of Archaeological Archives in Hertfordshire</i> (2017). See also DMP for further details.) It is not currently anticipated that decisions will be made that differ from the standards and guidance cited above.			
DE-SELECTED DOCUMENTS			
The de-selected analogue data will be destroyed (especially that containing anything in regard to GDPR) subject to final checking by the Project Archives Officer. Possible exceptions include images, records retained for business purposes including promotional or teaching material.			
AMENDMENTS			
Detail any amendments to the above selection strategy here.			
Date	Amendment	Rationale	Stakeholders Involved



3. MATERIALS			
Material Type:	Bulk Finds	Page	
STAKEHOLDERS	Project Manager – Wesley Keir Project Archives Officer – Helen Parslow Finds Officer – Anna Rebisz-Niziolek Repository – North Hertfordshire District Council Museum Service Project Assurance – HEA Landowner – Graham Banks		
SELECTION STRATEGY			
It is not anticipated that bulk finds of any category will be present in such quantity as to require the implementation of a selection strategy during the fieldwork phase of the project. Bulk finds will be selected for inclusion in the preserved archive by the Project Manager, Project Archives Officer, and Finds Officer in conjunction with the HEA and Repository. Specialist advice will be sought in order to inform these decisions where necessary. We will consult with each of our specialists, the HEA and Repository Manager during fieldwork and post-excavation work as required. Any de-selection, beyond what is described below, will be discussed and agreed with the stakeholders. Selection strategy reviews will be undertaken at review points at the end of fieldwork and prior to final archiving. Bulk finds will be managed in accordance with Albion Archaeology procedures and to the standards set out in <i>Hertfordshire Archaeological Archive Standards: A Countywide Standard for the Creation, Compilation and Transfer of Archaeological Archives in Hertfordshire</i> (2017). Material that will not be collected during fieldwork will include: - Material that is from the overburden or post-19th-century deposits, unless it is deemed to be intrinsically significant, is considered Treasure Trove, or comprises human remains. - All other finds will be collected and recorded.			
UNCOLLECTED MATERIAL			
Uncollected material will be left on site. Where relevant, its presence will be noted in the project record.			
DE-SELECTED MATERIAL			
This will be returned to the site, should it still be in progress. If site works are complete, the landowner will be consulted to see if they would like to keep the material. Some material may be retained for educational purposes. Should the de-selected material be disposed of elsewhere, it will be left with an appropriate marker to identify it as re-buried material.			
AMENDMENTS			
Detail any amendments to the above selection strategy.			
Date	Amendment	Rationale	Stakeholders Involved



9. APPENDIX 4: DATA MANAGEMENT PLAN

Project Manager	Wesley Keir
Project Number	ASH/2SC '26
Project Name	Land East of 2 Scarp Close, Ashwell, Hertfordshire
Author(s)	Wesley Keir/Helen Parslow
Stakeholders	Albion Archaeology, Graham Banks (client)
Origination Date:	10/02/2026
Reviser(s)	N/A
Date of last revision	N/A
Project stages covered	Archaeological mitigation
Version	1.0
Status	Draft
Summary of Changes	N/A
File Name/Location	https://centralbedfordshirecouncil.sharepoint.com/sites/CandDA/bionArchaeology... ASH_2SC '26 AshwellEastScarpClose/Archive/ASH_2SC '26 DMPv1-0.doc
Related Policies	CBC data management policies, IT policy, CBC Data Protection Policy, Information Security Policy, Records Management Policy and IT Acceptable Use Policy.
Data Collection/Creation	
Data to be Collected/Created	<i>Specify what data you will collect or create. Indicate the likely types and formats of your data (e.g. Word Documents, Excel Spreadsheets) and volume. Outline and justify any deviation from Data Management Procedure or Policy in choice of format and consider the implications of data format and data volumes in terms of cost, storage, backup and access.</i> Physical Site recording sheets Site drawings Correspondence (letters/logs) Digital Photographs (.JPEG/.TIF) Spatial data (plans, sections), AutoCAD (.DWG), ESRI Shape file (.SHP) Finds and context information (MS Excel) Reports (MS Word) Correspondence (e-mail, logs)
How Data will be Collected/Created	<i>Document the standards and methodologies used, and quality assurance processes. Document any deviation from Data Management Procedure or Policy on version control, file naming, folder structure and usage.</i> The data will be created according to Albion Archaeology's Procedures Manual and Data Management Procedure, CBC Data Protection Policy, Information Security Policy, Records Management Policy and IT Acceptable Use Policy.
Relations	N/A
Documentation and Metadata	
Metadata	<i>Document any deviation from Data Management Procedure or Policy</i> None proposed
Documentation	None proposed
Ethical and Legal Compliance	
Data Security Issues	Client confidentiality where appropriate
Intellectual Property Rights	Copyright – Albion Archaeology. A copyright licence will be granted to the repositories on deposition.
Data Storage	
Storage and Backup	<i>Document any deviation from Procedure for backing up data and transfer to network.</i> Data will be stored on the Albion Archaeology network, or CBC SharePoint account, managed by Central Bedfordshire Council's ICT Team. During fieldwork, data will be managed in line with Project Procedures for backing up data and transferring it to the network. Digital photographs will be downloaded to the network at frequent intervals.



Access and Security	<i>Document any deviation, to provide access to data and any security measures required.</i>
	Data will be made available to the project team through the Albion Archaeology network and/or CBC SharePoint account. Selected data will be made available to external specialists where appropriate. There are no specific security issues.
Selection and Preservation	
Preservation Plan	<i>Document what data will be preserved and the repositories for the archive.</i>
	The physical archive, documentary and material, will be transferred to North Hertfordshire District Council Museum Service. In addition, a copy of any digital files they wish to receive will also be transferred to them. The documentary archive will contain any hard-copy data reports the repository wishes to receive. The digital data will be deposited with the Archaeology Data Service and will also be stored on the Albion Archaeology network. A copy of the report will be uploaded to OASIS.
Data Sharing	
Data Sharing Plan	<i>Document any addition to the dissemination of the data, other than deposition with the repository, HER and publication. Consider how this may be affected by file types, size, complexity and sensitivity of the data. Consider how data will be shared with externals during the project.</i>
	The digital data will be deposited with the Archaeology Data Service. A copy will also remain with Albion Archaeology, and will be available on request where appropriate.
Data Sharing Restrictions	<i>Document any restrictions on the use of the data after project completion.</i>
	There are no restrictions on the use of this data after project completion, subject to client confidentiality, copyright, GDPR etc.
Responsibilities and Resources	
Responsibilities	<i>Document any deviation to the responsibilities set out in Data Management Procedure or Policy.</i>
	The Project Manager and Project Archives Officer are responsible for ensuring that the data management plan is followed.
Resources	<i>Consider any resources needed to deliver the plan, e.g. software, hardware, technical expertise, etc. Where dedicated resources are needed, these should be outlined and justified.</i>
	Resources required to deliver this plan are covered by the project budget or by Albion Archaeology, as are the costs of deposition of the archive.

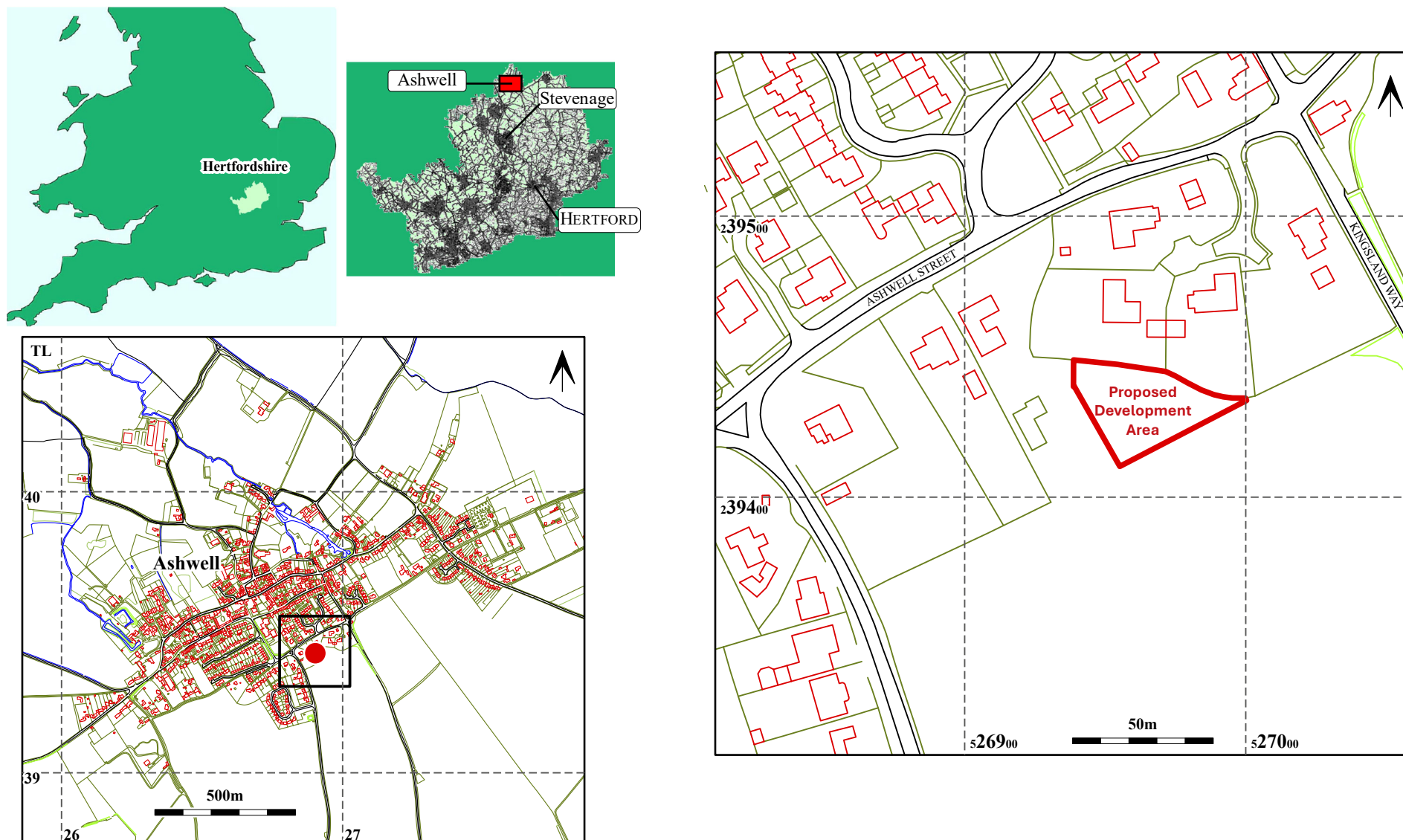


Figure 1: Site location

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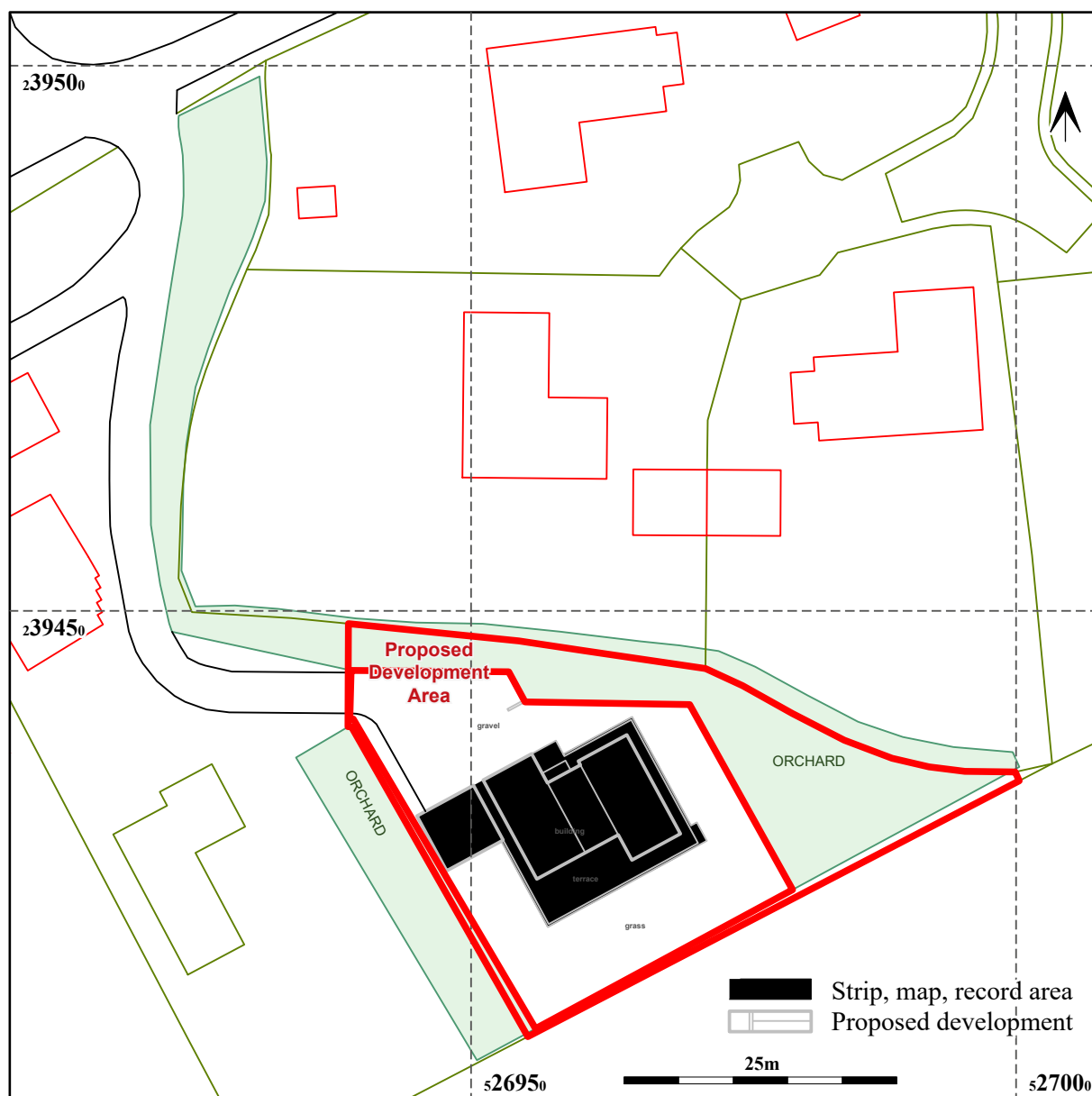


Figure 2: Proposed trenches and proposed development

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