

SPARBERRY HILL SOLAR SCHEME, ST IPPOLYTS, HERTFORDSHIRE: WRITTEN SCHEME OF INVESTIGATION FOR ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION

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Sperberry Hill Solar Scheme, St Ippolyts, Hertfordshire: Written Scheme of Investigation for Archaeological Investigation

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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This document is a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) setting out the methodology for archaeological investigation at Land Opposite Wymondley Grid Station and to the South of Sperberry Hill, St Ippolyts, Hertfordshire (approximate centre 520403, 226447) (hereafter referred to as the 'site,' Figure 1). The site is proposed for development comprising a solar farm measuring 35.5 hectares with associated battery storage and ancillary infrastructure (hereafter referred to as the 'Scheme').
- 1.2 AOC have been commissioned by Axis ('the Consultant') on behalf of Brockwell Energy Limited ('the Client') to undertake the required archaeological investigation.
- 1.3 The site is located on land at Sperberry Hill, St Ippolyts, Hitchin, in North Hertfordshire. The site occupies three agricultural fields to the south of the hamlet of Redcoats Green in Little Wymondley. The site is bound to the north by Stevenage Road and Sperberry Hill, to the west by Tittendell Lane and Little Almshoe Lane, to the south by Little Almshoe Lane and agricultural land, and to the east by agricultural land. The site lies within the local authority administrative area of North Hertfordshire District Council (NHDC).
- 1.4 The Scheme comprises the resubmission of an earlier proposal for a solar development (hereafter 'the 2023 Scheme') on the same site which was refused by NHDC on 22nd November 2023. The Scheme includes the same components as the 2023 Scheme but with a 9% reduction in the area of panels and with the omission of numerous panel rows south of Redcoats Farm. The Scheme includes solar panels, eight battery storage units, string inverters, a DNO substation, a switchroom, a control room, a grid connection / cabling to the nearby National Grid Wymondley Substation, internal stone tracks, two improved existing access points off Little Almshoe Lane, and an access point from Stevenage Road, fencing and CCTV cameras along with a combination of woodland and hedgerow planting. The areas of the proposed solar pv arrays, proposed woodland and proposed species rich grassland are shown on Figure 3.
- 1.5 A geophysical survey was undertaken across the western part of the site in respect of a previous proposal in 2015 (GSB 2015) (Figure 2). Subsequently, an archaeological evaluation was carried out across the western part of the site in 2015 by Archaeology South East (ASE; ASE 2016) (Figure 2). A geophysical survey was carried out across the eastern and southern parts of the site in December 2021 (AOC 2022) (as shown on Figure 2) and a Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) was undertaken in 2024 (AOC 2024).
- 1.6 This WSI (Stage 1) sets out the methodology for archaeological investigation in the eastern and southern part of the site. This will commence with an archaeological evaluation by trial trenching (Stage 2a), in order to assess the presence or absence of archaeological remains, depth, condition and significance. The evaluation along with the results of the previous fieldwork in the western part of the site will inform on the need for and scope of further works which may take the form of archaeological monitoring (watching brief) or strip, map and record (Stage 2b). The refined scope of any such work would be detailed in an addendum to this WSI.
- 1.7 This WSI also outlines the requirements for provision of post-investigation assessment, analysis of the site investigation and recording, publication and analysis, and archive deposition (Stage 3).

- 1.8 All works will be undertaken by a team of suitably qualified professional archaeologists in accordance with current best practice standards and guidance. The results will be published online via Archaeological Data Service (ADS).

2 PLANNING BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The local planning authority, North Hertfordshire District Council (NHDC) is advised in archaeological matters by Hertfordshire Historic Environment Advisory Service (HHEAS). Archaeological advice is provided by Andy Instone, Senior Historic Environment Advisor at HHEAS.

- 2.2 Planning permission (Planning Ref: 24/02455/FP) has been granted for a proposed solar farm measuring 35.5 hectares with associated battery storage and ancillary infrastructure. The Planning Authority determined that this was conditional upon an agreed programme of archaeological work taking place.

- 2.3 The Senior Historic Environment Advisor at HHEAS set out an Archaeological Brief to planning colleagues on 7 February 2025 (Archaeological Brief P01/22/0709/3) in advance of determination. *"I therefore consider that the position of the proposed development is such that it should be regarded as likely to have an impact on heritage assets of archaeological interest and I recommend the following Archaeological Brief, should you be minded to grant consent:*

1. The protection and preservation of a defined area of substantial archaeology through a no-dig policy, as identified during the initial evaluation, which will include buffer zones determined by this office.

2. The archaeological monitoring of all development works associated with the areas of no-dig to ensure compliance with Part 1.

3. The archaeological field evaluation of the entire remaining development area, via targeted trial trenching at a 3% sample, informed by the results of the geophysical survey, prior to any development commencing.

4. Such mitigation measures as advised as necessary by this office based on the results of this evaluation. These may include: a. the preservation of any remains in situ, if warranted, as advised by this office, b. appropriate archaeological excavation, including full open area excavation and recording of any remains before any development commences on the site, with provisions for subsequent analysis and publication of results, as advised by this office, c. archaeological monitoring of the groundworks of the development (also including a contingency for the preservation or further investigation of any remains then encountered), as advised by this office, d. the categorisation of any areas as more suited to no-dig solutions, or to being removed from development completely, e. such other provisions as may be necessary to protect the archaeological interests of the site;

5. the analysis of the results of the archaeological work, with provisions for the subsequent production of a report and an archive, and the publication of the results, as appropriate, as advised by this office.

6. The public dissemination of the results of the archaeological work in an accessible manner, as advised by this office."

- 2.4 Condition 9 attached to the permission (Planning Ref: 24/02455/FP) states:

"A) No development approved by this permission shall take place/commence until an Archaeological Written Scheme of Investigation has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority in writing and in accordance with the programme of work as set out in the Archaeological Brief (P01/22/0709/3). 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. Nomination of a competent person or persons/organisation to undertake the works set out within the Archaeological Written Scheme of Investigation.*

B) The 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).

C) 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."

Reason: To ensure the implementation of an appropriate archaeological investigation, recording, reporting and publication, and the protection and preservation of archaeological features of significance, in accordance with North Hertfordshire Local Plan Policy HE4 and Section 16 of the NPPF 2024."

- 2.5 The archaeological work will be undertaken in accordance with this WSI and the requirements of nationally recognised archaeological guidance, including the professional standards issued by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA), specifically the Standard and Universal Guidance For Archaeological Field Evaluation (CIfA 2023a and 2023b) and Standard and Universal Guidance for Archaeological Monitoring and Recording (CIfA 2023c and 2023d), and Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England', East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers 14, (Gurney 2003).
- 2.6 The archaeological works will be managed in accordance with the Historic England publications Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE): Project Managers Guide (2006), and the MoRPHE Project Planning Note 3: Archaeological Excavation (PPN3) (2008). It will also meet the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF; Chapter 16: 'Conserving and enhancing the historic environment'; MHCLG 2024.

- 2.7 This WSI has been prepared in consultation with Andy Instone, Senior Historic Environment Advisor at HHEAS. This document represents a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for the archaeological investigation and aims to discharge Condition 9A only. This document alone will not result in the discharge of archaeological Condition 9 in its entirety.
- 2.8 Furthermore, the works described in this document on their own do not necessarily discharge the archaeological conditions. The trial trenching is merely the first phase of investigations and further phases of archaeological fieldwork may be required prior to or during development. Any requirement for mitigation would be set out in an addendum to this WSI, which would be submitted to the Senior Historic Environment Advisor at HHEAS for comment and approval.

3 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

- 3.1 The bedrock geological mapping provided by the British Geological Survey (BGS) for the site comprises Holywell Nodular Chalk Formation and New Pit Chalk Formation, a Sedimentary bedrock which formed between 100.5 and 89.8 million years ago during the Cretaceous period.
- 3.2 The BGS records three superficial deposits on the site. In the eastern part of the site to the south of Redcoats Green the BGS records Lowestoft Formation – Diamicton, a Sedimentary superficial deposit formed between 480 and 423 thousand years ago during the Quaternary period. There are also two bands of differing superficial deposits across the eastern part of the site comprising Glaciofluvial Deposits Mid Pleistocene - Sand and gravel, a sedimentary superficial deposit formed between 860 and 116 thousand years ago during the Quaternary period and Head - clay, silt, sand and gravel, a Sedimentary superficial deposit formed between 2.588 million years ago and the present during the Quaternary period. In the western part of the site the BGS records Glaciofluvial Deposits Mid Pleistocene - Sand and gravel, a sedimentary superficial deposit formed between 860 and 116 thousand years ago during the Quaternary period
- 3.3 The site is located on gently undulating land. The north of the site lies on land recorded at 100m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD), the centre at 86m AOD and the south at 89m AOD. In the east of the site, the northern field slopes gently downwards from north to south, whilst the southern field is located on gently upward sloping land, which slopes from north to south. The western field is generally flat but slopes very gradually downwards to the west and south.

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

- 4.1 AOC Archaeology (AOC) undertook a Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) in 2024 including a review of the relevant HER, the NHLE and map regression. A walkover survey was carried out in respect of the 2023 Scheme on the 24th and 25th August 2021 as the site was not altered in the intervening time a further walkover was not conducted. The archaeological baseline and results were summarised in the HIA (AOC 2024). The archaeological background below is drawn from the HIA and asset numbers in this section refer to that document.
- 4.2 There are no World Heritage Sites or Registered Battlefields recorded within the site or surrounding 2km radius area. The northeast edge of a Grade II* Registered Park and Garden (RPG), Temple Dinsley extends into the surrounding 2km radius area at the southwest. There are three Conservation Areas within a 2km radius of the site. St Ippolyts Conservation Area lies c.120m to the northwest of the site and includes the Grade I Listed Church of St Ippolyts and six Grade II Listed Buildings within the 2km radius area. Gosmore Conservation Area lies

c.1.05km to the northwest of the site, and includes one Grade II* Listed Building, Avenue Farmhouse and 15 Grade II Listed Buildings within the 2km radius area. Great Wymondley Conservation Area lies 1.68km to the north of the site and includes one Grade II* Listed Building, Delamere House and three Grade II Listed buildings within the 2km radius area. There are a number of other Listed Buildings within a 2km radius of the site falling outside the conservation areas.

- 4.3 There are two Scheduled Monuments within a 2km radius of the site comprising Minsden Chapel (Asset 1), the ruins of a 14th century two cell church and Wymondley Priory (Asset 2), consisting of priory, barn, moat, and associated earthworks. The former lies at the northeast of the 2km radius area and the latter lies towards the southeast of the 2km radius area.
- 4.4 The Hertfordshire HER has identified seven areas within a 2km radius of the site as an 'Area of Archaeological Significance (AAS).' Notably, there is one AAS to the immediate west of the site and one to the south/southwest extending into southwestern part of the site.

Prehistoric

- 4.5 The site lies within a broad glacial valley cut through the scarp of the Chilterns in the last Ice Age, known as the 'Hitchin-Stevenage Gap.' Lakes formed in hollows left behind following the retreat of the Anglian ice sheet, which were gradually infilled with fine sediments; these sediments have produced Palaeolithic implements discarded by people active around the edges of the lakes (Wymer 1999, 163). Little Wymondley lies at the eastern edge of a large lake, and a further lake has been identified at Fisher's Green, to the east of the site (Fitzpatrick-Matthews 2020a, 5). A Palaeolithic hand axe (held by the North Hertfordshire Museum) was found in the parish of Wymondley, representing part of a large group of similar artefacts recovered from the Hitchin area (Fitzpatrick-Matthews 2020b, 2). Metal artefacts of prehistoric date were reportedly found around Titmore Green to the east of the site (Fitzpatrick-Matthews 2020a, 5).
- 4.6 There are three heritage assets of likely prehistoric date recorded on the Hertfordshire HER lying within the site (Assets 96, 105 and 138). These relate to evidence obtained from archaeological events within the western part of the site comprising aerial photograph interpretation (Events 139 and 143), a geophysical survey (Event 166) undertaken by GSB (GSB 2015) and an archaeological evaluation (Event 166) undertaken by ASE (ASE 2016). The southwest corner of the site is identified as an AAS.
- 4.7 Cropmarks interpreted as a pair of round barrows (Assets 96 and 105) potentially dating from the Late Neolithic to early Bronze Age were identified in the southwest of the site through aerial photograph interpretation (Asset 143).
- 4.8 A geophysical survey (Event 166) (GSB 2015) undertaken within the western part of the site revealed a large D-shaped enclosure containing several possible roundhouses and a trackway within the southwest of the site as well as five possible ring ditch features in the northwest of the site (Asset 138) (GSB 2015). The subsequent archaeological evaluation revealed archaeological features in nine of the twenty trenches opened, with substantial evidence of activity identified in the southwestern corner. The dating evidence suggests two phases of significant activity, including pits and ditches of Late Iron Age/Early Roman date lying to the east of the probable trackway identified by the geophysical survey.
- 4.9 A cluster of possible round barrows potentially dating from Late Neolithic to early Bronze Age

(Assets 101- 104) are noted as a series of cropmarks in St Ibbes to the northwest of the site, identified from aerial photographs (Asset 144). These features are reported as being within the southwestern corner of the area investigated by the geophysical survey in 2015 (GSB 2015) (Asset 166), however point data from the HER does not indicate that any anomalies were identified in this area.

- 4.10 Cropmarks interpreted as a small single ditched circular enclosure of possible Late Neolithic to early Bronze Age date (Asset 97) and an oval enclosure (Asset 142) interpreted as the ring ditch of a likely Bronze Age barrow have been identified from aerial photographs to the southeast of the site.
- 4.11 An archaeological evaluation (Asset 154) to the southeast of the site identified Bronze Age to Roman remains. This area is now identified as an AAS lying approximately 185m to the southeast of the Site. A late Bronze Age ring ditch (Asset 117) was revealed and part of an enclosure ditch with pottery tentatively dated to the Iron Age (Asset 118), or possibly earlier to the Bronze Age. Pits and ditches were recorded within the enclosure; accordingly, it was thought likely to have been related to settlement rather than stock control. A Bronze Age burial mound was also identified. Later remains including a Roman chalk quarry (Asset 116) along with associated settlement evidence was also recorded as further detailed below.
- 4.12 A late Iron Age ditch (Asset 90), measuring 4m wide by 0.55m deep containing a uniform fill producing Iron Age pottery was recorded during archaeological works to the east of the site. To the southwest of the ditch (Asset 90) and c.95m to the east of the site two features, interpreted as pits or post holes were revealed. It was thought likely that they could also be of Iron Age date due to the similar nature of the fills.
- 4.13 An evaluation on land to the northwest of the site (Asset 195) recorded Late Iron Age/Early Roman remains, primarily comprising ditches. These were thought to define the northern boundary of a large settlement enclosure and probable field boundaries subdividing associated agricultural land to its north. Although the northern part of the enclosure was found to extend into the south of the area, no features suggestive of occupation activity (buildings, other structures, hearths/ovens, rubbish pits) were encountered. Late Iron Age/Early Roman settlement and associated land use was thought likely to have been short-lived with no further evidence of past activity until the late post-medieval period (ASE 2020).
- 4.14 Prehistoric findspots have also been recorded within a 2km radius of the site; comprising worked flints (Asset 108) to the southeast; worked flints and pottery from early Neolithic to Earlier Bronze Age date (Asset 87) to the northeast; a Neolithic hand-axe (Asset 186) to the northwest and pottery sherds of Early to Mid-Iron Age date (Asset 88) to the north of the site.
- 4.15 To the southwest of the site, a possible ring ditch enclosure (Assets 94 & 141) has been recorded as a cropmark from aerial photographs. However, the area is known as Mill Hill and it is possible that it represents the site of a former windmill.

Roman

- 4.16 An archaeological evaluation undertaken in the western part of the site in 2016 revealed evidence for Late Iron Age/Early Roman activity in the southwestern area comprising an enclosure and associated features. Additionally, an Early Roman timber-built structure comprising post holes and occupation layers with associated pits and a large north to south orientated ditch or trackway were revealed (ASE 2016).

- 4.17 A Roman Road (Asset 99) aligned roughly northeast to southwest connecting Baldock to the northeast and Rush Green to the southwest is recorded c.1km to the east of the site. Three Roman sites have been recorded on the western side of the former road (Asset 99). A chalk quarry (Asset 116) identified c.520m east of the site may have utilised the route for transportation or construction.
- 4.18 Evidence for Late Iron Age/Roman activity including ditches, postholes and a pit was identified c.780m to the southeast of the site. Evidence for Roman activity (Asset 114), including a Late Iron Age to Early Roman ditch possibly relating to stock management was recorded c.940m to the southeast of the site.
- 4.19 A substantial Roman Farmstead (Asset 91), possibly extending over three hectares was identified during archaeological works to the northeast of the site in advance of laying a water pipeline in 1975. Within the supposed extent of the Farmstead, Roman pottery (Asset 109) was recovered around a depression interpreted as a quarry. Correspondence with Letchworth Museum records that Roman pottery was found when the topsoil was stripped in advance of the pipe trench. Fieldwalking to the west of the pipeline produced further Roman pottery, together with tile, slate, bone, stone, flint, chalk rubble and one decorated piece of stone. The HER notes that the asset may have been partly destroyed by the construction of the A1(M). Residual Roman tile was identified during a survey c.1km to the east of the site and to the south of the Farmstead (Asset 91) in an area of ridge and furrow.

Saxon

- 4.20 The placename Wymondley is first recorded in the 11th century as 'Wilmundeslea', combining an Old English person's name Wilmund with the suffix lea/lēah meaning woodland clearing (Mills 2011). It is possible that the area in which the Site was located fell within woodland in the pre-medieval period.
- 4.21 The Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS) records several finds of 7th to 8th century sceattas at Jacks Hill, over 1km to the northeast of the site. These coins have been interpreted as possible evidence for the location of a market in the early medieval period (Fitzpatrick Matthews 2020b, 18).
- 4.22 The name Sperberry ('Speleburwe' in 13th century records) means 'hill of speech' in Anglo-Saxon, and Sperberry (Asset 121) is recorded as the probable meeting place of the half-hundred of Hitchin. It survives as a road name above the Ippollitts Brook at St Ibbs, just off the London Road to the south of Hitchin.
- 4.23 The Church of St Ippolyts is located to the northwest of the site. It is traditionally believed to have been founded in 1087 and parts of the church, including the nave and chancel contain elements of 11th-century fabric. However, most of the church dates to the 14th century, with 19th century alterations.
- 4.24 Evidence for Middle Saxon activity is recorded to the northwest of the site comprising findspots and isolated remains. This evidence includes a 7th century pouch bottle urn (Asset 184) found at Vicar's Grove Gravel Pit in 1938. A late 6th/early 7th century inhumation (Asset 190) was found nearby during construction work at Pound Farm, along with associated finds comprising a scramasax belt buckle and tag and a knife. Other isolated burials are said to have been found in the vicinity, but there is limited evidence to support this apart from the findspot at Vicar's Grove (Asset 184).

Medieval

- 4.25 The Manor of Wymondley (Asset 114) is recorded as 'Wimundeslai' by the time of the Domesday Survey in 1086. It is mentioned in four separate entries in the Domesday Book, with the largest landholding containing the village of Great Wymondley, held by King William I and granted to Reginald de Argentein (Fitzpatrick-Matthews 2020b, 19-20). In 1285 a licence of free warren was granted to Reginald de Argentein 'in all his demesne lands in Wymondley', and from 1299 the manorial court rolls refer to a park, and a park and warren. One of these records, dated 1369, is for renewal of a fence between the park and the lord's hall. This implies that there was a deer park (Asset 137) adjacent to the manor house.
- 4.26 The separate settlements of Great Wymondley and Little Wymondley to the north of the site are not referred to until the late-12th century. A Norman castle was constructed at Great Wymondley over 2km north of the site.
- 4.27 The word "Green" can indicate the location of secondary settlements, and it is possible that Redcoats Green to the northeast of the site may have originated as a secondary settlement during the medieval period. The word Redcoats seems to have originated from an individual, John le Radecote who is recorded as dying in 1349. The Old English of "read" or "red" refers to a gravel outcrop and the "cot" is thought to refer to a cottage, therefore Redcoats would mean a cottage by or on a gravel outcrop (Fitzpatrick-Matthews 2020a, 18). Two metres of gravel was identified in a borehole to the northeast of the site. However, the first documentary record of Redcoats Green is dated to 1602 (FitzpatrickMatthews 2020a, 18).
- 4.28 A medieval deer park (Asset 106) is recorded to the south of the site. The deer park was known from c.1320 and is documented in 1358 when it was visited by Queen Isabella. The park may be earlier in date and may be historically documented as Almshoe Park, owned by Simon Fitz Adam in c.1240, around his grand new Manor House of Almshoe Bury.
- 4.29 Scheduled Monument Wymondley Priory (Asset 2) lies c.1.7km to the northeast of the site and was founded between 1203 and 1207 as an Augustinian monastic hospital dedicated to St Mary by Richard de Argentein. Part of the un-aisled nave of the medieval priory church survives as the taller part of the 16th century house, the Grade I Listed The Priory (Asset 18). The surrounding Grade II Listed garden walls (Asset 79) incorporate medieval foundations to the east of the house, together with reused stonework from the priory buildings. The Priory and a Grade II* Listed post-Dissolution barn (Assets 18 & 55) are located within an enclosure defined by a moat of possible medieval date. However, a detailed survey for the National Monuments Record concluded that it may have instead formed an ornamental feature associated with the post-Dissolution house.
- 4.30 Scheduled Monument (and Grade II Listed Building) Minsden Chapel (Asset 1) is located c.1.5km to the southwest of the site. It is a ruined 14th century two cell church dedicated to St Nicholas with bellcote, which was likely ruined by the end of the 17th century.
- 4.31 St Ippolyts Village (centred Asset 169) developed around the Grade I Listed 11th century church (Asset 69). The church post-dates the Domesday Book and as such the settlement is considered likely to have originated in the late 11th/ early 12th century (NHDC 2019).
- 4.32 Gosmore village (Asset 168), to the west of the site is first recorded in the 14th century as part of the Parish of St Ippolyts and is thought to have developed as a farming settlement at a crossroads.

- 4.33 The late 15th century Grade II* Listed Redcoats Farmhouse Hotel (Asset 6) is located within 100m of the site to the northeast and was probably built for John Sturgeon, who was High Sherriff in 1479. In association with the Farmhouse Hotel there are two 17th century barns (Assets 7 and 8) and an 18th century granary (Asset 9). The Wyck (Asset 42) is a 16th century, timber built, former open hall house with later post-medieval chapel (Asset 136) and stable (Asset 127). It is possible that the site was included within the landholding of Redcoats from the late 15th century, given its later associations (as further detailed below).
- 4.34 Three medieval farms are recorded to the east of the site (Assets 10, 16 and 66) and evidence of ridge and furrow has been recorded to the east and northeast (Assets 110, 113 and 134). A medieval findspot (Asset 122) is also recorded within a 1km radius of the site.
- 4.35 The site appears to have been located within an agricultural landscape during the medieval period.

Post-medieval and Modern

- 4.36 The settlements of Hytchin, Epaletts, Wimley Magna and Wimley Parua around the site are identified on Saxton's Maps of 1577 and 1583.
- 4.37 Early maps showing the site are generally pictorial in nature and do not show the site in any detail. Norden and Kip's map of Hertfordshire of 1637 identifies the villages of 'Wimley P[arva]' and 'Wimley M[agna]'. A map by Drury dated 1760-1790 depicts the site lying to the south of Titmore Green. Buildings illustrated to the south of a roughly east to west aligned road to the north of the site may represent the buildings at Redcoats (Assets 6-9) to the northeast of the site. A map by Hyett dated 1810 identifies Redcoats Green to the northeast of the site and shows a cluster of buildings to the south of the fork in the road consistent with the location of Redcoats Farm. Land to the south of Redcoats, within the site is shown to be within enclosed agricultural fields.
- 4.38 The 1811 Enclosure map (Hertfordshire archives reference: QS/E81) shows the eastern part of the site within the parishes of Little Wymondley and the Great Wymondley. Land within the northwestern corner and the eastern field, included a freehold allotment. Land recorded as being held by Edward Kitchiner from James Lucas Esquire was recorded as allotments. Plots belonging to Edward Kitchiner comprising 354, 355 and 360 are recorded within the north and central area of the site. The southern portion of the site and Redcoats Farm to the northeast of the Site also appears to have belonged to Edward Kitchiner. The farm is depicted as an enclosed, courtyard farm. The map suggests that the site was in use as agricultural land in the early 19th century. Three small square buildings (Asset 196) are shown on the 1811 Enclosure map within land plot 343 which belonged to 'James Titmus'. The buildings are not shown on the Ordnance Survey map of 1884 suggesting that they had been removed by this date.
- 4.39 The 1816 Enclosure map (Hertfordshire archives reference: DP/59/29/1) shows the western part of the site. The land is recorded as being owned by Thomas Dashwood and it is split into six separate land holdings. The two land holdings in the west appear to be under the sole control of Thomas Dashwood whereas the four to the east are leased out to William Lax and Edward Kitchiner. Edward Kitchiner is identified as the main landholder in the east of the site, although

a small allotment is recorded as being leased from T Dashwood. The southern part of the site is also annotated as allotments.

- 4.40 The Ordnance Survey (OS) map of 1884 shows the eastern half of the site occupying at least four fields, whereas the western part of the site is shown to have been amalgamated into one large field. There is a parish boundary line indicating that the site lay in the west of the Parish of Great Wymondley and Little Wymondley and in the east of the Parish of Ippolyts. A ditch aligned roughly east to west is depicted bisecting the eastern half of the site and an area of woodland annotated as “Dell Close” is recorded immediately to the east of the site. Redcoats Green is identified to the northeast of the site, and the buildings appear to be to layout shown on the 1811 Enclosure map. A small plantation of trees is depicted between Redcoats Farm and the site. No features are shown within the single large field that comprises the western half of the site.
- 4.41 Redcoats Green Estate was sold at auction in 1887. An accompanying map records the land use within the site as being mixed; the northern part of the site is noted as being wholly arable, with a small meadow located in the centre of the site and another meadow recorded in the southernmost area of the site.
- 4.42 The OS map of 1899 shows no changes to the site and OS mapping appears to show very little change to the site during much of the 20th century. The OS map of 1924 shows numerous footpaths crossing through the eastern half of the site.
- 4.43 The HER records numerous post-medieval farm buildings not related to Redcoats within a 1km radius of the site, many of which are Listed Buildings.

Aerial Photographs and Lidar

- 4.44 The National Collection of Aerial Photographs (NCAP) holds a single aerial photograph showing the site (Sortie HSL/UK/72/0052 Frame 0402). The photograph taken in 1972 shows the site comprising seven agricultural fields; a single large cultivated field in the west half of the site; four fields within the northeast part of the site, three of which appear to be cultivated, one in the southeastern corner which appears to be fallow or grassland and one cultivated field extending into the southern part of the site. Redcoats Farmhouse Hotel (Asset 6) is visible to the northeast of the site in an area which appears to have been designed and planted to create a garden around the hotel. A line of trees aligned north to south is visible within the central northern area of the site and seems to act as a field boundary, whilst the other field boundaries do not appear to be associated with upstanding features.
- 4.45 LiDAR data downloaded from the Environment Agency includes composite 1m and 2m resolution digital terrain models (DTM) dated 2020 and DTM and digital surface data and models (DSM) data from 2017 and was processed using Relief Visualization Toolbox (RVT-version 2.2.1, 2019) which produced imagery with simple local relief model (SLRM), slope gradient, sky-view factor (16 directions) and 16 directional hill-shade visualisations. This imagery was consulted in grey scale and colour as part of the HIA (AOC 2024). LiDAR imagery also shows ditched field boundaries, one aligned north to south in the centre of the northern area and the other aligned east to west in the northeastern area of the site. Faint traces of thin

linear features aligned north to south and east to west are visible which likely represent traces of historic cultivation on the site.

- 4.46 Multi-directional hill shading and slope imagery from 2020 1m DTM data appears to show two negative features within the northern part of the eastern half of the site and another larger negative feature extending into the southeastern corner of the site. The OS map published in 1881 records a chalk pit in the south of the site and this feature could represent the historically documented chalk pit. Other sub-circular negative features are visible in the wider area, and a possible quarry or extraction area is visible immediately to the east of the site.

Undated evidence

- 4.47 A cropmark of an oval enclosure (Asset 98) has been identified from aerial photographs to the southeast of the site. There has been no intrusive works and the cropmark remains undated. Similarly, linear cropmarks to the southwest of the site (Asset 185) and to the north of the site (Asset 192) likely indicate the presence of former field boundaries and ditches but there has been no intrusive work, and the cropmarks remain undated.
- 4.48 Bones were reportedly found in a mound (Asset 107) to the northwest of the site in the 1920's. However, the mound is not recorded on historic maps, and no further record of the remains was made. The date of the feature, and its associated remains is unknown.

Previous investigations

- 4.49 The Hertfordshire HER records numerous previous archaeological investigations within a 1km radius of the site including aerial photographic interpretation (Events 138 to 146), geophysical surveys (Events 138, 157, 160, 166 and 188) and archaeological interventions (Assets 153 to 165). These have been referred to above in the period-based discussions where relevant to the site.
- 4.50 The geophysical survey (Event 166) undertaken in the western part of the site, south of Sperberry Hill recorded many geological anomalies as well as probable archaeological anomalies and some anomalies of likely archaeological origin, although the latter did not correlate directly with previous aerial photographic cropmark evidence (GSB 2015). The subsequent archaeological evaluation (ASE 2016) revealed archaeological features in nine of the twenty trenches excavated, with substantial evidence of archaeological activity identified in the southwestern area of the site. The dating evidence suggests two phases of significant activity, one comprising pits and ditches of Late Iron Age/Early Roman date and the other comprising postholes, occupation layers and rubbish pits of Early Roman date.
- 4.51 An archaeological evaluation following geophysical survey to the northwest of the site (ASE 2020) broadly corresponded with the geophysical survey. Although additional ditches and pits were revealed that had not been identified by the geophysical survey.
- 4.52 Following archaeological investigations in and surrounding the site several AAS have been identified and mapped in the Hertfordshire HER, notably including one to the immediate west of the site and one to the southwest extending into the southwestern part of the site (Figure 2).
- 4.53 The geophysical survey carried out across the eastern part of the site in December 2021 (AOC 2022) comprised the survey of a total of 18 hectares, identifying limited evidence for archaeological activity. Four groups of weak curving and rectilinear anomalies were identified

which, based on their interpretation as cut and filled features were considered to be of potential archaeological interest. Further linear and discrete anomalies were of unclear origins, but an archaeological origin cannot be ruled out. A former field boundary was positively identified and there were a number of discrete geophysical trends which were considered most likely to be related to geological processes and former water courses; but could alternatively be archaeological in origin. Several areas of magnetic disturbance, most likely the result of modern activity, were also recorded, including a service crossing the southern portion of the survey area.

5 AIMS OF THE INVESTIGATION

5.1 The principal objective of the archaeological investigation is to protect the archaeological interest of the site.

5.2 The first stage of investigation will take the form of an archaeological evaluation by trial trenching. The aims of the evaluation will be:

- to establish the character, nature, date, condition and significance of the archaeological resource, within the site, and to define the nature and extent of any avoidance or mitigation works that may be required.
- To record and sample excavate any archaeological remains encountered
- To determine the degree of complexity of the horizontal and/or vertical stratigraphy present.
- To assess the depth, condition and significance of the buried remains present within the site.
- To assess the eco-factual and environmental potential of any archaeological features and deposits.
- To determine the extent of previous truncations of the archaeological deposits.
- To provide further information as to the significance of the assets to the archaeological advisors at HHEAS.
- To enable the archaeological advisor at HHEAS to make an informed decision on the status of the condition, and any possible requirement for further work in order to satisfy that condition.
- To make available to interested parties the results of the investigation.

5.3 The specific aims of the evaluation are defined as:

- To determine any presence and character of any archaeological remains within the site.
- To determine the character and composition of any structural remains.
- To determine the date, function and nature of any cut features.
- To identify any in-situ internal or external surfaces present.
- To retrieve datable material when available.

- To determine how the results of the evaluation can contribute to the East of England Regional Research Framework (2021).
- 5.4 The evaluation will inform on the need for and scope of further works which may take the form of archaeological monitoring (watching brief) or strip, map and record. The scope of any such work would be detailed in an addendum to this WSI but the aims would be either:
- to preserve the archaeological evidence contained within the site **by record**, to attempt a reconstruction of the history and use of the site and undertake comparative analysis between the site and other relevant sites in the locality; or
 - where physical preservation is likely to be considered as a mitigation option, the primary factors affecting the present state of preservation and the direct and indirect effect of the proposed development should also be considered. The preservation strategy for archaeological remains will be determined with reference to the principles outlined in the Historic England document 'Preserving Archaeological Remains (2016).'
- 5.5 The HIA found that “overall, there is considered to be a High potential for remains of prehistoric and Roman date and a Low potential for remains of medieval or later date being present within the site (AOC 2024).”
- 5.6 Should however more significant remains be identified, investigations should consider local and regional research priorities. Attention is drawn to research objectives within:
- Research and Archaeology Revisited: a revised framework for the East of England (EAA Occ. Paper No 24, 2011),
 - East of England Regional Research Framework (ALGAO East of England 2020, 2024).

6 SCOPE OF WORKS AND STRATEGY

Archaeological Investigation: Trial Trench Evaluation

- 6.1 The requirements of the archaeological investigation were outlined by the Senior Historic Environment Advisor at HHEAS, as set out in an Archaeological Brief provided to planning colleagues on 7 February 2025 (Archaeological Brief P01/22/0709/3). The Brief set out the requirements for the investigation as further detailed in Section 2 above including:
- *The protection and preservation of a defined area of substantial archaeology through a no-dig policy, as identified during the initial evaluation, which will include buffer zones to be determined by HHEAS.*
 - *The archaeological monitoring of all development works associated with the areas of no-dig to ensure compliance with Part 1.*
 - *The archaeological field evaluation of the entire remaining development area, via targeted trial trenching at a 3% sample, informed by the results of the geophysical survey, prior to any development commencing.*
- 6.2 The preceding geophysical survey (GSB 2015) of the western part of the site revealed five possible ring ditches lying within a large enclosure in the north of the area (Figure 2) (not subsequently tested by trial trenching). Elsewhere within the western part of the site the geophysical survey revealed a possible trackway and rectangular and oval enclosures along with curving and linear anomalies. The central and southern areas within the western part of

the Site were subject to trial trenching (ASE 2016) which revealed archaeological remains in and around the AAS (identified on Figure 2). It is understood that this area should be excluded from the initial 3% trial trenching.

- 6.3 There are also two areas where wildflower meadows are proposed and where no intrusive works will be undertaken. These areas of species-rich grassland and wildflower meadow are proposed to enhance the overall biodiversity of the site. The seed mix would comprise a mixture of fine-leaved grasses and wildflowers that are relatively slow to establish, but after the first establishment year provide a show of flowers which will provide interest for insects, birds and mammals. The sowing species rich grass would be at a rate of 25kg per hectare. Prior to seeding the soil would be cultivated to a fine seed bed and would be rolled before and after sowing to aid germination. Once the seed has germinated the areas would be mechanically cut regularly to control weeds. Once established the areas would be cut once or twice a year after flowering. It is proposed that no trial trenching is undertaken in these areas.
- 6.4 The site, with these areas excluded, comprises an area measuring approximately 22 hectares.
- 6.5 The scope of the archaeological works has been designed to be cognisant of the Brief above and will involve the excavation of 66 trenches.
- 6.6 The trenches will each measure 50m by 1.80m (Figure 2). The trench array has been designed to target different geophysical anomalies, as well as evaluating a percentage sample of the negative areas.
- 6.7 Overall, the archaeological evaluation of the site will allow for an understanding of the archaeological potential of the site and, if necessary, provide the information to devise a mitigation strategy to minimise the impact of development upon the archaeology.
- 6.8 No-dig solutions will be adopted within defined areas of the site to be agreed with HHEAS, the Consultant and the Client. This will apply to both the panels and cabling and include the use of above-ground roads. The no-dig solution will be adopted within the AAS at the southwest of the site (as shown on Figure 2) and elsewhere as determined necessary following the evaluation and consultation with HHEAS.

Archaeological Mitigation

- 6.9 Overall, the archaeological evaluation will allow an understanding of the archaeological potential of the site and, if necessary, provide the information to devise a mitigation strategy to minimise the impact of development upon the archaeology.
- 6.10 Should significant archaeological remains be identified, a mitigation strategy will be agreed with HHEAS and outlined in an addendum to this WSI. This may involve:
- to preserve the archaeological evidence contained within the site **by record**, to attempt a reconstruction of the history and use of the sites and undertake comparative analysis between the site and other relevant sites in the locality; or
 - where physical preservation is likely to be considered as a mitigation option, the primary factors affecting the present state of preservation and the direct and indirect effect of the proposed development should also be considered. The preservation strategy for archaeological remains will be determined with reference to the principles outlined in the Historic England document 'Preserving Archaeological Remains (2016).'

- 6.11 Any further archaeological works (watching brief and/ or strip, map and record) will be reported on, with an archaeological post-excavation assessment undertaken should significant archaeological remains be identified. Following completion of the PXA report, a programme of analysis, archive preparation deposition and publication of the results as agreed with HHEAS would be required.

General

- 6.12 The archaeological investigation will be undertaken and designed in accordance with current best archaeological practice, local and national standards and guidelines including:

- Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (2014) (updated 2022) Code of conduct: professional ethics in archaeology.
- Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (2023a) Universal guidance for archaeological field evaluation.
- Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (2023b) Standard for archaeological field evaluation.
- Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (2023c) Universal Guidance for archaeological monitoring and recording
- Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (2023d) Standard for archaeological monitoring and recording
- Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (2014) (updated 2020) Standard and guidance for the creation, compilation, transfer and deposition of archaeological archives.
- Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (2014) (updated 2020) Standard and guidance for the archaeological investigation and recording of buildings or structures.
- Gurney, D. (2003), Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England. E. Anglian Archaeol. Occ. Pap. 14
- Historic England (2015a). Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment: The MoRPHE Project Managers' Guide
- Historic England (HE 2018) Archaeological Guidance Paper 3: Standards and Practices in Archaeological Fieldwork.
- Historic England (HE2015b) Environmental Archaeology: A guide to the theory and practice of methods, from sampling and recovery to post-excavation.
- Historic England (2018) The Role of the Human Osteologist in an Archaeological Fieldwork Project Swindon. Historic England.
- Historic England (2019) Animal Bones and Archaeology: Recovery to Archive.
- Historic England (2018c) Waterlogged Organic Artefacts: Guidelines on their Recovery, Analysis and Conservation
- Historic England (2015a) Digital Image Capture and File Storage.
- Historic England (2008) Investigating Conservation: Guidance on how the detailed examination of artefacts from Archaeological Sites can shed light on their manufacture and use.

- Museum of London (MoL 1994) – Archaeological Site Manual (Third Edition).
 - RESCUE & ICON (2001) First Aid for Finds
 - United Kingdom Institute for Conservation (UKIC 1990) – Guidance for Archaeological Conservation Practice.
 - United Kingdom Institute for Conservation (1983) Conservation Guidelines No. 2
- 6.13 Insurances, copyright and confidentiality, and standards are defined in Appendix A.
- 6.14 A unique Site code for the project (WYM/SH '25) will be used as the site identifier for all records produced.
- 6.15 The archaeological investigation will be carried out by a team composed of a Project Officer, assisted by a team of archaeologists. The team size will be increased where required. The project will be overseen by Yvonne Robertson, Operations Manager for Milton Keynes. The works will be monitored by Andy Instone, Senior Historic Environment Advisor at HHEAS. A copy of the approved WSI will be held on site along with the detailed site risk assessment. All site staff will be made aware of and will have reviewed both documents. CVs of the onsite staff will be sent to Andy Instone, Senior Historic Environment Advisor at HHEAS for agreement prior to the works commencing.
- 6.16 The archaeological advisors will be advised at least 10 days in advance of the proposed start date and pre-programmed monitoring meetings will be arranged to ensure all works are reviewed on site. No backfilling of trenches / excavation areas can commence until signed off by the archaeological advisors.
- 6.17 A list of specialists who may be contacted for sample/artefact analyses is given in Appendix B.
- 6.18 A digital management plan is attached as Appendix C.
- 6.19 An initiated OASIS form is shown in Appendix D.

7 METHODOLOGY

Archaeological Evaluation

- 7.1 The evaluation trenches will be opened by a mechanical excavator, each under the supervision of a Project Officer/Supervisor. Undifferentiated topsoil or overburden of recent origin will be removed in successive level spits down to the first significant archaeological horizon, or the natural substratum, whichever is encountered first. The excavated material will be kept separate from other deposits and examined for archaeological materials. The location of the evaluation trenches is shown on Figure 2. The trenches will be set out using a Differential GPS.
- 7.2 Current service plans will be consulted, and the entire site will be visually inspected prior to the commencement of any machine excavation, including the examination of any available exposures (e.g. recently cut ditches and geotechnical test pits). Trench locations will be CAT scanned before excavation.
- 7.3 The trenches will be opened using mechanical excavators equipped with a flat bladed (toothless) ditching bucket. It will be carried out under constant archaeological direction and control of AOC staff.
- 7.4 When access to the trench is needed the machine will cease operations and if necessary, relocated to ensure safe access. Subject to safe access, the archaeologist will enter the trench

- to carry out excavation or recording as required. Trenches will be battered or stepped to ensure safe access/egress.
- 7.5 Topsoil and subsoil will be stored separately and will be examined for archaeological materials.
- 7.6 Trenches will be excavated only to a safe working depth, although they potentially will be stepped if required. The trenches will be secured with road / insulated pins and barrier mesh, if required.
- 7.7 Where structures, finds, soil features and layers of archaeological interest are exposed in the evaluation trenches, AOC will observe, clean, assess, excavate by hand where appropriate, sample and record these features and finds. Archaeological features will be excavated sufficiently to identify, where possible, the nature of the deposits, date and depths. The application of archaeological science to artefacts and samples is a standard requirement for all archaeological investigations, and arrangements are in place – see Specialists in Appendix B. Any deposit that may be of palaeoecological value will be sampled appropriately.
- 7.8 HHEAS will be informed as soon as possible of the discovery of any unexpected archaeological remains or changes in the programme of groundworks on site.
- 7.9 The integrity of any archaeological features or deposits, which might be better excavated in conditions pertaining to full excavation, or might warrant preservation in situ, will not be compromised. Where such significant archaeological remains are encountered, sufficient protection will be afforded (i.e. the laying down of a permeable terram or 'open-weave Netlon' as a visual barrier) prior to their careful backfilling. The backfilling of trenches where significant archaeological remains have been identified (and preserved for considered excavation at a later date) will be carried out under archaeological supervision.
- 7.10 On completion of machine excavation, all faces of the trench that require examination or recording will be cleaned using appropriate hand tools. All investigation of archaeological horizons will be by hand, with cleaning, inspection, and recording both in plan and section.
- 7.11 Linear features will be excavated to achieve a minimum sample of 10% of their length, with a minimum individual slot length of 1m. The termini of any linear features will be 100% excavated. Pits and post holes will be 50% excavated as a minimum or excavated in quadrants where they are large or found to be deep. Built structures should be excavated sufficiently to define the extent of the feature and to achieve the objectives of the evaluation.
- 7.12 Individual complex features such as kilns, burials, solid or bonded structural remains, building slots or postholes should be cleaned and recorded but, subject to the agreement of HHEAS, it will normally be preferable to leave them in-situ (if necessary with specific protection against disturbance during backfilling. Any excavation will be carried out in such a way as to allow for the subsequent protection of remains, either for conservation or to allow more detailed investigations to be conducted at a later date as part of a mitigation stage. During this time, specialist advice would be sought.
- 7.13 The depth and nature of colluvial or other masking deposits must be established across the site.
- 7.14 Hand auger will be used where excavation of deep features continues below a level that is not practicable or safe at this stage of investigation (e.g. wells).
- 7.15 Archaeological recording, where not precluded by Health & Safety considerations, will consist

of:

- Hand cleaning of archaeological features, sections and surfaces sufficient to establish the stratigraphic sequence exposed.
- Excavated material will be examined in order to retrieve artefacts to assist in the analysis of their spatial distribution.
- Completion of pro-forma record sheets.
- Plans and sections of all exposed archaeological features and horizons (including boundaries of natural) at an appropriate scale. 1:100/1:200 will be utilized to initially map the entire exposure and linked to detail plans at 1:20 of excavated features and sections at 1:10, if necessary. All features will be accurately tied into the Ordnance Survey National Grid and Ordnance Datum.
- A scaled photographic record of representative exposed sections and surfaces, along with sufficient photographs to establish the setting and scale of the works.
- A record of the datum levels of archaeological deposits.

- 7.16 Records will be produced using either pro-forma context or trench record sheets compatible with those published by the Museum of London (MoL 1994), and features will be planned according to the single context method.
- 7.17 The photographic record will consist of high-quality digital uninterpolated images of at least 12 megapixels taken using a camera with an APS-C or larger sensor. Graduated metric scales of appropriate lengths will be used, ensuring the use of vertical scales used against deep sections in combination with horizontal scales. Digital photographs intended for archive purposes will comply with best practice available at the current time – i.e. JPEG, high quality non-proprietary raw files (DNG) or TIFF images. The incorporation of clear digital images within ensuing reports, to augment the drawn record, is expected.
- 7.18 A record of the full sequence of all archaeological deposits as revealed in the investigation will be made. Plans and sections of features will be drawn at an appropriate scale of 1:10 or 1:20, as appropriate or surveyed using AOC's digital recording. Trench locations will be surveyed using a differential GPS (Trimble). The actual areas of ground disturbance and any features of archaeological interest will be accurately located on a site plan and to a known, permanent location. A site grid will be accurately tied into the National OS Grid and located on the 1:2500 map of the area.
- 7.19 Where required, buried soils and associated deposits will be inspected on site by a suitably qualified geoarchaeologist whose advice should be sought as to whether soil micromorphology or other analytical techniques will enhance understanding of depositional processes and transformations at the site. If so, suitable samples should be taken from relevant deposits or features for assessment and inclusion in the report. On encountering preserved buried soils during trenching, the trench strip depth should be raised to enable hand excavation in 1m square test pits on a grid along the trench to examine the artefact content and for sampling such old land surfaces soils. This could be on a 5m grid if the soils occur along the full length of the trench, or a suitable array of grouped test pits if the soils are found in discrete patches. The remaining soil layer should then be stripped out by machine or by hand accordingly.

- 7.20 AOC will recover environmental samples from suitable deposits that might help to characterise local environmental development or inform on the characterisation of land-use for the local area. Attention will be paid to:
- the retrieval of charred plant macro & microfossils, faunal remains and land molluscs from former dry-land palaeosols and cut features,
 - the retrieval of plant macro & microfossils, insect, faunal remains, molluscs, pollen and other biological remains from waterlogged deposits located;
 - provision for the absolute dating of critical contacts should be made: eg the basal contacts of peats over former dryland surfaces; distinct land use or landmark change in urban contexts.
- 7.21 Bulk samples, 20L for wet and 40L for dry contexts of will be taken from appropriate contexts for the recovery and assessment of environmental data. Provision will be made for column and other appropriate samples to be taken. Sampling methods will follow Historic England guidelines (HE 2015c).
- 7.22 A metal detector will be made available on site to aid in the recovery of artefacts. Spoil heaps of topsoil and subsoil will be scanned. The detector will not be set to discriminate against iron.
- 7.23 Any findings of human remains will be left in situ, covered and protected. Limited excavation would be undertaken to establish basic information, however any burials or cremations would be left in situ to allow for discussions to be held between HHEAS and the client, regarding potential mitigation or preservation in situ (including change in development design). If removal is essential a Licence will be sought from the Ministry of Justice. The Senior Historic Environment Advisor (at HHEAS), and the Local Authority Environmental Health Officer will be informed, as appropriate.
- 7.24 Any finds that could be considered treasure under the terms of the Treasure Act 1996 (with subsequent amendments) Act and uncovered during the process of fieldwork should be immediately reported to the Finds Liaison Officer, so that it is properly reported to the appropriate Coroner within 14 days of discovery in line with the Treasure Act. Advice and guidance on compliance with Treasure Act issues would be undertaken with the Finds Liaison Office of the Portable Antiquities Scheme at the HHEAS office.
- 7.25 All identified finds and artefacts will be collected and retained. Certain classes of material, i.e. postmedieval pottery and building material may be discarded after recording if a representative sample is kept. No finds will be discarded without the prior approval of the LPA's Archaeological Advisors.
- 7.26 Finds will be studied to provide a date range of the assemblage with particular reference to pottery. In addition the artefacts will be used to characterise the site, and to establish the potential for all categories of finds should further archaeological work be necessary. During this process special attention will be made to objects that indicate the presence of organic residues and, where relevant, specialist advice will be sought.
- 7.27 All finds and samples will be treated in a proper manner and to standards agreed in advance with the recipient museum. Finds will be exposed, lifted, cleaned, conserved, marked, bagged and boxed in accordance with the guidelines set out in United Kingdom Institute for Conservation's *Conservation Guidelines No. 2* (UKIC 1983). All processing will be undertaken

in line with AOC Standard operating procedures and the resulting material (flot) will be collected in sieves of 0.3 mm and 1 mm, whilst the non-floating residue (retent) will be wet-sieved through the 1 mm nylon mesh.

- 7.28 Provision for onsite conservation and finds treatment, in addition to any scientific dating of materials uncovered, will be undertaken where appropriate. The scientific dating techniques will be reviewed in regards to the aims and objectives of the project and in reference to the Historic England document 'Radiocarbon Dating and Chronological Modelling (2022)'.
- 7.29 Upon completion of the evaluation, the trenches will be backfilled and compacted with the machine bucket only.

Archaeological Monitoring and Recording, and Archaeological Mitigation (where required)

- 7.30 The need for and scope of further archaeological works will be informed by the results of the archaeological trial trenching works. The scope of these works will be outlined in an addendum to this WSI, with the working areas and methodology clearly defined.
- 7.31 Should the approach be taken to preserve the archaeological evidence contained within the site **by record**, any machining undertaken under archaeological direction will be done with a flat bladed bucket (toothless), and in horizontal spits.
- 7.32 Should there be unsupported sections deemed unsafe by the onsite staff, no member of staff will enter the excavated area until suitable protection measures are in place. Shoring or stepping should be carried out if necessary to adequately record any significant archaeological remains.
- 7.33 All archaeological remains uncovered will be excavated and recorded. If significant archaeological remains are revealed, additional excavation staff will be made available. The degree of further work will be defined by the monitoring archaeologist and the relevant LPA archaeological advisor. Delays to development can be minimised by continuing to monitor areas while the archaeological resource is recorded.
- 7.34 Archaeological recording, where not precluded by Health & Safety considerations, will consist of:
- The investigation of the intersections of features of archaeological date to obtain a phasing of the site;
 - A robust spatial framework of excavation to provide an understanding of the spatial distribution of past activities across the investigation area including any 'special' deposits and any patterning in artefact distribution. Such a framework will take into account the inter-relationship of major features.
 - Structural remains and other areas of significant and specific activity (domestic, industrial, religious, hearths, 'special'/ patterned deposits etc) will be fully excavated and recorded.
 - Where appropriate, for instance where the stratigraphy is complex, single context planning will be used.
 - Non-structural linear cut features will be sample excavated and recorded with a sufficient number of sections to establish the feature's character, date and morphology

and to provide information on activities taking place in close proximity to the feature. All terminal ends will be investigated. Sections will normally be at least 1m wide.

- Non-structural pits will be half-sectioned unless the character, number or size of the pits makes this unpractical. For instance, if a pit contains several intersections and re-cuts, it would not always be appropriate to half-section it. In this situation, the Principal Archaeologist will consider 'quadranting' or single context planning. Equally if 'special' deposits are expected pits may need to be excavated in plan rather than being half-sectioned. The strategy will need to be agreed with the Archaeological Advisors.
- Non-structural post and stake-holes will be half-sectioned sufficiently to clarify character, relationships and chronology.
- All burial deposits and associated remains will be fully excavated and recorded in accordance with an agreed methodology.

Complex/ very significant features/ deposits/ artefact assemblages/ artefacts	Sampling to be subject of further discussion with HHEAS. If of exceptional nature, the advice of Historic England may be sought.
Hearths, ovens, kilns	100% of domestic/industrial working features (hearths, ovens). Also to be sampled for arch/mag as standard if appropriate (this applies to any in-situ burnt features unless agreed otherwise on site following discussion). Paleoenviromental sampling to be agreed with Archaeological Advisors.
Possible prehistoric roundhouses or other post-built structures	Total excavation of all post-holes, spreads/occupation layers and cut features (e.g. ring-gullies) directly associated with structures. Metal detector to be used at all stages of excavation/ removal, for better artefact recovery (e.g. for droplets of bronze).
Possible cremation burials	Total excavation; lifting of intact/ semi-intact pottery vessels with following micro-excavation in laboratory.
Linear features	Excavation by hand of sections across all termini, all junctions or intersections of cut features, in the body of the features the following scope of works would apply: 10% of each linear feature's exposed area Partial excavations within a linear at junctions of cut features will not be a substitute for sections across the body of the linear, away from such junctions, because of possible contamination between intercutting contexts. With prior agreement with the Archaeological Advisors, the remainder of the fills may be excavated mechanically under close archaeological supervision and control and thorough metal detecting.
Discrete cut features general	Total excavation by hand of all discrete <i>datable</i> and <i>ancient</i> cut features of less than 2 sq. metres plan area, and such features manifestly rich in ancient paleoenviromental remains; except where deeper than 1 metre, when half-sections will be acceptable. Metal detector to be used at all stages of excavation/ removal, for better artefact recovery.
Post-holes	Post-holes probably associated with structures - complete excavation by hand. Otherwise a 50% sample will be undertaken of isolated post holes.

Pits	Default - half-section. Further sampling to be decided on basis of Health & Safety considerations/ contents/ retrieval of datable materials.
Structural Features	All structural features will be fully revealed in plan and recorded. All individual elements including walls, floors, doorways, and any negative features will have context boundaries distinguished facilitating a full written, drawn and photographic record. Negative structural features (beam slots etc) will be 75-100% sampled.
Demonstrably 19th/20th-century features	If not evidently part of a structure, <i>e.g.</i> a structure of industrial archaeological interest, or if without good artefact assemblage, record and sample only that sufficient to confirm late date. If artefact-rich/part of a structure, treat as with pits and post-holes above.
High/nationally significant features (e.g. high-status burials)	Developer and Archaeological advisor to be notified immediately on discovery/recognition. Strategy for excavation/scientific investigation/conservation <i>etc</i> to be agreed before work resumes.

- 7.35 Appropriate measures will be put in place to ensure adequate Health and Safety standards on site and the completion of the objectives of the scheme of works.
- 7.36 If complex archaeological features or deposits are encountered, HHEAS will be informed in the first instance. Excavation will include sampling of features or deposits to recover artefacts, ecofacts and dating evidence.
- 7.37 Records will be produced using either pro-forma context or trench record sheets and by the single context planning method and will be compatible with those published by the Museum of London (MoL 1994).
- 7.38 A record of the full sequence of all archaeological deposits as revealed in Archaeological Investigation will be made. Plans and sections of features will be drawn at an appropriate scale of 1:10 or 1:20, with sections drawn at 1:10.
- 7.39 A photographic record of all significant features observed will be undertaken. This will consist of digital SLR photography which supplies both Jpeg and Raw formats. The DSLR camera will be a Nikon D60, or Canon DS126741 or similar, and photography will include 1m scales for overview shots, and smaller scales for smaller features as appropriate. Each view will be taken with and without a photographic board, to ensure on-site identification of features and the trial trench. Working shots will be taken as well as general shots to give a view of the scope of the work, setting trenches in their landscape as appropriate.
- 7.40 Bulk samples of 40 litres in volume will be taken from appropriate contexts for the recovery and assessment of environmental data. Sampling methods will also follow national guidelines (HE 2015).
- 7.41 A metal detector will be made available on site to aid in the recovery of artefacts. Stripped areas and spoil heaps of topsoil and subsoil will be scanned. The detector will not be set to discriminate against iron.
- 7.42 Any finds of human remains will be left in situ, covered and protected. The Ministry of Justice, the local constabulary and HHEAS will be informed. If removal is essential advice on how best

to proceed will be sought from the Ministry of Justice and the local authority environmental health officer.

- 7.43 Any finds covered by the provisions of the Treasure Act 1996 and Treasure (Designation) (Amended) 2023, including gold and silver, will be moved to a safe place and reported to the coroner's office according to the procedures determined by the Act. They will also be reported to HHEAS and the local finds liaison officer from the Portable Antiquities Scheme. Where removal cannot be effected on the same working day as the discovery, suitable security measures will be taken to protect the artefacts from theft or damage.
- 7.44 All identified finds and artefacts will be collected and retained. Certain classes of material, i.e. postmedieval pottery and building material may be discarded after recording if a representative sample is kept. No finds will be discarded without the prior approval of the archaeological advisor and the receiving museum.
- 7.45 Finds will be scanned to assess the date range of the assemblage with particular reference to pottery. In addition, the artefacts will be used to characterise the site, and to establish the potential for all categories of finds should further archaeological work be necessary.
- 7.46 All finds and samples will be treated in a proper manner and to standards agreed in advance with the recipient museum. Finds will be exposed, lifted, cleaned, conserved, marked, bagged and boxed in accordance with the guidelines set out in United Kingdom Institute for Conservation's Conservation Guidelines No 2 (UKIC 1983).
- 7.47 Provision for onsite conservation and finds treatment, in addition to any scientific dating of materials uncovered, will be undertaken where appropriate.
- 7.48 Upon completion of the project the landowner and the receiving museum will be contacted regarding the preparation, ownership and deposition of the archive and finds.

8 REPORT AND ARCHIVE PREPARATION

- 8.1 If no archaeological mitigation and further site work is required the evaluation report will be completed within eight to ten weeks from the end of fieldwork, subject to the availability of specialist reports. The report will, at a minimum, include the following:
- A location plan of the site.
 - The date of the record, the names of the recorders and the location of the archive.
 - A table of contents and a list of figures and plates.
 - Acknowledgements to all contributors to the fieldwork, reporting and analysis. Also, a note of any copyrights for reproduced material.
 - A location plan of the trenches.
 - Plans and sections of features and/or extent of archaeology located. These will be at an appropriate scale.
 - Representative sections of the trenches detailing the stratigraphic sequence.
 - A sample of trench photographs.
 - A summary statement of the results (including an assessment of the character, nature, date, condition and significance of the archaeological resource).

- A table summarising per trench the deposits, features, classes and numbers of artefacts encountered and spot dating of significant finds.
 - A definition of the nature and extent of any avoidance or mitigation works that may be required.
 - An HER Summary Sheet
- 8.2 The procedures defined in Historic England's Management of Archaeological Projects 2nd edition (1991) will be followed for immediate post-field archive preparation and initial assessment if warranted. It will then be agreed with HHEAS.
- 8.3 A list of specialist staff that may be used for analysis of samples and artefacts is given in Appendix B.
- 8.4 A digital copy of the report clearly marked DRAFT will be prepared and issued to HHEAS for comments and approval prior to the production of the final report. A copy of the final report, once approved, will also be issued digitally to HHEAS on the understanding that it will become a public document after an appropriate period of time. A hard copy of the final report will also be issued to HHEAS.
- 8.5 An OASIS form has been initiated (Appendix D). This will be completed, and an electronic copy of the evaluation report deposited with the Archaeological Data Service (ADS).
- 8.6 Hertfordshire County Council will be notified of the fieldwork and a site code has been obtained from the North Hertfordshire District Council Museum Service.
- 8.7 In addition the HCCHER will be informed of the expected time limits for deposition of the archive.
- 8.8 Any further archaeological works (watching brief and/ or strip, map and record) will be reported on, with an archaeological post-excavation assessment undertaken should significant archaeological remains be identified.

Post-Excavation Assessment Report (if required)

- 8.9 If significant archaeological remains are identified and further site work is required a Post-Excavation Assessment (PXA), which will cover all phases of works, will be completed within nine to twelve months of completion of the work on site, dependent upon specialist availability. A digital copy of the final agreed report, and a phased GIS file of the final excavation plan (Shapefile), will also be issued to the Senior Historic Environment Advisor at HHEAS. A copy of the report will be deposited with the Hertfordshire Historic Environment Record.
- 8.10 The PXA document provides an overall assessment of the site stratigraphy, landuse, and finds and ecofacts recovered from the environmental samples, including recommendations for further work within an updated project design. Each specialist assesses the material and prepares a report (provided as appendices in the PXA), quantifying the material with statements on potential and significance, including recommendations for further work.
- 8.11 The updated project design will consider scope for any further analysis, dissemination and archiving. Following completion of the PXA report, a fully costed programme for delivery of the analysis, archive preparation deposition and publication of the results will be submitted for approval.

- 8.12 Where possible, the site record will be separated into chronological phases (e.g. Phase 1, Phase 2 etc), each of would represent a distinct episode of land-use. Phases would be numbered sequentially from earliest to latest. It should be noted, however, that this formative phasing may change at the publication stage should additional evidence come to light, for example through absolute dating etc. As such the initial phasing will be based upon relative dating gleaned from the finds assemblages, the stratigraphic relationships present and through relative spatial analysis of the features.
- 8.13 The site records would be completed and checked. A context register would be completed and a draft stratigraphic matrix compiled for the site. Illustrations would be constructed to accompany the results showing the location of the features. Assessment of the finds would be undertaken. The photographic archive would be checked and reassessed prior to deposition.
- 8.14 The PXA report will include as a minimum the following:
- Title page;
 - A signed QA sheet detailing as a minimum - title, author, version, date, checked by, approved by;
 - A non-technical summary;
 - A copy of the completed OASIS form;
 - A site location drawing;
 - The archaeological and historical background;
 - The methodology employed for the investigation;
 - The aims and objectives of the investigations;
 - The results of the investigation (stratigraphic, artefactual, environmental, initial scientific dating results);
 - Statements of potential (stratigraphic, artefactual, environmental);
 - Statement of the significance of the results in their local, regional, national and international context;
 - A quantification of the archive that includes the list of all site records, finds and samples;
 - An Updated Project Design (UPD) that sets out how the research aims and objectives of the WSI can be addressed at the analysis stage;
 - Post-excavation analysis method statements;
 - Recommendations for analysis, reporting and publication (including a synopsis of the proposed contents);
 - Proposed resources and programming (task list linked to key personnel, time required and key research questions that the task will answer or facilitate and programme cascade chart);
 - The current and proposed arrangements for long-term conservation and archive storage (including details of the accredited repository details);
 - General and detailed plans showing the location of the investigation areas accurately positioned on an OS base with grid co-ordinates and a plan of the identified archaeological remains (to a known scale);
 - Detailed plans and sections/profiles, deposit models etc., to support the narrative;
 - Detailed stratigraphic matrix for each area excavated and how the areas interlink;
 - Photographs and illustrations, including any 3D models;
 - Bibliography;

- A cross-referenced index to the project archive and summary of contexts; and
 - Appendices containing specialist reports.
- 8.15 The PXA report and Updated Project Design (UPD) will be submitted to the Senior Historic Environment Advisor at HHEAS for review and comment.
- 8.16 The scope of the analysis and publication report will be dependent upon the assessment and future discussions to be held with the Senior Historic Environment Advisor at HHEAS and the client. The analysis stage will be undertaken in accordance with the UPD and will lead to the compilation of a research archive and the production of integrated report texts and illustrations for publication.
- 8.17 A list of specialist staff that may be used for analysis of samples and artefacts is given in Appendix B.
- 8.18 A copy of the final report, once approved, will also be issued to Hertfordshire County Council on the understanding that it will become a public document after an appropriate period of time.

Archive Preparation

- 8.19 The site archive will comprise all artefacts, environmental samples and written and drawn records. It is to be consolidated after completion of the whole project, with records and finds collated and ordered as a permanent record. Archaeological finds rarely have any monetary value but they are an important source of information for future research, included in museum exhibits and teaching collections. The Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA 2020a) and the Society of Museum Archaeologists (SMA 1993) recommend that finds are publicly accessible and that landowners donate archaeological finds to a local museum. The Archive Manager will consult local guidance for deposition of the physical archive and will discuss the requirements with the North Hertfordshire District Council Museum Service.
- 8.20 The unique Site Code (WYM/SH '25) will be clearly indicated on any specification received for this project. It will be shown on all paperwork (context/photo/enviro sample forms, lists and plans), and on finds bags and sample containers/bags and later shown on ensuing reports and on the OASIS data collection form.
- 8.21 During the reporting stage, AOC will discuss arrangements with the developer/landowner, and HHEAS for the archive to be deposited with the North Hertfordshire District Council Museum Service.
- 8.22 In the case where finds are retained, landowner consent will be required to allow transfer of the finds to the North Hertfordshire District Council Museum Service. This will require the completion of a Deed of Transfer form accompanied by a Legal Title Consent Request Letter from the landowner. The watching brief and evaluation report will confirm if the Deed of Transfer has/has not been signed by the landowner. A complete finds inventory and further finds information can be provided to the landowner on request.
- 8.23 The site archive specification should conform to the guidelines in MoRPHE (HE 2015), eg section 2.5.3, and the paper and material (physical) archive be respectively deposited within North Hertfordshire District Council Museum Service on completion of the fieldwork programme or following any publication of the results.
- 8.24 Digital archive material will be deposited with a CoreTrustSeal repository, eg ADS. Only the

final version of all born digital documents (reports, databases, images, survey files) will be selected for inclusion in the Digital Archive.

- 8.25 Selection will be defined against the research aims, regional and national research frameworks, specialist advice and the significance of the project results. Selection will be carried out based on the guidelines provided by the ADS Guidelines for Depositors (2021) and Guidance for the selection of material for deposit and archive (2018), ClfA Selection Toolkit for Archaeological Archives (2019) and the Historic England Digital Image Capture and File Storage – Guidelines for Best Practice (2015c).

9 HEALTH AND SAFETY

- 9.1 AOC Archaeology maintains the highest standards of health and safety, both on-site and in our premises, and a copy of our Health and Safety Policy can be supplied on request.
- 9.2 Health and Safety will take priority over all other requirements. A conditional aspect of all archaeological work is both safe access to the area of work and a safe working environment.
- 9.3 The project will be carried out in accordance with safe working practices and under the defined Health and Safety Policy. A separate Risk Assessment/Method Statement (RAMS) will be prepared prior to the commencement of the fieldwork.
- 9.4 Staff present on site will be required to wear the appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), which will be issued as necessary. Welfare facilities will be made available on site for staff welfare and washing.
- 9.5 Where AOC Archaeology is not the main contractor on a site the main contractor's Risk Assessment will have primacy over the AOC Archaeology document given that:
- The main contractors' risk assessment takes account of AOC's working practices – i.e. it does not compromise normal and safe archaeological procedure as set out in our Written Scheme of Investigation and Risk Assessment;
 - AOC Archaeology was notified of the full suite of hazards present prior to arriving on site;
 - There is a proper induction and monitoring process in place and AOC Archaeology staff have been through this process;
 - There is no significant conflict between AOC Archaeology Health & Safety procedures and those proposed by the main contractor;
 - AOC Archaeology are made aware of new threats or hazards as they arise during the course of our on-site involvement.
- 9.6 The methodologies of the WSI will be met in full, where reasonably practicable.
- 9.7 Any significant variations to the proposed methodology will be discussed and agreed with HHEAS in advance of implementation.
- 9.8 The scope of fieldwork is aimed at meeting the objectives of the project in a cost-effective manner. AOC Archaeology attempts to foresee all possible site-specific problems and make allowances for these. However, there may on occasion be unusual circumstances, which have not been included in the programme and costing. These can include:
- unavoidable delays due to extreme bad weather or vandalism.
 - extensions to feature excavation sample sizes requested by the local authority's

archaeological advisor and land authorities.

- complex structures or objects, including those in waterlogged conditions, requiring specialist removal.
- unforeseen Health and Safety issues.

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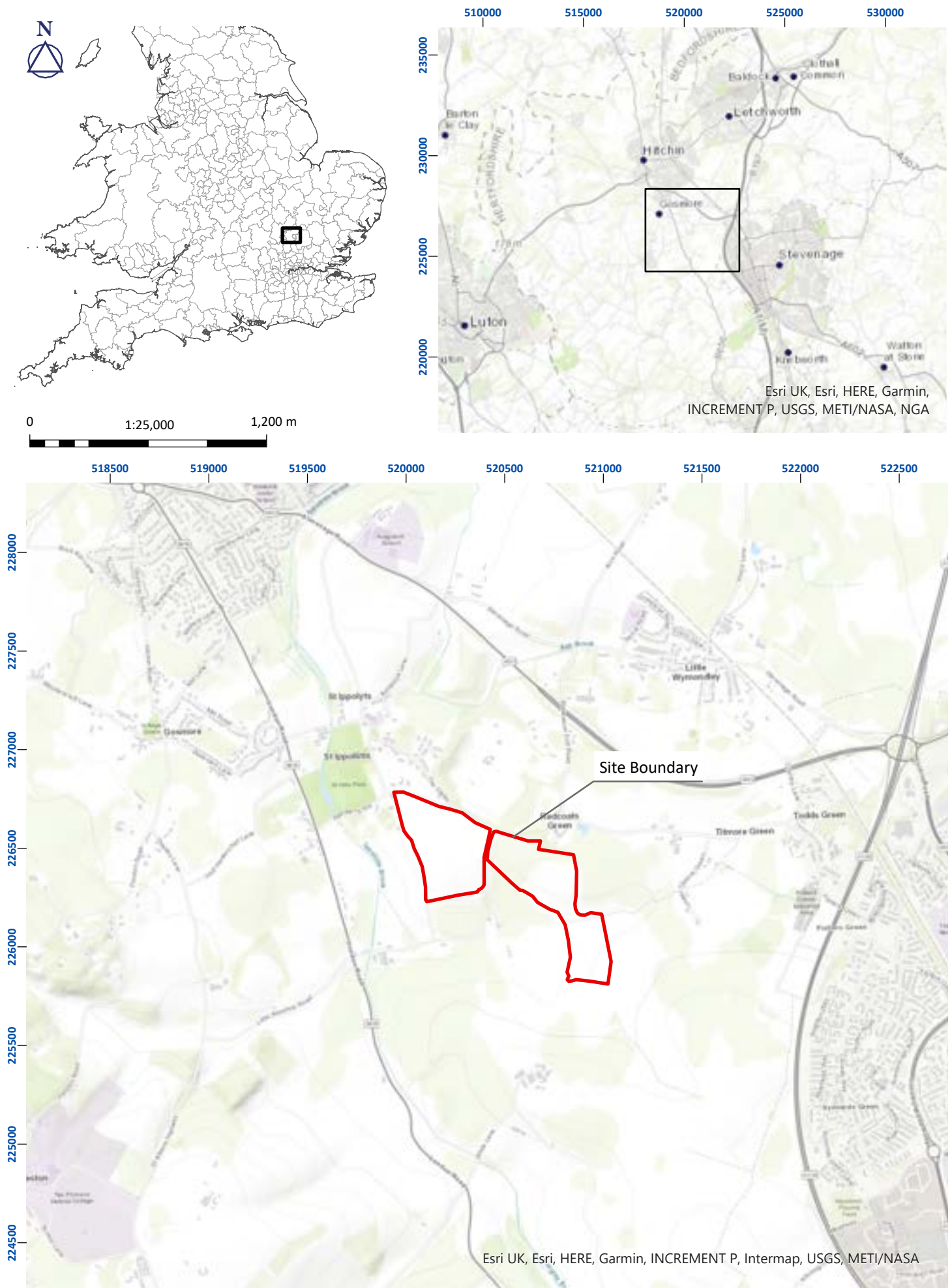
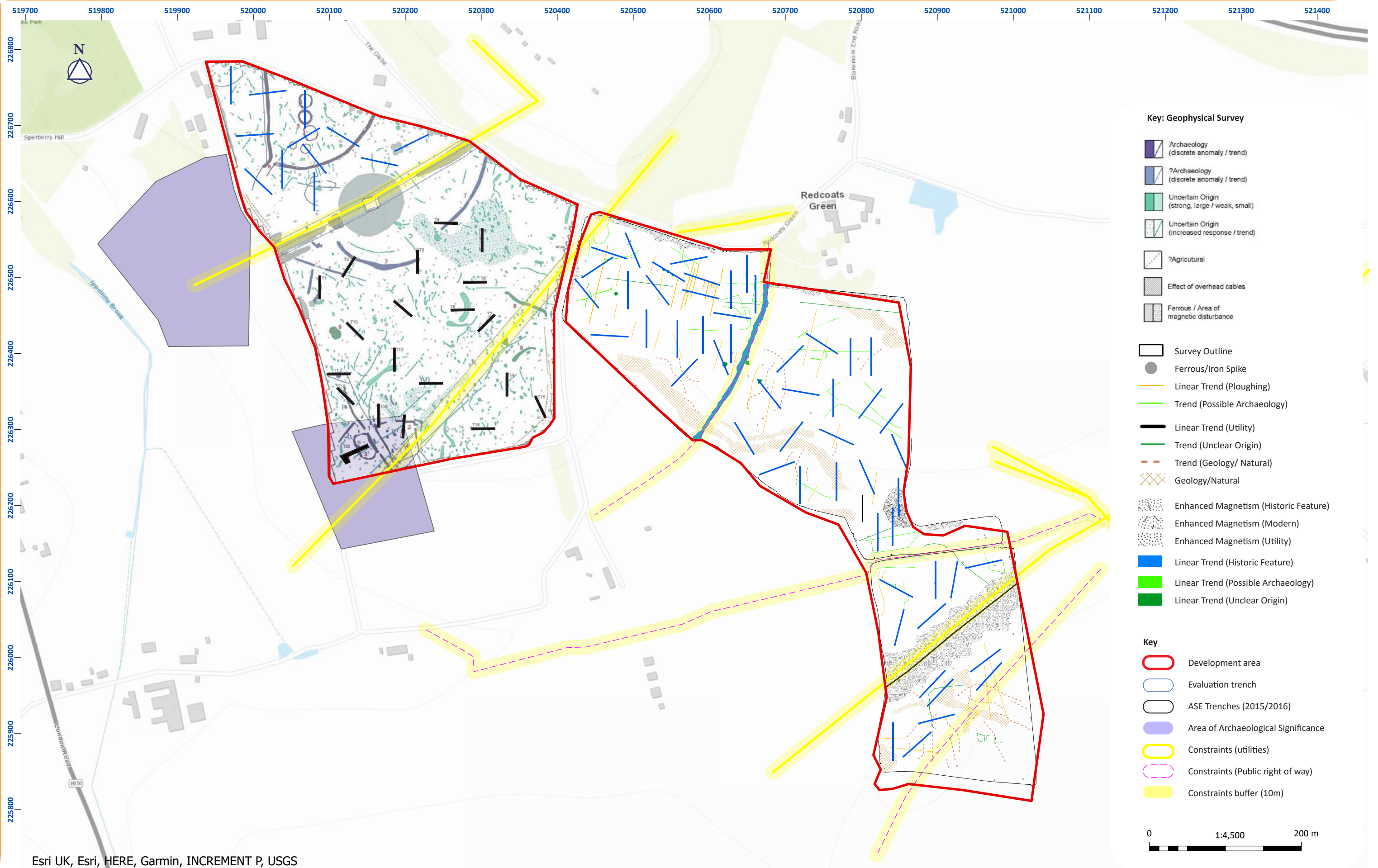


Figure 1: Site location plan

01/80248/WSI/01/01



Esri UK, Esri, HERE, Garmin, INCREMENT P, USGS

Figure 2: Trench location plan

01/80248/WSI/02/01

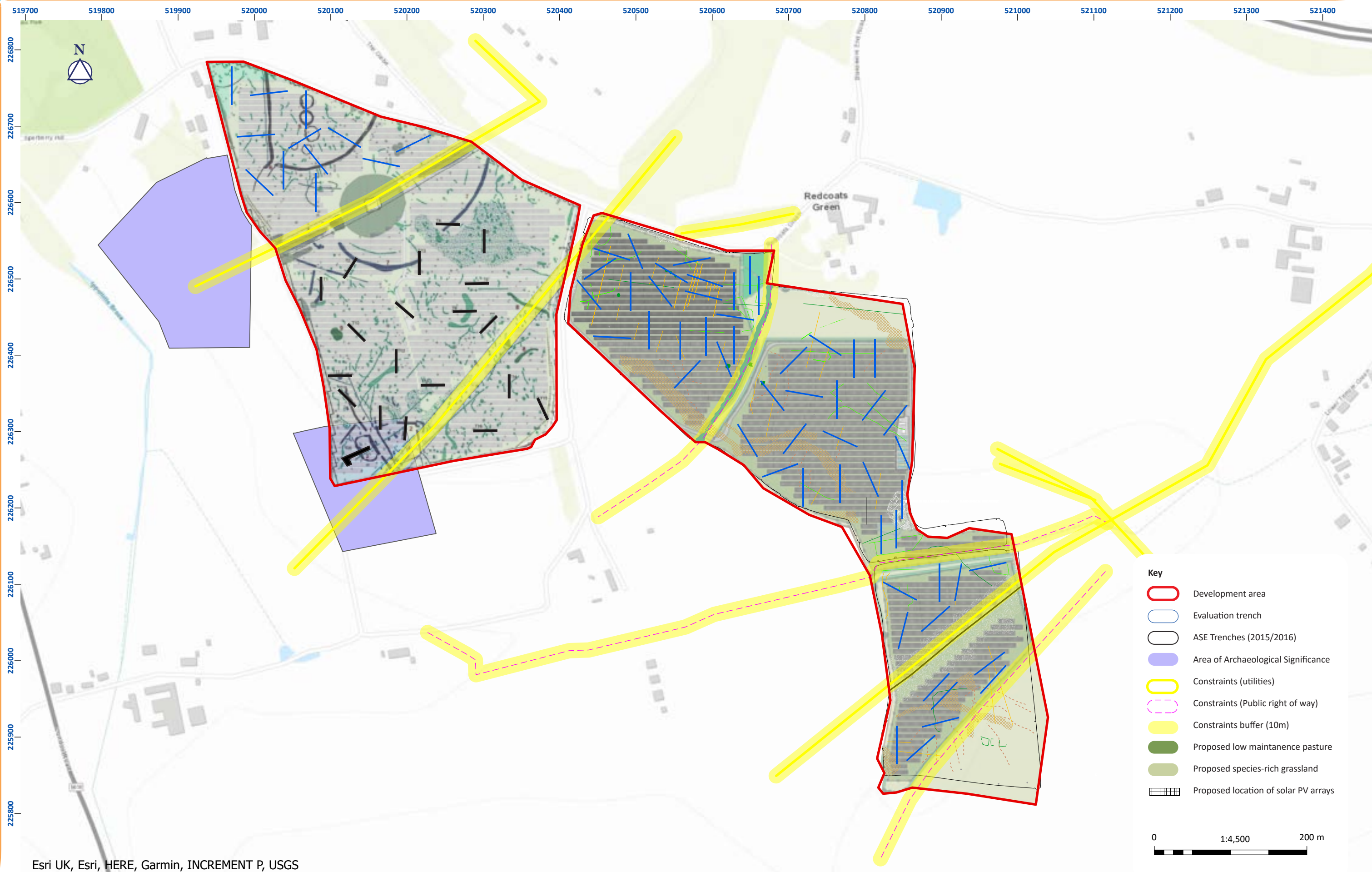


Figure 3: Trench location plan showing development areas

Appendices

APPENDIX A: INSURANCE, COPYRIGHT AND CONFIDENTIALITY AND STANDARDS

Insurances

1. AOC holds Employers Liability Insurance, Public Liability Insurance and Professional Indemnity Insurance. Details can be supplied on request.
2. AOC will not be liable to indemnify the client against any compensation or damages for or with respect to:
 - damage to crops being on the Area or Areas of Work (save in so far as possession has not been given to the Archaeological Contractor)
 - the use or occupation of land (which has been provided by the Client) by the Project or for the purposes of completing the Project (including consequent loss of crops) or interference whether temporary or permanent with any right of way light air or other easement or quasi easement which are the unavoidable result of the Project in accordance with the Agreement
 - any other damage which is the unavoidable result of the Project in accordance with the Agreement
 - injuries or damage to persons or property resulting from any act or neglect or breach of statutory duty done or committed by the client or his agents servants or their contractors (not being employed by AOC Archaeology or for or in respect of any claims demands proceedings damages costs charges and expenses in respect thereof or in relation thereto)
3. Where excavation has taken place evaluation trenches will be backfilled with excavated material but will otherwise not be reinstated unless other arrangements have previously been agreed. Open area excavations normally will not be backfilled but left in a secure manner unless otherwise agreed.

Copyright and Confidentiality

4. AOC Archaeology will retain full copyright of any commissioned reports, tender documents or other project documents under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 with all rights reserved; excepting that it will provide an exclusive license to the Client in all matters directly relating to the project as described in the Written Scheme of Investigation.
5. AOC will assign copyright to the client upon written request but retains the right to be identified as the author of all project documentation and reports as defined in the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988.
6. AOC will advise the Client of any such materials supplied in the course of projects, which are not AOC's copyright.
7. AOC undertake to respect all requirements for confidentiality about the Client's proposals provided that these are clearly stated. In addition, AOC further undertakes to keep confidential any conclusions about the likely implications of such proposals for the historic environment. It is expected that Clients respect AOC's and the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' (CIfA) general ethical obligations not to suppress significant archaeological data for an unreasonable period.

Standards

8. AOC Archaeology is an accredited ISO 9001:2015 organisation and a Registered Archaeological Organisation with the CIfA, operating to nationally agreed guidelines, processes and procedures. These are set within a framework that endeavours to carry out the required work and submit the final report in a manner that meets the client's specific needs, providing quality assurance throughout the project and for the end product.
9. AOC Archaeology conforms to the standards of professional conduct outlined in the Chartered Institute of Archaeologists' Code of Conduct (CIfA 2020), the CIfA Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation (CIfA 2020) and the British Archaeologists and Developers Liaison Group Code of Practice (1991).

10. Where practicable AOC will liaise with local archaeological bodies (both professional and amateur) in order that information about particular sites is disseminated both ways (subject to client confidentiality).

APPENDIX B: SPECIALIST STAFF

The following specialist staff may be used on this project depending on the type of artefacts and soil samples recovered during the course of the fieldwork.

Geo-archaeology	Virgil Yendell	AOC
Macroscopic plant remains	Virgil Yendell	AOC
Soils and sediments analysis	Virgil Yendell	AOC
Palaeo-environmental archaeology	Virgil Yendell	AOC
Human remains	Alexandra Johnson	AOC
Conservation	Gretel Evans	AOC
Building material	Les Capon	AOC
Lithics	Jon Cotton	Freelance
Mammal and bird bone	Jackaline Robertson	AOC
Prehistoric pottery	Jon Cotton	Freelance
Roman pottery	Andrew Peachey	Wardell Armstrong
Medieval pottery	Luke Barber	Freelance
Post-medieval pottery	Kylie McDermott	AOC
Metalwork	Andrew Morrison	AOC
Glass	Andrew Morrison	AOC
Industrial waste	Dawn McLaren	AOC
Clay tobacco pipe	Andrew Morrison	AOC

APPENDIX C: DIGITAL MANAGEMENT PLAN

1. Project	
<u>Site Code:</u>	WYM/SH '25
<u>Site Name:</u>	<u>Sperberry Hill Solar Scheme, St Ippolyts, Hertfordshire</u>
<u>Project Type:</u>	<u>FW Evaluation</u>
<u>OASIS ID:</u>	aocarcha1-537336
<u>Local authority:</u>	<u>Hertfordshire County Council</u>
<u>Data Repository:</u>	<u>the Archaeology Data Service (ADS)</u>
2. Data Collection and Standards	
Data Standards & Methods of Collection	
Methods of collection will conform to AOC recording practices and relevant ClfA Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Excavation (ClfA 2014). Digital data acquisition standards are defined from <i>ADS Guides to Good Practice</i> (Niven 2021): https://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/help-guidance/guides-to-good-practice/the-project-lifecycle/planning-for-the-creation-of-digital-data/ Data collection will adhere to FAIR Principles and will be in line with ClfA <i>Dig Digital</i> Guidance: https://www.archaeologists.net/sites/default/files/downloads/selection-toolkit/digdigital_full_guidance.pdf The intended repository for digital data is the Archaeology Data Service (ADS) The intended repository for physical site records is the designated repository of the local authority: Hertfordshire County Council.	
Site Records	
Records for this project will be: Created on pro-forma record cards and data entered into spreadsheets/scanned to PDF on completion of fieldwork.	
Photographic Record	
The photographic record will comprise digital images taken using an SLR camera of at least 12 megapixels. The photography format to be used is: JPG	
Survey	
Archaeological features will be surveyed using a Trimble GNSS GPS tied to OSGB with corrections provided by Trimble VRS Network. Tolerance will be to a horizontal and vertical accuracy of +/- 0.05m. Where tree cover or site obstructions prevent a clear GPS signal, survey will be carried out either by Total Station positioned over a known point or tied to a predefined grid or by hand planning. Where hand plans are required, these will be georeferenced in GIS and shapefiles exported for final plans and archiving purposes.	
Data Standards	

Data collected will include standard formats which maximise use and reuse in the future. The table below conforms to ADS Instructions for Depositors (2021)
<https://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/help-guidance/instructions-for-depositors/files-and-metadata/>.

The table below provides a summary of the data types and formats for data collected and created. In cases where the project progresses or becomes more complex, additional types will be added to this section where required.

Data Type Collected	Format for Storage and Archive
Spreadsheets ➤ Context Register ➤ Finds Registers ➤ Sample Registers ➤ Photographic Register ➤ Drawing Register ➤ Specialist Data Tables ➤ Harris Matrices ➤ Metadata Tables	Registers and Data Tables Microsoft Excel (.csv) Metadata as .csv files
Text / Documents ➤ WSI ➤ Daybook/watching brief logs ➤ Final Report ➤ Individual Specialist Reports	All reports as PDF (.pdf/a)
Photography & Raster Images Photography will be undertaken using: 1. Digital SLR 2. Colour print 3. B/W print 4. Colour slide 5. B/W slide ➤ Final Archive Images	Site photographs will be provided in: Joint Photographic Experts Group JPG (.jpg)
GIS ➤ Site Plans ➤ Survey Data	ESRI Shapefile (.shp,.shx & .dbf, plus associated files) deposited as .zip file

Additional Survey Types (if applicable):

•

3. Data Storage and Backup

Field Data

Site Records

- 'Born digital' data from AOC's Field Data Manager app data is uploaded to a live SharePoint list on creation and backed up daily.
- Paper records are kept in site folders and removed from site at close of work each day

Photographic Backup Strategy

- Site cameras are removed from site at close of work each day

Digital photographs are recorded onto SD cards and backed up as follows:

- SD cards are downloaded to server storage weekly/on completion of job (whichever is first)

Survey Data

- Survey data is synced daily to cloud storage and downloaded as a Trimble .job file to the specific project folder on AOC's servers.

Project Data

- The primary data storage location for this project is AOC's on-premises servers
- Sufficient data storage space is available via AOC's servers and via SharePoint backup. The server is accessible by staff on and off-site through a secure log-in, including 2-factor authentication.
- The on-premises server is backed up daily to maintain an up-to-date security copy of the organisation wide data. A working copy is kept in cloud storage.
- Off-site access to the project files on AOC's servers is provided to support back-up of raw data while fieldwork is ongoing.
- Where internet access for data backup is not possible, the raw data will be backed up to a separate media device (such as laptop and portable external hard drive) and transferred to the server at the earliest possible opportunity.
- Project files will be shared with external specialists and contractors directly using the same system, with the wider project team gaining access to only the files needed using permissions-based access.
- Project folders and files will be named following established AOC procedures. *ProjectNumber_name_date (yyyymmdd)* and conform to ADS best practice and version control guidance.
- On completion of the project, cloud data will be moved to AOC on-premises servers for long term storage.
- Data intended for digital archive will be structured in the server directory as follows:
 - **Archive**
 - **3D**
 - **Graphics**
 - **GIS**
 - **Photos**
 - **Spreadsheets**
 - **Reports**

4. Metadata

- Metadata tables for each data type will be populated as the project progresses and will use the standard format for each data type as recommended by:

ADS Guides to Good Practice (Niven 2021).

<https://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/help-guidance/guides-to-good-practice/the-project-lifecycle/project-metadata/>

- Data documentation will meet the requirement of the Project, Museum Deposition Guidelines, Digital Repository Guidelines and the methodology described in the WSI.

5. Ethics and Legal Compliance

- Personally Identifiable Information (PII) will be removed from the archaeological project archive and permission to include individual's names in any reporting will be gained prior to use.

- Copyright for all data collected by the project team belongs to AOC Archaeology Group (AOC Holdings Ltd), and formal permission to include data from external specialists and contractors is secured on the engagement of the specialist or contractor.
- Where formal permissions and/or license agreements are linked to data sharing, details of these will be included in the project documentation folders and will accompany the archaeological project archive.

6. Archive

Digital archive material will be deposited with a trusted digital repository, where data migration and backup procedures are in place, and the integrity of the digital archive is maintained (see Section 1). Where a trusted repository is not specified, digital archive material will be deposited with the county museum on Archival Gold CD.

- Version control will be applied throughout the project in line with AOC standard operating procedures and ADS (2021) ClfA (2019) and HE (2015) guidelines.
- Only the final version of 'born digital' documents (reports, databases, images, survey files) will be selected for inclusion in the Digital Archive. The material de-selected from inclusion in the preserved archive will be duplicates or re-productions created during the lifespan of the project.
- Digital photographs will be assessed during post-excavation and selection based on the principles set out in the ADS (2011) & and HE guidelines (2015).
- **Raw data (all formats) will only be preserved if specifically requested by the Client or specified by local authority requirements, e.g. unprocessed survey, raw photogrammetric data. Where an archive of raw data with an accepted repository (e.g. ADS) is required, a subsequent costing for storage and archiving will be provided.**
- Selection will be defined against the research aims, regional and national research frameworks, specialist advice and the significance of the project results. Selection will be carried out based on the following guidelines:

ADS (2021) Guidelines for Depositors

<http://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/advice/guidelinesForDepositors>

ADS (2018) Guidance for the selection of material for deposit and archive

<https://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/advice/selectionGuidance.xhtml>

ClfA (2019) Selection Toolkit for Archaeological Archives

<https://www.archaeologists.net/selection-toolkit>

Historic England (2015) Digital Image Capture and File Storage – Guidelines for Best Practice

<https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/digital-image-capture-and-file-storage>

7. Data Sharing and Accessibility

Data specific requirements, ethical issues or embargos which are linked to particular data formats will be documented within the relevant metadata tables accompanying the project archive.

- A summary of the project will be included on the OASIS Index of Archaeological Investigation (see Section 1).
- A final version of the project report will be supplied to the Historic Environment Record via OASIS, and any data which they request can also be provided directly.
- The location(s) of the final Archaeological Archive will be added to OASIS when appropriate.
- The Repository in Section 1 will disseminate the digital elements of the Archaeological Archive online under a creative commons licence and the dataset will receive a unique identifier (DOI).

8. Responsibilities

- The Project Manager will be responsible for implementing the DMP, and ensuring it is reviewed and revised at each stage of the project.

The Project Manager is Yvonne Robertson.

- Data capture, metadata production and data quality are the responsibility of the Project Team, assured by the Project Manager with support from the Geomatics Manager and Archives Officer.
- Storage and backup of data in the field is the responsibility of the field team. Data management on site will be supervised by the site lead.

The site lead responsible for field data management is Kirsty Luckcuck.

- Once data is incorporated into the organisations project server, storage and backup is managed by AOC's IT Support Team.
- Data archiving is undertaken by the project team under the guidance of the Archives Officer with the support of the Geomatics Manager.
- The Archives Officer is responsible for the transfer of the Archaeological Project Archive to the agreed repository.
- Details of the core project team can be provided on request.

9. Additional References

Brown, D.H., 2011. Archaeological Archives: A guide to best practice in creation, compilation, transfer and curation, Archaeological Archives Forum (2nd ed).

https://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/archiveDS/archiveDownload?t=arch-799-1/dissemination/pdf/AArchives_v2.pdf

ClfA Dig Digital Online Resource, <https://www.archaeologists.net/digdigital>

APPENDIX D: OASIS FORM

OASIS ID (UID)	aocarcha1-537336
Project Name	Trial Trench at Sperberry Hill Solar Scheme, St Ippolyts, Hertfordshire
Sitename	Sperberry Hill Solar Scheme, St Ippolyts, Hertfordshire
Sitecode	WYM/SH '25
Project Identifier(s)	80248
Activity type	Trial Trench
Planning Id	24/02455/FP
Reason For Investigation	Planning: Post determination
Organisation Responsible for work	AOC Archaeology Group
Project Dates	07-Dec-2025 - 07-Dec-2025
Location	Sperberry Hill Solar Scheme, St Ippolyts, Hertfordshire NGR: TL 20403 26447 LL: 51.92353299493042, -0.250522432669357 12 Fig: 520403,226447
Administrative Areas	Country: England County/Local Authority: Hertfordshire Local Authority District: North Hertfordshire Parish: St Ippolyts
Project Methodology	The requirements of the archaeological investigation were outlined by the Senior Historic Environment Advisor at HHEAS, as set out in an Archaeological Brief provided to planning colleagues on 7 February 2025 (Archaeological Brief P01/22/0709/3). The Brief set out the requirements for the investigation including: -The protection and preservation of a defined area of substantial archaeology through a no-dig policy, as identified during the initial evaluation, which will include buffer zones to be determined by HHEAS. -The archaeological monitoring of all development works associated with the areas of no-dig to ensure compliance with Part 1. -The archaeological field evaluation of the entire remaining development area, via targeted trial trenching at a 3% sample, informed by the results of the geophysical survey, prior to any development commencing.
Project Results	
Keywords	
Funder	Private or public corporation Brockwell Energy Limited ,Private or public corporation Axis
HER	Hertfordshire HER - unRev - STANDARD

Person Responsible for work	Yvonne Robertson
HER Identifiers	
Archives	



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