



PHOENIX CONSULTING
Archaeology Limited

SPECIFICATION
FOR
ARCHAEOLOGICAL WORKS

Land at Barkway
Royston Road
Hertfordshire

PC561a

on behalf of:

REDROW HOMES LIMITED

By:

A Richmond BA PhD MCIfA FSA

Specification for presentation to the Curatorial Authority

7th January 2025

CONTENTS

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Commission
- 1.2 Site Location
- 1.3 Archaeological Background
- 1.4 Field Evaluation

2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL MITIGATION

- 2.1 Introduction
- 2.2 Aims
- 2.3 Strip, Map and Sample
- 2.4 Trial Trenching – Eastern Field
- 2.5 Recording Policy for Archaeological Investigation

3.0 MONITORING, REPORTING & DEPOSITION OF THE ARCHIVE

- 3.1 Monitoring
- 3.2 Reporting & Archiving

4.0 OTHER ISSUES

- 4.1 Programming of Works
- 4.2 Safety Aspects
- 4.3 Outreach and Publicity

FIGURES

- Figure 1** Land at Barkway, Royston Road, Hertfordshire. Site Location.
- Figure 2** Results from the trial trenching across the Site's western field (after Archaeological Solutions Ltd 2018).
- Figure 3** Areas for Strip, Map & Sample and Trial Trenching.



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Non-technical summary:

The following document represents a specification of works to be adopted by an approved field contractor for undertaking the required mitigation at ‘Land at Barkway, Royston Road, Hertfordshire’ in fulfilment of the relevant archaeological condition of planning permission.

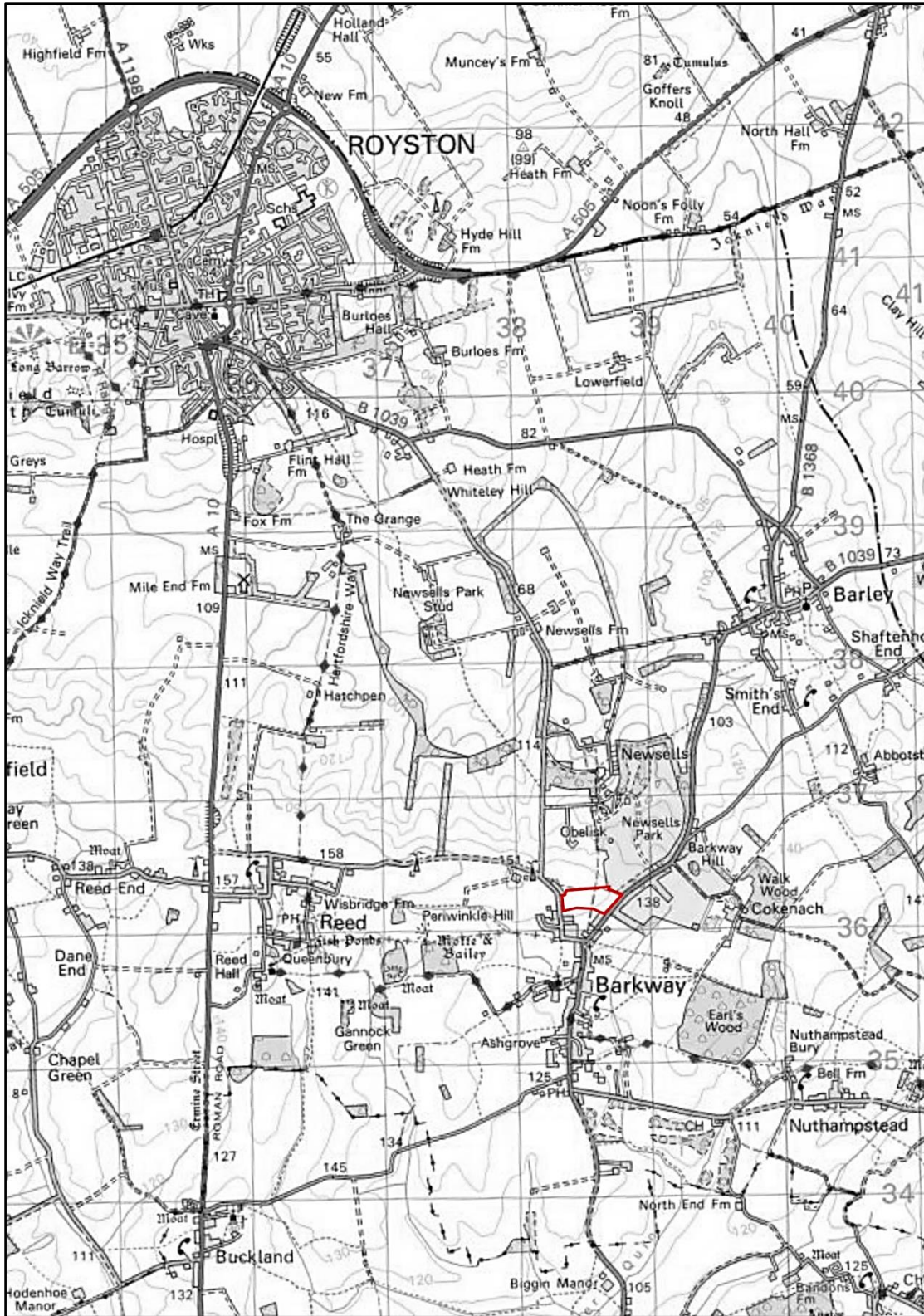


Figure 1 Land at Barkway, Royston Road, Hertfordshire: Site location.
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The commission

- 1.1.1 Redrow Homes Ltd (the Company) have purchased a site for residential development off Royston Road, Barkway, Hertfordshire (NGR TL 3840 3620). The site covers c.7.6ha., and has a resolution to grant outline planning permission for 140 units including 40% affordable homes. The proposed development area forms a natural northern continuation to the built settlement of Barkway (see Figure 1). This scheme has been prepared in response to the draft planning condition (No 10) contained in the draft decision notice.

Condition 10:

A No demolition / development shall take place / commence until and Archaeological Written Scheme of Investigation has been submitted to and approved by the local planning authority in writing. The scheme shall include an assessment of archaeological significance and research questions; and:

- 1) The programme and methodology of site investigation and recording;
- 2) The programme for post investigation assessment;
- 3) Provision to be made for analysis of the site investigation and recording;
- 4) Provision to be made for publication and dissemination of the analysis and records of site investigation;
- 5) Provision to be made for archive deposition of the analysis and records of the site investigation;
- 6) Nomination of a competent person or persons / organisation to undertake the works set out within the Archaeological Written Scheme of Investigation.

B) The demolition / development shall take place / commence in accordance with the programme of archaeological works set out in the Written Scheme of Investigation approved under Condition (A).

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 protect the historic environment.

- 1.1.2 This document is a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) describing in detail the archaeological works to be implemented across the proposed development site. It is submitted to the Archaeological Advisor to the Planning Authority (AAPA) for approval.
- 1.1.3 All archaeological works will be carried out to appropriate CIfA guidelines and will adhere to the requirements of this WSI.

1.2 Site Location

Location & landform

- 1.2.1 The Site comprises the great parts of two fields at the north end of the village, where Royston Road branches off from High Street. The larger western field is under arable, whilst the smaller eastern field is improved pasture. The Site is bordered on the west side by Royston Road with elements of Barkway village to the southwest and north-west; and on the eastern side by Cambridge Road, beyond which are agricultural fields bordered by tree belts. A public footpath forms the northern edge, whilst another separates the two fields of the Site.
- 1.2.2 The site is located on fairly level ground at approximately 140m AOD on the eastern end of a spur, on the edge of the Chiltern scarp. The Chiltern scarp slopes down immediately to the north and to a lesser degree also slopes to the south; towards the village of Barkway. The valley of the River Quin is located 350m to the south-east of the Site, flowing in a northeast to south-west direction. It is joined by another stream located 330m south-west, running from the village of Reed to Barkway.
- 1.2.3 The solid geology of the Chiltern Scarp comprises Upper Cretaceous white chalk, often containing flint nodules. This is overlain by superficial geology of chalky till. Soils of the area comprise those of the Hanslope Association, which are described as slowly permeable calcareous clayey soils. The Hertfordshire Historic Landscape Characterisation places the Site in a small area of later enclosure where 18th and 19th century changes have been made to earlier field boundaries.

1.3 Archaeological background

- 1.3.1 The archaeological and historical background has been detailed in a number of earlier documents (*cf.* Thompson 2016; Bull 2016; Higgs 2018). What follows here is a summary of the main points.

- The chalk landscape and river valleys of north Hertfordshire are known for numerous finds of Palaeolithic to Neolithic flint artefacts, Bronze Age round barrows and field systems. Therfield Heath to the west is a Scheduled Ancient Monument site containing a Neolithic long barrow, Bronze Age round barrows and Iron Age boundary ditches. The prehistoric Icknield Way passes approximately 4.7km to the north and west of the site. It connected the late Iron Age settlement at Baldock some 12km to the west with the Peddars Way and Norfolk to the north-east.
- The cropmark of a ring ditch is located 240m to the west of the site (HER 6154). Its form suggests that it could be a prehistoric feature; and a cropmark of a possible trackway which may be associated is also recorded (HER 7792). A Neolithic or Bronze Age flint blade, and other worked flints were found 490m south-east of the site, on the east side of the River Quin (HER 9070). Field walking 180m to the north of the site recovered small quantities of struck and burnt flint (HER 11437). A watching brief at Manyons Farm, located 440m to the south-west of the site, identified a multi-period site commencing with a soil horizon containing a sherd of Iron Age pottery (HER 6515).
- The Roman landscape comprised significant roads and settlements, including Baldock to the west and *Durolipone* (Cambridge) to the north. The Icknield Way became a major Roman road. Ermine Street, located 2.6km to the west of the site, connected Braughing and London to the south with *Durotrigum* (Godmanchester) and *Durobrivae* (Water Newton) to the north.
- A Roman coin hoard is recorded from Barkway 550m south of the site (HER 491). An archaeological evaluation some 270m further to the south identified evidence for Romano-British occupation. A puddingstone quern fragment and a Roman cosmetic implement are also recorded from along the High Street (HER 9072, HER 10262), and three Roman pottery sherds were found 180m to the north of the site (HER 11437).
- Early Anglo-Saxon burials have been found within prehistoric mounds on Therfield Heath and in Royston. The earliest record for the manorial estate at Barkway is in the Domesday Survey where *Bercheuuei* means 'Birchtree way' (Mills 1991; Gover, Mawer & Stenton 1938). An alternative translation is that it means 'the way over the hill', referring to the route from Braughing to Royston (HER 2688). The main manor was held by Geoffrey de

Mandeville from the king, where previously in 1066 it was held by the Saxon *Esger the Constable*.

- The Manyons Farm watching brief c.440m south-west of the Site identified part of a double bayed or aisled rectangular building, thought to be of Saxon date. A pit and Saxo-Norman pottery, dated between the 11th - mid 12th centuries were found here (HER 6516).
- The cropmarks of a possible motte and bailey castle are located on Periwinkle Hill towards Reed, 1 km to the west (HER 855). To the south and west of Periwinkle Hill there are at least eight moated sites focused around the dispersed village of Reed which are thought to be Medieval. Additionally, there is a probable moat located at Parsonage Farm in Barkway 590m south of the Site (HER 4028).
- The Site is recorded on the 1804 enclosure map for Barkway and Reed. The Site formed part of a larger area named Barkway Mill Field and was owned by Richard Burn Esquire. An enclosure containing a mill is shown at the north-western corner of the Site and a second enclosure to the west, across Royston Road, is the location of the post-Medieval windmill (HER 1536).
- In 2017 the land to the immediate west of the Site, on the western frontage of Royston Road, was subject to a gradiometer survey. It identified a possible trackway, some possible pit scatters, and possible linears to the west (HER EHT8404; Donaldson & Sabin 2017). The subsequent trial trenching in 2018 revealed archaeology in only three of the 11 trenches (HER EHT8450; Hood 2018). A double-ditched feature which may be a prehistoric droveway was recorded (HER 31463), and at least two pits containing Late Bronze Age pottery (HER 31464).

1.4 Field Evaluation

- 1.4.1 In February 2016 and again in January 2018, Archaeological Solutions Limited (AS) carried out archaeological desk-based assessments of the Site. The earlier assessment (Thompson 201) concentrated on just the western field, whilst the later assessment (Bull 2018) covered both fields.
- 1.4.2 The western field has been subject to a geophysical magnetometry survey (HER AS1828; Blagg- Newsome, Bescoby & Summers 2016). The survey identified several potential archaeological anomalies across the area, including two suspected enclosures.

- 1.4.3 The western field has also been subject to a trial trench evaluation (Bull 2016). The evaluation revealed Late Bronze Age - Early Iron Age features several of which contained flint-gritted Late Bronze Age - Early Iron Age pottery (HER 31209). The features (four pits, a post hole and a ditch), were widely scattered and only one pit contained more than a few sherds. The 52 sherds from a pit in Trench 10 included the lower part of a single pot which may have been deposited complete but was later plough-damaged. The pit included some daub with wattle impressions, and similar daub came from the post hole.
- 1.4.4 The trench evaluation also revealed Roman ditches within the Site's northwestern corner (HER 31210). An anomaly identified by the geophysical survey was found during the evaluation to be part of a ditch and its recut, and apparently part of an enclosure. The ditches contained 1st - 2nd century Roman pottery including a lid-seated shell-tempered jar, and sandy grey wares. Sparse Roman tile, animal bone and oyster shell were also present.
- 1.4.5 In summary, the trial trenches with archaeology are as follows (see Figure 2):
- Trench 1** Gullies and ditches containing Roman pottery. One ditch corresponded to a geophysical anomaly suggestive of an enclosure.
 - Trench 2** Undated gully and undated hollow.
 - Trench 4** Two pits, one with LBA to EIA pottery, the other with CBM.
 - Trench 5** A pit and a post-hole. The pit contained MBA-EIA pottery.
 - Trench 6** Two undated ditches and two undated post-holes.
 - Trench 7** A single ditch with prehistoric pottery.
 - Trench 8** An undated ditch.
 - Trench 9** A post-hole with MBA-EIA pottery.
 - Trench 10** A pit with MBA-EIA pottery, an undated pit, and a modern gully with a residual Roman sherd.
 - Trench 12** A pit with MBA-EIA pottery.

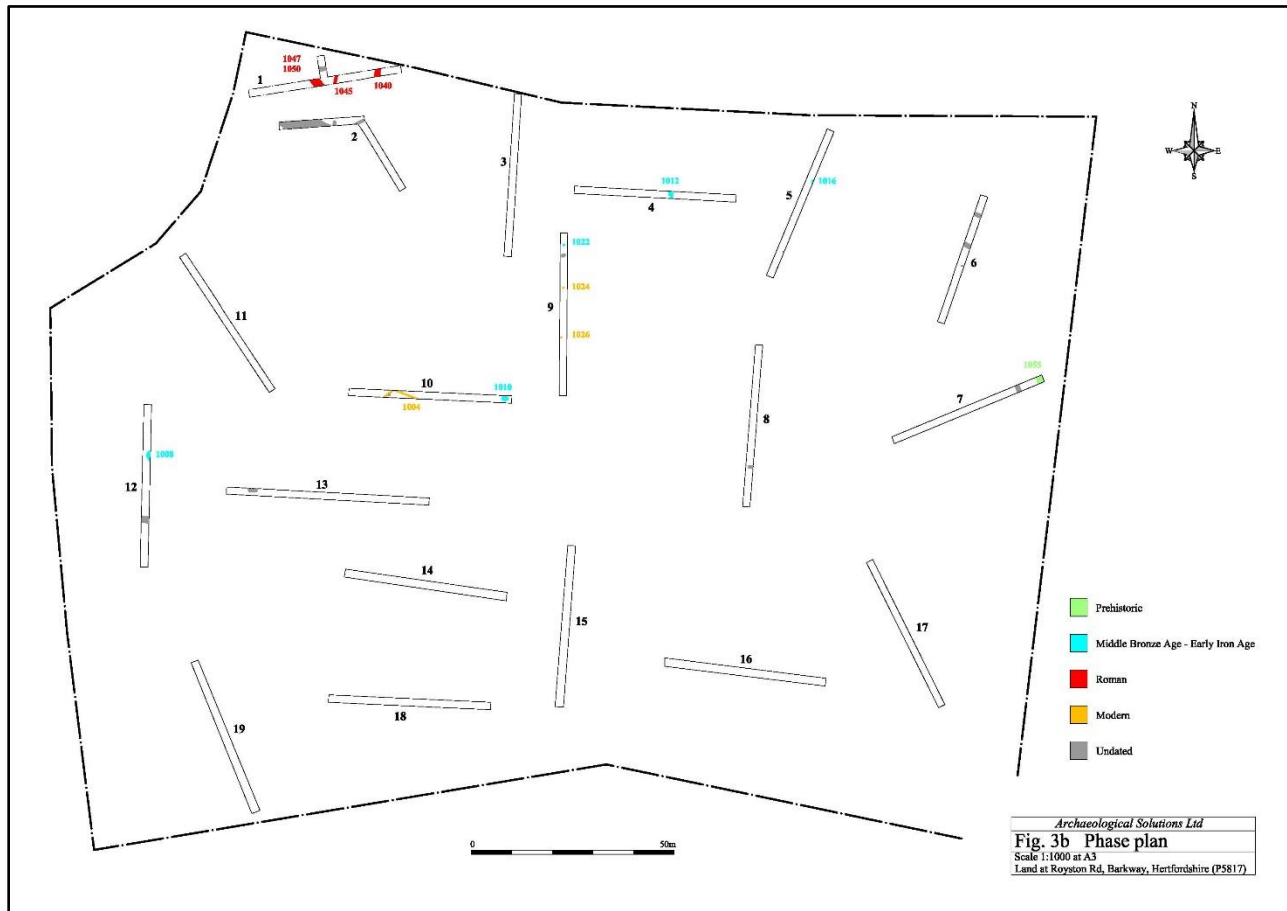


Figure 2 Results from the trial trenching across the Site's western field (after Archaeological Solutions Ltd 2018).

2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL MITIGATION

2.1 Introduction

- 2.1.1 A strip, map and sample exercise will be undertaken across the western field where the field evaluation showed important buried archaeology to exist (as detailed on Figure 3). The works will 'preserve by record' any archaeological remains within these areas. Across the eastern field it is proposed to undertake trial trenching (see Figure 3). Further mitigation may be required across the eastern field dependent upon the results of the trial trenching. Such works would be subject to an updated WSI.

2.2 Aims

- 2.2.1 The archaeological investigations will be carried out in order to:

- recover a plan of the extent and structure of features and deposits of archaeological interest, in particular evidence of dispersed Prehistoric activity and Romano-British enclosures / field systems;
- expand current knowledge of patterns of landscape exploitation and settlement at different periods;
- place the identified features within their local and regional context;
- place the findings in the context of the results of earlier archaeological works in this part of Hertfordshire.

2.2.2 Works will be conducted in accordance with the research objectives as outlined in the East of England Regional Research Framework for the Historic Environment (2021); Glazebrook (1997), Brown & Glazebrook (2000), Gurney (2003) Medlycott and Brown (2008) and Medlycott (ed.) (2011). Research objectives relating to the period-specific archaeology expected for this Site can be found at:

[Early to Middle Bronze Age Research Agenda - East of England Research Framework \(researchframeworks.org\)](https://researchframeworks.org/)

[Late Bronze Age to Middle Iron Age Research Agenda - East of England Research Framework \(researchframeworks.org\)](https://researchframeworks.org/)

[Late Iron Age & Roman Research Agenda - East of England Research Framework \(researchframeworks.org\)](https://researchframeworks.org/)

2.3 **Strip, Map and Sample** – see Figure 3

2.3.1 The following stages of work are proposed:

STAGE 1: Machining under archaeological observation

2.3.2 A *Strip, Map and Sample* exercise is where the areas of investigation are removed of their soils (top and sub) to the upper-most level of any identified archaeological features by a 360° tracked excavator fitted with an appropriate toothless ditching bucket. This will be done in strips across the zones of investigation (see Figure 3) until the areas have been opened up. An archaeological presence will be maintained at these times and any archaeology identified planned (stage 2) and appropriately dealt with following a review meeting (stage 4) utilising the methodology detailed below (stages 5). No machinery will cross stripped areas until they have been given the ‘all-clear’ by the on-site archaeologist.

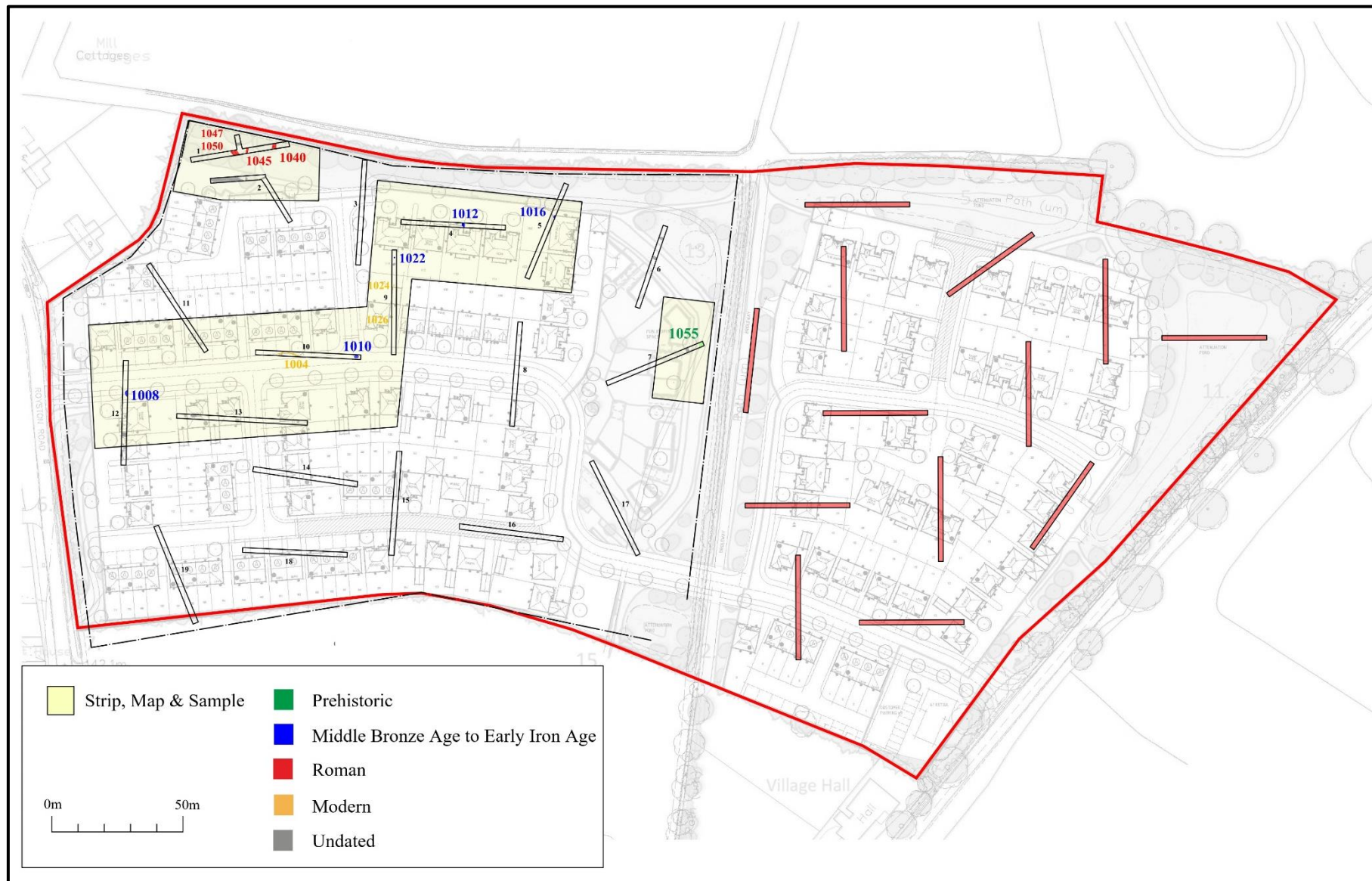


Figure 3 Areas for Strip, Map & Sample (western field) and trial trenching (eastern field).

STAGE 2: Preparation of base-plan

- 2.3.3 A pre-excavation base-plan of any features present will be prepared (scale 1:250 or other appropriate scale) using CAD.

STAGE 3: Metal-detector survey

- 2.3.4 Undertake a gridded metal-detector survey of the stripped area as well as spoil areas to assess the artefactual content of the site area. Finds will be recorded using GPS. The detector will not discriminate against iron.

STAGE 4: Review meeting

- 2.3.5 An on-site review meeting, involving the AAPA at Hertfordshire County Council, the Company and the site archaeologists will be held to review the results of the soil strip. The purpose of the meeting will be to identify specific areas requiring excavation and to finalise specific sampling strategies to ensure that the archaeological interest of the site is appropriately dealt with.

STAGE 5: Excavation

- 2.3.6 The following sampling strategy is proposed as a guideline within areas selected for hand-excavation at the review meeting within the strip, map and sample zones. Final sampling strategies will be agreed on site with the AAPA. Detailed methodologies for excavation are provided under section 2.5 below:

- specific settlement features, such as hut circles – 50%. Hand-excavation would investigate entrances/terminals, segments opposite the entrance causeway, and evenly-spaced segments along their length.
- enclosure ditches – excavation would be targeted at the entrances/terminals, and sections along the mid-point of each side, and also opposite to any entrance causeways, a sample of up to 10% by length.
- discrete features, pits and post-holes – 50% by half-section, although some industrial features, artefact-rich pits and wells may exceptionally require a greater percentage excavation, potentially up to 100% of their fill.
- linear non-settlement features – sufficient to recover artefactual and ecofactual assemblages, sampling by means of evenly-spaced segments along their length, and to define relationships with intersecting features – a sample of up to 10% of this feature group would be the objective.

- 2.3.7 The excavation strategy would be reviewed by means of regular monitoring meetings during the excavation. Sampling levels may be altered by agreement with the AAPA.
- 2.3.8 In the event of unique or significant finds being made which are considered beyond that which can successfully be recorded under the archaeological investigation conditions, then negotiations will be held between the developer, the archaeological contractor and the AAPA to determine the best way to record the archaeology appropriately. **There will be provision for the reasonable extension of areas should important archaeology be seen to extend beyond the boundaries shown on Figure 3.**

2.4 Trial Trenching – Eastern Field

- 2.4.1 Across the eastern field it is proposed to undertake trial trenching (see Figure 3). Further mitigation may be required across the eastern field dependent upon the results of the trial trenching. Such works would be subject to an updated WSI in consultation with the LEADS team.
- 2.4.2 Figure 3 details a 3% cover of archaeological trial trenches, with each trench being 40m x 1.8m. The aim of the trench evaluation will be to better understand the character, date and level of preservation of potential archaeological remains across this area of the site.
- 2.4.3 A degree of flexibility regarding final trench location may be required to account for unforeseen ground conditions.
- 2.4.4 The following approach is proposed with regard to the trench evaluation:
- All archaeological operations must take into account personal safety and must follow FAME¹ guidelines and Health and Safety legislation. For health and safety reasons, trenches will not exceed 1.2m in depth, unless adequate safety measures are put in place prior.
 - The trenches will be surveyed and located using GPS equipment or a Total Station Theodolite.
 - Overburden will be stripped and stored using a mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket in a clean and methodical manner.
 - At all times soils will need to be handled according to best practice. Topsoil will be stored one side of the trench and subsoils the other to allow for appropriate backfilling.

¹ Federation of Archaeological Managers and Employers

- Excavations will take place to a level of either natural deposits or when the upper-most surface of archaeologically significant horizons are encountered. All machine work will be under the direct supervision of a qualified archaeologist.
- If archaeological horizons are encountered then subsequent excavations will be undertaken by hand.
- Trenching is defined as a limited programme of intrusive fieldwork which determines the presence or absence of archaeological features, structures, deposits, artefacts or ecofacts within a specified area or site. If such archaeological remains are present field evaluation defines their character, extent, quality and preservation, and enables an assessment of their significance in a local, regional, national or international context as appropriate.
- Trench plans will be drawn at scale 1:50 and 1:20 as necessary and located on a site plan. Excavated sections will be drawn at scale 1:10. All finds relating to the archaeological record of the site will be collected with reference to context and location.
- All finds and samples will be exposed, lifted, cleaned, conserved, marked, bagged and boxed in accordance with the United Kingdom Institute for Conservation Guidelines No 2 (and as updated) and Historic England Guidelines (2004, 2008 & 2014).
- A metal detector will be used on site to scan stripped soils for the presence of artefacts. The bias will be set to include detection of ferrous objects.
- Environmental sampling will be carried out in the event that significant archaeological deposits are encountered. Relevant current Historic England guidelines on sampling strategies for soils and palaeo-environmental remains will be adopted.
- Any human remains will initially be left *in situ*. Where it is necessary to remove human remains, then this will be carried out in accordance with the relevant Ministry of Justice Licence.
- Site photography will provide a specific and general record of the evidence using high resolution (12mp or higher, using an APS-C sensor) SLR cameras.
- Monitoring visits by the LEADS team will be arranged so that officers can be satisfied that the works are being conducted to proper professional standards.

- The trenches will not be backfilled before they have been inspected by the LEADS team, or the agreement of that authority has otherwise been obtained.

2.5 Recording policy for archaeological investigations (Strip, Map and Sample)

- If and when archaeological features are identified during the strip, map and sample exercise, the depth of the stripping will be monitored and if necessary, altered to allow the archaeological remains to be observed from the highest level at which they can be identified in the depositional sequence. Mechanical excavators and dumper trucks will not run over freshly stripped surfaces until they have been signed-off, and will not re-enter an area if significant archaeological horizons have been exposed.
- All archaeological operations must take into account personal safety and must follow FAME (formerly SCAUM) guidelines and Health and Safety legislation.
- Plans will be drawn at an appropriate scale (1:100, 1:50 and 1:20 as necessary) and located on an overall site plan being related to the OS grid. A grid will be laid out over areas of archaeological interest and overall plans of any archaeologically significant areas will be compiled showing all exposed archaeological features.
- All archaeological features will be surveyed and located to an accuracy of 0.1m or greater using a total station theodolite (TST) or differential GPS.
- Where archaeological horizons are encountered, subsequent excavations will be undertaken by hand. All excavated sections will be drawn at scale 1:10 and plans at 1:20 or 1:50, as appropriate. Upon all plans and sections the OD height of all principal strata and features will be shown.
- All finds relating to the archaeological record of the site will be collected with reference to context and location.
- A metal detector will be used on site to scan the stripped areas and soil bunds for the presence of artefacts (see detail above).
- All finds and samples will be exposed, lifted, cleaned, conserved, marked, bagged and boxed in accordance with the United Kingdom Institute for Conservation Guidelines No 2.
- Relevant current Historic England guidelines on sampling strategies for soils and palaeo-environmental remains will be adopted, namely that

sample size be a minimum of 40 litres, if the deposit size allows. The following should be referred to:

Historic England 2015 *Waterlogged Wood: Guidelines on the Recording, Sampling, Conservation and Curation of Waterlogged Wood*, London.

Historic England 2015 *Environmental Archaeology: A Guide to the Theory and Practice of Methods, from Sampling and Recovery to Post-Excavation*, London.

Historic England 2012 *Waterlogged Organic Artefacts: Guidelines on Their Recovery, Analysis and Conservation*.

- In the event that human remains are encountered, a Ministry of Justice Licence will need to be obtained prior to their investigation and removal.
- Any finds that are considered to be treasure under the definitions of The Treasure Act 1996 will be treated in accordance with the Act's guidelines, which will include appropriate reporting to the local coroner and Finds Liaison Officer for Hertfordshire, within the timeframe outlined in the Act's provisions.
- Due concern will be given to the physical security of all archaeological/historical features, deposits, artefacts and records, both on and off site. All reasonable measures will be taken to secure their protection before, during and after investigations.
- Monitoring visits by the curatorial authority will be arranged so that the AAPA can be satisfied that the works are being conducted to proper professional standards.
- Registers will be maintained of all photographs, levels, plans, sections, finds and samples taken, made or gathered in the field.
- Site photography will provide a specific and general record of the evidence. Using high resolution (12mp or higher) digital SLR cameras, archaeological horizons and features will be recorded prior to, and following excavation. Appropriate scales, information boards and north arrow will be used.
- A detailed context record will be maintained on individual pro-forma record cards, designed to meet the highest current professional standards. Each archaeological layer, fill, cut, etc., will be individually numbered and described in terms of soil detail, stratigraphic position, dimensions, artifact content, samples and interpretation. The context system will be cross-

referenced to all other records, and will be compatible with computerisation.

- No archaeological areas will be passed over for **development** before they have been inspected by the AAPA, or the agreement of that authority has otherwise been obtained.

3.0 MONITORING, REPORTING & DEPOSITION OF THE ARCHIVE

3.1 Monitoring

- 3.1.1 The on-site archaeological works will be monitored by the AAPA. The Archaeological Advisor will be invited to make regular site inspections.
- 3.1.2 The aim of the monitoring process is to ensure the use of appropriate methods and standards during the works. It will also ensure adherence to the requirements of this Written Scheme of Investigation for mitigation.
- 3.1.3 The aims of the monitoring should be to ensure that:
 - 1. all critical aspects of the programme of archaeological works are undertaken to the satisfaction of the local planning authority;
 - 2. all aspects of the work are undertaken in accordance with the approved documentation;
 - 3. variations can be agreed without delay (provided they still conform to the requirements of the local planning authority).
- 3.1.4 It may be necessary to make arrangements for the monitoring prior to fieldwork commencing.

3.2 Reporting & Archiving

- 3.2.1 A post-excavation assessment/ interim report on the archaeological investigations will be prepared, preferably within c. 6 months of completing the on-site work (subject to specialist assessments having been completed). This report should be sufficiently detailed to allow a decision to be made about the appropriate level of future archaeological reporting. The report will describe and summarise the main findings of the excavations and will be illustrated. To prevent unnecessary duplication and repetition of information in the post-excavation stage, the assessment reports may well represent a considerable portion of any final reporting.

- 3.2.2 Where appropriate, assessment of finds and samples will be undertaken in accordance with the guidelines outlined by Historic England in the publication: *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)* – 2006, reissued 2015. Assessment will include observations on potential significance and recommendations for further analysis.
- 3.2.3 An appropriate level of post-excavation analysis and reporting of the archive will be undertaken.
- 3.2.4 A summary of the findings will be deposited in the Hertfordshire County Council Historic Environment Record. Details of the work will be entered on the OASIS database at <http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/projects/oasis>. The developer should present the report to the local planning authority within one month of receiving it.
- 3.2.5 Once all works on the Site have been completed, a final publication should be prepared for a suitable journal; should the result so warrant it, **and in consultation with the LEADS team**.
- 3.2.6 A museum accession number will be obtained prior to the commencement of works. Following the investigation, the paper record of the survey will be deposited with the Museum. The archaeological contractor will ensure they are aware of the Museum's conditions of acceptance, which will be adhered to. **The receiving museum should be contacted at the earliest opportunity so that any issues with archiving can be agreed before commencement of site works.**
- 3.2.7 The project archive will be prepared in accordance with best practice. Works will conform to Historic England's MoRPHE guidelines.

4.0 OTHER ISSUES

4.1 Programming of works

- 4.1.1 Works are likely to commence **early 2025**.

4.2 Safety aspects

- 4.2.1 All work will conform to the archaeological contractor's *Health & Safety Manual*, and will be carried out according to the relevant Health and Safety legislation and any other specific health and safety requirements of the developer.

- 4.2.2 A copy of the archaeological contractor's *Health and Safety Policy* will be made available to the main contractor prior to the start of works. The policy should make particular reference to the FAME (Federation of Archaeological Managers and Employers) Health and Safety Manual (Allen & Holt 1986, with more recent updates). A full Risk Assessment will be prepared and submitted to the developer prior to the commencement of works. A named Safety Consultant will be provided by the archaeological contractor.
- 4.2.3 The field contractor will hold all necessary insurances to undertake the required works.

4.3 Outreach & Publicity

- 4.3.1 In the event significant archaeological deposits are identified during the investigations, scope for publicising these discoveries will be explored with the client **and the LEADS team**. Publicity may take the form of press releases, social media output, open-day or engagement of local archaeological societies, parish-based presentations, as deemed appropriate, and in consultation with the interested parties.

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