

**WRITTEN SCHEME OF INVESTIGATION FOR
ADDITIONAL ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION
& MITIGATION**

**LAND AT HIGH STREET,
SUTTON BINGER,
WILTSHIRE**

PREPARED ON BEHALF OF



Charles Church

December 2025

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Document Prepared by: Ben Barker BSc MA

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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) has been prepared by GHC Archaeology & Heritage on behalf of Charles Church. The WSI details a programme of additional archaeological evaluation and mitigation in accordance with the requirements of condition 26 of the outline planning permission for of up to 60 dwellings, including affordable housing with public open space, structural planting and landscaping, land for the provision of allotments and sustainable drainage system (SuDS) with vehicular access point, which was granted on appeal (06/22/0546/F) on the 27/01/2025. The site is located in the village of Sutton Benger which lies within the planning authority area of Wiltshire Council.
- 1.2 Following the results of the earlier phase of archaeological evaluation by trial trenching (Cotswold Archaeology 2023), the Assistant County Archaeologist for Wiltshire Council has agreed that a suitable programme of archaeological mitigation should consists of the excavation of two further trenches and two large areas within the north of the site.
- 1.3 This WSI sets out a programme for archaeological mitigation by open area excavation of the two areas plus the excavation of two additional trenches, and it is subject to the approval of Wiltshire Council.

Site Location and Description

- 1.4 The village of Sutton Benger, Wiltshire, is located approximately 13 miles to the west of Swindon, to the south of the M4 motorway. The development site is located to the north of the High Street on the eastern side of the village (centred at ST 95028 78804; Figure 1). The 3.2ha site comprises part of a former arable field bounded by High Street (B4069) to south-west, residential development to the west and agricultural fields to the north and east.
- 1.5 The site lies on a relative flat piece of land, falling gently from c. 56m AOD to c. 54m AOD from west to east toward the River Avon which lies c. 600m further to the east. A tributary of the Avon flows west to east less than 200m to the north of the site.
- 1.6 The recorded geology within the study site consists of Kellaways Sand Member sandstone overlain by superficial River Terrace Deposits of sands and gravels (BGS 2025).

Planning Background

- 1.7 Outline planning application (PL/2023/06204) for *“the erection of up to 60 dwellings, including affordable housing with public open space, structural planting and landscaping, land for the provision of allotments and sustainable drainage system (SuDS) with vehicular access point. All matters reserved except for means of access”* was initially refused by Wiltshire Council but granted on appeal (AP-37140) to the Planning Inspectorate on 27/01/2025.

1.8 Condition 26 of the planning consent requires that:

26. No development shall commence within the red-line boundary on the approved Site Location Plan until (a) a written programme of archaeological investigation, which should include on-site work and off-site work such as the analysis, publishing and archiving of the results, has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority; and (b) the approved programme of archaeological work has been carried out in accordance with the approved details.

1.9 Following the issue of report on trial trenching that was undertaken was completed in November 2023 (Cotswold 2023) the LPA's Archaeological Advisor was content that further work could be secured by the above condition.

1.10 Following the granting of the planning consent it was agreed that the archaeological mitigation should include:-

- the excavation of two trial trenches that were previously inaccessible;
- a mix of open area excavation and archaeological monitoring and recording of areas where the completed trial trenching had previously identified significant archaeological remains.

The archaeological monitoring would be reserved for the areas in close proximity to modern services which could not otherwise be stripped as part of the main works due to health and safety constraints.

1.11 This WSI has been prepared in response to the above requirements, as negotiated by Pegasus Group and the Wiltshire Council Assistant County Archaeologist. This document has been produced by GHC Archaeology & Heritage, acting on behalf of Charles Church, and is subject to approval by the to Wiltshire Council.

Archaeological Background

1.12 The following archaeological background is informed by a desk-based heritage assessment (Pegasus 2023), a geophysical survey (Archaeological Surveys 2023) and a trial trench evaluation (Cotswold 2023). The following text presents a site-focussed summary derived from these sources.

Prehistoric

1.13 Cropmarks thought to indicate the presence of remains relating to Iron Age settlement are located to the east of the site (MWI5041). A linear cropmark recorded within site was believed to be associated with the Iron settlement activity.

1.14 The wider area contains a number of cropmarks that are likely to relate to prehistoric settlement, farming and burial activity. Two possible roundhouse or barrow ring ditches (MWI77347) were identified c. 190m north-west of the site by geophysical survey

(EWI9751) but could not be located by the subsequent archaeological mitigation (EWI9971).

Roman

- 1.15 There is little direct evidence for significant Roman activity within the site or in the immediate vicinity, though fieldwalking in the area of the aforementioned cropmarks (MWI5041) has identified a mix of Iron Age and Romano-British finds. These finds included Roman pottery sherds and possible masonry (MWI5006).

Medieval

- 1.16 The village of Sutton Benger is thought to have had early medieval origins. The site is located c. 250m to the east of the church (NHLE 1022403) and historic core of the village (MWI5093 & MWI5114). It is likely to have been removed from the settlement core and to have formed part of the village's agricultural hinterland.

Postmedieval and modern

- 1.17 Historic maps indicated that the site continued to be utilised for agricultural purposes throughout the Postmedieval and modern periods and there is no evidence of any structures within the site.
- 1.18 In 2022 a sewer was installed across the site as part of the Chippenham Gateway Scheme, traversing the site from its south-east corner to its north-west corner. The works involved the stripping of a c. 20m easement and were subject to archaeological mitigation (EWI9971); no archaeological features or deposits were identified.

Previous archaeological work

- 1.19 Geophysical survey of the site in 2022 (Archaeological Surveys 2023) identified a number of linear anomalies, most of which were poorly defined and appear to have been truncated by later agricultural activity. Some discrete anomalies were also noted but it was uncertain if these related to archaeological activity or modern disturbance.
- 1.20 In November 2023, Cotswold Archaeology carried out an archaeological evaluation, comprising 11 trenches (Cotswold 2023). The evaluation identified remains thought to be related to settlement activity dating to the Iron Age.
- 1.21 Towards the centre of the site the identified remains included a curved ditch and associated postholes, potentially part of a roundhouse, and some adjacent pits. Along the southern edge of the site a potential trackway was recorded. This was less securely dated by one sherd of single sherd of late prehistoric pottery.
- 1.22 Traces of ridge and furrow cultivation were identified in the majority of the trenches, with the furrows all aligned north-south. The trenching also identified a number of undated ditches, four of which did not align with the current field system and may be of an earlier date.

- 1.23 The evaluation was constrained by poor weather. This resulted in a ditch-like feature within another trench (Tr. 2) not being excavated and another trench (Tr. 3) not being opened. Both of these un-investigated trenches were located in the north-eastern corner of the site (Figure 2).

2 RESEARCH DESIGN

Aims and Objectives

- 2.1 The primary aim of the completing the archaeological trenching will be to identify and assess the significance of any archaeological remains within the north-east corner of the site and to assess the potential impacts of the proposed development upon the archaeological resource.
- 2.2 The archaeological excavation and monitoring will aim to record any archaeological remains prior to their destruction to a level appropriate to their significance.
- 2.3 This aims above will be realised through the achievement of the following objectives:
- To establish the spatial extent date, character, condition and significance of the archaeological activity within the investigation areas shown on Figure 1,
 - To recover information relating to the nature and function of past human activity represented by the surviving archaeological remains,
 - Excavate and record identified archaeological features and deposits to a level appropriate to their extent and significance,
 - To recover environmental evidence where appropriate,
 - To undertake sufficient post-excavation assessment and analysis of artefacts, environmental samples and structural data to interpret their significance,
 - To interpret and report the nature of human activity at the site and to place the site within its local, regional and national context as appropriate,
 - Report and publish the results of the excavation and post-excavation analysis and place them within their local and regional context,
 - To produce a site archive for deposition with an appropriate museum and to provide information for the local HER to ensure the long-term survival of the excavated data.

Research Framework

- 2.4 The programme of archaeological investigation has the potential to contribute to research priorities identified in the South West England Archaeological Research Framework (<https://researchframeworks.org/swarf/>). The evaluation has identified remains thought to

relate to rural Iron Age settlement and medieval farming. The date of the possible trackway in the southern part of the site has yet to be determined.

- 2.5 Further investigation of the archaeological remains in the two main excavation areas (A & B, Figure 1) has the potential to reveal more about the exact nature and scale of these remains, and so further contribute towards the selected research objectives, specifically relating to the Iron Age period and possibly also to the early medieval period, including:-

3h: *Are there regional traditions of pit digging and deposition, and what might these tell us of residency, settlement duration, composition, social relations and relations with places and other agencies?*

4f: *The origins of many of our towns, villages and farmsteads can be traced back into the Medieval period and these places provide an important physical link between the 21st century and the landscape of Medieval England. There are important regional and local variations that help to provide a sense of place and define the character of settlements. The story of the Medieval manor, the Medieval church, monastic estates, Medieval agriculture and the management of the Medieval landscape provide clear and tangible links between the present day and the Medieval period (see, for instance, the work of the Shapwick Project: Aston and Gerrard 1999; Gerrard and Aston forthcoming).*

10c: *When and under what conditions did field systems and traditions of roundhouse settlement begin? Did field systems begin in the early 2nd millennium BC?*

16e: *A better definition of key transitional phases (such as the beginning of the Neolithic, the introduction of metalworking and Beakers and the change from the Earlier to the Later Iron Age) is required.*

17b: *A range of context types should be sampled for plant macrofossils, especially for the Iron Age where most work has concentrated on pits. For example, sampling only obviously rich deposits misses evidence for crop processing and leads to mis-interpretation of site function and plant use. Standard recording of tooth wear should be employed to establish the age of death of pigs, sheep and cattle for inter-site comparison. Standardised recording should be employed to allow inter-assemblage and site and period comparisons of butchery and cooking methods. This would also facilitate the understanding of the relative importance of hunting red and roe deer.*

40a: *There is a need to better understand the chronology and regionality of crop diversification and intensification of production, which appears to take place from around the Middle Bronze Age onwards. Well-dated assemblages from a range of settlement contexts are required to examine introductions of new crops and associated wild species.*

- 2.6 The investigation will also take account of the national research programmes outlined in the English Heritage (now Historic England) *Strategic Framework for historic Environment Activities and Programmes in Historic England* (SNHESE), first published in 2008.

Standards

- 2.7 This specification conforms to the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (MHCLG 2025), the Historic England *Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning: 2, Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment* (March 2015a).
- 2.8 It has been designed in accordance with current best archaeological practice and the appropriate national standards and guidelines including:-
- *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Assessment and Fieldwork in Wiltshire and Swindon Borough* (Wiltshire Council Archaeology Service 2025);
 - *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment* (Historic England 2015b);
 - *Standard for Archaeological Excavation* (CIfA 2023a);
 - *Universal Guidance for Archaeological Excavation* (CIfA 2023b);
 - *Standard for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (Chartered Institute for Archaeologists 2023c);
 - *Universal Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (Chartered Institute for Archaeologists 2023d);
 - *Standard for Archaeological Monitoring and Recording* (Chartered Institute for Archaeologists 2023e);
 - *Universal Guidance for Archaeological Monitoring and Recording* (Chartered Institute for Archaeologists 2023f);
 - *Standard and Guidance for the Creation, Compilation, Transfer and Deposition of Archaeological Archives* (CIfA 2020a).
 - *Code of Conduct: Professional Ethics in Archaeology* (Chartered Institute for Archaeologists 2022).

3 METHODOLOGY

- 3.1 GHC will inform Wiltshire Council Archaeology Service (WCAS) at least two week in advance of the commencement of fieldwork.
- 3.2 The appointed archaeological contractor to undertake the work detailed in this WSI will be a CIfA Registered Organisation and will be subject to Wiltshire Council Archaeology Service approval.
- 3.3 The archaeological contractor shall contact the relevant local receiving museum prior to the start of fieldwork and obtain the necessary Accession Numbers/complete the required archive deposition forms.
- 3.4 Before fieldwork commences an OASIS online record will be initiated and key fields completed on Details, Location and Creator forms.

- 3.5 All members of the archaeological project team will have read this WSI advance of commencement of the fieldwork.

Fieldwork scope

- 3.6 The archaeological investigation will comprise the excavation and investigation of aborted trenches 2 and 3 from the 2023 evaluation, plus two open area excavation, or archaeological monitoring and recording, within Mitigation Areas A and B (Figure 1).

- 3.7 The extent of the areas are as follows :-

- Evaluation Trenches 2 and 3 are each 30m by 1.8m;
- Mitigation Area A equates to c. 2,580m²;
- Mitigation Area B equates to c. 3,310m².

- 3.8 The south-western part of Area A, labelled a1, was flagged as potentially being within 10m of an unidentified service during the evaluation. The wider area will be scanned and inspected prior to excavation and area a1 will only be stripped as part of archaeological open area excavation if no service is identified and it is safe to do so. **The contractor is advised to proceed with caution in this area.**

- 3.9 The parts of Areas A and B labelled a2, a3 and b1 form 10m stand-offs from identified services and will be archaeologically monitored during the construction phase of works.

- 3.10 The previously agreed mitigation areas have been reduced to exclude areas of the site that have been previously investigated during the 2022 strip for the Chippenham Gateway sewer installation. This area will not be re-stripped unless it is necessary to do so to understand the form and function of identified archaeological features within the mitigation area.

Evaluation fieldwork methodology

- 3.11 The archaeological trial trench evaluation will comprise the excavation of two archaeological trial trenches measuring 30m x 1.8m (see Figure 1). The trenches are sited in the same location as the two trenches that it was not possible to investigate as part of the 2023 evaluation (Cotswold 2023). Trench 2 has been previously excavated and backfilled, whilst trench 3 was undug.

- 3.12 Topsoil and modern overburden across the trenches will be stripped using a mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless, flat bladed, grading bucket, down to the first significant archaeological horizon or natural sub-soil. Spoil from mechanical excavation will be scanned by eye and by metal detector to aid the recovery of artefacts. Topsoil / overburden and subsoil will be stored separately.

- 3.13 All excavation by mechanical excavator will be undertaken under direct archaeological supervision, by a suitably experienced and qualified archaeologist, with one archaeologist responsible for monitoring each excavator.
- 3.14 All archaeological features and deposits revealed will be cleaned and excavated in an archaeologically controlled and stratigraphic manner, in order to establish their extent, form, date, function and relationship to other features. All features will be investigated to understand the full stratigraphic sequence down to naturally occurring deposits. A sufficient sample of every archaeological and suspected archaeological feature or deposit will be excavated. This will include:
- Slots through each linear feature (minimum 1m where possible). Relationships with other features and deposits will be investigated only where it is clear that this can be done without compromising potential future investigation.
 - Unless falling into the category below, discrete/non-linear features (pits and postholes for example) will be 50% excavated (half-sectioned). Relationships with other features and deposits will be investigated only where it is clear that this can be done without compromising potential future investigation.
 - Discrete features of high potential (palaeoenvironmental and artefactual potential, for example) may need to be fully excavated.
- 3.15 All spoil will be stored and managed in line with the standards of the *Construction Code of Practice for Sustainable Use of Soils on Construction Sites* (DEFRA 2009).
- 3.16 Any excavation, by machine or by hand, will be undertaken with a view to avoiding damage to any archaeological features or deposits which appear to be demonstrably worthy of preservation in situ or which would be better examined as part of a subsequent phase of mitigation.
- 3.17 Should the excavation of the trenches reach the limit of safe working depth without natural geology being encountered, a sondage will be excavated (where it is not considered to adversely impact archaeological deposits) in order to establish the depth of natural geology. Where depth of excavation is required to be greater than 1m, suitable stepping will be employed. Any deep excavation considered to be potentially unsafe will be photographed and immediately backfilled.
- 3.18 All archaeological deposits, features and artefacts exposed, examined or excavated will be fully recorded, employing standardised and documented recording methods, and utilising pro forma recording sheets. Context numbers will be assigned to all features, deposits, structures and other significant elements (e.g., articulated skeletal material) encountered, however recent their origin.

- 3.19 All identified finds and artefacts will be collected and retained and bagged and labelled according to their context. Finds of significant interest will be given a 'small finds' number, and information on their location in three dimensions will be entered on a separate pro-forma sheet. The finds selection/selection strategy will be developed using the ClfA Selection Toolkit. No finds will be discarded without assessment by an appropriate finds specialist, and/or the approval of the Planning Archaeologist.
- 3.20 A drawn record will be made of all features revealed during the archaeological evaluation. Plans will be completed at a scale of 1:20 (as appropriate), with section drawings at a scale of 1:10. All plans will be tied in with the OS National Grid with levels given to above Ordnance Datum.
- 3.21 A photographic record will be made of all of the archaeological features, deposits, structures or building elements investigated or exposed during fieldwork, and a detailed register will be maintained of the location, subject and direction of view of all photographs taken. General site shots will also be taken to provide a wider context to the excavations.
- 3.22 A photographic record, utilising high resolution digital photography of a minimum of 10 megapixels will be maintained during the course of the fieldwork and will include:
- the site prior to commencement of fieldwork
 - the site during work, showing specific stages of fieldwork
 - the layout of archaeological features within each trench
 - individual features and, where appropriate, their sections
 - groups of features where their relationship is important
- 3.23 All photography will follow the archaeological contractor's guidance which conforms to industry best practice (Historic England 2015b).
- 3.24 Following excavation and recording of any archaeological remains, and with the agreement of the Planning Archaeologist, the evaluation trenches will be backfilled with the previously excavated spoil.
- 3.25 Provision will be made for limited extensions of the footprints of trenches to allow for the investigation of significant remains that extend beyond the limit of excavation.
- 3.26 Should significant archaeological features or deposits be identified that warrant further extensions, the definition of a wider mitigation area or a revised investigation strategy, this will be agreed by WCAS and GHC prior to further excavation. If necessary, an addendum to this WSI will be produced to cover the potential need for further archaeological mitigation.

Open area excavation fieldwork methodology

- 3.27 With the exception of the parts a2, a3 and b1, topsoil and modern overburden within Areas A and B (Figure 1) will be stripped using a mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless, flat bladed, grading bucket, down to the first significant archaeological horizon or natural subsoil. Spoil from mechanical excavation will be scanned by eye and by metal detector to aid the recovery of artefacts. Topsoil / overburden and subsoil will be stored separately.
- 3.28 All excavation by mechanical excavator will be undertaken under direct archaeological supervision, by a suitably experienced and qualified archaeologist, with one archaeologist responsible for monitoring each excavator.
- 3.29 All archaeological features and deposits revealed will be cleaned and excavated in an archaeologically controlled and stratigraphic manner, in order to establish their extent, form, date, function and relationship to other features. All features will be investigated to understand the full stratigraphic sequence down to naturally occurring deposits. A sufficient sample of every archaeological and suspected archaeological feature or deposit will be excavated. This will include:-
- Ditches – up to 10% by length of linear ditches will normally be sampled, focussed on establishing stratigraphic relationships, investigating terminals and recovering dating and environmental evidence. A higher sample, up to 20% by length may be required where ditches define or lie adjacent to settlement, industrial, burial or other specialist activity.
 - Pits – all pits be 50% sampled. The sample size will be increased, including the 100% excavation of a proportion of pits, where there is spatial, finds, environmental or other evidence to indicate that this will further the project objectives. Larger features will be excavated by quadrant where appropriate.
 - Structures/buildings – all features and deposits that form components of a structure or building will be investigated. A minimum of 50% of all post-holes forming a hut circle or 50% by length of a drip gully will be excavated.
 - Post and stake holes – where these features do not form a recognisable structure, a minimum of 50% of every other post-hole will be excavated. A representative sample of stake holes will also be investigated.
 - Burials and related deposits – all inhumation and cremation burials will be excavated in accordance with the Ministry of Justice licence. All associated deposits, e.g. pyre sites, mausolea and mortuary enclosures, will also be fully investigated and excavated.

- Specialist activity areas/deposits – all such deposits, such as corn driers, hearths and kilns, will be fully investigated and excavated.
 - Quarries, working hollows and similar large amorphous features – up to 10% by area of large, amorphous features will be excavated by hand or sufficient to characterise them satisfactorily. Consideration will be given to machine excavation, with the consent of WCAS, where additional excavation might be informative.
- 3.30 All spoil will be stored and managed in line with the standards of the Construction Code of Practice for Sustainable Use of Soils on Construction Sites (DEFRA 2009).
- 3.31 Should the excavations reach the limit of safe working depth without natural geology being encountered, a sondage will be excavated (where it is not considered to adversely impact archaeological deposits) in order to establish the depth of natural geology. Where depth of excavation is required to be greater than 1m, suitable stepping, battering or shoring will be used, in line with an appropriate risk assessment, to enable investigation of basal fills as far as is reasonably practicable. The WCAS archaeological officer will be afforded the reasonable opportunity to inspect all archaeological excavations, however deep excavation considered to be potentially unsafe will be photographed and immediately backfilled.
- 3.32 All archaeological deposits, features and artefacts exposed, examined or excavated will be fully recorded, employing standardised and documented recording methods, and utilising pro forma recording sheets. Context numbers will be assigned to all features, deposits, structures and other significant elements (e.g. articulated skeletal material) encountered, however recent their origin.
- 3.33 All identified finds and artefacts will be collected and retained, and bagged and labelled according to their context. Finds of significant interest will be given a 'small finds' number, and information on their location in three dimensions will be entered on a separate pro-forma sheet. The finds selection/selection strategy will be developed using the ClfA Selection Toolkit. No finds will be discarded without assessment by an appropriate finds specialist, and/or the approval of WCAS.
- 3.34 A drawn record will be made of all features revealed during the archaeological excavation. Plans will be completed at a scale of 1:20 (as appropriate), with section drawings at a scale of 1:10. All plans will be tied in with the OS National Grid with levels given to above Ordnance Datum.
- 3.35 A photographic record will be made of all of the archaeological features, deposits, structures or building elements investigated or exposed during fieldwork, and a detailed register will be maintained of the location, subject and direction of view of all photographs taken. General site shots will also be taken to provide a wider context to the excavations.

- 3.36 The photographic record will be maintained throughout the course of the fieldwork and will include as a minimum:
- the site prior to commencement of fieldwork
 - the site during work, showing specific stages of fieldwork
 - the general layout and distribution of archaeological features within the site
 - individual features and, where appropriate, their sections
 - groups of features where their relationship is assessed to be important
- 3.37 Where digital photography is employed this will follow the requirements of Historic England guidance for digital image capture (Historic England 2015c).
- The camera used has a minimum sensor size (APS-C) of 22mm by 15mm
 - The camera used has a sensor that exceeds 10 Mega Pixels
 - All photographs are taken in a raw format (.raw or .nef, for example). Photographs must not be taken in .jpg format
 - All photographs are converted from raw format to uncompressed .tiff at 8 bit. Raw format and .jpg photographs are not suitable for archiving
 - Digital photographs will not be manipulated or altered prior to inclusion in a project archive
- 3.38 Drone-based digital photography may be employed where suitable, and if required.
- 3.39 Expansion of the excavation areas will not be undertaken without the agreement of GHC and the WCAS Archaeologist. Situations where this may be necessary are likely to be limited to instances where significant remains are identified and cannot be preserved in situ, and where best practice is to maintain the integrity of a structure, feature or an individual, or where Treasure artefacts would otherwise be at risk of theft.
- 3.40 Following excavation and recording of any archaeological remains, and with the agreement of WCAS, the excavation areas, or parts thereof, may be backfilled or released to the developer for construction in accordance with the planning consent.

Archaeological monitoring and recording fieldwork methodology

- 3.41 Areas a2, a3 and b1 (Figure 1) fall within 10m of identified services and will subject to archaeological monitoring and recording of intrusive works during the construction phase. This approach will also apply to area a1 if it is found to fall within the safety stand-off of a positively identified live service.
- 3.42 All work within these areas will be undertaken in accordance with ClfA's Standard and guidance for archaeological monitoring and recording (ClfA 2023e & 2023f) and will aim to

adhere to the strategy for the open area excavation wherever possible and where safe to do so.

- 3.43 The archaeological works will take the form of monitoring of all below ground disturbance by suitably qualified and experienced professional archaeologist(s). This is likely to comprise:
- archaeological inspection of overburden removal;
 - monitoring of any excavations;
 - recording of archaeological features in plan;
 - excavation of features, if necessary, to determine their date and character.
- 3.44 Provision will be made during the archaeological monitoring and recording for the observing archaeologist to halt groundworks, where necessary, to appropriately investigate and record any features uncovered.
- 3.45 Excavated archaeological features will be recorded in plan and section by measured drawing at appropriate scales. All archaeological features or deposits encountered will be described fully on pro-forma individual context recording sheets, using standard methods of the archaeological contractor appointed.
- 3.46 Archaeological features, deposits and spoil will be metal detected. Artefacts will be recovered, spatially-recorded, labelled, bagged, and retained.
- 3.47 A photographic record of the work will be maintained during the course of the fieldwork, consisting of high-resolution digital images follow the requirements of Historic England guidance for digital image capture (Historic England 2015b).
- 3.48 All contexts will be numbered and finds recorded by context. All levels will relate to Ordnance Datum.
- 3.49 Where monitoring of extensive elements of the monitoring area has produced negative results, subject to written agreement of WCAS, agreement will be sought to end the programme of archaeological monitoring and recording.

Palaeoenvironmental sampling strategy

- 3.50 Soil samples will be taken from all suitable features or deposits for palaeoenvironmental sampling. This will comprise the removal of a bulk sample from every securely sealed and hand-excavated context, excepting those with excessive levels of residuality or those with minimal 'soil' content (such as building rubble).
- 3.51 Bulk samples will comprise representative 40 litre samples. Where a context does not yield 40 litres of material, smaller samples will be taken (generally the maximum amount of material that it is practicable to collect). Bulk samples will be used to recover a sub-sample of charred macroplant material, faunal remains and artefacts where necessary, as well as any significant industrial residues.

- 3.52 If buried soils or other deposits are encountered, column samples may be taken for micromorphological and pollen analysis. Environmental material will be stored in a controlled environment and specialists consulted during the course of the work if necessary.
- 3.53 The post-excavation processing of all palaeoenvironmental samples will be undertaken in line with the requirements of the former English Heritage's (now Historic England) publications *Archaeological Science at PPG16 Interventions: Best Practice Guidance for Curators and Commissioning Archaeologists* (2006) and *Environmental Archaeology: A guide to the theory and practice of methods from sampling and recovery to post-excavation* (2011).

Human remains

- 3.54 The Ministry of Justice and WCAS will be informed if human remains are found. The Archaeological Contractor will apply for a Ministry of Justice exhumation licence before commencing work. Any human remains encountered will be accurately recorded in plan to identify the date and character of the remains and protected. Disturbance of human remains will be kept to a minimum until a Ministry of Justice exhumation licence has been obtained by the archaeological contractor.
- 3.55 Removal of human remains will only take place under appropriate government and environmental health regulations, in compliance with the Burial Act 1857 and after obtaining a Section 25 exhumation licence obtained from the Ministry of Justice.
- 3.56 If required a qualified and experienced osteoarchaeologist will undertake site visits to discuss the recording and assist in the removal of any human skeletal remains.
- 3.57 Human remains will be processed as part of the post-excavation assessment following national standards and guidance, including English Heritage (2004), ClfA/BABAO (Mitchell and Brickley 2017), the Advisory Panel on the Archaeology of Burials in England (Mays 2017) and Historic England (2018).

Scientific dating

- 3.58 Provision will be made to recover material suitable for radiocarbon, archaeomagnetic, dendrochronological and other scientific dating. Where material suitable for dating is recovered, sufficient dating will be undertaken to meet the aims of the investigation. Specialist dating will be undertaken following discussion with WCAS and the Historic England Regional Science Advisor.

Other finds

- 3.59 All finds and samples will be treated in a proper manner during the excavation and post-excavation stage and to standards agreed in advance with the intended museum store. Finds will be exposed, lifted, cleaned, conserved, marked, bagged and stored in accordance with the guidelines set out in United Kingdom Institute for Conservation's *Conservation Guidelines No. 2* (1990) and the ClfA guidelines *Standard and Guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials* (2020b).

- 3.60 If required, conservation will be undertaken by approved conservators in line with the *First Aid for Finds* guidelines (Watkinson and Neal 2001). In accordance with the procedures outlined in English Heritage's MoRPHE PPN3 (2008), significant iron objects, a selection of non-ferrous artefacts (including all coins), and a sample of any industrial debris relating to metallurgy should be X-radiographed before assessment.
- 3.61 For ceramic assemblages, recording will be carried out in a manner compatible with existing typological series in local pottery reference collections.
- 3.62 All finds of gold and silver or of significant monetary value will be moved to a safe place. Where removal cannot be effected immediately, suitable security measures will be taken to protect the artefacts from theft or damage.
- 3.63 All finds of gold and silver, and associated objects deemed 'Treasure' will be immediately reported to the Treasure team at the British Museum (treasure@britishmuseum.org), who will inform the coroner according to the procedures relating to the Treasure Act 1996 (and the act's amendment of 2023 to include prehistoric objects such as Bronze Age metalworking hoards and other non-precious metal items), after discussion with the Client and WCAS.
- 3.64 Ownership of any finds recovered during archaeological works rests with the landowner except where other law overrides this (e.g. Treasure Act 1996, Burial Act 1857). However, GHC will seek to obtain agreement from the landowner to donate the recovered artefacts to the Wiltshire Museum (subject to statutory laws concerning human remains and treasure trove).

Unexpectedly significant or complex discoveries

- 3.65 Should unexpectedly extensive, complex or significant remains be uncovered that warrant, in the professional judgment of the archaeologist on site, more detailed recording than is appropriate within the terms of the WSI, the scope of the WSI will be reviewed.
- 3.66 In the event of a review of the WSI being required, GHC will contact the Client and WCAS with the relevant information to enable them to resolve the matter. This is likely to require an on-site meeting between the relevant stakeholders to review the archaeological remains on-site and identify a way forward. Any variations to this WSI will be put in writing and agreed by the relevant stakeholders including WCAS and the Client.

Plant and equipment

- 3.67 The archaeological contractor on site will be responsible for the provision of all required welfare, plant, and health and safety equipment.

Strategy Review

- 3.68 The strategy for the archaeological fieldwork will be held under continuous review. Should the strategy be considered unsuitable at any time by GHC or the appointed archaeological contractor, an alternative strategy will be proposed for agreement with WCAS.

Post-excavation

- 3.69 The project reporting and archiving will be undertaken in compliance with the *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Assessment and Fieldwork in Wiltshire and Swindon Borough* (WCAS 2025) and will fully integrate the results of the previous evaluation.
- 3.70 On completion of the fieldwork it will be agreed with the WCAS Archaeological Advisor whether the results of the trial trench evaluation warrant their own report (to allow for the production of an additional WSI) or if they can be integrated into the reporting on the excavation results. If positive results are identified and a separate report is required this will be produced within 4 weeks of the completion of trenching fieldwork.
- 3.71 Unless otherwise agreed with WCAS, a written timetable for post-excavation assessment, updated project design and/or reporting will be produced for approval within four weeks of the completion of excavation fieldwork. Following this, a written statement of progress on post-excavation work – whether assessment, analysis, report writing and publication or archiving – will be provided by the archaeological contractor at six monthly intervals.
- 3.72 The format of the report will include the following as a minimum:
- Site name and grid reference
 - Project type (evaluation, watching brief etc.)
 - Date and duration of fieldwork
 - Site code
 - Area of site
 - An accurate site location and trench/survey plan based on up-to-date OS mapping, including heights aOD
 - Monuments identified (referenced to the RCHME Thesaurus of Monument Types)
 - Museum accession number
 - Unique OASIS ID number and completed OASIS form.
- 3.73 If required, a post-excavation assessment report (PXA) on the fieldwork will be prepared in accordance with the principles of Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE) (HE 2015b).
- 3.74 The PXA will present a clear and concise assessment of the archaeological value and significance of the results, and will identify the research potential, in the context of the Regional Research Framework. It will present an Updated Project Design (UPD), with a timetable, for analysis, dissemination, and archive deposition.
- 3.75 The PXA will offer a statement of significance for retention, based on specialist advice, and - where it is justified – the UPD should propose a discard strategy. This will be agreed in advance with the intended receiving repository (Wiltshire Museum).

- 3.76 The archaeological contractor will consult the intended archive depository before the archive is prepared regarding the specific requirements for the archive deposition and curation, and regarding any specific cost implications of deposition. It will be established that the intended depository will accept the entire archive resulting from the project (both finds and written archive) in order to create a complete record of the project.
- 3.77 The UPD will state proposals for the deposition of the digital archive relating to this project with the Archaeology Data Service (ADS), or similar digital archive repository, and allowance will be made for costs incurred to ensure proper deposition.
- 3.78 A digital copy of the PXA and UPD, clearly marked DRAFT, will be presented WCAS for approval within nine months of the completion of fieldwork unless other arrangements are negotiated. Following acceptance, a digital copy of the approved PXA report will be submitted to the HER in PDF/a format. Provision will also made for a hard copy report to be submitted on request.
- 3.79 On request, digital vector plans of mitigation areas, recorded archaeological features and excavated sections, will be provided to the HER and/or WCAS following approval of the final report.
- 3.80 A hard copy of the approved final report will be provided to county HER by the Archaeological Contractor. The hard copy of that approved report will consist of one unbound paper copy and will be supplemented by a digital .pdfa copy.
- 3.81 At the start of work (immediately before fieldwork commences) an OASIS online record <http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/oasis/> will be initiated and key fields completed on Details, Location and Creators forms by the archaeological contractor. When the project is completed, all parts of the OASIS online form will be completed, and a copy will be included in the final report and also with the site archive. A .pdf version of the entire report will be uploaded to the OASIS website upon approval by WCAS.
- 3.82 An archive of all records and finds will be prepared, consistent with the principles of MoRPHE. It must be adequate to perform the function of a final archive for deposition in the receiving repository. Subject to confirmation of content, it is anticipated that the archive will be deposited with Wiltshire Museum.
- 3.83 An archive of all records and finds will be prepared and will be adequate to perform the function of a final archive for deposition with the nominated repository. Ownership of any objects/artefacts recovered from the archaeological works rests with the landowner except where other law overrides this (e.g., Treasure Act 1996, Burial Act 1857). However, GHC will seek to obtain 'in principle' agreement from the landowner to donate the recovered artefacts to Wiltshire Museum (subject to statutory laws concerning human remains and treasure trove).
- 3.84 The archaeological contractor will consult with the intended archive depository before the archive is prepared regarding the specific requirements for the archive deposition and curation (including the digital archive), and regarding any specific cost implications of deposition. The

intended depository must be prepared to accept the entire archive resulting from the project (both finds and written archive) in order to create a complete record of the project.

- 3.85 A report describing the results of the archaeological fieldwork will be submitted for publication to an appropriate local journal and/or national journals, dependant on the nature of the results. The results may merit publication of the post-excavation analysis as a sperate monograph or other format to be agreed with WCAS.
- 3.86 The project archive will be prepared according to the recommendations in *Guidelines for the Preparation of Excavation Archives for long-term storage* (Walker 1990); *Standards in the Museum Care of Archaeological Collections* (Museums and Galleries Commission 1992); and the Archaeological Archives Forum's Guide to best practice in creation, compilation, transfer and curation for archaeological archives (Brown 2011).
- 3.87 Any digital archiving will be in full accordance with current ClfA guidance (<https://www.archaeologists.net/digdigital>) and will follow a Data/Digital Management Plan to be prepared by the Archaeological Contractor and approved by WCAS. The Digital Archive should only be deposited with a Trusted Digital repository which must have a Core Trust Seal status. The location of the digital archive/web address will be included in the final report.

4 TIMETABLE AND PERSONNEL

- 4.1 The archaeological contractor will be a ClfA Registered Organisation. Full details of the organisation and staffing will be provided to WCAS upon request.
- 4.2 Paul Gajos MCIfA of GHC will be in overall charge of the project. Ben Barker MA BSc will monitor the work on behalf of the developer.
- 4.3 The main period of fieldwork is anticipated to take up to 6 weeks, with a team of up to 8 archaeologists, commencing in winter/spring 2025. The duration of the archaeological monitoring and recording will be subject to the construction programme.

5 MONITORING

- 5.1 The aims of monitoring are to ensure that the archaeological works are undertaken within the limits set by this specification, and to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority's archaeological advisor.
- 5.2 Ben Barker, Head of Archaeology for GHC, will monitor implementation of the programme of works on behalf of the developer.
- 5.3 WCAS will be given two-weeks' notice of when work is due to commence and will be free to visit the site by prior arrangement with GHC. WCAS will monitor implementation of the programme of works on behalf of the Local Planning Authority and evaluate the work being undertaken on site against the methodology detailed in this specification.

- 5.4 WCAS will also be responsible for considering any changes to the specification of works; any such alterations should be agreed in writing with the relevant parties prior to commencement of on-site works, or at the earliest available opportunity.

6 INSURANCE

- 6.1 The archaeological contractor will produce evidence of Public Liability Insurance to the minimum value of £5m and Professional Indemnity Insurance to the minimum of £5m.

7 HEALTH AND SAFETY

- 7.1 All works will be undertaken in compliance with the Health and Safety at Work Act (1974) and all applicable regulations and Codes of Practice. All archaeological staff will undertake their operations in accordance with safe working practices and will be CSCS certified. At least one First Aider will be present on site at all times.
- 7.2 A site-specific risk assessment will be produced by the appointed archaeological contractor, prior to the commencement of work on site, which will be subject to regular review.
- 7.3 All fieldwork staff will be required to wear suitable Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), including hi-visibility coats/vests, hard hats, safety boots and gloves, as well as safety glasses if required. Suitable PPE and welfare facilities will be provided by the archaeological contractor.
- 7.4 All staff will receive a health and safety induction prior to starting work on site to be provided by the archaeological contractor, and visitors to the site will receive an induction as required. The archaeological contractor will provide all staff on site with copies of all health and safety documentation.
- 7.5 Regular audits of health and safety practices will be carried out during the course of the project by the archaeological contractor in consultation with the site workforce. Toolbox talks on health and safety issues will be conducted at minimum weekly intervals and/or after changes in working practices or identification of new threats/risks. The risk assessment will be reviewed and updated as necessary. Control measures will be implemented as required in response to specific hazards.
- 7.6 Safe working will take priority over the desire to record archaeological features or remains, and where it is considered that recording is dangerous, any such features will be recorded by photography at a safe distance. Excavations greater than safe working depth will be fenced off with netlon safety fencing.
- 7.7 The edges of each excavation area will be battered or stepped at regular intervals to allow egress for wildlife. At least one ends of each trenches should be similarly battered.

- 7.8 The developer will provide plans of all known services prior to excavation, and areas of excavation will be scanned with a Cable Avoidance Tool (CAT) prior to ground works commencing. Necessary measures will be taken to avoid disturbing any services.
- 7.9 Plant operators will be required to produce evidence of qualification within an industry accepted registration scheme. Sub-Contractors health and safety performance will be kept under review and action taken if necessary.
- 7.10 Measures must be taken to keep the access road clean and free from mud.

8 COPYRIGHT AND PUBLICITY

- 8.1 Copyright of the documentation prepared by the archaeological contractor and specialist sub-contractors should be the subject of additional licences in favour of Charles Church, GHC and Wiltshire Council to use such documentation for their statutory and educational functions, and to provide copies to third parties as required.
- 8.2 Under the Environmental Information Regulations (EIR 2005), information submitted to the HER becomes publicly accessible, except where disclosure might lead to environmental damage, and reports cannot be embargoed as 'confidential' or 'commercially sensitive'.
- 8.3 It is recognised that the project may identify remains which are of interest to the public and these may be publicised through appropriate media. Any publicity for the project proposed by the archaeological contractor should be approved by GHC and Charles Church Ltd.
- 8.4 The appointed contractor will not issue any information on the work through media, internet or social media without prior agreement with GHC.
- 8.5 Care will be taken to ensure that any publicity does not compromise the security of archaeological remains that may have been identified or recovered. Any approaches by the press to the archaeological contractor should be referred to GHC in the first instance.

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Figures

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