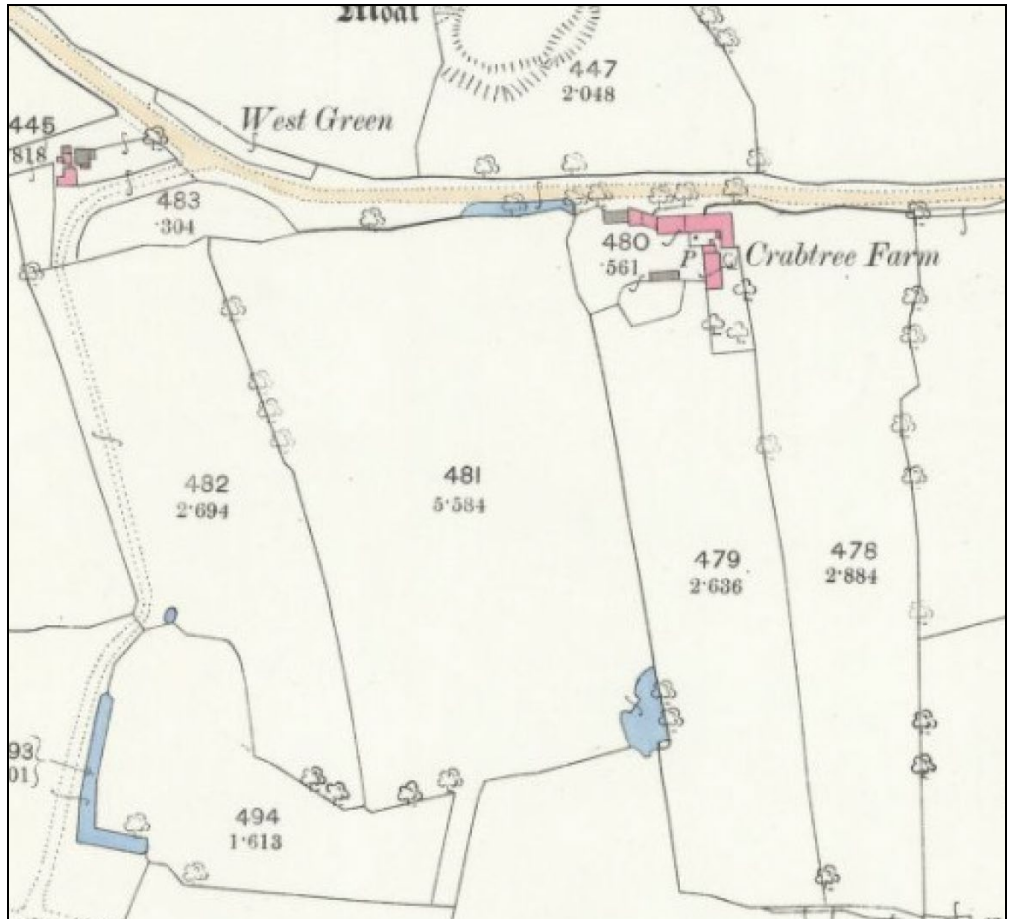


**Land at Crabtree Farm, Hinckley Road,
Barwell, Leicestershire**

(NGR: 443635 296211)



Project Design for an Archaeological Field Evaluation 2024

Planning Ref: 23/01177/FUL
Museum Accession No. X.A20.2024



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For:

Fort Estates Limited

Reporting: Richard Cherrington

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Cover Image: Extract from Ordnance Survey mapping of 1888

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Summary

Benchmark Archaeology (BA) has been commissioned by Fort Estates Limited to undertake a programme of Archaeological Field Evaluation (AFE) on land at Crabtree Farm, Hinckley Road, Barwell, Leicestershire (Site centre @ c. NGR: 443635 296211, Figures 1 - 3).

Fort Estates Limited are currently seeking planning permission (23/01177/FUL) from Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council (HaBBC) for residential development of 45 no. dwelling houses with garage and associated driveway, open space, landscaping, drainage and LEAP (Revised scheme 22/01053/FUL).

The site lies in an area of archaeological potential where archaeological remains with an Iron Age to Post-medieval date range can be anticipated.

Due to the archaeological potential of the site, the Senior Planning Archaeologist (SPA), Leicestershire County Council (LCC) has recommended that an AFE be undertaken prior to any development in order to establish the presence / absence of archaeological remains and advise on requirements for any archaeological mitigation prior to, or during, development.

This document specifies the methodology to be employed during the AFE and is produced at the request of the SPA, LCC.

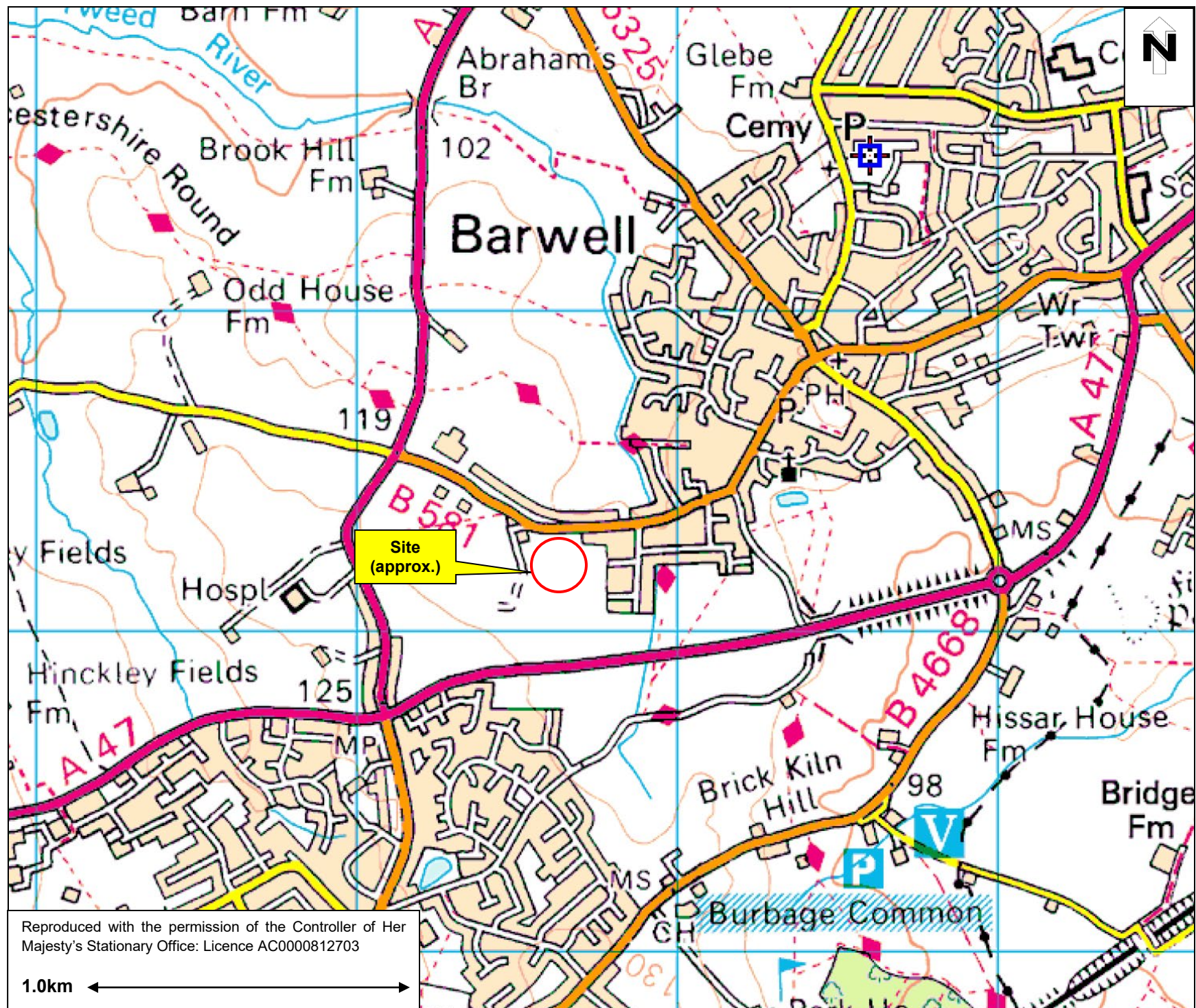


Figure 1: Site Location

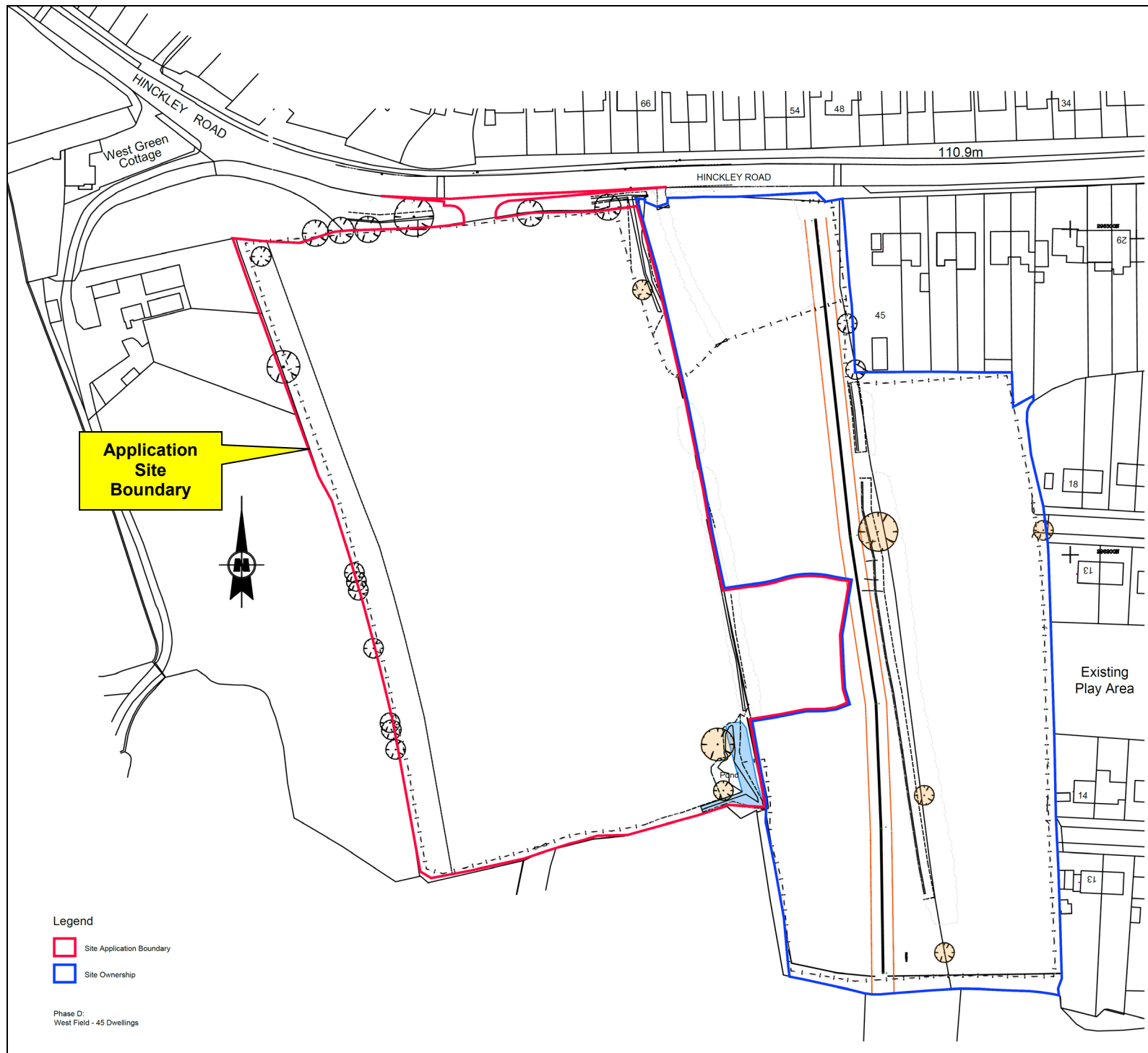


Figure 2: Application Site (not to scale)

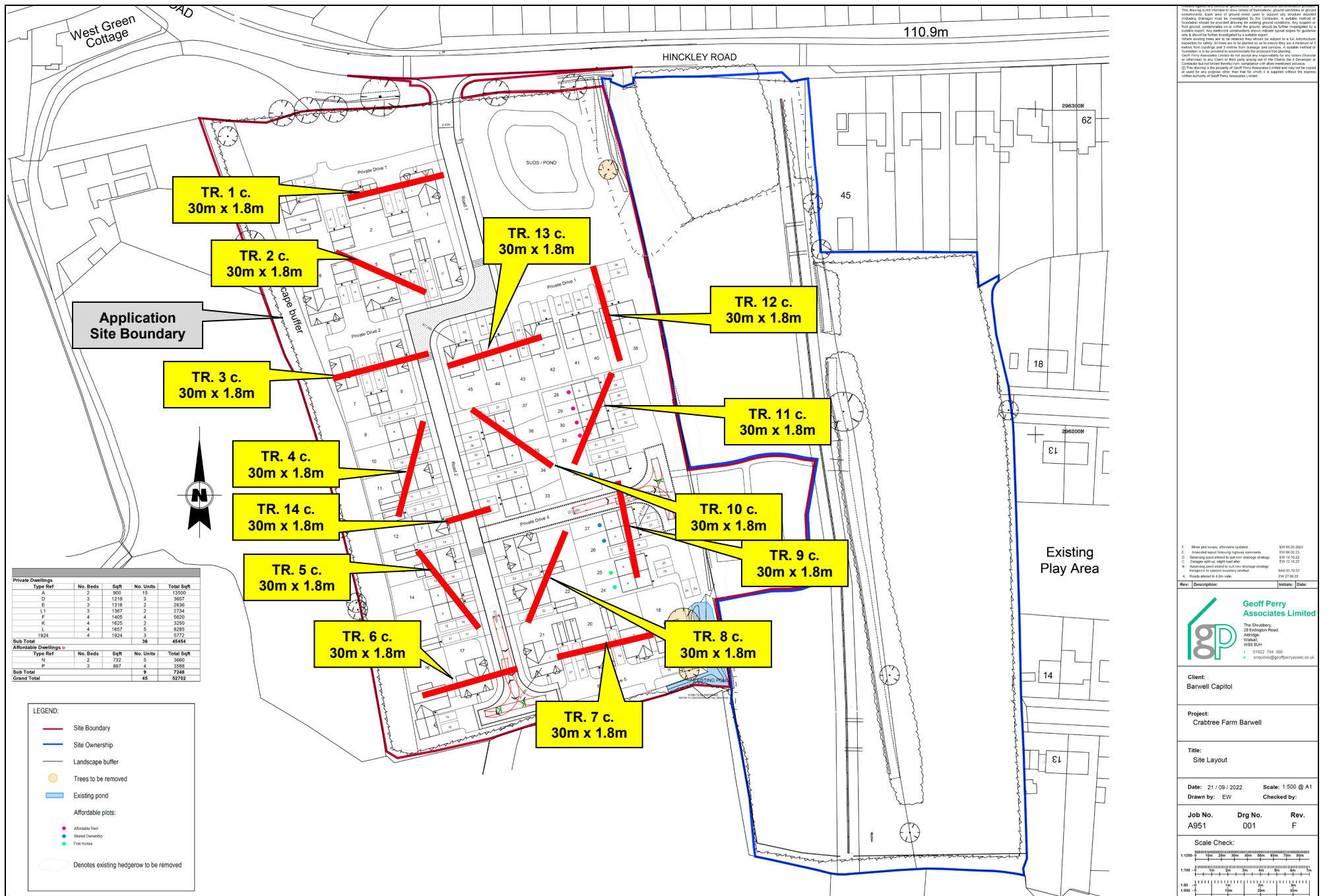


Figure 3: Proposed Development and Proposed Evaluation Trenches

1.0 INTRODUCTION (Figures 1 - 3)

1.1 Project Background

1.1.1 Benchmark Archaeology (BA) has been commissioned by Fort Estates Limited to undertake a programme of Archaeological Field Evaluation (AFE) on land at Crabtree Farm, Hinckley Road, Barwell, Leicestershire (Site centre @ c. NGR: 443635 296211, Figures 1 - 3).

1.1.2 Fort Estates Limited are currently seeking planning permission (23/01177/FUL) from Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council (HaBBC) for residential development of 45 no. dwelling houses with garage and associated driveway, open space, landscaping, drainage and LEAP (Revised scheme 22/01053/FUL).

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1.1.5 This document specifies the methodology to be employed during the AFE and is produced at the request of the SPA, LCC.

1.2 Benchmark Archaeology

1.2.1 BA is an independent archaeological organisation providing a wide range of archaeological services carried out to the highest professional standards. They carry out watching briefs, evaluations, excavations, surveys, desk-based assessments, historic building recording, church and garden archaeology, in addition to other specialist and logistical services. BA is committed to ensuring that the client receives a cost-effective service, while maintaining the highest professional standards, and enhancing the archaeological record. All projects are carried out in accordance with NPPF, the guidance of the Treasure Act (1996), and the guidelines and recommendations issued by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists and English Heritage.

1.2.2 Richard Cherrington is Principal Archaeologist at BA. He has 20 years' experience as a commercial archaeologist working independently and for university and local authority archaeological units in the UK and overseas. He holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Ancient History & Archaeology, a PG Cert in Environmental Management, and a PG Diploma in Practical Archaeology. Richard is an Associate level member of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (ACIfA), a

member of the Council for British Archaeology (CBA), Vernacular Architecture Group (VAG), and the British Brick Society (BBS).

2.0 SITE LOCATION, DESCRIPTION AND GEOLOGY (Figures 1 - 3)

2.1 Location

2.1.1 The site comprises land at Crabtree Farm, Hinckley Road, Barwell, Leicestershire (NGR: 443635 296211, Figures 1 - 4). Barwell is a civil parish and large village in Leicestershire. It was originally known as Borewell, but later became "Barwell", the name in use today. The brook is now called the River Tweed, and is a tributary of the River Trent.

2.2 Description

2.2.1 The AFE area is roughly rectangular in plan and is currently under grass (pasture) cover.

2.3 Geology

2.3.1 The underlying geology of the site comprises mudstone deposits of the Mercia Mudstone Group overlain by Diamicton deposits of the Oadby Member (www.bgs.ac.uk).

2.3.2 The local soilscape is described as slowly permeable seasonally wet slightly acid but base-rich loamy and clayey soils with impeded drainage and of moderate fertility. The soilscape typically supports seasonally wet pasture and woodland habitats. Landcover is grassland and arable with some woodland. General cropping is mostly suited to grass production for dairying or beef; some cereal production often for feed. Timeliness of stocking and fieldwork is important, and wet ground conditions should be avoided at the beginning and end of the growing season to avoid damage to soil structure. Land is tile drained and periodic moling or subsoiling will assist drainage (www.landis.org.uk).

2.3.3 No site-specific geotechnical data was available at the time of writing.

2.4 Topography

2.4.1 The site slopes gently downwards from south – north and lies at a height of c. 112m – 114m AOD.

3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND SUMMARY (with Kelly 2024)

3.1 Introduction (with Kelly 2024)

3.1.1 Consideration of the submitted desk-based assessment (BWB Report Ref.: BMW 2759), and the Leicestershire and Rutland Historic

Environment Record (HER) notes that the site lies within an area of archaeological potential. Evidence for prehistoric activity and Roman remains have been identified within the wider landscape. A rectangular earthwork enclosure thought to represent the remains of a medieval moated site lies immediately west of the site (HER Ref.: MLE2804), with a second similar feature recorded to the north (MLE2818). Recent trial trenching evaluation undertaken in 2021 immediately to the east found evidence for Anglo-Saxon and medieval activity, and subsequent area excavation in 2023 recorded features dating to the Roman, medieval and post-medieval periods.

3.2 Previous Archaeological Work

3.2.1 Programmes of Archaeological Desk-based Assessment (BWB 2021) covering the development site, and Archaeological Field Evaluation (Allen Archaeology Ltd. 2021) and Archaeological Strip, Map and Sample Excavation (Cherrington 2023) immediately to the east of the site have been undertaken. Summaries of the results of these projects appear below:

Archaeological Desk-based Assessment (BWB 2021)

- *The archaeological desk-based assessment has established that there is low potential for archaeological remains, given its undeveloped nature and uninterrupted use as agricultural land away from known settlement. Archaeological investigation undertaken within the eastern part of the site found evidence for activity dating between the Saxon and post-medieval period although the extent of this was limited. Further investigation will be undertaken within the northeastern part of the site to provide more detail on the archaeology encountered.*

Archaeological Field Evaluation (Allen Archaeology Ltd. 2021)

- *Archaeological remains were exposed in two of the seven trenches, consisting of linear ditches and furrows, and potentially representing several different phases of activity. Ditches [612] and [614] at the east end of Trench 6 appear in plan to possibly form one corner of a rectangular enclosure, with ditches [704] and [706] at the southeast end of Trench 7 forming another corner. A Mesolithic/Early Neolithic flint bladelet, very likely to be residual, was recovered from the fill of ditch [704] and a sherd of possible Anglo-Saxon pottery from ditch [706]. If this interpretation is correct, most of the enclosure is likely to extend beyond the site boundary to the east. Environmental samples from the features were limited in composition, containing only small amounts of charred cereal grains, likely to be scattered, wind-blown refuse, rather dumping directly into the features. Several of the linear features in Trench 6 were orientated north-northwest to southsoutheast, consistent with previous recording of furrows at the site (BWB 2018). A wide, shallow ditch in Trench 7 produced a single sherd of medieval pottery. This is on a different alignment to the ridge and furrow previously identified and may represent a different period of land division, but little can be inferred from a single sherd. The evidence suggests a negligible archaeological potential for much of the site, but a focus of possible activity has been identified in the northeastern part of the site, around Trenches 6 and 7, potentially dating to the Anglo-Saxon to medieval periods.*

Archaeological Strip, Map and Sample Excavation (Cherrington 2023)

- *ASMSE at the site has demonstrated activity of Romano-British (43AD – 409AD) and Medieval (1066AD – 1539AD) date in the form of residual pottery and CBM, and 12th Century archaeological features respectively. A single 18th Century feature (F108) was also recorded.*
- *In contrast to the previous field evaluation (Allen Archaeology Ltd. 2021) no further evidence for Prehistoric (500,000BC – 42AD) or Anglo-Saxon (410AD – 1065AD) activity was recorded.*
- *The 12th Century features have been interpreted as probable field boundaries (F102 and F108), a pit or possible tree-hole reused for refuse (F119), and elements of a large probable rectilinear stock enclosure. Features F102 and F114 extended beyond the confines of the site.*
- *Environmental analysis of deposits (121 and 122) from a 12th Century pit / tree-hole (F119) were relatively rich, with cereals being particularly abundant. It would appear most likely that the remains are derived from mixed refuse, including possible midden waste along with cereal storage detritus, with the latter including contaminant seeds of a similar size to the grains. Such material would have been removed from the store on an annual basis, in order to make room for the new season's crop.*
- *Many of the remaining undated features (F104, F106, F112, F116, F124 and F126), given the similarity of the feature fills to the 12th Century features, may be of the same date. The modern features (marked red on Figure 5) are associated with drainage and are probably 19th Century in date.*

4.0 PROJECT AIMS AND METHODOLOGY (Figure 3)

4.1 Archaeological Field Evaluation (Trial Trenching)

4.1.1 The Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) defines Archaeological Field Evaluation (AFE) as *“a limited programme of non-intrusive and/or intrusive fieldwork which determines the presence or absence of archaeological features, structures, deposits, artefacts or ecofacts within a specified area or site on land, inter-tidal zone or underwater. 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”*. (CIfA 2020).

4.1.2 The CIfA states that the purpose of AFE is: *“to gain information about the archaeological resource within a given area or site (including its presence or absence, character, extent, date, integrity, state of preservation and quality), in order to make an assessment of its merit in the appropriate context”* (ibid).

4.1.3 Upon completion, the CIfA suggests that AFE may lead leading to one or more of the following:

- *The formulation of a strategy to ensure the recording, preservation or management of the resource*

- *The formulation of a strategy to mitigate a threat to the archaeological resource*
 - *The formulation of a proposal for further archaeological investigation within a programme of research*
- 4.1.4 The purpose of the work is to define the character, date, and extent of archaeological remains that exist in the area under consideration, and to facilitate discussions regarding the need for preservation or other mitigation measures in any future potential development.
- 4.1.5 The AFE will seek to assess, amongst other variables, the presence, absence, depth, quality, date and condition of preservation of archaeological remains and paleoenvironmental deposits that lie within areas identified as of potential archaeological significance.
- 4.1.6 It is proposed that AFE at the site will comprise the excavation of 14 no. trenches (Trenches 1 - 14, Figure 3) amounting to 737m² (4% sample) of trenching. An amount of contingency trenching (1%, sample 184m²) may be required by the SPA, LCC to answer specific and significant research questions.
- 4.1.7 A representative number of archaeological features will be sample excavated by hand in order to determine the date, character etc. of features encountered. The following sample excavation percentages for typical features are envisaged:
- *Linear features: 25%*
 - *Post-holes: 50%*
 - *Pits: 50%*
 - *Suitable datable waterlogged deposits: to be environmentally sampled (see section 4.1.9 below)*
- 4.1.8 Other features such as stone structures, floor / occupation layers and kilns / furnaces will be identified, sampled and recorded within the parameters of the evaluation and in a manner not causing any unnecessary damage to important remains which may require preservation or further mitigation works. The treatment of any human remains encountered are discussed in section 4.1.9 below
- 4.1.9 To achieve the AFE aims, the following fieldwork methodology will be adopted as appropriate:
- *All archaeological operations will take into account personal safety and follow current Health and Safety legislation.*
 - *Trenches will be surveyed and located to an accuracy of 0.1m or greater using tapes, plane table or EDM equipment.*
 - *Tarmacadam, concrete and other hardstanding will be stripped using a mechanical excavator fitted with a suitable bucket. It may be necessary to utilise a breaker, toothed bucket or other plant to remove any hardstanding, but for archaeological purposes a toothless ditching bucket will be used*

below this horizon. This machine excavation will be carried out under constant archaeological supervision.

- Mechanical excavations will take place to a level of either natural deposits or when archaeological horizons are encountered.
- If archaeological horizons are encountered then subsequent excavations will be undertaken by hand.
- Trench plans will be drawn at scale 1:50 and 1:20 as appropriate and located on a site plan. Sections will be drawn at scale 1:20 or 1:10 as appropriate.
- All finds and samples will be exposed, lifted, cleaned, conserved, marked, bagged and boxed in accordance with the United Kingdom Institute for Conservation Guidelines 2. Advice will be taken on an appropriate environmental sampling strategy, where appropriate.
- If appropriate, environmental samples will be taken from features to enable their date, nature, extant and condition to be described and analysed. Environmental sampling guidelines provided by English Heritage (2011) will be adhered to. Bulk environmental samples from dateable deposits will recover 40 litres of material with the aim of processing the samples within two weeks of recovery. Where smaller volumes of dateable deposits are encountered, sampling will aim to recover the maximum amount possible. Smaller samples may be appropriate for particularly rich / waterlogged deposits. Sampling procedures will be carried out in line with English Heritage guidelines (2011) and the advice of the nominated project specialist.
- Where deemed appropriate the advice of the relevant Historic England Regional Science Advisor will be sought in relation to the collection of palaeoenvironmental material, industrial residues or other relevant scientific material.
- Where appropriate, specialist analysis of artefacts will be carried out by recognised experts.
- All 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 regulations. It will also be carried out in accordance with relevant health and safety legislation pertaining to the removal of human remains. The landowner / developer, coroner and SPA, LCC will be informed of the discovery of any human remains.
- Registers will be maintained of all photographs, levels, plans, sections, finds and samples taken, made or gathered in the field.
- Photography will be carried out using 35mm SLR cameras, supplemented by digital images. Archaeological deposits and features will be photographed on monochrome film. Digital images in TIFF format will be taken with a Nikon D3500 DSLR which includes a 24 megapixel sensor. Information boards, scales and north arrows will be included in the images.
- A detailed context record will be maintained on individual pro-forma record cards. Each archaeological layer, fill, cut, etc., will be individually numbered and described.
- Trenches will be back-filled subject to agreement with the curatorial monitoring authority.
- All stages of the project will be carried out in accordance with the requirements established in the English Heritage volume entitled

'Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment: The MoRPHE Project Managers' Guide'.

- *The project will be carried out in accordance with recommendations made by the following Chartered Institute for Archaeologists documents: "Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation" (2020), 'Code of Conduct' (2019) and Standard and Guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological material' (2014).*
- *Guidance from the following documents will be sought: The Role of the Human Osteologist in an Archaeological Fieldwork Project (2018); the Advisory Panel on the Archaeology of Burials in England (APABE) documents Science and the Dead: A guideline for the destructive sampling of archaeological human remains for scientific analysis (2013), Large Burial Grounds Guidance on sampling in archaeological fieldwork projects (2015), and Guidance for best practice for treatment of human remains excavated from Christian burial grounds in England (2017); and the ClfA guidelines, Updated Guidelines to the Standards for Recording Human Remains (ClfA, 2017).*
- *Guidance will be followed from the following Historic England documents as appropriate: Animal Bones and Archaeology (2019); Geoarchaeology: Using earth sciences to understand the archaeological record (2015); Waterlogged Organic Artefacts: Guidelines on Their Recovery, Analysis and Conservation (2018b); and Waterlogged Wood: Guidelines on the Recovery, Sampling, Conservation and Curation of Waterlogged Wood (2010).*
- *Finds will be collected, recorded and retained in line with the ClfA 'Toolkit for Selecting Archaeological Archives' (ClfA 2019a) and guidance described in Preparation of Archaeological Archives: Selection, Retention and Dispersal of Archaeological Collections (2010) and the ClfA documents Standard and Guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials (2014b)*
- *The work will be conducted in accordance with the relevant ClfA Standard and Guidance documents, Historic England guidance and LCC 'Generic Brief for Archaeological Field Evaluation (Trial Trenching).*
- *Pottery reports will refer to the appropriate (Leicestershire) county type series.*
- *Due consideration will be paid to the welfare of wildlife / flora during the fieldwork and wildlife egress from excavated trenches will be taken into account.*

4.2 Research Frameworks

- 4.2.1 Following the fieldwork and post-excavation analysis, consideration will be given as to how the project has contributed to the regional research agenda (East Midlands Historic Environment Research Framework). The relevant periods are the Romano-British, Early Medieval and High Medieval periods. Any comments will be offered using the online reporting tool.

5.0 MONITORING

- 5.1 The work will be monitored by the SPA, LCC on behalf of the local planning authority. Curatorial monitoring will include reviewing of fieldwork, progress of excavation reports, archive preparation and final deposition.
- 5.2 The SPA, LCC will be given due notice of the commencement of the archaeological programme. Prior to the start of works, BA will provide a timetable of proposed works and ensure that the SPA, LCC is kept regularly informed regarding progress of the project.
- 5.3 The SPA, LCC will be informed of any significant variation to the agreed programme of works and will be supplied with appropriate justification or explanation for doing so.

6.0 REPORTING AND ARCHIVE

- 6.1 An illustrated report in PDF/A format summarising the findings of the AFE will be submitted to the SPA, LCC upon the completion of the project. Copies of the report will be presented to the Leicestershire County Historic Environment Record. A further copy of the report will be presented to the relevant Local Planning Authority Planning Officer. A summary of the findings will be submitted to the relevant journals. On the completion of the fieldwork, an online OASIS form will be completed and report uploaded. The digital archive will be deposited with ADS.
- 6.2 The results of the work will be presented as a fully illustrated report produced in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists '*Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation*' (2020).
- 6.3 Guidance in the following documents will also be followed: '*The transfer of archaeological archives to Leicestershire County Council museum collections*' (Leicestershire County Council 2014), '*Standards in the museum care of archaeological collections*' (MGC 1992) '*guidelines for the preparation of site archives*' and assessments for all finds (other than fired clay objects) (Roman finds group and finds research group ad 700-1700 1993) and '*Archaeological archives. A guide to best practice in creation, compilation, transfer and curation*' (Brown 2007). The Leicestershire County Council museum accession number is X.A20.2024.
- 6.4 Any finds of archaeological interest will be appropriately conserved and deposited with an appropriate institution subject to agreement with the landowner.
- 6.5 Results of the project, even if negative, will be submitted for publication in appropriate academic journals. As a minimum, a

summary of findings will be submitted to the *'Transactions of the Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society'*.

7.0 RESOURCES AND TIMETABLE

- 7.1 The project will be under the management of Richard Cherrington BA, PG Cert, PG Dip Archaeol, ACIfA, Principal Archaeologist, BA, who will also undertake and supervise the AFE. If necessary, specialists will be commissioned for post-excavation analysis, subject to the approval of the SPA, LCC. Fieldwork assistance will be supplied by Jack Cook and staff from Cornerstone Archaeology as required. Logistical assistants undertaking non-archaeological tasks may also be engaged.
- 7.2 It is envisaged that machine trench excavation and backfilling will take c. 2 - 4 days. It is anticipated that a draft report will be produced no later than 6 weeks after the completion of fieldwork (subject to the availability of any specialists required).
- 7.3 The client has expressed the wish to commence the AFE at the earliest opportunity subject to approval by the SPA, LCC.

8.0 HEALTH AND SAFETY

- 8.1 BA operates to the highest professional standards, in keeping with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) codes of conduct, adhering to Health and Safety legislation and also following the Standing Conference of Archaeological Unit Managers (SCAUM) guidelines on health and safety in archaeology. All archaeological fieldwork staff are CSCS qualified and have CIfA membership.
- 8.2 BA will follow any proper instruction given by the Site Foreman, Clerk of Works, Site Manager, security personnel or advisors to the client, for the purposes of project health and safety.

9.0 INSURANCE

- 9.1 Richard Cherrington T/A Benchmark Archaeology holds Public Liability Insurance to a limit of £5,000,000, Employers Liability Insurance to a limit of £10,000,000, and Professional Indemnity Insurance to a limit of £250,000. No claims have been made or are pending against these policies.

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- Formal Garden Archaeology
- Church Archaeology
- Historic Building Recording
- Surveys
- Desk-Based Assessments
- Consultancy
- EIA's
- Heritage Statements

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