



UNIVERSITY OF
LEICESTER

Archaeological Services

Written Scheme of Investigation for Archaeological Field Evaluation

Site: MIRA Drive, Lindley, HORIBA MIRA, Nuneaton CV10 0TU

NGR: SP 37124 95850

Client: HORIBA MIRA

Planning Authority: Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council

Planning Ref: 22/00941/FUL

ULAS Job No: 23-579

Acc No/Site Code: X.A97.2023

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Written scheme of investigation for Archaeological Field evaluation

1. Introduction

Definition and scope of the project

- 1.1 This document is a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for a programme of archaeological evaluation on land at HORIBA MIRA, Nuneaton CV10 0TU in accordance with National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF): Section 16 Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment (MHCLG 2021) and will be submitted to the Planning Archaeologist for approval prior to any archaeological work taking place.
- 1.2 This WSI was commissioned by HORIBA MIRA. The fieldwork specified below is intended to provide preliminary indications of the character and extent of any heritage assets in order that the potential impact of the development on such remains may be assessed by the Planning Authority. It addresses the requirements of the Local Planning Authority for a scheme of work comprising archaeological evaluation.

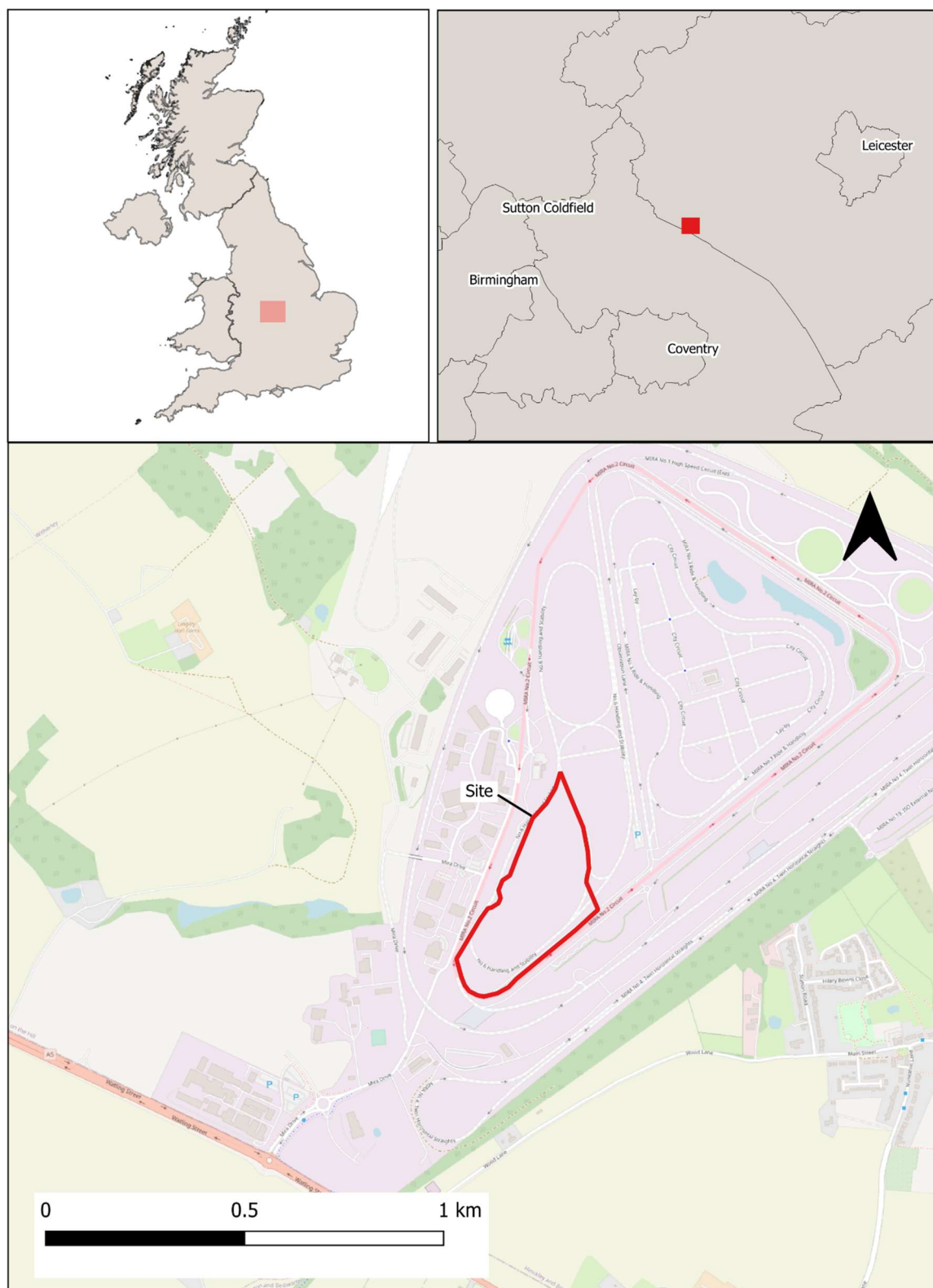
2. Background

Context of the Project

- 2.1 The site lies within the parish of Higham-on-the-Hill, in the District of Hinckley and Bosworth, Leicestershire, around 5 miles north-west of Hinckley and 5 miles south-east of Atherstone (Figure 1). It is demarcated by the A5 (Roman Watling Street) to the south; which is the border with Warwickshire. The dismantled Ashby and Nuneaton Joint Railway runs to the south-east of the site and to the north- west and north-east lie fields and local roads. The total area of the MIRA site is around 310 hectares
- 2.2 To the east of the proposed development area are multiple buildings associated with the headquarters. To the north east of the PDA is the majority of the proving grounds. To the south is Higham on the Hill, with intervening hedgerows between the residential area and the headquarters.
- 2.3 Planning permission has been granted for construction of a 7MW solar array and associated works (planning reference 22/00941/FUL). The Planning Authority have granted Planning Permission (Condition 4 parts 1 and 2) subject to an archaeological condition for a staged programme of work commencing with trial trenching evaluation.

Topography and Geology

- 2.4 The PDA comprises grassland and is bounded by a small road or test track which forms part of the larger proving grounds on the headquarters site. It lies within the runway area of the WW2 airfield.
- 2.5 The British Geological Survey website indicates that the underlying bedrock geology throughout the site is likely to be Mercia Mudstone Group with superficial deposits of Thrussington Member (<https://www.bgs.ac.uk/map-viewers/geology-of-britain-viewer/>).
- 2.6 The Soilscape website indicates that the soils, in the northern part of the site will be **Soilscape 18**: Slowly permeable seasonally wet slightly acid but base-rich loamy and clayey soils, and in the southern part of the site **Soilscape 8**: Slightly acid loamy and clayey soils with impeded drainage (Soilscape <http://www.landis.org.uk/soilscales/>).



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Created by: Score, Vicki
Created on: 12/09/2023

Figure 1: Location of site
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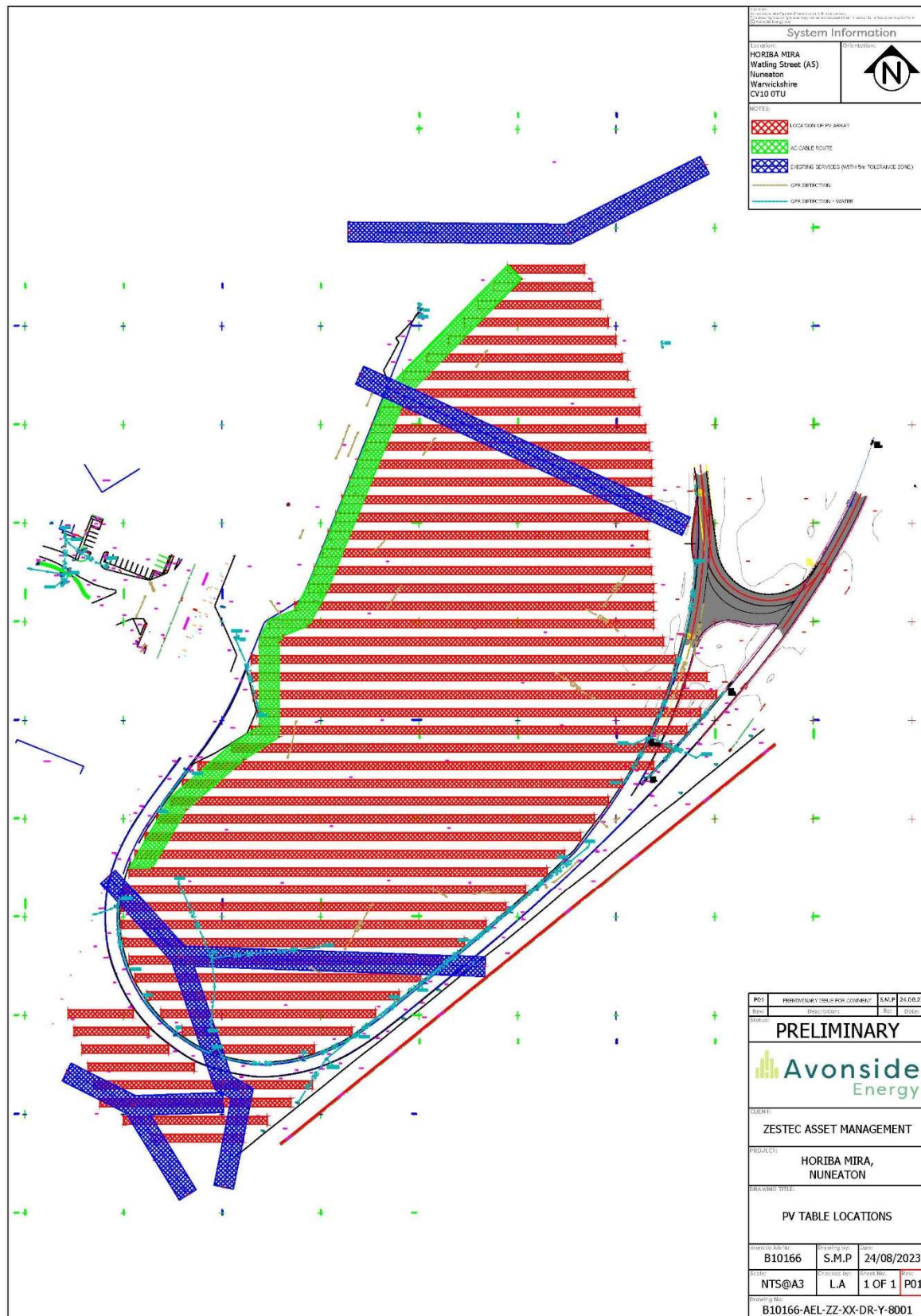


Figure 2: Detail of Site location. Provided by client

Historical and Archaeological Background

- 2.8 The Historic Environment Record (HER) for Leicestershire and Rutland shows that the assessment area lies on the site of the old Lindley Airfield (HER Ref. **MLE15973**). The site also lies on the site of the deserted parish of Rowden (**MLE2795**) and adjacent to earthworks associated with the abandoned village of Lindley (**MLE2792**). There are also enclosures dating from the Iron Age adjacent to the site (**MLE9578**) and other prehistoric sites are located nearby (**MLE8245**, **MLE6080** and Warks HER No. **4420 & 4501**).
- 2.9 The southern part of the site lies adjacent to the A5 Watling Street, a former Roman Road (**MLE1388**) and the Mancetter Roman Road has been projected to run to the north of the site (**MLE3019**). Roman pottery has been found within the former Lindley parish at the edge of the assessment area (**MLE8503**) and a large amount has been found further to the south (Warks HER No. **7439**). Roman coins have also been retrieved from two hoards to the south (Warks HER No. **5141**) of the site and near Harper's Hill, around 800m south-east of the site (Warks HER No. **1653**).

Previous archaeological work

- 2.10 A number of archaeological interventions have been carried out across the MIRA site. A trial evaluation (Thomas 2011) and following excavation (Flavell 2014) located evidence of Roman occupation to the south-west bounded by the A5.
- 2.11 Further trenching to the south-east for the proposed Training Centre (Higgins 2014) and a follow up SMS (Flavell 2017) revealed a small number of Roman features.
- 2.12 A series of archaeological interventions were carried out to the north of the development area for construction of a new high-speed autonomous vehicle test track facility including a desk based assessment (Hunt 2018a), Magnetometer survey (Gater 2018), Field walking (González Rodríguez 2018a), Metal Detector surveys (Beamish 2018b, González Rodríguez 2018b, González Rodríguez et al 2018), Aerial LiDAR (Beamish 2018a), Trench Evaluation (Hunt 2018b), Impact on Setting (Beamish 2018c) and Battlefield re-appraisal (Foard 2018) culminating in a controlled archaeological soil strip of the area (Reeds & Beamish 2021).
- 2.13 A geophysical survey was carried out across the PDA identifying several potential linear features, former field boundaries, modern ploughing and field drains (Fig. 3).

3. Aims and Objectives

- 3.1 The main objectives of the archaeological work are:
- To identify the presence/absence of any archaeological deposits.
 - To establish the character, extent and date range and significance of any surviving archaeological deposits.
 - To establish the ecofactual and environmental potential of any archaeological deposits and features encountered.
 - To provide sufficient information on the archaeological potential of the site to assess the impact of the proposed development on cultural heritage and to help formulate a mitigation strategy
 - To record any archaeological deposits and produce an archive and report of any results.

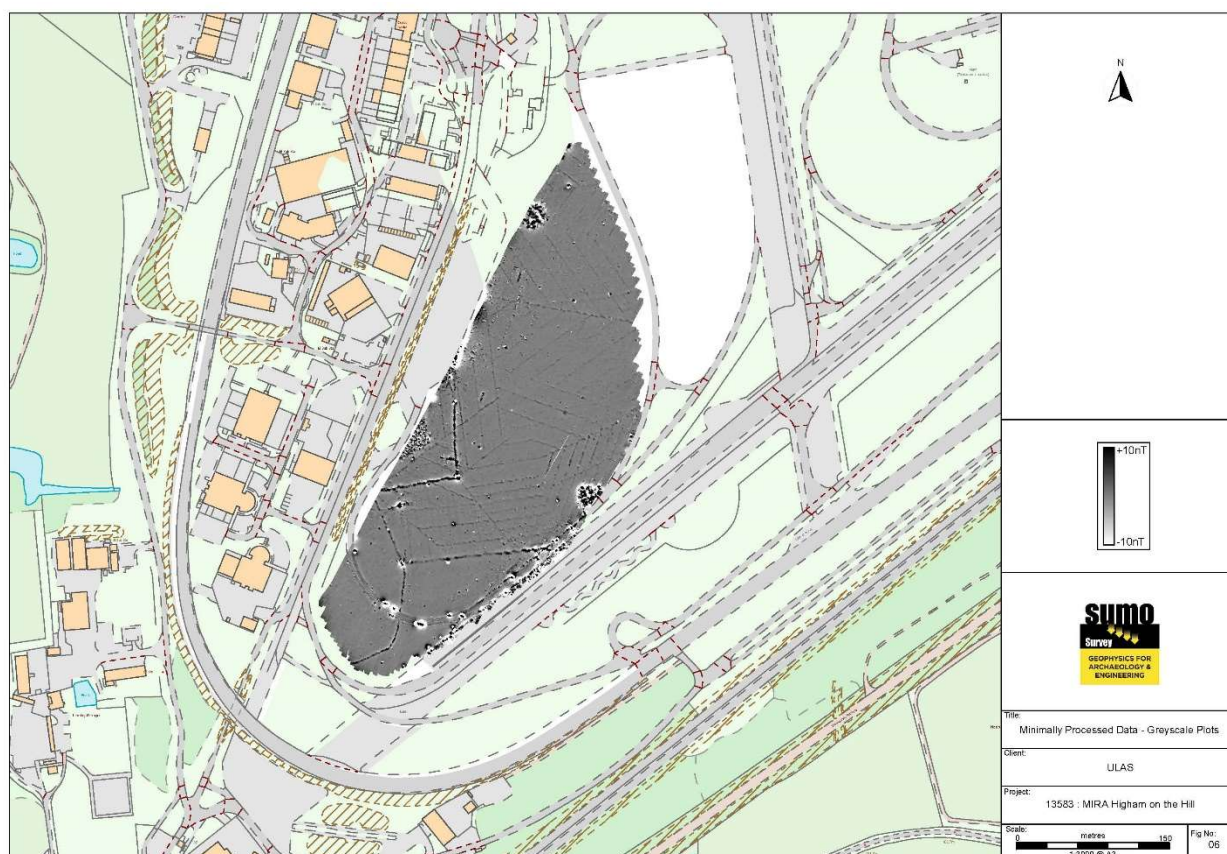


Figure 3: Geophysical survey results

- 3.2 The results of the evaluation will provide information in order for the local planning authority to make informed recommendations and to identify an appropriate mitigation strategy for the proposed development.

Research Objectives

- 3.3 While the nature, extent and quality of archaeological remains within the areas of investigation for the project remain unknown until archaeological work is undertaken, it is possible to determine some initial objectives derived from *The Archaeology of the East Midlands: An Archaeological Resource Assessment and Research Agenda* (Cooper 2006) and *East Midlands Heritage: An Updated Research Agenda and Strategy for the Historic Environment of the East Midlands* (Knight et al 2012).
- 3.4 The evaluation may contribute towards research into the origins and development of prehistoric artefact chronology and settlement patterns, and Roman settlement, landscape and society. Environmental evidence could provide information on local environmental conditions as well as settlement activity, craft, industry and land use. Artefacts can assist in the development of a type series within the region and provide evidence for evidence for craft, industry and exchange across broad landscape areas.
- 3.5 There is low potential for archaeology within the study area. although Roman remains have been found in the vicinity and the site lies within the WW2 airfield. The evaluation therefore has the potential to contribute to the following research aims:

5. Roman

- 5H Investigate landscape contexts of rural settlements.

- 5I Support research and publication of landscape syntheses.

9 Modern

- 9H Provide strategic directions and information for agri-environment schemes
- 9J War in towns: research the urban infrastructure of war

- 3.6 These research aims have been identified based on the current state of knowledge within the area of the scheme. The research aims will be re-assessed and updated during the course of the fieldwork.

4. Constraints

- 4.1 Access to the MIRA site is through the main entrance off the A5.
- 4.2 There are no known ecological constraints.
- 4.3 There are a number of services present including storm drainage and AC cable route., along with GPR detected services (Fig 2). Trenches have been laid out to avoid these.

5. Methodology

- 5.1 All work will be carried out in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (2020) and adhere to their *Code of Conduct* (2021).
- 5.2 Any significant variations to the proposed methodology set out below will be discussed and agreed with the planning archaeologist and client in advance of implementation.
- 5.3 The accession number (**X.A97.2023**) will be used to identify all records and artefacts.
- 5.4 Prior to machining of the trenches, general photographs of the site will be taken.
- 5.5 Evaluation trenches will be set out on OS National Grid (NGR) co-ordinates using an appropriate methodology. The position and size of trenches may be adjusted on site to account for constraints, with the approval of the planning archaeologist.
- 5.6 A total of thirty trenches (30m long x 1.8m wide) are proposed to provide coverage of the development area (Fig. 4), while avoiding the site constraints of drainage, and GPR detected services, and also in between the areas of the PV arrays (in red)



Figure 4: Proposed Trench plan (trenches in yellow).

- 5.7 Excavation will be carried out with a machine appropriate for the work fitted with a flat-bladed bucket to expose the underlying strata.
- 5.8 Topsoil and overburden will be removed carefully in level spits, under continuous archaeological supervision. The trenches will be excavated down to the top of archaeological deposits or natural undisturbed ground, whichever is reached first. All excavation by machine and hand will be undertaken with a view to avoid damage to archaeological deposits or features which appear worthy of preservation in situ or more detailed investigation than for the purposes of evaluation. Where structures, features or

- finds appear to merit preservation in situ, they will be adequately protected from deterioration.
- 5.9 All exposed features will be investigated (unless otherwise agreed with the Planning Archaeologist). Archaeological deposits will be recorded in plan and excavated using standard ULAS procedures.
- 5.10 As a minimum discrete features will be half-sectioned where possible; a 1m wide section of each linear feature will be excavated.
- 5.11 The ULAS recording manual will be used as a guide for all recording. Individual descriptions of all archaeological strata and features excavated or exposed will be entered onto pro-forma recording sheets.
- 5.12 A site plan will be prepared showing the location of the areas examined in relationship to the overall investigation area and Ordnance Survey National Grid. Measured drawings of all archaeological features will be prepared and tied into the overall site plan. The relative height of all principal strata and features will be recorded and tied into OD heights.
- 5.13 Excavated trench locations will be recorded by an appropriate method and be tied in to the Ordnance Survey National Grid.
- 5.14 A photographic record of the investigations will be prepared, illustrating in both detail and general context the principal features and finds discovered and their location and context. The photographic record will also include overall site and working shots to illustrate more generally the nature of the archaeological operation mounted.
- 5.15 A photographic record of the investigations will be prepared. This will include photographs illustrating in both detail and general context the principal features and finds discovered. The photographic record will also include 'working shots' to illustrate more generally the nature of the archaeological work.
- 5.16 All photographs (except general or publicity shots) will be taken with a high resolution digital camera and will include a suitable scale bar, north arrow and information to identify the site and where appropriate the context.
- 5.17 The photographic record will follow the standards set out in Historic England 2015, *Digital Image Capture and File Storage* and the standards required by Archaeology Data Service (ADS) for storage and archiving <https://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/advice/Downloads.xhtml>
- 5.18 This record will be compiled and checked during the course of the excavations, and all site records and finds will be kept securely.
- 5.19 After completion of the trenching, following prior agreement with the Planning Archaeologist, excavated trenches will be backfilled with the excavated arisings.

Contingency Provisions

- 5.20 While ULAS attempts to foresee and make allowances for all possible site specific constraints, there may on occasion be unusual circumstances which have not been included in the programme or quote, which may entail additional costs and/or time for the client. These could include: unavoidable delays due to bad weather, vandalism, poor ground conditions, areas requiring shoring or stepping, unknown contamination or services, further work required by the Planning Archaeologist (e.g., extensions to

trenches, extra trenches or changes to excavation sample sizes) or significant archaeological deposits that may require specialist input.

- 5.21 In the event of potentially significant archaeological deposits being found or further work being required for which the resources allocated are not sufficient or which are of sufficient significance to merit an alternative approach the archaeologist will inform the client, the planning archaeologist and the planning authority in order for detailed discussion between all relevant parties to take place. Following assessment of the archaeological remains ULAS shall, if required, implement an amended scheme of investigation on behalf of the client as appropriate.

Monitoring

- 5.22 Notification of the start of the site works will be made to the Planning Archaeologist prior to commencement of the **archaeological** work in order that monitoring arrangements can be made. All monitoring shall be carried out in accordance with the *CIfA Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (2020).
- 5.23 Internal monitoring procedures will be undertaken including visits to the site by the project manager. These will ensure that project targets are met and professional standards are maintained. Provision will be made for external monitoring meetings with the Planning Archaeologist, Planning Authority and the Client, if required, subject to the health and safety requirements of the site.

6. Finds

- 6.1 All finds and samples will be bagged separately, marked with the accession number/site code and related to the context record. All artefacts will be recovered and retained for processing and analysis in accordance with *Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials* (CIfA 2020).
- 6.2 All identified finds and artefacts are to be retained, although certain classes of building material will, in some circumstances, be discarded after recording with the approval of the Planning Archaeologist.
- 6.3 All objects or remains of archaeological interest, discovered in or under the Site during the carrying out of the project by ULAS or during works carried out on the Site by the Client other than articles subject to the Treasure Act, shall be deemed to be the property of ULAS provided that ULAS after due examination shall transfer ownership of all Archaeological Discoveries unconditionally to the appropriate authority for storage in perpetuity.

Treasure

- 6.4 In the event of discovery of artefacts that might constitute Treasure under the definition of The Treasure Act 1996 and its revisions (Treasure (Designation) Order 2002), these will be excavated and removed to a safe place. The client, Coroner, the Planning Archaeologist and the Finds Liaison Officer (FLO) will be informed immediately. A treasure receipt will be completed and submitted to the Coroner's Office and the FLO within 14 days.

Human Remains

- 6.5 If human remains are encountered they will be left in situ. ULAS will inform the client and the Planning Archaeologist immediately. If excavation of human remains is required ULAS will obtain a Ministry of Justice Licence (Section 25 of the Burial Act

1857). All excavation and post-excavation will also be in accordance with the standards set out in CIfA *Technical Paper 7: Guidelines to the Standards for Recording Human remains* (Brickley and McKinley 2004) and *Updated Guidelines to the Standards for Recording Human Remains* (CIfA 2017). The final placing of human remains following analysis will be subject to the requirements of the Ministry of Justice License.

7. Environmental Samples

- 7.1 All environmental work will be undertaken in accordance with Historic England guidelines (*Environmental Archaeology: A guide to the theory and practice of methods, from sampling and recovery to post-excavation*. 2011).
- 7.2 Although the environmental potential of the site is uncertain, if significant archaeological features are sample excavated, the following environmental sampling strategy will be adopted, following consultation with the ULAS Environmental Officer.
- A range of features to represent all feature types, areas and phases will be selected on a judgmental basis. The criteria for selection will be that deposits are datable, well-sealed and with little intrusive or residual material.
 - Any buried soils or well-sealed deposits with concentrations of carbonised material present will be intensively sampled taking a known proportion of the deposit.
 - Spot samples will be taken where concentrations of environmental remains are located.
 - Waterlogged remains, if present, will be sampled for pollen, plant macrofossils, insect remains and radiocarbon dating provided that they are uncontaminated.
 - Waterlogged remains, if present, will be sampled for pollen, plant macrofossils, insect remains and radiocarbon dating provided that they are uncontaminated.
- 7.3 All collected samples will be labelled with the accession number/site code, context and sequential sample numbers.
- 7.4 Appropriate contexts (i.e. datable) will be bulk sampled (50 litres or the whole context depending on size) for the recovery of carbonised plant remains and insects.
- 7.5 Recovery of small animal bones, bird bone and large molluscs will normally be achieved through processing other bulk samples or 50 litre samples may be taken specifically to sample particularly rich deposits.
- 7.6 Wet sieving with flotation will be carried out using a sieving tank with a 0.5mm mesh and a 0.3mm flotation sieve. The small size mesh will be used initially as flotation of plant remains may be incomplete and some may remain in the residue. The residue >0.5mm from the tank will be separated into coarse fractions of over 4mm and fine fractions of >0.5-4mm. The coarse fractions will be sorted for finds. The fine fractions and flots will be evaluated and prioritised; only those with remains apparent will be sorted. The prioritised flots will not be sorted until the analysis stage when phasing information is available. Flots will be scanned and plant remains from selected contexts will be identified and further sampling, sieving and sorting targeted towards higher potential deposits.
- 7.7 Where evidence of industrial processes are present (e.g. indicated by the presence of slag or hearth bases), samples will be taken for the analysis of industrial residues (e.g. hammer scale).

Scientific Dating

- 7.8 Due care will be taken to identify deposits and structures which may have potential for scientific dating. Suitable samples for radiocarbon dating will be subsampled from the processed and identified plant remains in the bulk samples and monolith sample (if taken) as deemed appropriate. Consideration will also be given to the use of Dendrochronology, Archaeomagnetic dating, Thermoluminescence and Optical Luminescence Dating (TL and OSL). Specialists will be consulted in this regard and where deemed appropriate to provide advice and where necessary supervise sampling, take readings and undertake post-excavation reporting.

8. Timetable and Personnel

- 8.1 The start date is TBC subject to approval of the WSI.
- 8.2 This project will be under the management of John Thomas (MCIfA). The Project Manager will direct the overall conduct of the evaluation as required during the period of fieldwork. Day to day responsibility will rest with the Site Supervisor who will be on-site throughout the project.
- 8.3 The site supervisor will carry out the post-excavation work, with time allocated within the costing of the project for analysis of any artefacts found on the site by the relevant in-house specialists at ULAS.
- 8.4 ULAS uses in-house and external specialists for post-excavation work as follows

Environmental analysis and reporting:	Rachel Small MA Will Johnson MA
Prehistoric and Roman Pottery:	Nicholas Cooper BSc, Dip post-ex, FSA, MCIfA Elizabeth Johnson BSc MA (Roman pottery) member SGRP
Post-Roman Pottery:	Paul Blinkhorn BA (external)
Animal bone	Jennifer Browning BA, MA, MCIfA (Animal Bone) Rachel Small MA Will Johnson MA
Human bone	Jennifer Browning BA, MA, MCIfA Rachel Small BSc York Osteological Unit (external)
Small Finds	Nicholas Cooper BSc, Dip post-ex, FSA, MCIfA
Industrial residues and building materials	Heidi Addison BA
Wood/Geoarchaeology	Matthew Beamish, MA (Cantab), MCIfA Wood: Michael Bamforth BSc MA MCIfA (external) Geoarchaeology: Andrew Howard PhD MCIfA (external)

9. Post Excavation Analysis and Reporting

- 9.1 Following completion of fieldwork, all artefacts and samples will be processed, assessed, conserved and packaged in accordance with CIfA (2020b), ULAS procedures and the relevant Museums for transferring archaeological archives (Leicestershire County Council 2018).
- 9.2 A draft report in will usually follow within six weeks. The report will include:

- A non-technical summary
 - The aims and methods adopted in the course of the evaluation.
 - A description of the nature, extent, date, condition and significance of all archaeological deposits recorded during groundworks
 - The anticipated degree of survival of archaeological deposits.
 - The anticipated archaeological impact of the current proposals.
 - Appropriate illustrative material including maps, plans, sections, drawings and photographs.
 - A summary of artefacts, specialist reports and a consideration of the evidence within its local, regional, national context.
 - An index of the contents and location of the archive.
 - Bibliography.
- 9.3 A draft digital version of the report will be provided for the client, the Planning Archaeologist and the Local Planning Authority for approval. Once approved the final report will be deposited with the Historic Environment Record on the understanding that it will become a public document after an appropriate period of time.
- 9.4 An, indexed, site archive will be prepared and deposited with the agreed museum in accordance with *Archaeological Archives: A Guide to Best Practice in Creation, Compilation, Transfer and Curation* (Brown 2011), CIfA 2020, *Standard and guidance for the creation, compilation, transfer and deposition of Archaeological Archives*, and the relevant museum guidelines (Leicestershire County Council 2018).

Publication and dissemination of results

- 9.5 The copyright of all original finished documents shall remain vested in ULAS and ULAS will be entitled as of right to publish any material in any form produced as a result of its investigations.
- 9.6 Arrangements will be made for an appropriate level of academic publication of the results of the excavations. As a minimum, a summary report will be published in the local journal (*Transactions of the Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society*). Where wider dissemination is appropriate and the significance of the results warrant, a full copy of the report in an appropriate format shall be submitted for publication in relevant academic journals.
- 9.7 ULAS supports the Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations (OASIS) project. An online OASIS form will be completed detailing the results of the project. Once a report has become a public document following its incorporation into the HER it will be uploaded onto the web-site.

10. Public Engagement and Publicity

- 10.1 The work is small scale and not anticipated to be suitable for public involvement or participation during the course of the fieldwork. However, the results will be made available via the ADS website, publication and if significant archaeological deposits are found talks and presentations to the local population can be provided.
- 10.2 ULAS shall acknowledge the contribution of the Client in any displays, broadcasts or publications relating to the site or in which the report may be included.

11. Health and Safety

- 11.1 All work will be conducted in accordance with the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and all subsequent Health and Safety legislation, University of Leicester Statement Of Safety Policy Health and Safety and Environmental policies as well as any Principal Contractor's policies or procedures. A site specific Risk Assessment and Method Statement (RAMS) will be formulated prior to commencement of fieldwork. This will be monitored on site and updated as necessary.
- 11.2 The safety of ULAS staff will take priority over the desire to record archaeological deposits.

12. Insurance

- 12.1 All ULAS work is covered by the University of Leicester's Public Liability, Professional Indemnity and Employers Liability Insurance as documented in the RAMS.

13. Quality Assurance

- 13.1 ULAS is a Registered Organisation (RO) with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists. All ULAS Project Managers hold Member status and all ULAS Projects are overseen by the Project Manager who is responsible for the quality of the project.

14. Staff Training and CPD

- 14.1 All ULAS staff are subject to University of Leicester's Personal Development Discussion (PDD) strategy which reviews personal performance, identifies targets and areas for improvement and identified the need for appropriate. All members of staff are required to maintain a Personal Development Plan and log.

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