

WRITTEN SCHEME OF INVESTIGATION FOR TRIAL TRENCHING

Lychgate Lane, Burbage, Leicestershire

Appeal Decision Ref: APP/K2420/W/23/3321670

794-PLN-HER-00217
Written Scheme of
Investigation for Trial
Trenching
Version 1.2
December 2023

WRITTEN SCHEME OF INVESTIGATION FOR TRIAL TRENCHING: Lychgate Lane, Burbage, Leicestershire

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Simon Mortimer

7 December 2023

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Avant Homes

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Site Location and Description

- 1.1.1 The c.2.7 ha development site (hereafter 'the site') is located to the south of Lychgate Lane on the south-eastern edge of Burbage, Leicestershire (centred at National Grid Reference SP 4488 9229; Figure 1).
- 1.1.2 The site is located on the south-eastern slope of Sketchley Hill and slopes eastwards from a high of c.110m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD) to a low of c.105m AOD. The nearest watercourse to the site is the Soar Brook, located c.1.5km to the south.

1.2 Geology and Soils

- 1.2.1 The British Geological Survey (BGS) 1:50,000 mapping records the underlying geology of the site as mudstone belonging to the Mercia Mudstone Group (<https://geologyviewer.bgs.ac.uk/> - accessed 22.11.23). The bedrock geology is overlain by superficial deposits of clay and silt of the Bosworth Clay Member (ibid.).
- 1.2.2 The Cranfield Soil and Agrifood Institute identifies the soils of the site as slightly acidic, loamy and clayey soils with impeded drainage (Soilscape 8; <http://www.landis.org.uk/soilscapes/> - accessed 22.11.23).

1.3 Planning Background

- 1.3.1 Planning permission was granted at appeal (Ref: APP/K2420/W/23/3321670), subject to conditions, for up to 85 dwellings plus associated site infrastructure and open space, with all matters reserved except for the means of access.
- 1.3.2 Conditions relating to archaeology are reproduced below.

25. No development shall take place/commence until a programme of archaeological work, comprising further post-determination trial trenching, specific metal-detecting and as necessary targeted archaeological investigation. The full programme and timetable will be detailed within a Written Scheme of Investigation, submitted to and approved by the local planning authority in writing. The scheme shall include an assessment of significance and research questions; and

- The programme and methodology of site survey, investigation and recording (including assessment of results and preparation of an appropriate mitigation scheme)
- The programme for post-investigation assessment
- Provision to be made for analysis of the site investigation and recording
- Provision to be made for publication and dissemination of the analysis, interpretation and presentation of the site investigation
- Provision to be made for archive deposition of the analysis and records of the site investigation
- Nomination of a competent person or persons/organisation to undertake the works, with particular reference to the metal detecting survey, as set out within the Written Scheme of Investigation.

No development shall take place other than in accordance with the Written Scheme of Investigation.

26. The development shall not be occupied until the site investigation and post investigation assessment has been completed in accordance with the programme set out in the Written Scheme of Investigation approved under condition 26; and provision has been made for analysis, publication and dissemination of results and archive deposition has been secured. This part of the condition shall not be discharged until these elements have been fulfilled in accordance with the programme set out in the Written Scheme of Investigation.

1.4 Scope of Document

- 1.4.1 This document forms an Archaeological Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for the programme of archaeological work, required to comply with Conditions 25 and 26 of the planning permission.
- 1.4.2 It establishes a strategy for archaeological investigation of the site, based around an initial programme of archaeological trial trenching and reporting of findings.
- 1.4.3 If the current trenching programme identifies significant archaeological features in part(s) of the development site, then appropriate further archaeological measures will be agreed with the Local Planning Authority (LPA) and their archaeological advisors. These further measures (e.g. open area excavation to record remains prior to their destruction during construction) will be documented in a supplementary archaeological specification. This specification will be submitted to, and agreed with, the LPA prior to their implementation and development groundworks within that area/phase of construction.
- 1.4.4 This WSI will be submitted to the LPA and their archaeological advisors for approval prior to any development.

1.5 Archaeological and Historical Background

- 1.5.1 The archaeological background to the development site was reviewed in a Heritage Statement¹, which incorporated the results of a geophysical survey². The geophysical survey encountered a number of anomalies assessed to be of an undetermined origin, meaning an archaeological origin cannot be discounted. The findings of these works on site, and within a 1km radius of the site, are summarised below.
- 1.5.2 The Historic Environment Record (HER) does not record any Early Prehistoric activity within the study site. Given the absence of Early Prehistoric remains within vicinity of the site, with the nearest known being a Bronze Age cemetery (HER reference MLE23172) and sporadic flints (MLE7235, MLE9344, MLE17704, MLE18018 & MLE18737) recorded at least 500m away from the site, the site's potential for Early Prehistoric remains is low.
- 1.5.3 No Iron Age to Roman HER entries are within the site or located within the vicinity. The nearest known areas of Iron Age to Roman activity comprises an Iron Age enclosure along with Roman features (MLE21696), c.550m to the south-west. The Heritage Statement assessed the geophysical anomalies on site as unlikely to be of an Iron Age to Roman date. Since known areas of Iron Age to Roman activity are far removed from the site, the site's potential for remains dating to this period is low.

¹ RPS. 2022. *Heritage Statement: Land at Lychgate Lane, Burbage, Leicestershire*. Unpublished report JAC27691

² Magnitude Surveys. 2021. *Magnitude Surveys: Geophysical Survey Report of Land at Lychgate Lane, Burbage*. Unpublished report MSSP1119.

- 1.5.4 The historic settlement of Burbage (MLE2848), located c.250m west of the site, is of at least Saxon origin and is recorded in 1086 Domesday Survey as '*Burbece*'. The name derives from the Old English burh, meaning 'a fortified place'³. Poorly preserved earthworks of Medieval ridge and furrow is recorded within the western half of the site. The site is located outside of the historic core of Burbage and was evidently ploughed during the Medieval period. The site's potential for significant (i.e. non-agricultural) Anglo-Saxon to Medieval remains is negligible/low.
- 1.5.5 The geophysical survey identified anomalies representing a former Post Medieval to Modern field system within the site. The undetermined anomalies were assessed to be likely associated with this field system. A review of historic mapping shows the site was in agricultural use from least the late Post Medieval period, likely pasture given the survival of the earthwork ridge and furrow. There is a negligible potential for significant Post Medieval to Modern remains.

³ Survey of English Place-Names <http://kepn.nottingham.ac.uk/map/place/Leicestershire/Burbage>

2 AIMS, OBJECTIVES AND STANDARDS

2.1 General

- 2.1.1 The primary aims of the overall programme of archaeological works will be to:
- confirm the veracity of the geophysical survey results and investigate the undetermined anomalies;
 - determine the location, extent, date, character, condition, and level of significance of any archaeological remains that are present;
 - assess the artefactual and environmental potential of any archaeological deposits encountered;
 - inform discussions with the LPA's archaeological advisors over any further works that are necessary;
 - produce a site archive for deposition with an appropriate museum and to provide information for accession to the Leicestershire & Rutland HER.

2.2 Research Framework

- 2.2.1 The programme of archaeological investigation will be conducted within the general research parameters and objectives defined by '*East Midlands Heritage: A research Agenda and Strategy for the Historic Environment*' (compiled on behalf of the region's historic environment community by D. Knight, B. Vyner and C. Allen) and the earlier Archaeological Resource Assessment and Research Agenda for the East Midlands '*The Archaeology of the East Midlands*' edited by N. Cooper (2006).
- 2.2.2 As no moderate or high potential for archaeological remains of any era were identified in the Heritage Statement, no specific questions outlined in the regional research agenda can be applied at this stage. If archaeological remains that can answer specific research questions are uncovered, consultation of the regional research agenda will be undertaken at the earliest possibility, so that excavation techniques to achieve meaningful results can be identified.

2.3 Standards

- 2.3.1 This WSI has been prepared in accordance with current best archaeological practice and the appropriate national and regional standards and guidelines including:
- Management of Archaeological Projects (English Heritage, 1991) and MoRPHE (English Heritage 2006);
 - Code of Conduct (Chartered Institute for Archaeology – CIfA, revised October 2022);
 - Standard and Guidance for an archaeological field evaluations (CIfA, updated October 2020);
 - Standard and Guidance for archaeological excavation (CIfA, updated October 2020);
 - Standard and Guidance for the creation, compilation, transfer and deposition of archaeological archives (CIfA, updated October 2020);

3 STRATEGY

- 3.1 The current programme of archaeological works comprise trial trenching.
- 3.2 The trenching strategy is be based around the excavation of 11no 30m x 1.8m trenches and five 15m x 1.8m trenches to provide an approximate 3% sample of the site (Figures 2 - 4). A contingency for a further 1% is allowed, which will comprise either, further trenches, or extensions to already excavated trenches.
- 3.3 Trench locations will target anomalies identified by the geophysical survey and provide a general coverage of the site area. The trenches avoid known service constraints on site (Figures 2 – 4).
- 3.4 On completion of the evaluation trenching, a written report will be prepared. The report will detail the findings of the archaeological trenching programme. Following sign off by the LPA's archaeological advisors, copies of the report will be deposited with the Leicestershire & Rutland Historic Environment Record and with the ADS OASIS. The project data will be ordered into an archive and deposited with an appropriate depository to ensure the long-term preservation of the archaeological information.
- 3.5 The trenching results will be reviewed with the LPA's archaeological advisors, to confirm any requirement for additional archaeological measures. Any necessary further measures will be documented in a supplementary archaeological specification and submitted to and agreed with the LPA prior to their implementation and development groundworks within that area/phase of construction.
- 3.6 Any variations to this strategy will be discussed and agreed with the LPA and their archaeological advisors prior to their implementation.

4 METHOD STATEMENT

4.1 Pre-Commencement

- 4.1.1 At the start of work (immediately before fieldwork commences) an OASIS online record will be initiated, and key fields completed on Details, Location and Creators forms.
- 4.1.2 The LPA's archaeological advisors will be given advance notice of commencement of the archaeological site works.
- 4.1.3 An accession number will be obtained prior to the commencement of fieldwork.

4.2 Fieldwork Methods (Excavation and Investigation of trial trenches)

- 4.2.1 Preceding any groundwork, the trial trench areas will be scanned for any uncharted underground services using a CAT. This will be undertaken by a suitable trained member of staff from the appointed archaeological contractor. Any potential services identified within the trial trench areas will be marked on the ground using spray paint to provide a surface visual. All plant movement will be undertaken in such a way as to minimize, and avoid where possible, tracking over identified services.
- 4.2.2 Topsoil and overburden will be removed by mechanical excavator using a toothless ditching bucket (c.1.8m wide), under continuous archaeological supervision. The spoil generated during the trial trenching will be mounded away from the edges of each trench. Mechanical excavation will cease at either undisturbed natural deposits or the top of archaeological deposits. The nature of these deposits will be assessed by hand excavation.
- 4.2.3 Upcast and spoil from mechanical excavation will be scanned by eye and by metal detector to aid the recovery of topsoil artefacts.
- 4.2.4 Should the excavation of the trenches reach 1.2m in depth (or limit of safe working depth) without natural geology being encountered, a machine dug sondage will be excavated in order to establish the depth of natural geology.
- 4.2.5 Each trench will be cleaned by hand as necessary to assist the identification and interpretation of exposed archaeological features and the nature of identified features assessed by sample excavation sufficient to determine date, nature, extent and condition and their environmental and scientific potential.
- 4.2.6 All exposed features will be investigated by hand, as a minimum (where possible):
 - a 1m wide section of each linear feature
 - all pits or discrete features will be half sectioned.
- 4.2.7 All features of apparently natural creation and thus of no archaeological interest, will be initially tested to prove their origin.
- 4.2.8 Where the excavation of a feature will be detrimental to its future investigation (i.e. relationships between groups of features not fully exposed within the trench) these will be avoided and recommended for investigation in any future archaeological works.
- 4.2.9 Should any unexpected discoveries of significant or complex remains be revealed the LPA's archaeological advisor will be notified at the earliest opportunity. All excavation by machine and hand will be undertaken with a view to avoid damaging archaeological deposits or features which appear worthy of more detailed investigation than for the purposes of evaluation.

- 4.2.10 Upon completion of the trial trenching, excavated trenches will be backfilled with arisings and loosely compacted. Trenches will not be backfilled without prior agreement with the LPA's archaeological advisor.

4.3 Fieldwork Methods (Investigation and Recording of any archaeological features)

- 4.3.1 Data-capture for site plans will as standard be capable of reproduction at a scale of 1:100; more complex features or areas of complex archaeological remains will be recorded at greater resolution (for reproduction at 1:10, 1:20, 1:50 as necessary). The sections of excavated archaeological features will be recorded by measured drawing at an appropriate scale (normally 1:10 or 1:20). Spot heights and those of individual features will be recorded relative to Ordnance Datum.
- 4.3.2 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.
- 4.3.3 A photographic record, utilising high resolution digital data capture, will be maintained during the course of the fieldwork. The record will place features within their site context, display feature and deposit associations and relationships, and demonstrate a feature's specific qualities and depositional sequence where appropriate. Additional photographs will be taken of the site conditions and working practices to display any constraints to achieving the aims and objectives of the project.
- 4.3.4 All artefacts will be treated in accordance with UKIC guidelines, *First Aid for Finds* (1998). All finds will be bagged and labelled according to the individual deposit from which they were recovered, ready for later cleaning and analysis.
- 4.3.5 If finds are made that might constitute 'Treasure' under the definition of the Treasure Act (1996), these will if possible be archaeologically excavated and removed to a safe place. Such finds will also be reported immediately to the local Coroner (within 14 days, in accordance with the Act). Should it not be possible to remove the finds that day suitable security will be arranged.
- 4.3.6 The environmental sampling strategy will include the routine sampling of deposits for the retrieval and assessment of the preservation conditions and potential for analysis of all biological remains, and will be developed in consultation with, an environmental specialist and the LPA's archaeological advisor.
- 4.3.7 The resulting site-specific environmental sampling strategy will be documented and reviewed as the project progresses. The environmental specialist will conduct or commission, as appropriate, programmes of scientific investigation in conjunction with the fieldwork, the results of which will be presented in the final publication or report. They will also ensure that, where time allows, the strategy evolves on site by seeking to ensure that bulk samples taken in the initial stages of the project are processed quickly and the results fed back to inform the excavation strategy.
- 4.3.8 All environmental work will be undertaken in accordance with current Historic England guidelines (see *Environmental Archaeology: A guide to the theory and practice of methods, from sampling and recovery to post-excavation*, Centre for Archaeology Guidelines 2011). Sample sizes will normally be 40-60 litres unless the deposit is smaller in volume. Samples will be directed to a representative range of context type from each phase, and examine:
- Survival of material
 - Key archaeological contexts
 - Potential
- 4.3.9 A suitable specialist will, if necessary, make a site visit to advise on deposits suitable for environmental sampling and/or geoarchaeological assessment.

- 4.3.10 Charred plant samples will be wet sieved with flotation using a 0.5mm mesh. All residues will be checked.
- 4.3.11 Should waterlogged deposits be encountered further consultation with a suitable specialist will determine methods for investigation and recovery.
- 4.3.12 Where there is evidence for industrial activity, macroscopic technological residues (or a sample of them) should be collected by hand. Separate samples (c. 10ml) should be collected for micro-slugs (hammer-scale and spherical droplets). Excavation and sampling of such deposits will be in accordance with the Centre for Archaeology Guideline on Archaeometallurgy (English Heritage 2001).
- 4.3.13 Human remains are not anticipated to be discovered during the works. However, any human remains encountered will be cleaned with minimal disturbance, recorded and left in situ and only removed if necessary. The contractor will comply with all statutory consents and licences under the Disused Burial Grounds (Amendment) Act, 1981 or other Burial Acts regarding the exhumation and interment of human remains. The archaeological contractor will comply with all reasonable requests of interested parties as to the method of removal, re-interment or disposal of the remains or associated items. Every effort will be made, at all times, not to cause offence to any interested parties. The LPA and the local coroner will be informed immediately if human remains are discovered.
- 4.3.14 If relevant and appropriate, samples will be taken for scientific dating (principally radiocarbon dating), where dating by artefacts is insecure and where dating is necessary for development of the subsequent mitigation strategy.

4.4 Reporting Methods

- 4.4.1 The LPA and their archaeological advisor will be informed in writing of the completion of fieldwork.
- 4.4.2 Following completion of the archaeological fieldwork, a programme of post-excavation assessment will be undertaken. Post excavation work will comprise the following:
- checking of drawn and written records during and on completion of fieldwork;
 - if appropriate, production of a stratigraphic matrix of the archaeological deposits and features present on the site,
 - cataloguing of photographic material;
 - cleaning, marking, bagging and labelling of finds according to the individual deposits from which they were recovered.
 - Finds will be identified and dated by appropriate specialists
 - Any finds requiring specialist treatment and conservation will be sent for appropriate treatment.;
 - Where artefacts are recovered from archaeological features they shall be quantified by date, class and type.
 - The processing and assessment of soil samples.
- 4.4.3 Unless otherwise agreed with the LPA's archaeological advisor, a report detailing the findings of the archaeological trial trenching will be prepared within six weeks of the completion of site works (dependent on receiving specialist reports).
- 4.4.4 The report will include:
- a title page detailing site address, site code and accession number, NGR, author/originating body, client's name and address;
 - full contents listing;
 - a non-technical summary of the findings of the investigations;
 - an introductory statement;
 - the aims and purposes of the archaeological work;

- a description of the topography and geology of the area;
- a description of the methodologies used during the investigations;
- an objective summary statement of the findings;
- a site location plan, an overall site plan showing the location of the trial trenches, and plans showing individual trenches/groups of trenches containing archaeological features (to include AOD levels);
- sections of the surveyed (and excavated) archaeological features (to include AOD levels);
- a phased stratigraphic discussion of the archaeological features;
- an interpretation of the archaeological features exposed and their local and regional context, including a statement of significance;
- specialist reports on the artefactual / ecofactual remains from the site;
- a full context list [appendix];
- full quantification of artefacts and ecofacts [appendix];
- an archive statement giving summary of contents, location, accession number and proposed date for final deposition (unless it is agreed that no archive deposition is necessary);
- a copy of the OASIS form

- 4.4.5 Specialist reports will include recommendations for retention/discard of material. It is noted that should significant material be recovered it should be retained and assessed alongside any further material recovered from any subsequent phase of works
- 4.4.6 Copies of the archaeological fieldwork report will be sent to the LPA and their archaeological advisor for review and approval.
- 4.4.7 A single digital copy of the full report will be submitted to the Leicestershire & Rutland Historic Environment Record. The OASIS online report form for the fieldwork will be updated and completed. A digital copy of the report will be uploaded to the OASIS site.

4.5 Archive Storage and Curation

- 4.5.1 An accession number will be obtained prior to the commencement of fieldwork.
- 4.5.2 Following acceptance of the report by the LPA, an ordered archive of both object and paper elements will be prepared in line with *The Transfer of Archaeological Archives to Leicestershire County Council Museum Collections, Archaeological Archives A guide to best practice in creation, compilation, transfer and curation* (Brown 2007), in addition to, other appropriate guidelines.
- 4.5.3 This excludes items of gold and silver which by law must be reported to Her Majesty's Coroner. If finds are made of gold or silver these will, if possible, be removed to a safe place. Such finds will be reported immediately to the local Coroner and to the local Finds Liaison Officer (within 14 days) in accordance with the 1997 Treasure Act. Should it not be possible to remove the finds that day, suitable security will be arranged.
- 4.5.4 A digital archive will also be deposited with ADS.
- 4.5.5 Notes or articles describing the results of the archaeological fieldwork will be submitted for publication to an appropriate local journal and/or national journals, dependent on the nature of the results. As a minimum a summary of the results of the fieldwork will be submitted to an appropriate Journal within two years of completion of the fieldwork.

5 TIMETABLE, PERSONNEL AND MONITORING

5.1 Timetable

- 5.1.1 The trial trenching programme is expected to take place in late 2023 / early 2024.
- 5.1.2 Notice will be provided to the LPA and their archaeological advisors of the confirmed start date and programme for work, before any fieldwork starts.
- 5.1.3 The fieldwork programme is anticipated to take up to 2 weeks on-site including backfilling.
- 5.1.4 Preparation of the final report will take up to 6 weeks following the completion of fieldwork.
- 5.1.5 Any revision to the timeframe will be agreed in writing and communicated to all stakeholders.

5.2 Personnel

- 5.2.1 Simon Mortimer MA_(Oxon) MCIfA (RPS), will manage the programme of works on behalf of Avant Homes.
- 5.2.2 The work will be carried out by an archaeological contractor who are accredited as a Registered Organisation with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA).
- 5.2.3 Details of the contractor and key project personnel will be provided to the LPA's archaeological advisor in advance of fieldwork commencing on request. The contractor will also provide confirmation that their works will follow the strategy and methods set out in this current WSI.

5.3 Monitoring

- 5.3.1 Project Monitoring will be maintained to ensure that the archaeological works are undertaken within the limits set by this WSI, and to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority.
- 5.3.2 RPS will monitor implementation of the programme of works on behalf of the developers.
- 5.3.3 The LPA's archaeological advisor 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 WSI.
- 5.3.4 The LPA's archaeological advisor will also be responsible for considering any changes to the specification of works; any such alterations will be agreed in writing with the relevant parties prior to commencement of onsite works, or at the earliest available opportunity.

6 INSURANCE AND HEALTH AND SAFETY

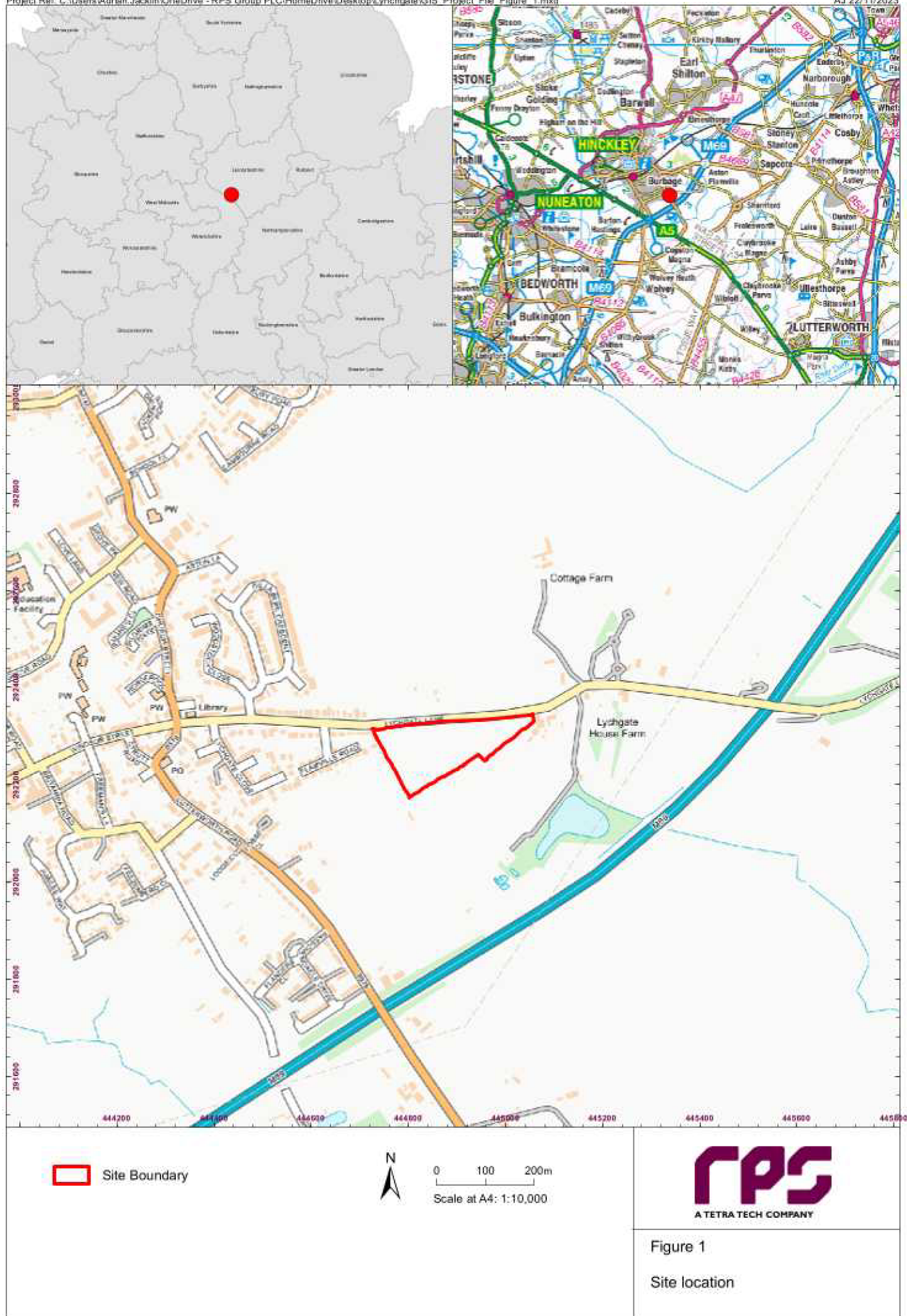
6.1 Insurance

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

6.2 Health and Safety

- 6.2.1 All works will be in compliance with the Health and Safety at Work Act (1974), all applicable regulations and Codes of Practice, and the Construction Design Management Regulations 2007. All archaeological staff will undertake their operations in accordance with safe working practices.
- 6.2.2 A site specific risk assessment and safety plan will be prepared before the start of the project and will be updated through the project as required.
- 6.2.3 A continuous process of dynamic risk assessment will be undertaken and if significant hazards are identified a specific risk assessment will be undertaken and recorded. Control measures will be implemented as required in response to specific hazards.
- 6.2.4 If significant new hazards are identified a specific risk assessment will be undertaken and recorded. Control measures will be implemented as required in response to specific hazards.
- 6.2.5 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 or remains will be recorded by photography, at a safe distance.

FIGURES



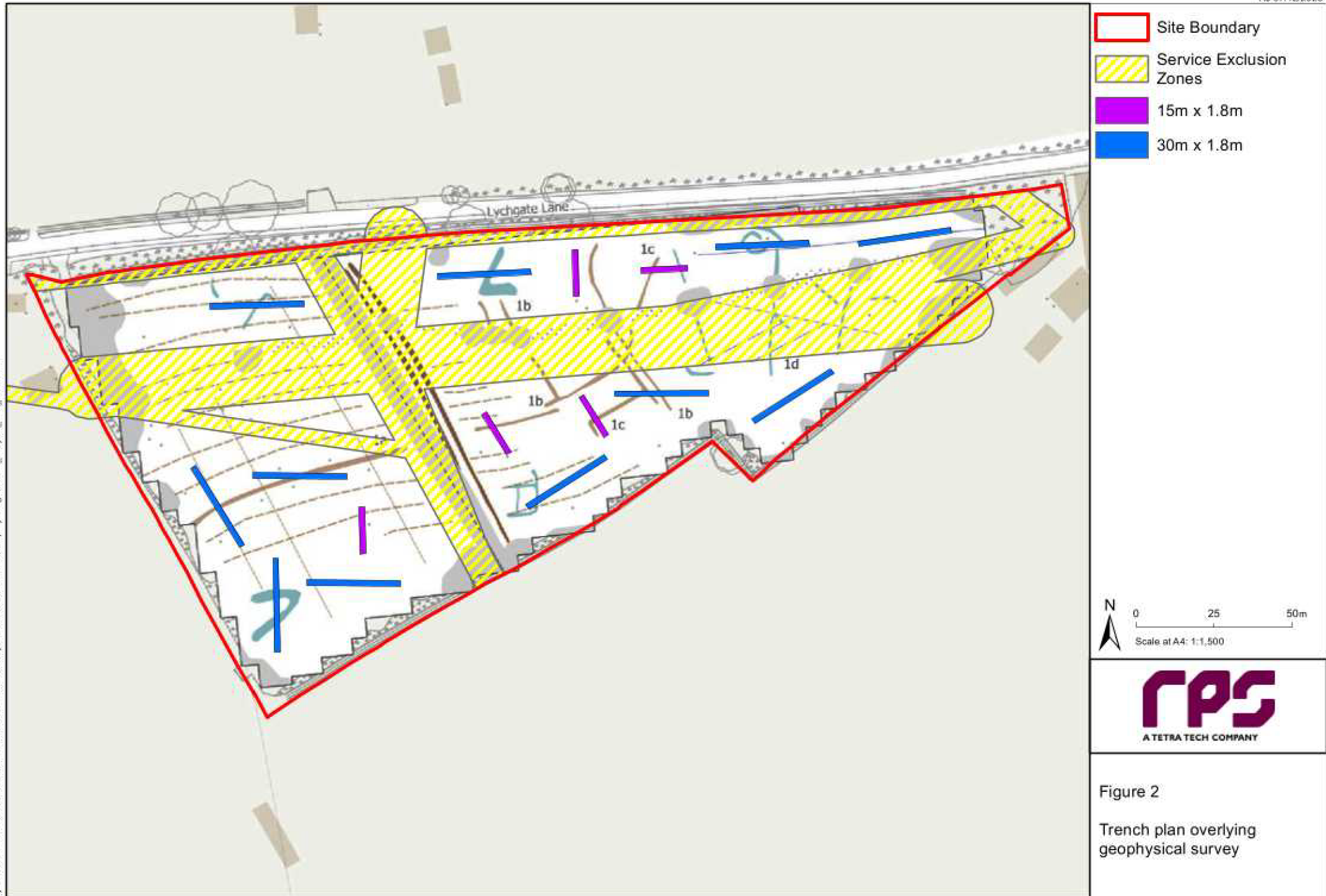
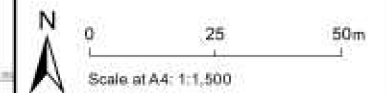


Figure 2

Trench plan overlaying geophysical survey

- Site Boundary
- 15m x 1.8m
- 30m x 1.8m



rps
A TETRA TECH COMPANY

Figure 3

Trench plan overlaying
constraints plan

