

MIRA TECHNOLOGY PARK PLOT 44

WRITTEN SCHEME OF INVESTIGATION – STRIP, PLAN & RECORD



Version	Date	Author	Checked By	Version History
1.1	10/01/25	D Harrison	D Harrison	Draft to client
2.1	13/01/25	D Harrison	D Harrison	Client edits
3				

CLIENT

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PROJECT NAME

MIRA Technology Park Plot 44

PLANNING REF

14/0661/CONDIT

HEADLAND REF P24-397

NGR

SP 36705 95109

HEADLAND PROJECT CODE

MIRA24

WORK STAGE

STRIP, PLAN & RECORD

PURPOSE OF WORK

To monitor the contractor's site clearance works and initial groundworks during the development through a Strip, Plan & Record, and to record any archaeological remains exposed. To present the results of the work in a report.

AUTHOR

David Harrison

PROJECT MANAGER

David Harrison

Name	Reference
Client	MTP Developments Limited
Consultant	N/A
Planning authority	Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council
Archaeological advisor	William Kelly (Senior Planning Archaeologist, Leicestershire County Council)

RELEVANT STANDARDS:

NAME	REFERENCE
Applicable ClfA standards	1. Code of Conduct (ClfA 2014a)
	2. Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials (ClfA 2014b)
	3. Standard for archaeological monitoring and recording (ClfA 2023a)
	4. Universal guidance for archaeological monitoring and recording (ClfA 2023b)
	5. Standard for archaeological excavation (ClfA 2023c)
	6. Universal guidance for archaeological excavation (ClfA 2023d)
Regional research framework	7. East Midlands Historic Environment Research Framework

PROJECT SCHEDULE:

MILESTONE	DATE
Proposed start on site	03/03/2025
Report production window	30/04/2025

PROJECT SPECIFICATION:

DESCRIPTION	REFERENCE
Oasis ID	headland1-530509
Archive repository	Leicestershire County Council Museums
Accession number	X.A184.2024

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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Swanvale Developments Limited on behalf of the client MTP DEVELOPMENTS LIMITED has commissioned Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd to agree an investigative programme of archaeological work to fulfil the requirements of Condition 32 of the MIRA Technology Park permission (14/0661/CONDIT) in relation to Plot 44.
- 1.2 The overarching project comprises the development of business park premises, landscaping and infrastructure.
- 1.3 Headland Archaeology have been commissioned to encapsulate the required archaeological works within a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI - this document) to be submitted for agreement with Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council.
- 1.4 This document takes into account relevant ClfA Standards and Guidance.

2 DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE

- 2.1 The Proposed Development Area (PDA) is situated at NGR SP 36705 95109 , located at MIRA Technology Park, Higham on the Hill, Leicestershire. It is bounded to the south by the A5 Watling Street, by existing business park infrastructure to the north and west and by a railway line to the east. The current land use is flat grassland with some stockpiling of soils from adjacent development plots. The site is situated at 99m aOD and covers an area of 0.97 hectares.
- 2.2 The bedrock geology of the site consists of Mercia Mudstone (NERC 2024). No superficial deposits are recorded.

3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

- 3.1 An Archaeological Desk Based Assessment (ULAS Report Ref 2010-213) for the wider MIRA Technology Park established that the site lies within an area of archaeological activity from prehistoric to post-medieval times. There is a moderate to high archaeological potential for Iron Age-Roman remains, given the presence of cropmarks of an enclosure immediately north of the area proposed for development and its location adjacent to the Roman road of Watling Street, and close to the Roman small town of Mancetter. There is a moderate potential for other prehistoric remains with various artefacts discovered in the surrounding area. The sites lies outside the known extent of the deserted medieval village of Lindsey and the medieval (and post-medieval) village core of Higham, and so potential for archaeological remains of these periods is low.
- 3.2 The archaeological requirement on Plot 44 is informed by the results of a trial trenching evaluation in 2014 (ULAS Report Ref 2014-178) which identified the presence of archaeological deposits within the proposed development area, including gullies, ditches and a refuse pit representing the remains of activity dating to the Roman period. Watling Street Roman Road passes approximately 50m south of the PDA.

4 OBJECTIVES

- 4.1 The objective of the Strip, Plan & Record is to mitigate the effects of the development on subsurface archaeological deposits through preservation by record.
- 4.2 More specific aims of the Strip, Plan & Record include:
- monitoring all ground clearance works and preliminary groundworks during each phase of the development.
 - establishing the location, extent, nature and date of archaeological features or deposits present within areas subject to ground works and preserving them by full excavation and creation of a complete record.
- 4.3 The resulting archive (finds and records) will be organised and deposited with an appropriate museum/archive repository to facilitate access for future research and interpretation for public benefit.

RESEARCH AGENDA

- 4.4 The relevant regional research framework for the region is the East Midlands Historic Environment Research Framework. Based on this framework, the following research questions have been highlighted as of potential relevance to the works summarised above, and as such will inform strategy both on site and during the assessment phase:
- 5.4.1: How did the Conquest impact upon rural settlements and landscapes?
 - 5.5.4: Can we chart more closely the processes of agricultural intensification and expansion and the development of field systems?
 - 5.7.3: To what extent may communication routes have been influenced by Late Iron Age settlement patterns and routes of movement?

5 PROJECT TEAM

- 5.1 Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd is a Registered Organisation and abides by the Codes of Conduct (CifA 2014a) and Approved Practice and Standards of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CifA). The company has all the necessary technical and personnel resources for the satisfactory completion of the work.
- 5.2 The project will be managed by David Harrison. The field team will consist of a Project Officer who will be supported by project assistants as required. Curricula vitae of key personnel can be supplied on request. The project team will familiarise themselves with the background to the site and will be aware of the project's aims and methodologies.
- 5.3 Specialist artefact analyses will be managed by Julie Franklin who is Headland's Finds Manager. Julie will undertake finds assessment within her areas of competence (medieval and post-medieval ceramics, metalwork, glassware, clay pipes, ceramic building material and other small finds). Further consultation will be sub-contracted to recognised period specialists where appropriate.

- 5.4 Environmental analysis will be managed by Kate Turner. Headland has in-house specialists who can undertake analysis of plant macrofossils, charcoal, animal bone and molluscs.

6 STRATEGY

- 6.1 All ground breaking works are to be monitored by an archaeologist. Notification to the archaeological contractor will be required, and sufficient time allowed to mobilize the attending archaeologist to site prior to the commencement of ground breaking works.
- 6.2 Regular communication between the attending archaeologist and on-site client contact will be required to discuss intended upcoming works and plan accordingly.
- 6.3 Works will be monitored to the first archaeological horizon, geological subsoil or the construction limit – whichever is encountered first, followed by appropriate archaeological action where required (below).
- 6.4 If monitoring identifies significant truncation to the archaeological horizon or any other factors compromising the survival of archaeological deposits, the Project Manager will discuss the results with the archaeological advisor and determine whether a revision to the agreed strategy is required.
- 6.5 Upon completion of all stages of the Strip Plan & Record, an archaeological report will be completed for the findings for the Strip Plan & Record as a whole.

PROGRAMME

- 6.6 Topsoil stripping is expected to commence in March 2025 and is expected to be completed within a week.

7 METHODOLOGY

FIELDWORK

- 7.1 The Strip Plan & Record will comprise monitoring of all ground breaking works associated with Plot 44. This will include, but not be restricted to, all topsoil stripping associated with ground clearance works, drainage works, compound creation and any temporary ground works relating to the development.
- 7.2 The main contractor will undertake all ground breaking works under direct archaeological supervision. A toothed excavator bucket may be used to remove any hard surfaces/demolition deposits, but all soft deposits are to be removed in spits using a flat bladed ditching bucket.
- 7.3 If archaeological sub-surface remains are encountered, they will be subject to a programme of excavation and recording. The level and duration of recording will be dependent on the significance of the remains encountered but in general should not exceed 2 hours per feature identified. Significant or complex remains may take longer or require additional resources. Where archaeology is identified, the stripped surface will not be tracked over until the archaeology has been adequately excavated and recorded.

- 7.4 The significance of sub-surface remains will be determined by the archaeological advisor to Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council and the scope of further works will be determined with their agreement during an on-site meeting with the client's representative. Any further works required may include full excavation of archaeological features likely to be destroyed by the development and subsequent post excavation analysis.
- 7.5 Any human remains identified on site will not be excavated; they will be protected and left in situ until an appropriate mitigation strategy is agreed (see Section 9 – Human Remains).
- 7.6 Any items that could be considered 'treasure' under the 1996 Treasure Act will be treated as per the associated Code of Practice (DCMS 2023; see Section 10 – Treasure).

RECORDING

- 7.7 All recording will follow ClfA Standards and Universal Guidance documents for both conducting 'archaeological excavation' and 'monitoring and recording' (ClfA 2023a-d). All contexts, small finds and environmental samples will be given unique numbers. This recording will be undertaken on Headland's pro forma digital recording system 'HARK!'. In the event that stratified deposits are encountered, a 'Harris' matrix will be compiled. Digital photography will be used to record any archaeological features; a graduated metric scale will be clearly visible. Paper registers will be created for all Digital Photography and Drawings, which will then be digitised to fit into our HARK! Systems.
- 7.8 A site plan including all identified features, areas of excavation and other pertinent information will be recorded using existing scaled plans of the site, which are accurately linked to the National Grid and heights to OD. Complex plans and sections will be hand-drawn on permatrace at an appropriate scale (normally 1:20 or 1:50 for plans and 1:10 for sections). Otherwise, they will all be recorded 3-Dimensionally using Headland's digital spatial recording system with a dGPS and/or Total Station.
- 7.9 Headland maintains a digitally based library of guidance documents that includes information on field evaluation and recording. Relevant parts can be forwarded on request.

SAMPLES AND ARTEFACTS

- 7.10 Finds will be routinely recorded by context and recorded 3-dimensionally where appropriate (i.e. where their position within a context can provide further significant information or the find is of particular significance). Any artefacts retrieved during the evaluation will be cleaned using appropriate techniques and packaged and stored in accordance with First Aid for Finds (Watkinson & Neal 1998). All artefacts recovered during the evaluation will be cleaned, marked and catalogued. Headland's in-house finds specialists will be available to provide advice remotely or on site if necessary. Conservation will be undertaken by Drakon Heritage.
- 7.11 Deposits identified as archaeologically significant will be sampled for environmental material and other finds (e.g. bone, pottery etc.). Bulk samples will be taken from selected deposits for wet sieving and floatation in order to recover any environmental material. A bulk sample will typically be 40 litres. However, where large deposits are encountered more than one bulk sample may be taken. Similarly, small deposits such as the fill of postholes may contain less than 10 litres of sediment and will be fully sampled. A representative proportion of samples taken on site will be processed and assessed with the results and recommendations for any further work included in the evaluation report.

- 7.12 Where waterlogged deposits are encountered (such as peat) appropriate sampling techniques will be employed so as to maximise the environmental information gained from such deposits. This may include the taking of monolith or core samples for pollen and non-pollen palynomorphs (e.g. testates and fungal spores) and large specialist samples for plant macrofossil, wood (including waterlogged wood) and insect analyses.
- 7.13 Headland's Environmental Manager, Kate Turner, will liaise with site staff to ensure an appropriate strategy for the recovery and sampling of environmental remains develops in tandem with fieldwork results.

MONITORING

- 7.14 Access to the site will be afforded to the archaeological advisor for monitoring purposes. The archaeological advisor to the LPA shall be given at least 5 working days' notice of the commencement of the project.

8 REPORTING AND ARCHIVE

- 8.1 The reporting will follow on from the fieldwork and will take the form of a single 'grey literature' report detailing the results of the fieldwork and assessment of all finds and environmental samples. An online OASIS report (headland1-530509) will be completed and will be accompanied by a PDF report and boundary file.
- 8.2 Alternative reporting requirements will be discussed and agreed with MTP DEVELOPMENTS LIMITED and Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council, following the fieldwork stages once a fuller understanding of the archaeological remains is appreciated.
- 8.3 Copies of all reports will be sent to the client MTP DEVELOPMENTS LIMITED and Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council for approval. Approved versions (electronic and, if required, paper) will also be submitted to the Leicestershire and Rutland Historic Environment Record.
- 8.4 All reports will be written in accordance with the appropriate ClfA standards and guidance, particularly ClfA's 'Standard for archaeological monitoring and recording' (ClfA 2023a); 'Universal guidance for archaeological monitoring and recording' (ClfA 2023b) and 'Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation, and research of archaeological materials' (2014b).
- 8.5 All reporting will be undertaken by suitably qualified and experienced members of staff, familiar with the project. Specialist reporting should adhere to the standards set out in the ClfA toolkit for specialist reporting (<https://www.archaeologists.net/reporting-toolkit>).
- 8.6 Draft reports will be submitted within 4 weeks of the completion of fieldwork.

REPORT STRUCTURE

- 8.7 The purpose of the Grey Literature Report is to detail the results of the fieldwork, with accompanying finds and environmental assessments and illustrations.
- 8.8 At a minimum, the report will include:
- QA sheet detailing title, author, version, date, checked by, approved by;

- Non-technical summary, summarising the scope and results of the investigation;
- Introduction including:
 - o Centred site location with 12-digit national grid reference;
 - o Background to the scheme;
 - o Description of development proposals and planning history;
 - o Organisation of the report
 - o Scope and date of fieldwork, archaeological contractors' personnel, commissioning body.
- Archaeological and historical background (including geological and topographical background and results of previous phases of fieldwork);
- Methodology employed;
- Aims and objectives of the investigation, including research framework questions;
- Results of the investigation including:
 - o Feature / group descriptions (where appropriate), arranged by period;
 - o Finds assessment by artefact type, including quantification, preservation, concordance table, and methods of processing and assessment;
 - o Environmental assessment, including quantification, preservation, details of sampling, processing, assessment, and tables;
- Significance of the results;
- Appendices containing specialist reports;
- Digital appendices of registers and any substantial data resource;
- Illustrations including:
 - o Site location;
 - o Overall site plan(s)
 - o Plans and sections of selected archaeological features;
 - o Colour images illustrating site setting, work in progress, and selected findings.

ARCHIVING

- 8.9 The following archive repository has been agreed as the archive repository for the project, Leicestershire County Council Museums. An accession number has been obtained for the project, which will be used as a reference on all material to be archived X.A184.2024.
- 8.10 The project archive will be compiled in accordance with the guidelines published by the ClfA on behalf of the Archaeological Archives Forum (2011). The documentary and digital archive will be submitted to Leicestershire County Council Museums (the archive repository) within twelve months of acceptance of final report by the Archaeological Advisor. The preferred method of deposition, where possible, will be digital. Any Update Project Design (UPD) will be submitted within 3 months of Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council's agreement to the Assessment Report and any final publication will be complete within a year of Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council's agreement to the UPD. It is anticipated that any final publication will report the results of the project as a whole. All finds will be reported to Leicestershire County Council Museums, which will determine the ultimate destination of the material archive. Once this is determined, and within twelve months of the approval of the final report by the county archaeologist, arrangements for deposition will be discussed with the relevant parties. Transfers of title and ownership will be made with the relevant parties as soon as possible.
- 8.11 If no finds of archaeological significance are discovered as a result of the archaeological works, the resulting archive will be deposited with the ADS as a recognised digital archive.

9 HUMAN REMAINS

- 9.1 If encountered human remains will not be excavated until reported to the client, curator and local police and a strategy to progress agreed with all parties. Depending on the agreed strategy, Headland's standard procedure will be to either: record, not disturb and cover with a suitable material prior to backfilling; or to fully excavate. If human remains are to be excavated, a license will be gained from the Ministry of Justice in accordance with Section 25 of the 1857 Burial Act. All excavation and treatment of cremated and inhumed human remains will be undertaken in cognisance of ClfA Guidelines to the Standards for Recording Human Remains (Brickley and McKinley 2004); ClfA Updated Guidelines to the Standards for Recording Human Remains (Mitchell & Brickley 2017); and all relevant BABAO Guidance including the BABAO Code of Ethics (2019) and BABAO Code of Practice (2019).

10 TREASURE

- 10.1 Any recovered artefacts that are designated treasure as defined by the Treasure Act 1996 will be treated in accordance with said act. Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd will follow the advice provided by the portable antiquities scheme for treasure (<https://finds.org.uk/treasure/advice/forarchaeologists>) and follow the Code of Practice attached to the Treasure Act 1996 (DCMS 2023).
- 10.2 Should an artefact or artefacts classed as potential treasure be recovered during the course of the works, the law requires that it is to be reported to the local coroner within 14 days of discovery or realisation that the artefact(s) constitute potential treasure – this reporting requirement will be undertaken by Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd, and the archaeological coordinator will be informed.
- 10.3 Where appropriate and agreed with the Client and LPA, the site/spoil should be scanned with a metal-detector and finds recorded and recovered as soon as practicable.
- 10.4 Any MD-user engaged or allowed to undertake this work should formally agree to an appropriate methodology for this work, that any finds remain the property of the landowner, and that all significant finds and their locations shall be fully recorded as part of the project.
- 10.5 Any treasure will be removed to a secure store. Where removal cannot be achieved on the same working day as the discovery, suitable security measures must be taken to protect the finds from theft.
- 10.6 All finds and archaeological records should be removed from the site at the end of each working day as a matter of course.

11 HEALTH AND SAFETY

- 11.1 All of Headland's work is undertaken in accordance with current Health & Safety legislation. A risk assessment will be prepared prior to the commencement of fieldwork. All staff will wear appropriate PPE, which is to include high-visibility clothing, hard hats and safety footwear. Suitable site welfare facilities will be provided by the client.

- 11.2 This WSI is submitted on the understanding that there will be unlimited access to all relevant areas of the development area.

12 INSURANCE AND COPYRIGHT

- 12.1 Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd carries adequate insurance for the works described in this document. Certificates can be presented on request.
- 12.2 Copyright will be retained by Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd as far as it applies to any and all items produced by Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd or its subcontractors in the course of the works. Headland will licence the client, Local Planning Authority and relevant archives as necessary for use in matters relating to the project. This licence will also extend to non-commercial use.

13 REFERENCES

Archaeological Archives Forum (AAF) 2011 *Archaeological Archives A guide to best practice in creation, compilation, transfer and curation* (2nd edn) (ClfA: Reading) http://www.archaeologyuk.org/archives/aaf_archaeological_archives_2011.pdf accessed 19/12/2024

BABAO 2019a *BABAO Code of Ethics* <https://www.babao.org.uk/assets/Uploads/BABAO-Code-of-Ethics-2019.pdf> accessed 19/12/2024

BABAO 2019b *BABAO Code of Practice* <https://www.babao.org.uk/assets/Uploads/BABAO-Code-of-Practice-2019.pdf> accessed 19/12/2024

Brickley M & McKinley JI (eds) 2004 *Guidelines to the Standards for Recording Human Remains* (Paper No 7, BABAO, IFA: Reading; revised 2017) http://www.archaeologists.net/sites/default/files/ifa_paper_7.pdf accessed 19/12/2024

Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (ClfA) 2014a *Code of Conduct* (updated October 2022) (Reading) <https://www.archaeologists.net/sites/default/files/Code%20of%20conduct%20revOct2022.pdf> accessed 19/12/2024

Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (ClfA) 2014b *Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials* (updated October 2020) (Reading) <https://www.archaeologists.net/sites/default/files/ClfAS%26GFind%202.pdf> accessed 19/12/2024

Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (ClfA) 2023a *Standard for archaeological monitoring and recording* (Reading) <https://www.archaeologists.net/sites/default/files/Standard%20for%20archaeological%20monitoring%20%26%20recording.pdf> accessed 19/12/2024

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Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) 2023c *Standard for archaeological excavation* (Reading)

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Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) 2023d *Universal guidance for archaeological excavation* (Reading)

<https://www.archaeologists.net/sites/default/files/Universal%20guidance%20for%20archaeological%20excavation.pdf> accessed 19/12/2024

DCMS 2023 *Treasure Act 1996: Code of Practice* (3rd Revision)

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1138568/Treasure_Act_1996_Code_of_Practice.pdf accessed 19/12/2024

Mitchell P & Brickley M (eds) 2017 Updated guidelines to the standards for recording human remains. Chartered Institute for Archaeologists <https://www.babao.org.uk/assets/Uploads-to-Web/14-Updated-Guidelines-to-the-Standards-for-Recording-Human-Remains-digital.pdf> accessed 19/12/2024

Natural Environment Research Council (NERC) 2024 *British Geological Survey* <http://www.bgs.ac.uk/> accessed 19/12/2024