



# West Court Finchampstead, Berkshire

Written Scheme of Investigation for  
Archaeological Watching Brief

Planning Ref.: 242402  
Document Ref.: 306430.01  
January 2025



© Wessex Archaeology Ltd 2024, all rights reserved

Portway House  
Old Sarum Park  
Salisbury  
Wiltshire  
SP4 6EB

[www.wessexarch.co.uk](http://www.wessexarch.co.uk)

Wessex Archaeology Ltd is a company limited by guarantee registered in England, company number 1712772. It is also a Charity registered in England and Wales number 287786, and in Scotland, Scottish Charity number SC042630. Our registered office is at Portway House, Old Sarum Park, Salisbury, Wiltshire, SP4 6EB

#### Disclaimer

The material contained in this report was designed as an integral part of a report to an individual client and was prepared solely for the benefit of that client. The material contained in this report does not necessarily stand on its own and is not intended to nor should it be relied upon by any third party. To the fullest extent permitted by law Wessex Archaeology will not be liable by reason of breach of contract negligence or otherwise for any loss or damage (whether direct indirect or consequential) occasioned to any person acting or omitting to act or refraining from acting in reliance upon the material contained in this report arising from or connected with any error or omission in the material contained in the report. Loss or damage as referred to above shall be deemed to include, but is not limited to, any loss of profits or anticipated profits damage to reputation or goodwill loss of business or anticipated business damages costs expenses incurred or payable to any third party (in all cases whether direct indirect or consequential) or any other direct indirect or consequential loss or damage

## Document Information

Document title West Court, Finchampstead, Berkshire  
Document subtitle Written Scheme of Investigation for Archaeological Watching Brief  
Document reference 306430.01

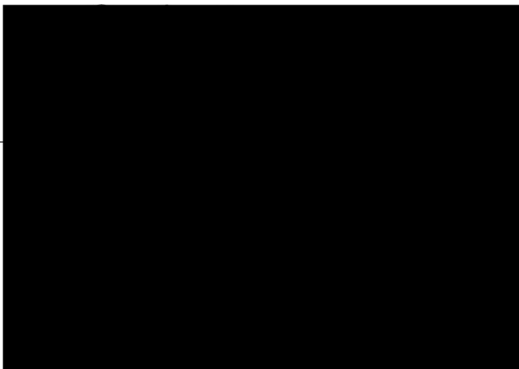
Client name Nirvana Spa Ltd  
Address 200 Dukes Ride  
Crowthorne  
RG45 6DS

Site location West Court  
Park Lane  
Wokingham  
RG40 4QJ

County Berkshire  
National grid reference 477226 163869 (SU 77226 63869)  
Statutory designations  
Planning authority Wokingham Borough Council  
Planning reference 242402  
Museum name No collection museum

WA project code(s) 306430  
Project management by Will Smith  
Document compiled by John Powell  
Graphics by Eilis Weldon

## Quality Assurance

Issue	Date	Author	Approved by
1	20/12/2025	AJP	
2	13/01/2025 – BA comments addressed	WS	



## Contents

<b>1</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1	Project and planning background.....	1
1.2	Scope of document.....	2
1.3	Location, topography and geology .....	2
<b>2</b>	<b>ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND.....</b>	<b>3</b>
2.1	Introduction.....	3
2.2	Designated heritage assets .....	3
2.3	Archaeological and historical context.....	3
<b>3</b>	<b>AIMS AND OBJECTIVES.....</b>	<b>4</b>
3.1	Aims .....	4
3.2	General objectives .....	5
3.3	Site-specific objectives.....	5
<b>4</b>	<b>FIELDWORK METHODS .....</b>	<b>5</b>
4.1	Introduction.....	5
4.2	Service location and other constraints .....	5
4.3	Watching brief methods .....	6
4.4	Recording .....	6
4.5	Survey .....	6
4.6	Monitoring.....	7
4.7	Finds.....	7
4.8	Environmental sampling.....	8
<b>5</b>	<b>POST-EXCAVATION METHODS AND REPORTING .....</b>	<b>8</b>
5.1	Stratigraphic evidence .....	8
5.2	Finds evidence .....	8
5.3	Environmental evidence.....	9
5.4	Reporting .....	9
<b>6</b>	<b>ARCHIVE STORAGE AND CURATION.....</b>	<b>10</b>
6.1	Museum.....	10
6.2	Transfer of title.....	10
6.3	Preparation of archive.....	10
6.4	Selection strategy .....	10
6.5	Security copy .....	11
<b>7</b>	<b>OUTREACH AND SOCIAL MEDIA .....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>COPYRIGHT .....</b>	<b>11</b>
8.1	Archive and report copyright .....	11
8.2	Third party data copyright .....	11
<b>9</b>	<b>WESSEX ARCHAEOLOGY PROCEDURES.....</b>	<b>12</b>
9.1	External quality standards.....	12
9.2	Personnel .....	12
9.3	Internal quality standards.....	12
9.4	Health and safety.....	13
9.5	Insurance.....	13
	<b>REFERENCES .....</b>	<b>14</b>
	<b>APPENDICES .....</b>	<b>16</b>
	Appendix 1 Finds and environmental specialists.....	16



## **List of Figures**

**Figure 1** Site location plan



# West Court Finchampstead, Berkshire

## Written Scheme of Investigation for Archaeological Watching Brief

### 1 INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Project and planning background

1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology has been commissioned by Nirvan Spa Ltd ('the client'), to produce a written scheme of investigation (WSI) for a proposed archaeological watching brief during the construction of a new swimming pool and associated landscaping. The works to be monitored cover an area of approximately 11 x 6 m centred on NGR 477226 163869, at West Court, Park Lane, Wokingham, RG40 4QJ (Fig. 1).

1.1.2 The proposed development comprises the creation of a new swimming pool in a three-sided courtyard to the rear of West Court, a grade II listed building (since 1967; (planning application 242402). The swimming pool also features an area of hardstanding patio terrace connecting the main building with the swimming pool, and together are of relatively modest in size. The swimming pool forms part of a wider redevelopment of West Court that will see the building converted into a 49 bedroom hotel (planning application 240428).

1.1.3 A planning application (242402) submitted to Wokingham Borough Council, was granted on 25 November 2024, subject to conditions. The following conditions relate to archaeology:

*Condition 4 No development shall take place/commence until a programme of archaeological work, including a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) has been submitted to, and approved by, the local planning authority in writing. The WSI shall include an assessment of significance and research questions; and:*

- 1. The programme and methodology of site investigation and recording*
- 2. The programme for post investigation assessment*
- 3. Provision to be made for analysis of the site investigation and recording*
- 4. Provision to be made for publication and dissemination of the analysis and records of the site investigation*
- 5. Provision to be made for archive deposition of the analysis and records of the site investigation*
- 6. Nomination of a competent person or persons/organisation to undertake the works set out within the WSI.*

*Reason: The site lies in an area of archaeological potential, particularly for, but not limited to, Roman remains. The potential impacts of the development can be mitigated through a programme of archaeological work. This is in accordance with national and local plan policy.*

*In view of the nature and scale of the development and the low likelihood of the potential archaeology, should it exist, meriting preservation in situ, an archaeological monitoring and recording exercise in the form of a Watching Brief, on a controlled strip of the area, to the required depth for the development, is likely to represent an appropriate programme of works.*

Condition 5 *The Development shall take place in accordance with the WSI approved under condition 4. 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 WSI approved under condition 4 and the provision made for analysis, publication and dissemination of results and archive deposition has been secured.*

*Reason: The site lies in an area of archaeological potential, particularly for, but not limited to, Roman remains. The potential impacts of the development can be mitigated through a programme of archaeological work. This is in accordance with national and local plan policy.*

*In view of the nature and scale of the development and the low likelihood of the potential archaeology, should it exist, meriting preservation in situ, an archaeological monitoring and recording exercise in the form of a Watching Brief, on a controlled strip of the area, to the required depth for the development, is likely to represent an appropriate programme of works.*

- 1.1.4 Prior to the planning application the Archaeology Officer at Berkshire Archaeology was consulted regarding the proposed development. They highlighted the potential archaeological implications for the proposed development which lies within an area of considerable potential for archaeology. Of particular importance is the route of the Devils Highway Roman Road that crosses the site from east–west and any associated remains of the road or roadside activity. Given this potential an archaeological watching brief, comprising a controlled strip of the development area was recommended.

## **1.2 Scope of document**

- 1.2.1 This WSI sets out the aims and objectives of the watching brief, and the methods and standards that will be employed. It conforms to current best practice, as well as the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' relevant standards and guidance (CIfA 2014a; 2023a–b), guidance in *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment* (MoRPHE; Historic England 2015a), and Berkshire Archaeology *General Standards for Historic Environment Projects* (Berkshire Archaeology 2021), also appended to this document.
- 1.2.2 This document will be submitted to the Archaeology Officer at Berkshire Archaeology, archaeological advisor to the Local Planning Authority (LPA), for approval prior to the fieldwork.

## **1.3 Location, topography and geology**

- 1.3.1 The works to be monitored are located to the east of West Court, a grade II listed building, situated 2.5 km to the north-west of Finchampstead, Berkshire. West Court is located within the Arborfield Garrison Strategic Development Location (SDL), adjacent to the southern settlement boundary and will remain in an area of green space (West Court SANG) following the development at Arborfield Garrison.
- 1.3.2 The location of the proposed swimming pool lies within a three-sided courtyard, currently comprising a patio/grassed area. It is bounded by the buildings that make up West Court on three sides, with areas of landscaped gardens to the east. Beyond the gardens of West Court agricultural land extends in all directions. The A327 (Reading Road) lies 700 m to the west with Park Lane approximately 300 m to the south-east.

- 1.3.3 Existing ground levels are approximately 52 m above Ordnance Datum (OD) and the area of the swimming pool is largely flat.
- 1.3.4 The natural geological substrate is mapped as sedimentary bedrock of London Clay Formation, and comprises clay, silt and sand (British Geological Survey 2024).

## 2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

### 2.1 Introduction

- 2.1.1 A summary of the archaeological and historical background to the site is presented below. Relevant entry numbers from the Berkshire Historic Environment Record (HER) and the National Heritage List for England (NHLE) are included. Additional sources of information are referenced, as appropriate.

### 2.2 Designated heritage assets

- 2.2.1 West Court is a Grade II Listed Building (NHLE1118093). The formal listing states '*West Court, a former manor house with a C17 core and substantial additions and rebuilding in 1800, 1835, 1901 and 1964, latterly used as an officers' mess. The 1964 northern extensions, excluded from the listing, include a single-storey range with a very large dining room and ceremonial corridor and the adjoining three-storey bedroom wing and service accommodation.*'

### 2.3 Archaeological and historical context

#### *Prehistoric (950,000 BC–AD 43)*

- 2.3.1 Early prehistoric activity is limited to a number of finds spots in the local area. A Palaeolithic scraper was found alongside other later artefacts approximately 480 m to the south-west of the site although their exact location is somewhat uncertain. Additional Palaeolithic finds are known from the wider area such as a hand axe (MRM16393) found to the east of the site and a palaeolith from Banisters Farm (MWK8608), 845 m to the south-east (Wessex Archaeology 2019).
- 2.3.2 A large extant Bronze Age Bell barrow and barrow cemetery (NHLE1013244) lies 2.10 km to the east of the site. Closer to West Court, two Bronze Age burial urns (MWK1121) were found in the area of the drive some 470 m to the west and may indicate the presence of a cemetery (MOLA 2014). Excavations some 1.1 km to the north also investigated Bronze Age ditches and pits (MOLA 2016).
- 2.3.3 Evidence of Iron Age settlement, metal-working, and cultivation has also been identified within the vicinity of the proposed development, and some may have continued in use into, or perhaps intermittently through, the Romano-British period. This may have been the case for a settlement at Whitehall Brick and Tile Works, Arborfield Green, 1.6 km north-west of the site, where occupation spanned the end of the 1st century to early 2nd century AD (Pine 2003).

#### *Romano-British (AD 43–410)*

- 2.3.4 The projected route of the Roman road from Silchester to Staines crosses the site from east to west (NHLE1016332; Fig. 1). The road, known as the Devils Highway and assigned number 4a in Ivan Margary's catalogue of Roman roads in Britain (Margary 1955), connected London to Silchester (*Calleva Atrebatum*) via a crossing of the River Thames at Staines (*Pontes*). From Silchester it continued south-west towards Old Sarum



(*Sorbiodunum*), near Salisbury in Wiltshire (Margary 4b) and formed part of a longer route joining London to Exeter traditionally known as the Port Way (Margary 4).

- 2.3.5 Earlier excavations to the east of the site investigated the road at three locations. In 1974 two sections were cut across the road at Pond Field (SU 7840 6390) and exposed two successive road surfaces. The lower surface was 5.1–6.0 m wide, with the upper measuring 5.3–7.8 m wide; pottery dated to the late first and second centuries was also recovered (Wilson *et al.* 1975, 280). Further investigations were undertaken in Cottage Field, Wheatlands Manor (SU 7800 6390) in 1975, and again identified two successive road surfaces (Goodburn *et al.* 1976, 372). Subsequent work to the west of Wheatlands Manor (SU 7774 6390) found traces of road metalling, but auguring at West Court failed to find the road suggesting a diversion from the alignment (Frere *et al.* 1985, 312).
- 2.3.6 Recent geophysical survey and archaeological trial trench evaluation work ahead of development at Hogwood Farm (Wessex Archaeology 2018; 2019; Fig. 1) identified the road 440 m to the east of West Court. Here, the road was defined by a thick linear spread of mixed, poorly sorted sub-rounded and angular stone, including flint 5.70–8.00 m wide. The road surface was flanked by ditches to the north and south that varied from 0.60 m to 2.05 m wide and 0.25–0.65 m deep. Additional ditches and pits were found in the area close to the road and probably represent an area of roadside activity. Roadside settlement activity is also apparent 1 km further to the east at Wheatlands Manor where a series of rectangular buildings have been identified as cropmarks (NHLE1006968; Fig. 1).
- 2.3.7 In the wider landscape a number of Romano-British finds and settlements have been identified and include ditched enclosures, a possible villa, buildings, and iron working (Wessex Archaeology 2019). Similar evidence has been found during evaluation and excavations as part of the Hogwood Farm development to the north of West Court, including a possible iron working site, settlement sites and ditched enclosures (*ibid.*).

#### *Post-Roman to post-medieval (AD 410–1800)*

- 2.3.8 The villages of Arborfield Cross and Finchampstead both have Saxon origins. Former field boundaries identified in the surrounding area are thought to be Saxon in date. During the medieval and post-medieval period, the site formed part of the Parish of Finchampstead. It is likely the site comprised agricultural land during this period.
- 2.3.9 The site of West Court has been occupied since the middle ages; in 1337 a mill worth 7s 8d together with 105 acres of land was passed to Thomas Banister and his wife Amice (VCHS 1923). The earlier house probably a moated site but was renovated and enlarged in the 17th–19th centuries, and the earliest parts of the present house date to the 17th century.

#### *Modern (AD 1800–present)*

- 2.3.10 The house at West Court was requisitioned in 1941 by the War Department for use as a training establishment, it was subsequently bought by the War Department in 1950 and saw significant alterations and enlargement in 1964.

### **3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

#### **3.1 Aims**

- 3.1.1 The aims of the investigation are to:

- allow, within the resources available, the preservation by record of archaeological deposits, the presence and nature of which could not be established (or established with sufficient accuracy) in advance of the development or other works;
- provide an opportunity, if needed, to signal to all interested parties, before the destruction of the material in question, that an archaeological find has been made for which the allocated resources are not sufficient to support treatment to a satisfactory and proper standard; and
- guide, not replace, any requirement for contingent excavation or preservation of possible deposits.

### **3.2 General objectives**

3.2.1 In order to achieve the above aims, the general objectives are to:

- determine the presence or absence of archaeological features, deposits, structures, artefacts or ecofacts within the specified works area;
- record and establish, within the constraints of the works, the extent, character, date, condition and quality of any surviving archaeological remains (a preservation by record);
- place any identified archaeological remains within a wider historical and archaeological context in order to assess their significance; and
- make available information about the archaeological resource on the site by preparing a report on the results.

### **3.3 Site-specific objectives**

3.3.1 Following consideration of the archaeological potential of the site and the regional research framework (REF.), the site-specific objectives are to:

- examine evidence for remains of the Roman road that may exist within the site, does the road extend across the site and if so record and document its construction; and
- examine evidence for the remains of any associated roadside settlement.

## **4 FIELDWORK METHODS**

### **4.1 Introduction**

- 4.1.1 Compliance with health and safety regulations and requirements will take priority over archaeological considerations in all works.
- 4.1.2 All works will be undertaken in accordance with the detailed methods set out within this WSI. Any significant variations to these methods will be agreed in writing with the Archaeology Officer at Berkshire Archaeology and the client prior to being implemented.
- 4.1.3 The works to be monitored comprise a controlled strip of the swimming pool area and associated service ducts. Additional monitoring may be necessary within the surrounding paved area if archaeological levels are impacted (Fig. 1).

### **4.2 Service location and other constraints**

- 4.2.1 The client and/or their principal contactor will be responsible for the identification and protection of any above- and below-ground services within the watching brief area/s. The

client and/or their principal contactor will also be responsible for informing Wessex Archaeology of, and delimiting, any other areas of environmental, ecological or other constraints.

### **4.3 Watching brief methods**

- 4.3.1 The watching brief will be undertaken by at least one archaeologist, subject to the number of site operations being carried out at any one time. All mechanical excavation will, where possible, be undertaken using a toothless ditching bucket and will be constantly monitored by the attending archaeologist.
- 4.3.2 Without causing unnecessary delay to the groundwork programme, the archaeologist may ask for the groundwork to be temporarily halted whilst investigations are carried out. If appropriate, areas of archaeological interest will be defined and suitably protected in advance of their investigation and recording.
- 4.3.3 Where necessary, the surface of archaeological deposits will be cleaned by hand. A sample of the archaeological features and deposits identified will be hand-excavated and recorded, sufficient to address the project aims. Spoil from machine stripping and hand-excavation will be visually scanned for the purposes of finds retrieval and, where appropriate, will also be metal-detected by trained archaeologists. Finds will be collected and bagged by context.
- 4.3.4 If extensive, complex or well-preserved archaeological remains are identified, for which the scope of the approved strategy is insufficient, the monitoring archaeologist will halt the groundwork, delimit the area of archaeological interest, and report immediately to the Wessex Archaeology project manager. Wessex Archaeology will then inform the groundwork contractor, the client and the Archaeology Officer at Berkshire Archaeology, as a contingent excavation or revised strategy may be required. The programme, and additional resources, for any contingent excavation will be agreed with the client. Accordingly, this WSI will need revising before any further fieldwork proceeds – the revised WSI will need the approval of the Archaeology Officer at Berkshire Archaeology, on behalf of the LPA.
- 4.3.5 If human remains are uncovered, the specific methods outlined below (section 4.7) will be followed.

### **4.4 Recording**

- 4.4.1 All exposed archaeological deposits and features will be recorded using Wessex Archaeology's pro forma recording system.
- 4.4.2 A complete record of excavated archaeological features and deposits will be made. This will include plans and sections, drawn to appropriate scales (generally 1:20 or 1:50 for plans, 1:10 for sections) and tied to the Ordnance Survey (OS) National Grid.
- 4.4.3 A full photographic record will be made using digital cameras equipped with an image sensor of not less than 10 megapixels. This will record the detail and general context of the principal features and the site. Digital images will be subject to managed quality control and curation processes, which will embed appropriate metadata within the image and ensure long term accessibility of the image set.

### **4.5 Survey**

- 4.5.1 The real time kinematic (RTK) survey of all archaeological features will be carried out using a Leica Global Navigation Satellite System (GNSS) connected to Leica's SmartNet service.



All survey data will be recorded in OS National Grid coordinates and heights above OD (Newlyn), as defined by OSTN15 and OSGM15, with a three-dimensional accuracy of at least 50 mm.

- 4.5.2 If, due to unforeseen circumstances, it is not possible to survey using survey equipment prior to the destruction of the material, archaeological features will be located to client plans that are related to OS mapping or structures/features that appear on OS mapping. This will be achieved using hand-held measuring tapes and the basic principles of triangulation.

#### **4.6 Monitoring**

- 4.6.1 The Client will inform the Archaeology Officer at Berkshire Archaeology of the start of the watching brief and its progress. Reasonable access will be arranged for the Archaeology Officer at Berkshire Archaeology to make site visits to inspect and monitor progress. Should it be deemed appropriate, remote monitoring of the works by phone, mail or video call may be utilised by the Archaeology Officer for Berkshire Archaeology.
- 4.6.2 Any variations to the WSI, if required to better address the project aims, will be agreed in advance with the client and the Archaeology Officer at Berkshire Archaeology.

#### **4.7 Finds**

##### *General*

- 4.7.1 All archaeological finds will be retained, although those of clearly very recent origin with negligible potential to provide information relevant to the project aims and objectives may be recorded on site and not retained. Where appropriate, soil samples may be taken and sieved to aid in finds recovery. Any finds requiring conservation or specific storage conditions will be dealt with immediately in line with *First Aid for Finds* (Watkinson and Neal 1998).

##### *Human remains*

- 4.7.2 In the event of discovery of any human remains (articulated or disarticulated, cremated or unburnt), all excavation of the deposit(s) will cease pending Wessex Archaeology obtaining a Ministry of Justice licence (this includes cases where remains are to be left *in situ*).
- 4.7.3 Initially the remains will be left *in situ*, covered and protected, pending discussions between the client, Wessex Archaeology's osteoarchaeologist and the Archaeology Officer at Berkshire Archaeology regarding the need for excavation/removal or sampling. Where this is deemed appropriate, the human remains will be fully recorded, excavated and removed from site in compliance with the Ministry of Justice licence.
- 4.7.4 Excavation and post-excavation processing of human remains will be in accordance with Wessex Archaeology protocols and in-line with current guidance documents (e.g., McKinley 2013) and the standards set out in ClfA Technical Paper 13 (McKinley and Roberts 1993). Appropriate specialist guidance/site visits will be undertaken if required.
- 4.7.5 The final deposition of human remains subsequent to the appropriate level of osteological analysis and other specialist sampling/examinations will follow the requirements set out in the Ministry of Justice licence.

##### *Treasure*

- 4.7.6 Wessex Archaeology will immediately notify the client and the Archaeology Officer at Berkshire Archaeology on discovery of any material covered, or potentially covered, by the

*Treasure Act 1996.* All information required by the Act (i.e., finder, location, material, date, associated items etc.) will be reported to the Coroner within 14 days.

#### **4.8 Environmental sampling**

- 4.8.1 All sampling will be undertaken following Wessex Archaeology's in-house guidance, which adheres to the principles outlined in Historic England's guidance (English Heritage 2011; Historic England 2015b).
- 4.8.2 Bulk environmental soil samples, for the recovery of plant macrofossils, wood charcoal, small animal bones and other small artefacts, will be taken as appropriate from well-sealed and dateable contexts. In general, features directly associated with particular activities (e.g., pits, latrines, cesspits, hearths, ovens, kilns and crop driers) should be prioritised for sampling over features, such as ditches or postholes, that are likely to contain reworked and residual material.
- 4.8.3 If waterlogged or mineralised deposits are encountered, an appropriate environmental sampling strategy will be agreed with the Archaeology Officer at Berkshire Archaeology. Specialist guidance will be provided by Wessex Archaeology's geoarchaeological and environmental team, with site visits undertaken if required.
- 4.8.4 Any samples will be of an appropriate size – typically 40 litres for the recovery of environmental evidence from dry contexts, and 10 litres from waterlogged deposits.
- 4.8.5 Following specialist advice, other sampling methods such as monolith, Kubiena or contiguous small bulk (column) samples may be employed to enable investigation of deposits with regard to microfossils (e.g., pollen, diatoms) and macrofossils (e.g., molluscs, insects), soil micromorphological or soil chemical analyses.

### **5 POST-EXCAVATION METHODS AND REPORTING**

#### **5.1 Stratigraphic evidence**

- 5.1.1 All written and drawn records, and surveyed data from the watching brief will be collated and checked. Key data will usually be transcribed into a database, which can be updated during any further analysis. The preliminary phasing of archaeological features and deposits will be undertaken using stratigraphic relationships and the spot dating from finds, particularly pottery, and any other relevant information.
- 5.1.2 A written description will be made of all archaeologically significant features and deposits that were exposed and excavated, ordered by period/phase and/or feature group as appropriate.

#### **5.2 Finds evidence**

- 5.2.1 All retained finds will, as a minimum, be cleaned, weighed, counted and identified. They will then be recorded to a level appropriate to the aims and objectives of the project. Recording and reporting will conform to the Type 1 (Description) level according to the ClfA (n.d. a) *Toolkit for Specialist Reporting*, to include appropriate quantification and characterisation. The report will include a table of finds by feature/context.
- 5.2.2 Metalwork from stratified contexts will be X-rayed and, along with other fragile and delicate materials, stored in a stable environment. The X-raying of objects and other conservation needs will be undertaken by Wessex Archaeology's conservation staff or another approved conservation centre.

- 5.2.3 Finds will be suitably bagged and boxed in accordance with the guidance given by the relevant museum and ClfA (2014b).

### **5.3 Environmental evidence**

- 5.3.1 Bulk environmental soil samples will be processed by standard flotation methods. The residues will be fractionated into 5.6/4 mm and 1 mm and dried if necessary. The coarse residue fraction (>5.6/4 mm), and the fine fraction when appropriate, will be sorted and discarded, with any finds recovered given to the appropriate specialist. The flot will be retained on a 0.25 mm mesh and scanned to assess the range of environmental remains present and their preservation. Unsorted fine residues will be retained until after any analyses and discarded following final reporting (in accordance with the Selection policy, below).
- 5.3.2 In the case of samples from cremation-related deposits the flots will be retained on a 0.25 mm mesh, with residues fractionated into 4 mm, 2 mm and 1 mm. In the case of samples from inhumation burial deposits, the sample will be wet-sieved through 9.5 mm and 1 mm mesh sizes. The coarse fractions (9.5 mm) will be sorted with any finds recovered given to the appropriate specialist together with the finer residues.
- 5.3.3 Any waterlogged samples will be processed by standard waterlogged flotation methods.
- 5.3.4 Recording and reporting will conform to the Type 1 (Description) level according to the ClfA (n.d. a) *Toolkit for Specialist Reporting*, to include appropriate quantification and characterisation.

### **5.4 Reporting**

- 5.4.1 Following completion of the fieldwork and the assessment of the stratigraphic, finds and environmental evidence, a draft report will be prepared in general accordance with relevant guidance (ClfA 2023b). The draft report will be submitted for approval to the client and the Archaeology Officer at Berkshire Archaeology for comment. Once approved, a final version will be submitted.
- 5.4.2 The report will include the following elements:
- Non-technical summary;
  - Project background;
  - Archaeological and historical context;
  - Aims and objectives;
  - Methods;
  - Results – stratigraphic, finds and environmental;
  - Conclusions in relation to the project aims and objectives, and discussion in relation to the wider local, regional or other archaeological contexts and research frameworks etc;
  - Archive preparation and deposition arrangements;
  - Appendices;
  - Illustrations; and
  - References.



- 5.4.3 A copy of the final report will be deposited with the HER, along with surveyed spatial digital data (.dxf or shapefile format).

#### *Publication*

- 5.4.4 If no further excavation works are undertaken, a short report on the results will be prepared for publication in a suitable journal, if considered appropriate and agreed with the client and the Archaeology Officer at Berkshire Archaeology.

#### *OASIS*

- 5.4.5 An OASIS (online access to the index of archaeological investigations) record (<http://oasis.ac.uk>) will be created, with key fields completed, and a .pdf version of the final report submitted. Subject to any contractual requirements on confidentiality, copies of the OASIS record will be integrated into the relevant local and national records and published through the Archaeology Data Service (ADS) ArchSearch catalogue.

## **6 ARCHIVE STORAGE AND CURATION**

### **6.1 Museum**

- 6.1.1 The site falls within an area where there is currently no collecting museum. Every effort will be made to identify a suitable repository for the archive resulting from the fieldwork, and if this is not possible, Wessex Archaeology will initiate discussions with the local planning authority in an attempt to resolve the issue. If no suitable repository is identified, Wessex Archaeology will continue to store the archive, but may institute a charge to the client for ongoing storage beyond a set period.

### **6.2 Transfer of title**

- 6.2.1 The legal owner of any finds recovered (i.e., the landowner), with the exception of human remains and any objects covered by the *Treasure Act 1996*, will be contacted to request transfer of their ownership to the museum via a written agreement.

### **6.3 Preparation of archive**

#### *Physical archive*

- 6.3.1 The physical archive will be prepared following nationally recommended guidelines (Brown 2011; ClfA 2014b; SMA 1995). The archive will usually be deposited within one year of completion of the project, with the agreement of the client.

#### *Digital archive*

- 6.3.2 The digital archive will be deposited with a Trusted Digital Repository, in this instance the Archaeology Data Service (ADS), to ensure its long-term curation. Digital data will be prepared following ADS guidelines (ADS 2013 and online guidance) and accompanied by metadata.

### **6.4 Selection strategy**

- 6.4.1 It is widely accepted that not all records and materials (artefacts and ecofacts) collected or created during an archaeological project require preservation in perpetuity. These records and materials will be subject to selection in order to establish what will be retained for long-term curation, with the aim of ensuring that all elements selected to be retained are appropriate to establish the significance of the project and support future research, outreach, engagement, display and learning activities, i.e., the retained archive should fulfil the requirements of future researchers and the receiving museum.

6.4.2 The selection strategy, which details the project-specific selection process, is underpinned by national guidelines on selection and retention (Brown 2011, section 4) and generic selection policies (SMA 1993; Wessex Archaeology's internal selection policy) and follows ClfA's (n.d. b) *Toolkit for Selecting Archaeological Archives*. It should be agreed by all stakeholders (Wessex Archaeology's specialists, external specialists, local authority, museum) and fully documented in the project archive.

6.4.3 In this instance, given that the level of finds recovery is expected to be relatively low, decisions on selection will be deferred until after the fieldwork, and no detailed strategy is presented here. Any material not selected for retention may be used for teaching or reference collections by the museum, or by Wessex Archaeology.

## **6.5 Security copy**

6.5.1 In line with current best practice (e.g., Brown 2011), on completion of the project a security copy of the written records will be prepared in the form of a digital PDF/A file.

## **7 OUTREACH AND SOCIAL MEDIA**

7.1.1 In line with its charitable aims, Wessex Archaeology will, where possible and in consultation with the client, seek opportunities to disseminate the results and engage with the local community through social media, press releases, open days and volunteer involvement, while accounting for issues such as health and safety, confidentiality and vandalism.

## **8 COPYRIGHT**

### **8.1 Archive and report copyright**

8.1.1 The full copyright of the written/illustrative/digital archive relating to the project will be retained by Wessex Archaeology under the *Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988* with all rights reserved. The client will be licenced to use each report for the purposes that it was produced in relation to the project as described in the specification. The museum, however, will be granted an exclusive licence for the use of the archive for educational purposes, including academic research, providing that such use conforms to the *Copyright and Related Rights Regulations 2003*.

8.1.2 Information relating to the project will be deposited with the Historic Environment Record (HER), where it can be freely copied without reference to Wessex Archaeology for the purposes of archaeological research, or development control within the planning process.

### **8.2 Third party data copyright**

8.2.1 This document, the report and the project archive may contain material that is non-Wessex Archaeology copyright (e.g., Ordnance Survey, British Geological Survey, Crown Copyright), or the intellectual property of third parties, which Wessex Archaeology are able to provide for limited reproduction under the terms of our own copyright licences, but for which copyright itself is non-transferable by Wessex Archaeology. Users remain bound by the conditions of the *Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988* with regard to multiple copying and electronic dissemination of such material.



## **9 WESSEX ARCHAEOLOGY PROCEDURES**

### **9.1 External quality standards**

- 9.1.1 Wessex Archaeology is registered as an archaeological organisation with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) and fully endorses its *Code of Conduct* (CIfA 2014c) and *Regulations for Professional Conduct* (CIfA 2019). All staff directly employed or subcontracted by Wessex Archaeology will be of a standard approved by Wessex Archaeology, and archaeological staff will be employed in line with the CIfA codes of practice, and will normally be members of the CIfA.

### **9.2 Personnel**

- 9.2.1 The fieldwork will be directed and supervised by an experienced archaeologist from Wessex Archaeology's core staff. The overall responsibility for the conduct and management of the project will be held by one of Wessex Archaeology's project managers, who will visit the fieldwork as appropriate to monitor progress and to ensure that the scope of works is adhered to. Where required, monitoring visits may also be undertaken by Wessex Archaeology's Health and Safety manager.
- 9.2.2 The assessment of any finds and environmental data will be undertaken by Wessex Archaeology core staff or external specialists, using Wessex Archaeology's standard methods, under the supervision of the departmental managers and the overall direction of the project manager. A complete list of finds and environmental specialists is provided in Appendix 1.
- 9.2.3 The following key staff are proposed:
- Project Manager Will Smith
  - Fieldwork Director TBC
- 9.2.4 Wessex Archaeology reserves the right, where necessary due to unforeseen circumstances, to replace nominated personnel with alternative members of staff of comparable expertise and experience.

### **9.3 Internal quality standards**

- 9.3.1 Wessex Archaeology is an ISO 9001 accredited organisation (certificate number FS 606559), confirming the operation of a Quality Management System which complies with the requirements of ISO 9001:2015 – covering professional archaeological and heritage advice and services. The award of the ISO 9001 certificate, independently audited by the British Standards Institution (BSI), demonstrates Wessex Archaeology's commitment to providing quality heritage services to our clients.
- 9.3.2 Wessex Archaeology assigns responsibility to individual managers for the successful completion of all aspects of a project, including reporting. This includes monitoring progress and quality; controlling the budget from inception to completion; and all aspects of health and safety for the project. At all stages, the project manager will carefully assess and monitor performance of staff and adherence to objectives, timetables and budgets, while the manager's own performance is monitored by the team leader or regional director. The technical managers in the Graphics, Research, GeoServices and IT sections provide additional assistance and advice.
- 9.3.3 All staff are responsible for following Wessex Archaeology's quality standards but the overall adherence to and setting of these standards is the responsibility of the senior



management team who, in consultation with the team leaders/regional directors, also ensure projects are adequately programmed and resourced within Wessex Archaeology's portfolio of project commitments.

#### **9.4 Health and safety**

- 9.4.1 All works will be undertaken in accordance with the *Health and Safety at Work Act 1974*; the *Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999* and all other applicable health and safety legislation.
- 9.4.2 Wessex Archaeology is an ISO 45001 accredited organisation (certificate number OHS 744383), confirming the operation of an Occupational Health and Safety Management System that complies with the requirements of ISO 45001:2018. The award of the ISO 45001 certificate, independently audited by the British Standards Institution (BSI), demonstrates Wessex Archaeology's commitment to delivering effective risk management across all its activities.
- 9.4.3 Wessex Archaeology will, for all projects, produce one or more task and site-specific risk assessments and method statements (RAMS), which will ensure our staff can work safely on the site. A copy of the RAMS and our Health and Safety Policy can be provided to the client. All staff on our sites will be made fully familiar with the RAMS before work commences.
- 9.4.4 We aim to work collaboratively on health and safety with clients and, where separately appointed, with principal contractors. We expect clients to provide in good time all the necessary risk information about a site that may affect the archaeological work, such as locations of utilities or any known ground contamination. We will comply with the project specific Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) requirements, and any other specific additional requirements of the Principal Contractor.
- 9.4.5 All fieldwork staff are certified through the Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS) and have undergone UKATA Asbestos Awareness Training. Staff who carry out specific tasks are suitably trained and competent to do so through training accredited by the Construction Industry Training Board (CITB), Institution of Occupational Safety & Health (IOSH) and the National Plant Operators Recognitions Scheme (NPORS).

#### **9.5 Insurance**

- 9.5.1 Wessex Archaeology holds Employers Liability (£15,000,000), Public Liability (£15,000,000) and Professional Indemnity (£10,000,000) policies.

## REFERENCES

- ADS 2013. *Caring for Digital Data in Archaeology: a guide to good practice*. Archaeology Data Service & Digital Antiquity Guides to Good Practice.
- Berkshire Archaeology 2021. *General Standards for Historic Environment Projects 2021*.
- British Geological Survey 2024 *BGS Geology Viewer* <https://www.bgs.ac.uk/map-viewers/bgs-geology-viewer/> (accessed 16/12/2024).
- Brown, D. H. 2011. *Archaeological Archives: a guide to best practice in creation, compilation, transfer and curation* (revised edition). Archaeological Archives Forum.
- Chartered Institute for Archaeologists [ClfA] 2014a (revised October 2020). *Standard and Guidance for the Collection, Documentation, Conservation and Research of Archaeological Materials*. Reading: ClfA.
- ClfA 2014b (revised October 2020). *Standard and Guidance for the Creation, Compilation, Transfer and Deposition of Archaeological Archives*. Reading: ClfA.
- ClfA 2014c (revised October 2022). *Code of Conduct*. Reading: ClfA.
- ClfA 2019 (revised July 2021). *Regulations for Professional Conduct*. Reading: ClfA.
- ClfA 2023a. *Standard for Archaeological Monitoring and Recording*. Reading: ClfA.
- ClfA 2023b. *Universal Guidance for Archaeological Monitoring and Recording*. Reading: ClfA.
- ClfA n.d. a. *Toolkit for Specialist Reporting* <https://www.archaeologists.net/reporting-toolkit> (accessed 10/12/2023).
- ClfA n.d. b. *Toolkit for Selecting Archaeological Archives* <https://www.archaeologists.net/selection-toolkit> (accessed 10/12/2023).
- Ditchfield, P. H and Page, W. (eds) 1923. *Victoria County History, A History of the County of Berkshire: Volume 3. British History Online* <https://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/berks/vol3>. (accessed 17/12/2024).
- English Heritage 2011. *Environmental Archaeology. A Guide to the Theory, Practice of Methods, from Sampling and Recovery to Post-excavation* (2nd edition). Portsmouth: English Heritage.
- Frere, S. S., Hassall, M. W. C. and Tomlin, R. S. O. 1985. 'Roman Britain in 1984', *Britannia* 16, 252–332.
- Goodburn, R. Wright, R. P., Hassall, M. W. C. and Tomlin, R. S. O. 1976. 'Roman Britain in 1975', *Britannia* 7, 291–392.
- Historic England 2015a. *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment: The MoRPHE project managers' guide*. Swindon: Historic England.
- Historic England 2015b. *Geoarchaeology. Using Earth Sciences to Understand the Archaeological Record*. Swindon: Historic England.

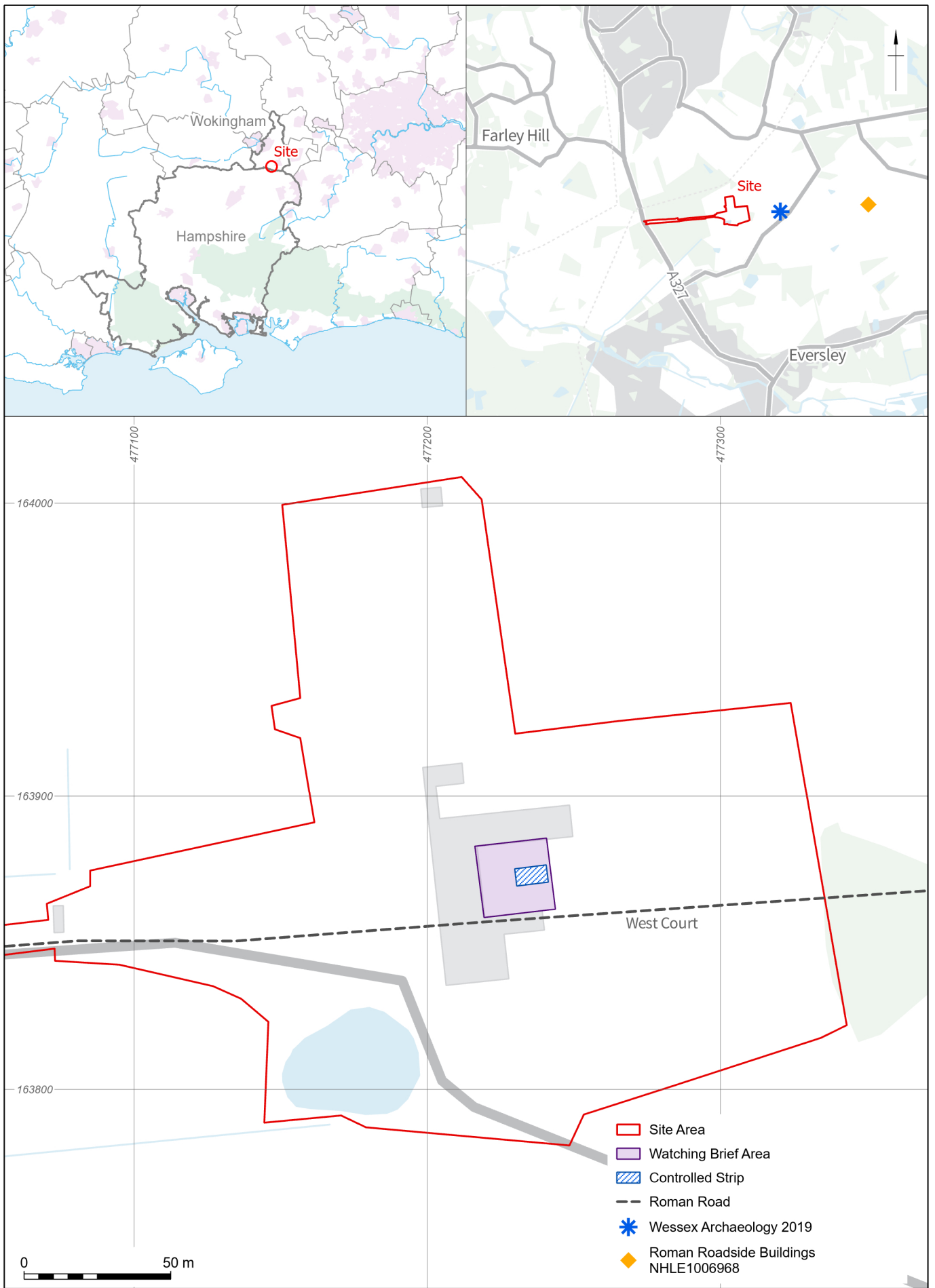
- McKinley, J. I. 2013. 'Cremation: excavation, analysis and interpretation of material from cremation-related contexts', in Tarlow, S. and Nilsson Stutz, L. (eds), *The Oxford Handbook of the Archaeology of Death and Burial*, 147–71. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- McKinley, J. I. and Roberts, C. 1993. *Excavation and Post-excavation Treatment of Cremated and Inhumed Human Remains*. Reading: ClfA Technical Paper 13.
- MOLA 2014. *Arborfield Garrison SDL, proposed major residential led development. Historic environment assessment, reference AGLC/HPA/DOC/17b*. London: unpublished report.
- MOLA 2016. *Arborfield Parcel SC1, Berkshire, evaluation report*. London: unpublished report ref. BR-PSC16.
- Pine, J. 2003. 'The excavation of a Late Iron Age/Roman settlement and iron production site at Whitehall Brick and Tile Works, Arborfield Garrison, Berkshire', *Berkshire Archaeological Journal* 76, 37–67.
- SMA 1993. *Selection, Retention and Dispersal of Archaeological Collections*. London: Society of Museum Archaeologists.
- SMA 1995. *Towards an Accessible Archaeological Archive*. London: Society of Museum Archaeologists.
- Watkinson, D. and Neal, V. 1998. *First Aid for Finds: practical guide for archaeologists*. United Kingdom Institute for Conservation of Historic & Artistic Works.
- Wessex Archaeology 2018. *Hogwood Farm, Finchampstead, Berkshire. Detailed gradiometer survey report*. Salisbury: unpublished report ref. 206170.03.
- Wessex Archaeology 2019. *Hogwood Farm, Finchampstead, Berkshire. Archaeological evaluation report*. Salisbury: unpublished report ref. T24194.05.
- Wilson, D. R., Wright, R. P., Hassall, M. W. C. and Tomlin, R. S. O. 1975. 'Roman Britain in 1974', *Britannia* 6, 221–94.

## APPENDICES

### Appendix 1 Finds and environmental specialists

Name	Qualifications	Specialism
Sander Aerts	BA; MSc	Archaeoentomological remains, animal bone, marine shell
Phil Andrews	BSc; FSA; MCIfA	Slag and metal working debris
Richard Bradley	BA; MA; MCIfA	Battlefield artefacts, particularly Civil War period lead shot
Ceridwen Boston	BSocSc; MA; MSc; DPhil	Osteoarchaeology; funerary archaeology
Elina Brook	BA; MA; PCIfA	Later prehistoric and Romano-British pottery, and small finds
Alex Brown	BA; MSc; PhD	Geoarchaeology, palynology
Dan Carter	BSc; PhD	Pottery with particular emphasis on post-Roman ceramics. Small and bulk finds including ceramic building material, fired clay, metalwork, clay tobacco pipe, stone, shale and glass
Liz Chambers	BA; MSc	Geoarchaeology
Fiona Eaglesham	BSc; MSc	Archaeobotanical remains
Jessica Feito	BA; MSc; PhD	Archaeobotanical remains
Robert Francis	BSc, MSc, PhD	Anthracological remains, archaeobotanical remains
Erica Gittins	BA; MA; PhD	Prehistoric flint
Phil Harding	PhD	Prehistoric flint, particularly Palaeolithic flint
Hayley Hawkins	BSc; MSc	Geoarchaeology, marine geoarchaeology
Lorrain Higbee	BSc; MSc; MCIfA	Animal bone
Matt Leivers	BA; PhD; ACIfA	Prehistoric pottery and flint
Inés López-Dóriga	BA; MA; PhD	Archaeobotanical remains
Erica Macey-Bracken	BA; ACIfA	Post-medieval finds, ceramic building material and worked wood
Katie Marsden	BSc	Pottery from prehistoric to post-medieval/modern. Metalwork of all periods, including coins. Small and bulk finds including fired clay, ceramic building material, worked bone
Cai Mason	BSc; MCIfA	Post-medieval finds, particularly glass
Jacqueline McKinley	BTech; FSA	Human remains (inhumations and cremations)
Nicki Mulhall		Geoarchaeology and archaeobotanical remains
Marek Lewcun		Clay tobacco pipe
Jack Oughton	MSci; PhD	Geoarchaeology, palynology, geology
Charlie Robertson	BA; MSc	Human remains (inhumations)
Megan Scantlebury	BA; MSc	Archaeobotanical remains
Rachael Seager Smith	BA; MCIfA	Pottery with particular emphasis on Roman ceramics; and metalwork, fired clay, ceramic building material, stone, worked bone, shale, glass, and wall plaster
Andrew Shaw	BA; MA; PhD	Palaeolithic lithic artefacts and Pleistocene geoarchaeology
Mark Stewart	BA; MPhil	Prehistoric flint, worked stone, ceramic building material, glass, fired clay
Amy Thorp	BA; MA	Pottery with emphasis on Roman ceramics, small finds
Ed Treasure	BSc; MRes; PhD	Archaeobotanical remains, including plant remains and charcoal/wood
Kevin Trott	BA	Pottery from the Iron Age to early modern period, with emphasis on later Iron Age/Romano-British and medieval to post-medieval periods. Ceramic building material, fired clay/briquetage, metalwork/small finds, clay tobacco pipes, worked bone, stone artefacts, shale, glass, wall plaster, leather, marine shell
Jessica Waterworth	BA; MSc	Animal bone
Thomas Wicks	BA; MA	Conservation of objects
Daniel Young	BSc; MSc; PhD	Geoarchaeology, palaeoecology, deposit modelling

C:\Users\Ellis\_W\Wessex Archaeology\Geomatics Temporary Projects - Temporary Projects\306430\Geomatics\Setup\306430\_Setup.aprx



Coordinate system: OSGB 1936 British National Grid  
Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2024.  
This material is for client report only © Wessex Archaeology. No unauthorised reproduction.

Date: 18/12/2024 Created by: EW Revision: 0 Scale: 1:1,750 at A4

Figure 1: Site location and proposed watching brief area



# General Standards for Historic Environment Projects

## 1. Introduction

**1.1** Berkshire Archaeology (BA) is part of Reading Borough Council's Museum and Town Hall Services within the Directorate of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services. BA's principal purpose is to provide an advice service on the historic environment to the five unitary authorities of Reading Borough Council, Bracknell Forest Council, Wokingham Borough Council, Slough Borough Council and the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead, as well as advice to developers, landowners, the general public and other stakeholders. It should be noted that BA is not part of and does not represent the planning departments of the five unitary authorities. Advice on the historic built environment, listed buildings and conservation areas is provided by each authority's Conservation Officer. BA's mission is to ensure East Berkshire's archaeology is widely appreciated and preserved for future generations to enjoy through protecting, enhancing and advancing understanding of its archaeological resource.

**1.2** BA provides historic environment advice in accordance with national policy, as set out in the *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF) (published March 2012, updated July 2021), in the *Planning Practice Guidance for the Historic Environment* (updated July 2019), and in accordance with the local plan and heritage policies of the five unitary authorities. The practical implementation of national historic environment policy is set out in the Historic England's *Good Practice Advice notes* (GPAs) and *Historic England Advice Notes* (HEANs), particularly GPA 2 (Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment), GPA 3 (Setting and Views), and HEAN 12 (Statements of Heritage Significance).

## 2. Purpose

**2.1** This document sets out general standards and procedures required of those undertaking historic environment and archaeological projects through the development process in the five unitary authorities. Specific project requirements may be set out in a Brief issued by BA. This *General Standards* document provides a framework for archaeological practices to prepare Written Schemes of Investigation (WSI), Project Designs (PD), Updated Project Designs (UPD) or similar. All projects are unique and project-specific strategies and approaches may be acceptable with appropriate consultation with BA.

## 3. Principal Standards

**3.1** All historic environment projects must be undertaken to the highest possible standards and in accordance with best practice as set out in the following overarching standards documents.

- *Code of conduct* Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (December 2014)
- *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment: The MoRPHE Project Managers' Guide* (Historic England 2015)
- *Standards and guidance for historic environment desk-based assessment* (December 2014), *for archaeological field evaluation* (December 2014), *for archaeological excavation* (December 2014), and *for an archaeological watching brief* (December 2014) Chartered Institute for Archaeologists

**3.2** Specific best practice guidance in relation to specialist areas (e.g. finds and environmental materials) is set out under the relevant sections below.

**3.3** BA demonstrates its own commitment to best practice by adhering to the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and guidance for archaeological advice by historic environment services* (December 2014) and all other relevant standards.



## 4. Written Schemes of Investigations, Project Designs and Updated Project Designs

**4.1** All historic environment fieldwork projects will normally be undertaken in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) or Project Design (PD), which will normally be submitted to and agreed by BA in advance of the commencement of fieldwork.

**4.2** The WSI or PD prepared by the archaeological practice will set out the detailed methodology to be employed during the course of the project. When such documents are prepared in response to conditions attached to planning permissions, they will normally require formal approval by the relevant planning authority, following preliminary agreement with BA. Timescales and fees vary between each authority.

**4.3** The ClfA's Standards and Guidance documents and MoRPHE provide suitable guidance on the contents of WSIs and PDs.

**4.4** In order to assist in the preparation of appropriate aims and objectives, archaeological practices will normally be expected to consult with the Berkshire Archaeology's Historic Environment Record during the preparation of the WSI or PD.

**4.5** All WSIs and PDs must include a clear set of aims and objectives for the project. Schemes of investigation on known heritage assets will also include specific research objectives, with reference to the **Solent-Thames Research Framework for the Historic Environment. Resource Assessments and Research Agendas** (Oxford Wessex Monograph No. 6, 2014) and other research frameworks where relevant.

**4.6** WSIs and PDs will include provision for appropriate assessment, analysis, reporting, publication and archiving of the project results. For major projects, this information may be set out in an Updated Project Design (UPD) following an assessment of the project results. The UPD will also include revised and updated research objectives. Archaeological practices are advised to consult with BA regarding the requirements for post-excavation assessments and analysis in order to ensure the most appropriate and efficient procedures are followed (e.g. some projects may not merit a detailed assessment stage).

## 5. Methods

**5.1** The following section provides guidance to practices on sampling strategies for the principal fieldwork project types but BA recognises that all projects are unique and that practices may propose alternative strategies and approaches that are appropriate to the specific circumstances, aims and objectives of any particular project.

*Heritage Statements, Desk-based Assessments, Impact Assessments and Similar*

**5.2** BA would not normally require a WSI or PD in advance of the preparation of heritage statements and desk-based assessments. However, practices are advised to consult with BA regarding the scope, extent and detail of such assessments prior to commencement to ensure that the appropriate aspects of the historic environment are considered and assessed. The Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' Standards and Guidance should be followed.

**5.3** All assessments should include consultation with Berkshire Archaeology's Historic Environment Record and practices should ensure they allow sufficient time for such consultation and to receive the results. There will be a charge raised for providing HER data to commercial projects and the data will be supplied under licence.

**5.4** Data acquired from Heritage Gateway must not be used for commercial purposes and documentation submitted making use of such data will likely be rejected.

**5.5** In addition to HER data, HLC data, historic mapping, aerial imagery (including historic aerial photography and satellite imagery), and LiDAR data should be consulted where relevant.



**5.6** Analysing the impact of the proposed works on potential archaeological deposits is likely to be a critical element of the assessment to enable BA to properly assess the need for, scope, and scale of archaeological works.

#### *Evaluation*

**5.7** Field evaluation may include a range of techniques in more than one phase of investigation. The principal technique will normally comprise trial trenching. BA will normally expect that trial trenching will sample a minimum of 5% of the area to be impacted by proposed development, including any areas of ancillary works.

**5.8** A contingency of up to 1% of the area to be impacted by proposed development should normally be provided for additional trial trenching in order to clarify the presence, extent, nature and importance of deposits recorded during the evaluation.

**5.9** The WSI will set out a sampling strategy for archaeological deposits identified by evaluation. This will provide for an investigation of a representative sample of deposits and features without unnecessarily compromising the integrity of deposits that may better be investigated at a subsequent stage of mitigation fieldwork.

**5.10** Evaluation trenches will not normally be backfilled without prior inspection by a representative of BA, however approval may be granted remotely subject to the circumstances of the project and appropriate consultation with BA.

#### *Excavation*

**5.11** The purpose of excavation, as defined in the ClfA's Standard, is to examine the archaeological resource within a given area or site within a framework of defined research objectives, to seek a better understanding of that resource.

**5.12** The WSI or PD will set out the research objectives which will guide the excavation strategy. In order to provide guidance, BA's normal sampling strategy for rural excavations is provided below. BA acknowledges that all projects are unique and this guidance may be varied to suit specific project objectives, subject to appropriate consultation with BA both prior to and during the course of a fieldwork project.

- *Ditches* – up to 10% by length of linear ditches will normally be sampled, focussed on establishing stratigraphic relationships, investigating terminals and recovering dating and environmental evidence. A higher sample, up to 20% by length, will normally be sought where ditches define or lie adjacent to settlement, industrial, burial or other specialist activity.
- *Pits* – all pits will normally be 50% sampled. The sample size will be increased, including the 100% excavation of a proportion of pits, where there is spatial, finds, environmental or other evidence to indicate that this will further the project objectives.
- *Structures/buildings* – all features and deposits that form components of a structure or building will normally be investigated. The sample of individual features or deposits comprising that structure to be excavated will depend on the nature and significance of the structure but typically would consist of 50% of all post-holes forming a hut circle or 50% by length of a drip gully.
- *Post and stake holes* – where these features do not form a recognisable structure, they will be sampled, normally 50% of every other post-hole. A representative sample of stake holes will be investigated.
- *Burials and related deposits* – all inhumation and cremation burials will be excavated in accordance with the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) licence. This will normally require total excavation and recovery. All associated deposits, e.g. pyre sites, mausolea and mortuary enclosures, will also be fully investigated and excavated.

- *Specialist activity areas/deposits* – all such deposits, such as corn driers, hearths and kilns, will be fully investigated and excavated.
- *Quarries, working hollows and similar large amorphous features* – normally up to 10% by area of large, amorphous features will be excavated or sufficient to characterise them satisfactorily.

#### *Strip, map and sample*

**5.13** A strip, map and sample exercise is normally deployed on the investigation of large, open areas, where the emphasis is on achieving an accurate plan of features, such as a field system or isolated structures, followed by selective excavation to answer specific questions. It is normally deployed where the potential is for a low density of archaeological deposits but where their spatial disposition will make an important contribution to the wider understanding of the historic landscape.

**5.14** This exercise therefore normally requires topsoil/subsoil removal in a manner appropriate to excavation. The sampling strategy will normally involve up to 5% by length of archaeological ditches and a representative sample of discrete features, which will normally be no more than 50% sampled. However the sampling strategy needs to be flexible and the WSI or PD should provide a contingency for additional investigation in case of the identification of exceptional deposits, such as burials.

#### *Watching Brief*

**5.15** Watching briefs will adhere to the ClfA's *Standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief* (December 2014). The WSI will detail the watching brief methods appropriate to the project aims and objectives, including specifying the construction works that will or will not be monitored. Consideration should always be given to ancillary and restoration works that may occur at a later stage, and their potential impact on surviving archaeology.

## **6. Recording**

**6.1** The WSI or PD will set out the methods and standards to be employed to create a permanent record of the investigation. A *pro forma* recording system will normally be used. Details of the standards for the drawn, photographic and survey record will be set out in the WSI.

**6.2** Archaeological practices should ensure that they are aware of the receiving Museum's requirements for project archives so that they are satisfied that their record accords with the Museum's standards.

**6.3** The use of high-quality digital photography is appropriate to secure a photographic record of a fieldwork project. The photographic record should illustrate both the detail and the general context of features and artefacts discovered, using appropriate photographic scales and location indicators. Working shots to illustrate more generally the progress of the archaeological investigation should also be included, as should photographs of clean trench side stratigraphy, artefacts or other events not easily captured in the drawn record. In the context of an archaeological evaluation or watching brief, negative trenches should be photographed to the same standards. There is no requirement for the use of black and white and colour transparency photography in addition to digital, unless expressly requested.

## **7. Finds and Environmental Materials**

**7.1** The WSI or PD will set out the methods and procedures for recovering, sampling, recording, processing, assessing, analysing and retaining finds and environmental materials on-site and in the post-fieldwork stages of the project. Where appropriate WSIs should also provide for scientific dating techniques. The methods and procedures should be in accordance with best practice as set out in:

- *Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials* (ClfA, December 2014).
- *Selection, Retention and Dispersal of Archaeological Collections Guidelines* (Society of Museum Archaeologists 1993)

- *Environmental Archaeology. A Guide to the Theory and Practice of Methods, from Sampling and Recovery to Post-excavation* (Historic England, second edition 2011).

**7.2** In particular it should be noted that in accordance with HE guidance, bulk environmental soil samples should normally be a minimum of 40 litres in volume.

## **8. Human remains**

**8.1** Archaeological practices will inform BA as soon as practicably possible of the discovery of human remains on site. Where those remains are to be excavated and recovered, this shall be undertaken in accordance with an appropriate licence obtained from the Ministry of Justice.

**8.2** Excavation of human remains will be in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Updated Guidelines to the standards for recording human remains* (Mitchell and Brickley, 2017).

## **9. Reporting**

**9.1** The style and format of reports are to be determined by the archaeological practice. However all reports must contain the following information:

- Site name and grid reference
- Project type (evaluation, watching brief etc.)
- Date and duration of fieldwork
- Site code
- Area of site
- An accurate site location and trench/survey plan based on up-to-date OS mapping, including heights aOD
- Monuments identified (referenced to the FISH Thesaurus of Monument Types)
- Museum accession number
- Unique OASIS ID number (see Section 11 below)

**9.2** The archaeological practice will determine the contents and structure of the report. The WSI, PD or UPD will set out the proposed report contents or publication synopsis. Guidance on best practice on report contents and structures should be followed as set out in the following documents:

- *Standards and guidance for archaeological desk-based assessment, field evaluation, for excavation, and for an archaeological watching brief* (Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, all December 2014)
- *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment: The MoRPHE Project Managers' Guide* (Historic England 2015)

**9.3** Archaeological practices will provide a digital copy of the final approved report in .pdf format to BA, which will be lodged with the HER and will become a publicly accessible document after an appropriate period of time (normally not exceeding 6 months). BA will also be provided with at least one copy of any formally published report, paper or monograph. Units are encouraged to provide GIS files showing trench and feature locations to aid their accurate recording on the HER.

**9.4** Where projects have been undertaken to meet the requirements of conditions of planning permission, a copy of the project report should be submitted to the appropriate planning authority for formal approval following submission to, and where appropriate comments from, BA.

**9.5** BA encourages innovative approaches to public engagement, participation, and dissemination, which are essential components of planning-led archaeology and should be contained in every WSI, PD, or UPD. These approaches should be proportionate to the work, might bring together multiple

pieces of recent work, and should be scalable to the significance of the findings. Berkshire Archaeology would be very pleased to discuss such plans with contractors, and to hear about successful engagement and outreach projects and to help disseminate news of such.

## 10. Archives

**10.1** The WSI or PD will set out the methods for creating a project archive that will contain all the data collected during the site investigation including records, finds and environmental materials. It must be quantified, ordered, indexed and internally consistent. The project archive will be assembled in accordance with best practice as set out in the following:

- *Standard and guidance for the creation, compilation, transfer and deposition of archaeological archives* (ClfA December 2014)
- *Archaeological Archives. A guide to best practice in creation, compilation, transfer and curation* (Archaeological Archives Forum, second edition 2011)

**10.2** Archaeological practices are advised that, unless subject to previous agreement, Reading Museum is currently only receiving archaeological archives for fieldwork projects within the post-1974 local authority boundary of Reading. Procedures for the deposition of archaeological archives with the Museum can be found at <https://www.readingmuseum.org.uk/collections/collections-enquiries> (Reading Museum Procedures for Archaeological Archives - Sixth edition September 2016).

**10.3** It should be noted that from September 2016 Reading Museum will only consider requests for the deposition of archaeological archives within Reading Borough that are made up of **both an object and a data archive**. The Museum will not issue an accession number or collect an archive that is only made up of a data archive or where no finds are intended to be deposited. Archives that comprise **data only** should normally be deposited with a recognised trusted digital repository, such as the Archaeology Data Service, unless otherwise agreed with Berkshire Archaeology. The digital repository should be identified in the WSI at the outset of the project. The appropriate level of archiving should be proposed on completion of the project for the agreement of Berkshire Archaeology prior to deposition. As a minimum, the project report should be deposited with OASIS (as well as the HER) along with the digital photographic archive. The project will not normally be confirmed as completed until the archive has been deposited.

**10.4** There is currently no suitable store or repository that can receive archaeological archives generated within the boroughs of Slough, Wokingham, Bracknell Forest and Windsor and Maidenhead. Archaeological practices are advised to make provision to retain these archives until a suitable solution can be found, and budget accordingly to cover all the costs for future deposition.

**10.5** It is acknowledged that the current situation in these Unitary Authorities is an impediment to obtaining a completed Transfer of Title form from the landowner to an appropriate store, which best practice recommends is achieved early in the lifetime of a project. The archaeological practice may wish to consider obtaining transfer of title from the landowner to the practice as an interim measure, making clear that transfer to a suitable museum or store will take place in due course with full acknowledgement to the original landowner.

## 11. OASIS

**11.1** Berkshire Archaeology supports the *Online Access to Index of Archaeological Investigations* (OASIS) project. The overall aim of the OASIS project is to provide an online index to the mass of archaeological grey literature that has been produced as a result of the advent of large-scale developer funded fieldwork.

**11.2** The archaeological practice must therefore complete the online OASIS form at <https://oasis.ac.uk/> and the OASIS ID reference **must** be included on any project report submitted to Berkshire Archaeology.

## **12. Programme and Monitoring**

**12.1** Archaeological practices are advised to allow sufficient time for BA to review and accept as satisfactory all project documentation, especially WSIs. Practices are also advised that BA does not represent the planning departments of the five unitary authorities and our acceptance of documents does not represent formal approval of documents, which are required by the five authorities in compliance with planning conditions, and which are subject to statutory consultation periods.

**12.2** All projects, both fieldwork and post-fieldwork, will be subject to a programme/timetable of work. Monitoring is to be agreed with BA prior to the commencement of the project. A minimum of two weeks' notice to BA is normally required prior to the commencement of a fieldwork project. If circumstances oblige a shorter notice period, this must be agreed with BA to ensure compliance with the WSI or PD and to allow eventual discharge of any planning condition.

**12.3** It is common for schemes of archaeological works to entail multiple phases of work. WSIs, PDs, or UPDs will need to provide for this possibility, and a planning condition will not be recommended for discharge until all further phases of work have been satisfactorily completed. Archaeological practices should ensure that they have discussed this possibility with their clients and that project timescales allow for the potential need for these works.

**12.4** It is the responsibility of the archaeological contractor to ensure that archaeological works take place within any other constraints or planning conditions present on the site. Contractors are advised to seek advice from their client or site manager to ensure works are implemented within such constraints; BA bears no responsibility for this.

**12.5** Monitoring of projects will be undertaken at appropriate project milestones, either through site visits from BA officers or through remote monitoring.

**12.6** Remote monitoring may take place through telephone conversations, video calls, emails, and the provision of appropriate documentation and images. It will allow an archaeological officer to see features and finds, and to understand the developing narrative at the site. The contractor should discuss the requirements for remote monitoring with BA at the appropriate point.

**12.7** BA's monitoring of projects will not normally be considered to be complete until a report, presented in accordance with the WSI or PD, has been submitted to Berkshire Archaeology following the completion of, or elimination of the need for any further, phases of work, and once the project archive has been deposited with an appropriate museum, store or repository.

## **13. Concluding Statement**

**13.1** Berkshire Archaeology is keen to collaborate with archaeological practices and consultancies to continue to improve standards within the profession and to best protect and promote the archaeology of the region. We are therefore always open to discussing elements of fieldwork, research, publication, and outreach, in order to continue to maximise the public benefit of the planning-led archaeology system.



Wessex Archaeology Ltd registered office Portway House, Old Sarum Park, Salisbury, Wiltshire SP4 6EB  
Tel: 01722 326867 Fax: 01722 337562 [info@wessexarch.co.uk](mailto:info@wessexarch.co.uk) [www.wessexarch.co.uk](http://www.wessexarch.co.uk)

