

**A43 MOULTON BYPASS
ARCHAEOLOGICAL WRITTEN SCHEME
OF INVESTIGATION**

Northamptonshire County Council

[287512A - HHE]

[Issue 1]

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Prepared for
Northamptonshire County Council

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Figure 1: Indicative Plan of Trench Locations

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Background

1.1.1 In September 2014 Parsons Brinckerhoff (PB) was commissioned by Northamptonshire County Council (hereafter the client) to undertake a programme of investigative fieldwork in support of a planning application to Northamptonshire County Council (NCC) for the development of a dual carriageway (2.5km in length) being developed to reduce congestion alongside the A43, also intended to service a planned housing development.

1.1.2 The investigation area is a linear scheme extending from a roundabout at the junction of the A43 and the A5076, Talavera Way, at the south running adjacent to a linear band of woodland respecting the A43. The scheme extends to the northeast into fields to the rear of residential properties alongside the A43. The scheme area is roughly centred on NGR SP 791 654.

1.1.3 An extensive programme of non-intrusive and intrusive investigation was carried out between 2009 and 2011 (geophysical survey) and 2010 to 2011 (trial trench evaluation) by CgMs Consulting on land to the north and east of this investigation area. The geophysical survey covered a small section of the area covered by this programme of investigation. Both types of investigation revealed the presence of archaeological remains. Subsequently, Parsons Brinckerhoff (PB) was invited by the client to submit a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for the required archaeological investigation.

1.1.4 This document has been written to comply with recommendations issued by NCC and with reference to professional standards and guidance (*Section 3.9*). It allows for the excavation of four evaluation trenches across the proposed development area, and represents an initial element of intrusive archaeological investigation on this section of the site. It should be noted that further investigation may be necessary to satisfy the terms of any subsequent planning conditions.

1.1.5 The evaluation trenching is intended to determine the extent, depth, function, chronology and relative significance of any archaeological deposits, and if necessary will serve to inform a mitigation strategy for a final stage of more detailed archaeological excavation of significant remains.

1.1.6 Any such final stage of excavation would be carried out in accordance with an updated Written Scheme of Investigation, which would be devised in consultation and agreed with the NCC prior to implementation.

1.2 Archaeological and Historical Summary

1.2.1 The archaeological and historical background has been abridged from a Heritage Assessment undertaken by CgMs Consulting in 2013.

1.2.2 There is a paucity of Palaeolithic evidence (500,000 to 10,000 BC) from the Nene Valley and so the scheme area is considered to have no potential for any such remains. Similarly, there are no Mesolithic Period (10,000 to 3,500 BC) finds known within the scheme area.

- 1.2.3 Various Neolithic Period (3,500 to 2,200 BC) finds have been recorded such as worked flint including leaf-shaped arrowheads and axes (MNN24447, 24446 and 21327), although it is considered there is a low potential for sub-surface features. Bronze Age (2,200 to 700 BC) finds are recorded from the site (lithic scatters) and features have been confirmed as being present to the north of the scheme area by excavation including possible ring ditches (MNN874 and 873). The potential for further sub-surface features from this period is high. The HER records a probable Iron Age (700 to 43 AD) settlement north-west of the scheme (MNN32639). There is moderate potential for features associated with the settlement to extend into the scheme area.
- 1.2.4 A Roman villa is recorded on the HER at Boothville (MNN140219) approximately 500m south-west of the scheme area. Roman period circular timber buildings were present in the southern part of the inner study area, and a further potential settlement might be present to the east of the area as suggested by the presence of roof tiles, stone rubble, coins and part of a quern (MNN24445). Other finds of the period include pottery and evidence of iron working (MNN140220). The evaluation to the immediate north also recorded a Romano-British settlement including field boundaries. There is high potential for further evidence of this period to be present within the inner study area.
- 1.2.5 There are no Saxon sites or finds recorded on the HER or within the study area. However, a recent evaluation recorded one closely dated Saxon grave, further undated graves, and a small assemblage of early to middle Saxon pottery. It is also possible that the remains of a sunken-featured building (SFB) were present. The remains of a deserted medieval village (DMV) lie to the west of Overstone Park House. There is moderate potential for further evidence of this period to be present within the inner study area.
- 1.2.6 The majority of the study area was in agricultural use during the post-medieval period. During the following centuries (Industrial Period) enclosed fields were created, however the majority of these were removed in the mid nineteenth-century. The inner study area has the potential to contain the remains of a windmill or windmill mound (MNN6063) and a field of ploughed out ridge and furrow. There is low potential for further evidence of these periods to be present.

1.3 PB Archaeology and Heritage

- 1.3.1 PB Archaeology and Heritage (A&H) are based in the PB Manchester office but work across the entire UK. All of the team members have at least nine years' experience in desk-based and field archaeology. The Team lead and Principal Consultant have over twenty-seven years of experience. The team has the expertise relevant to undertake all aspects of field and desk-based projects, and to monitor and to project manage. All members belong to the IfA.
- 1.3.2 In this instance the fieldwork will be sub-contracted to an IfA registered organisation (Oxford Archaeology East) and will be monitored on behalf of the client by PB.

1.4 Archive Deposition

- 1.4.1 The results of archaeological evaluation will form the basis of a full archive to professional standards, in accordance with current English Heritage guidelines (The Management of Archaeological Projects, 2nd edition, 1991) and the Guidelines for the Preparation of Excavation Archives for Long Term Storage (UKIC 1990). The project archive represents the collation and indexing of all the data and material gathered during the course of the project. The deposition of a properly ordered and indexed

project archive in an appropriate repository is considered an essential and integral element of all archaeological projects by the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA) in that organisation's code of conduct.

- 1.4.2 It is intended that the archive will be deposited with the Northamptonshire Record Office and the excavated material will be deposited with an appropriate museum (tbc). The museum will issue an accession number at the commencement of fieldwork. In addition, the Arts and Humanities Data Service (AHDS) online database project Online Access to index of Archaeological Investigations (OASIS) will be completed as part of the archiving phase of the project.

2 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 2.1.1 The main aim of the investigation will be to establish the presence or absence of any buried remains of archaeological interest within the area of the proposed development. Should any such remains prove to be present, then the evaluation will seek to characterise their character, extent, level of preservation, and significance. The results from the evaluation will provide information as to whether further investigation is required prior to the main development programme. The required stages to achieve these ends are as follows:

- to establish the presence or otherwise of archaeological deposits/features;
- to establish the nature of the deposits;
- to preserve by record any archaeological deposits encountered,
- to allow the presence of significant remains to be brought to the attention of all interested parties (statutory and otherwise).
- limited investigation of those areas of negative geophysical results;
- to produce a written report that will assess the significance of the data generated by the above fieldwork programme within a local and regional context;
- to facilitate the implementation of a strategy that will take account of the archaeological resource of the site in the final design proposals, and satisfy the requirements of the Planning Archaeologist at NCC.

3 METHOD STATEMENT

3.1 Strategy

- 3.1.1 Experience has shown the importance of a close working relationship between the consultant archaeologist and client's contractor on development projects. Such a relationship will help to ensure the timely and successful completion of the project in an efficient and cost-effective manner, achieving high technical and academic standards, whilst meeting all the requirements of the Heritage Team Leader's recommendations and fulfilling all the developers archaeological obligations.

- 3.1.2 The integration of the archaeological process into the initial pre-construction programme of site development will ensure that the character and extent of buried archaeological remains on the site are identified at an early stage in the development programme. This will allow an appropriate mitigation strategy to be devised (if appropriate) and implemented well in advance of the main construction programme.

3.2 Evaluation Trenching

3.2.1 The archaeological evaluation will comprise four trial trenches across the Scheme Area. Each of the trenches will be excavated to a length of 50m, and to a maximum width of 2m. The trenches will be positioned in the agreed locations as shown on Figure 1, although pending any on-site restrictions such as modern service trenches.

Trenches 1 and 2

3.2.2 These trenches have been located over features identified during a previous phase of geophysical survey undertaken as part of the CgMs Consulting assessment.

Trenches 3 and 4

3.2.3 The remaining trenches have been located across the scheme area to identify any potential previously unrecorded archaeology.

3.3 General Fieldwork Methodology

3.3.1 Excavation of the uppermost levels of modern overburden/demolition material will be undertaken by a machine fitted with a toothless ditching bucket to the top of the first significant archaeological level or 1.20m. The work will be supervised closely by a suitably experienced archaeologist, thereafter, all deposits will be cleaned manually to define their extent, nature, form and, where possible, date. Spoil from the excavation will be stored adjacent to the trench but no closer than 1 m from its edge, and will be backfilled but not otherwise reinstated upon completion of the archaeological works.

3.3.2 Once significant archaeological deposits have been exposed, further excavation will be carried out by manual techniques, proceeding in a stratigraphical manner. Pits and postholes will, in general terms, be subject to a 50% by volume controlled stratigraphic excavation, thereby providing a full vertical section for examination and recording. The remainder of the feature, should it prove necessary to be removed in entirety, will then be excavated quickly keeping only that dating evidence which is securely derived from the feature in question.

3.3.3 Linear cut features, such as ditches and gullies, will be subject to a maximum of 20% by volume controlled stratigraphic excavation, with the excavation concentrating on any terminals and intersections with other features which would provide important stratigraphic information. As with pits and postholes, should it prove necessary to remove the remainder of the feature to expose underlying features and/or deposits, it will be excavated quickly.

3.3.4 Extensive linear deposits or homogeneous spreads of material will be sample excavated by hand to a maximum of 50% by volume. If features/deposits are revealed which need to be removed and which are suitable for machine excavation, such as large-scale post-medieval dump deposits, then they would be sample excavated to confirm their homogeneity before being removed by machine. Any such use of a mechanical excavator will be agreed in advance with the Planning Archaeologist at NCC.

3.3.5 All information identified in the course of the site works will be recorded stratigraphically, using a system, adapted from that used by the Centre for Archaeology of English Heritage (CfA), with sufficient pictorial record (plans, sections

and both black and white and colour photographs) to identify and illustrate individual features. Primary records will be available for inspection at all times.

Context Recording

- 3.3.6 The features will be recorded using pro-forma sheets which are in accordance with those used by CfA. Similar object record and photographic record pro-formas will be used. All written recording of survey data, contexts, photographs, artefacts and ecofacts will be cross referencable from pro-forma record sheets using sequential numbering. The contextual details will be incorporated into a Harris matrix.

Photography

- 3.3.7 A full and detailed photographic record of individual contexts will be maintained and similarly general views from standard view points of the overall site at all stages of the excavation will be generated. Photography will be undertaken using high-resolution digital cameras. Photograph records will be maintained on index pro-forma sheets.

Planning

- 3.3.8 Archaeological planning will be undertaken using a combination of manually-drafted drawings and instrument survey, and the data will be digitally incorporated into a CAD system. All information will be tied in to Ordnance Datum. The precise location of each evaluation trench, and the outline of all archaeological features encountered, will be surveyed by EDM tacheometry using a total station linked to a pen computer data logger. This process will generate scaled plans within AutoCAD software, which will then be subject to manual survey enhancement. The drawings will be generated at accuracy appropriate for 1:20 scale, but can be output at any scale required.

- 3.3.9 All excavated sections across individual features will be drawn using manual techniques, and for the most part will be generated at a scale of 1:10. Assuming there is no requirement for shoring, the sections of the trenches will similarly be manually drafted, although a Total Station has proved to be a cost effective tool for drawing very long sections.

Finds

- 3.3.10 All finds will be lifted and processed in accordance with the United Kingdom Institute for Conservation (UKIC) First Aid for Finds, 1998, and the recipient museums guidelines. All finds will be retained unless otherwise agreed with the HER officer, although certain classes of building material can be discarded. All finds, where appropriate, will be washed.

- 3.3.11 The landowner will be consulted in writing as to consent for finds to be deposited with a recipient museum (To be confirmed).

Treasure

- 3.3.12 Any gold or silver artefacts recovered during the course of the investigations will be removed to a safe place and reported to the local Coroner according to the procedures relating to the Treasure Act, 1996. Suitable security will be employed to protect the finds from theft prior to removal from site. Any treasure will also be reported to the Portable Antiquities Scheme Finds Liaison Officer.

Environmental Sampling

- 3.3.13 Sampling of interpretable and datable archaeological deposits will be undertaken for the purposes of technological, pedological and chronological analysis where appropriate. The sampling strategy will comply with English Heritage Guidelines (2011).

Burials

- 3.3.14 Human remains are not expected to be present, but if they are found they will, if possible, be left in-situ, covered and protected. The remains will then be subject to a formal appraisal by an appropriate specialist. If removal is necessary, then the relevant Department of Cultural Affairs permission will be sought, and the removal of such remains will be carried out with due care and sensitivity, as required by current legislation.
- 3.3.15 All human remains will be recorded using skeleton recording forms. The grave cut and/or coffin and contents will be recorded in plan at 1:20. Significant details of any grave goods, should they be discovered, will be planned at 1:10. Photography will be used to provide a further detailed record of the skeleton.

3.4 Monitoring

- 3.4.1 The Planning Archaeologist or their representative will be given at least 1 week prior notice of the commencement of fieldwork. No backfilling of trenches will be carried out without the approval of the Planning Archaeologist.

3.5 Post-Excavation and Report Production

- 3.5.1 A report detailing the findings obtained from the evaluation will be prepared upon completion of the fieldworks. This report will include:
- Non-technical summary;
 - Introductory statement;
 - Aims and purpose of the archaeological mitigation;
 - Method statement;
 - A full, phased stratigraphic discussion of the archaeological features;
 - An interpretive discussion of the results, placing them in a local and regional context;
 - The results of assessment of artefacts and ecofacts carried out by suitable specialists;
 - A detailed context index;
 - Supporting illustrations and plans at appropriate scales;
 - Supporting data – tabulated or in appendices;
 - Digital or scanned photographs;
 - Index to archive and details of archive location;
 - References;

- A copy of this WSI.

3.6 Health and Safety

- 3.6.1 PB provides a Risk Assessment Method Statement (RAMS) for all projects and maintains a Safety Policy. PB will liaise with the client and main contractor to ensure all health and safety regulations are met. A RAMS and the sub-contractors own risk assessment will be completed in advance of all on-site works. All site staff should hold CSCS cards.

3.7 Programming

- 3.7.1 The evaluation will be undertaken by a Project Officer/Supervisor directing one field archaeologist over a period of approximately two days. Fieldwork can commence within two weeks of notification. A final report will be submitted within six-eight weeks of completion of the fieldwork.

3.8 Contingency for Further Work

Open-area Excavation

- 3.8.1 Should a stage of detailed open-area excavation be considered appropriate on the basis of the results obtained from the evaluation then this would be undertaken in accordance with the guidelines of MAP2. Discussions would be undertaken between the archaeological consultant, Planning Archaeologist and the client prior to any such works taking place, and a revised fee presented.

Post-excavation Assessment

- 3.8.2 Following any such excavation fieldwork the process would involve an assessment of the data-set generated by the excavation, followed by a review of the excavation archive to establish the potential for further analysis. This assessment would take place in close consultation with the client and the Planning Archaeologist, and the report format will also be agreed at this stage of the work. The Assessment would involve the compilation of a brief archive report, detailing the stratigraphic history of the site, and the outlining the significance of the structural, artefactual and environmental evidence. It is not possible to provide a finite quotation of costs for analysis until the results of the assessment are known.

Post-excavation Analysis

- 3.8.3 Should the results of the assessment warrant it then an appropriate programme of analysis should then be undertaken to prepare a research archive, as detailed in Appendix 6 of Management of Archaeological Projects. A provisional programme of post-excavation analysis is proposed, on the basis of the anticipated recovery of material from the excavation; however, the extent of the programme can only be reliably assessed on completion of the fieldwork. The proposed programme anticipates analysis of the artefactual evidence and of the site stratigraphy leading to the production of a final report.

3.9 Standards and Guidance

English Heritage, 2002 *Environmental Archaeology: A Guide to the Theory and Practice of Methods, from Sampling and Recovery to Post-Excavation*, Swindon

English Heritage, 1991 *The Management of Archaeological Projects*, 2nd edition, Swindon

Knight, D., Vyner, B. and Allen, C., 2012 *East Midlands Heritage – An updated Research Agenda and Strategy for the Historic Environment of the East Midlands* Nottingham

Museums' and Galleries' Commission, 1992 *Standards in the museum care of archaeological collections*, London

Dicks, S., 2013 *Heritage Assessment: Overstone Leys, Northamptonshire* CgMs Ltd. unpubl. report

The Institute for Archaeologists' 2012 *Code of Conduct*

The Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and Guidance for archaeological field evaluation* (revised 2008)

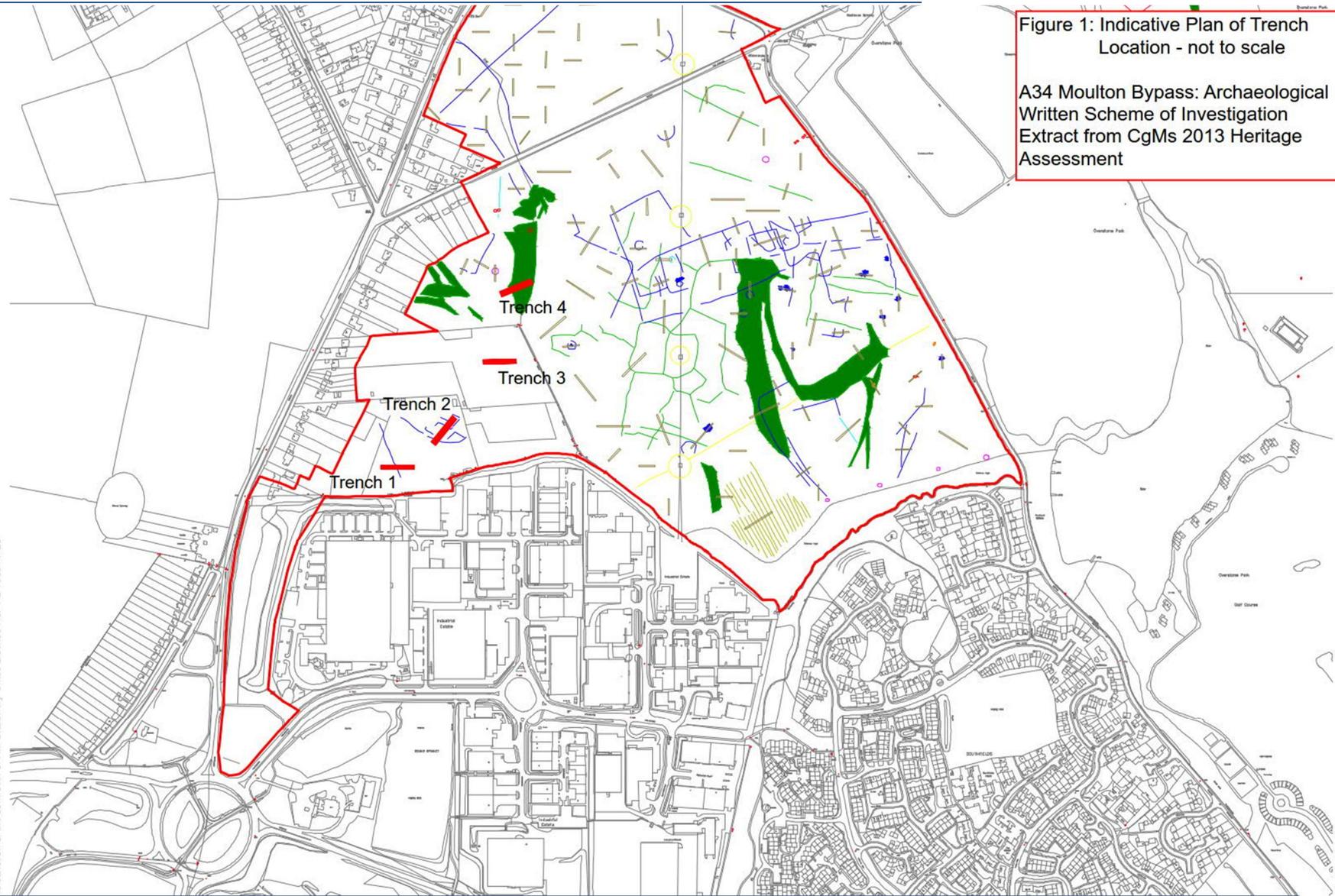


Figure 1: Indicative Plan of Trench Location - not to scale
A34 Moulton Bypass: Archaeological Written Scheme of Investigation
Extract from CgMs 2013 Heritage Assessment

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