

DESIGN BRIEF FOR ARCHAEOLOGICAL DESK- BASED ASSESSMENT, GEOPHYSICAL SURVEY AND TARGETED FIELD EVALUATION

Historic Environment Unit Hertfordshire County Council

Date of issue: **11th March, 2013**

Site: **DBC Housing Allocation Sites**

Grid ref: **LA1 - MARCHMONT FARM – TL05900904**

LA2 – OLD TOWN – TL05540815

LA4 - REAR OF HANBURY'S – SP96360704

LA5 – WEST TRING – SP90991126

LA6 – CHESHAM RD / MOLYNEUX AVE – TL00870360

Development: **Allocation within the Dacorum Borough Council Development Framework of 5 areas of land for large scale housing development**

This design brief is valid only for six months. After this period the Planning Archaeologist should be contacted. Any specification produced in response to this remains valid for the same period.

1. PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT BACKGROUND

1.1 As part of the production of the Dacorum Local Development Framework (LDF), it is proposed that 5 parcels of land, totalling approximately 43 ha, are included in the Dacorum Site Allocations Development Plan Document.

As part of this process, and following advice from Hertfordshire Historic Environment Unit (HHEU), the Local Planning Authority (LPA) requires that a programme of archaeological work should be carried out, to assess the viability of these sites in terms of the potential impact on the historic environment of the proposed future use for housing, and therefore their inclusion in the Dacorum Site Allocations Development Plan.

It should be noted that this is not a detailed archaeological field evaluation such as would be undertaken in association with a full planning application, but an assessment of archaeological potential, specifically designed to identify the presence of heritage assets which could represent a substantial constraint sufficient to require a redesign parts of the indicative master plans, and provide a baseline assessment of the likely extent and type of archaeology present for each of the allocation sites.

1.2 This programme of work will comprise:

1. Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment
2. Geophysical Survey
3. Targeted field evaluation to test the results/conclusions of 1 & 2

- 1.3 This brief has been produced by Hertfordshire Historic Environment Unit (HHEU) in accordance with Policy 12 of the national Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), so that a professional archaeologist can draw up a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for the required works (see www.communities.gov.uk).

The WSI will be forwarded to this office and to the LPA, for approval, in writing, prior to implementation. The contractor should confirm all site and development details directly with Dacorum Borough Council.

2. HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT BACKGROUND

- 2.1 An outline of the historic environment background for each of the 5 proposed allocation sites is as follows:

LA1 - MARCHMONT FARM

The site is within the Gade valley which is one of the most archaeological important river valleys in the county and which has a very high known density of heritage assets with archaeological and historical interest. Many known heritage assets occupy similar topographic positions to that of the Marchmont Farm site, for example, later Bronze-Age settlement at Gadebridge (HER7981), and have shown such positions to be preferred locations for later prehistoric/Roman settlement.

A number of Scheduled Monuments of Roman date are known from Hemel Hempstead. A villa at Boxmoor (SM27916), temple complex at Wood Lane End (SM27921), large barrow at High Street Green (SM27901), and villa at Gadebridge (SM27881), which is sited on the opposing slope of the river valley, approximately 730 west of the Marchmont Farm site. This, and evidence for several important Roman roads apparently converging, and a number of relatively recent archaeological discoveries, notably, Roman occupation (probably another villa site) at Spencer's Park (HER15191), suggest that this area was an important high status 'hinterland' to Verulamium.

LA2 – OLD TOWN, HEMEL HEMPSTEAD

The site is within the Gade valley which is one of the most archaeological important river valleys in the county and which has a very high known density of heritage assets with archaeological and historical interest.

The site immediately abuts the northern edge of Area of Archaeological Significance (AAS) number 36. This notes that Hemel Hempstead is a medieval settlement recorded in Domesday Book as 'Hamelamstede'. The medieval core of the settlement (Hemel Hempstead EUS) is believed to extend to within a few tens of metres of the 'Old Town site' boundary. Also, a number of earthworks are visible on 2010 Hertfordshire vertical aerial photomaps. One linear bank is clearly modern, running parallel to Fletcher Way, however, the form and alignment of the remainder suggest a medieval or earlier origin (HER18267).

In addition, a number of Scheduled Monuments of Roman date are known from Hemel Hempstead. A villa at Boxmoor (SM27916), temple complex at Wood Lane End (SM27921), large barrow at High Street Green (SM27901), and notably a villa at Gadebridge (SM27881), which is sited on the opposing slope of the river valley, approximately 500m north-west of the 'Old Town site'. This, and evidence for several important Roman roads apparently converging, and a number of relatively recent archaeological discoveries, notably, Roman occupation (probably another villa site) at Spencer's Park (HER15191), suggest that this area was an important high status 'hinterland' to Verulamium.

LA4 - REAR OF HANBURY'S, SHOOTERSWAY, BERKHAMSTED

The proposed housing allocation site is situated on an area of high land at the head of a dry valley on the southern edge of Berkhamsted. Berkhamsted was an important centre during the medieval period, as is demonstrated by the presence of a substantial motte and bailey castle (SM20626). The area around the town is known to contain a number of important prehistoric, Roman and medieval sites. Several significant prehistoric sites were identified during the construction of the A41 Berkhamsted bypass.

LA5 – WEST TRING

The site is within the Bulbourne valley which has a very high known density of heritage assets with archaeological and historical interest.

The site lies on the western edge of Tring, a settlement of medieval origin. The site is bounded along its southern edge by Akeman Street, a major Roman road.

Evidence for prehistoric, Roman and medieval occupation has been identified from the wider vicinity, including two late Iron Age shaft furnaces (HER6069), identified during the construction of the A41 Tring bypass

LA6 – CHESHAM RD / MOLYNEUX AVE, BOVINGDON

The proposed housing allocation site is bounded by Molyneux Avenue, Chesham Road, Hyde Lane and the rear of properties on Mitchell Close. The area is partially occupied by a large open reservoir, probably constructed to service the adjacent airfield during WWII. Although Bovingdon is a settlement with medieval origins, the core of that settlement lies at least 500m east of the site. There is however, evidence for significant prehistoric occupation in the wider vicinity, notably Whelpley Hillfort (SM27154). There is also significant potential for heritage assets relating to WWII.

3. GENERAL OBJECTIVES

- 3.1 To produce an initial archaeological assessment of the proposed allocation sites, sufficient to determine the presence/absence of heritage assets which might represent a significant constraint on future development of the proposed sites in line with an indicative masterplan. .
- 3.2 To produce a baseline assessment of the quality and extent of archaeological deposits present sufficient to inform further archaeological evaluation/ mitigation at a later stage of the planning process.
- 3.3 To produce a high quality, fully integrated archive and to secure the analysis, conservation, and long-term storage of any artefactual/ecofactual material recovered from the sites.
- 3.4 To provide adequately detailed project reports that will place the findings of the programme of archaeological assessment in their local and regional context, having made reference to relevant regional research agendas (East Anglian Archaeology Occ. Papers, 2000 & 2011) ..
- 3.5 To provide for the dissemination and publication of the project results, as appropriate.

4. SPECIFIC ARCHAEOLOGICAL REQUIREMENTS

- 4.1 The project will be conducted by an organisation working in accordance with the By-laws of the Institute for Archaeologists.
- 4.2.1 The project will be supervised and conducted by suitably qualified and experienced archaeologists

4.3 The archaeological contractor is asked to design a programme of:

Archaeological Desk-based Assessment,

- 4.3.1 This part of the project will involve the compilation and study of all available documentary and digital sources. These should as a minimum include:
 - Hertfordshire Historic Environment Record (HER), including HLC
 - Historic Mapping
 - All available aerial and satellite photography (historic and modern)
 - Geotechnical information (including borehole data where available)
- 4.3.2 As part of the assessment the contractor should undertake a detailed walk-over survey of each site, and produce a photographic record of that survey.
- 4.3.3 When assessing the potential archaeological interest of each of the proposed allocation sites, known archaeological evidence from within and surrounding each site should be assessed. In addition, the contractor should model potential in terms of evidence from the wider historic landscape, for example, drawing comparisons with known archaeological sites which occupy similar topographic positions in the wider landscape.
- 4.3.4 Where there is potential that future development of the proposed allocation sites may have an impact on the setting of a designated heritage asset this should be highlighted and discussed.
- 4.3.5 The IFA's *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Desk-Based Assessments* will be used for additional guidance in the design of the project specification, the contents of the report, and the general execution of the project.

4.4 The archaeological contractor is asked to design a programme of:

Geophysical Survey

- 4.4.1 This aspect of the project will be informed by the results of the desk-based assessments. However it is likely that this will be required for the majority of the sites in question.
- 4.4.2 Field survey by geophysical prospection is required to determine the extent and significance of subsurface features. A magnetometer survey will be conducted on a regular grid pattern, and will include a sampling interval of 1m x 0.25m.
- 4.4.3 Contractors must provide plots of raw data, as well as processed data, in line with English Heritage (2008) *Geophysical Survey in Archaeological Field Evaluation* Section 4.8. Please note that for the purposes of this exercise, zero median traverse processing does not constitute minimal processing.

- 4.4.4 Each day on site, the survey team must survey one grid twice, to demonstrate the repeatability of the results. The grid should not be surveyed twice in quick succession, but should be repeated at a later point in the day. The results of both surveys of the grids must be presented as an appendix to the site report as raw data.
- 4.4.5 A copy of the project archive must be prepared in line with Schmidt et al. (2001) *Geophysical Data in Archaeology: A Guide to Good Practice* (ADS), and lodged with Hertfordshire Historic Environment Record.
- 4.4.6 Processed data should also be supplied to Hertfordshire Historic Environment Unit (HHEU), geo-referenced to British National Grid, as shapefile, AutoCAD Drawing Database File (dwg), or ArcGIS file geodatabase.
- 4.4.7 The IFA's *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Geophysical Survey* will be used for additional guidance in the design of the project specification, the contents of the report, and the general execution of the project

4.5 The archaeological contractor is asked to design a programme of: Targeted Field Evaluation

- 4.5.1 The purpose of this aspect of the project is to test the results of the geophysical survey, and provide a baseline assessment of the type, date, quality and extent of heritage assets present on the site. It is expected that a further programme of archaeological work will be required at a later stage in the planning process to properly characterise the archaeological interest, and inform the implementation a programme of archaeological mitigation as appropriate.
- 4.5.2 The on-site aspect of the evaluation will comprise the cutting of trial trenches, the majority of which will be targeted to test geophysical anomalies. However, a proportion (to be informed by the results of the geophysical survey) will be sited in areas free from anomalies to test the degree to which the geophysics is representative of the concentration of archaeological features. All soil and overburden stripping should be undertaken under archaeological supervision.
- 4.5.3 Each trial trench will be 1.5 - 2m wide; its length may vary according to its location and purpose. A sufficient proportion of the site (between 0.5 and 1%) will be sampled to enable a proper assessment of the accuracy of the geophysical survey. The percentage will be stated.
- 4.5.4 The HHEU will wish to monitor the project on behalf of the planning authority. To facilitate this, the HHEU *will be informed of the the on-site timetable in advance and of the project's commencement **with a minimum of three full working days notice**, will be kept informed of project progress, and will be contacted immediately in the event of any important discoveries being made.*
- 4.5.5 If significant archaeological remains are identified, then the contractor should arrange for a meeting with the HHEU in order to agree an appropriate investigation. The programme of work should, therefore, include contingency provisions.
- 4.5.6 The IFA's *Standard and Guidance for Field Evaluation* will be used for additional guidance in the design of the project specification, the contents of the report, and the general execution of the project.
- 4.5.7 The initial arrangements for the deposition of the archive will be outlined in the WSI; the contractor will have liaised with the recognised place of deposition, so that there is an awareness of their requirements. *The place of (provisionally) arranged deposition will be named in the WSI.*
- 4.5.8 a programme of post-fieldwork analysis, archiving, and reporting/publication.

5. CONTENTS OF WRITTEN SCHEME OF INVESTIGATION

In accordance with the standards and guidance produced by the IfA, this design brief should not be considered to be sufficient to enable appropriate and full completion of the project. A **Written Scheme of Investigation** (WSI) or specification is required in order to provide 'the basis for a measurable standard'.

The WSI or project specification will be prepared by a professional archaeological contractor with demonstrable experience in the relevant areas of expertise. The WSI will be prepared in accordance with the guidance contained in the Historic Environment Planning Practice Guide (HEPPG).

A separate WSI should be produced for each aspect of the project, Desk-based Assessment, Geophysical Survey, Field Evaluation.

The WSI must be verified by the CHEU on behalf of the Local Planning Authority and approved by the Authority before implementation.

The WSI will include or demonstrate the following:

1. **Research Design:** This should demonstrate a clear understanding of the project's academic aims and objectives (HEPPG para. 134.6);
2. **Archaeological Method Statement** detailing the techniques, systems and procedures to be employed with regard to the project and the production of an appropriate report (HEPPG para. 134.11 etc.). These should conform to the guidelines set down in the relevant ALGAO and IfA guidance documents (see above) and include relevant detail concerning all aspects of the project.

The WSI will also:

3. provide details of the senior project staff, all specialist sub-contractors and the intended on-site archaeologists, indicating their suitability to undertake the project (c.v.s may be requested) - the on-site archaeological project staff must have relevant and appropriate experience of at least three years;
4. include a 'method statement' for all recording works detailing the techniques, systems and procedures to be employed;
5. in the case of field work include a detailed site plan, clearly annotated, and showing extent of areas surveyed and position of trenches (where appropriate)
6. demonstrate that the work will be undertaken in accordance with all relevant health and safety legislation;
7. demonstrate an understanding of the relevant legislation pertaining to human burial;
8. define and account for non-archaeological constraints; these include: live services, access routes and rights of way, the presence of statutory and non-statutory ecological areas, protected species and tree preservation orders (HEPPG para. 134.18);
9. provide a provisional programme outlining post-fieldwork analysis, the completion of the project archive and submission of a project report;
10. name the place of provisionally agreed archive deposition and outline the initial arrangements made for deposition.

6. PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

- 6.1 An adequately detailed report, prepared in accordance with NPPF Policy 141 and the guidance contained in the HEPPG, para. 135 in particular, will be produced for

each aspect of the project, and should be submitted to this office and the Local Planning Authority within four weeks of the completion of site work or in the case of DBA by a date specified in the WSI.

The report will include:

1. a brief non-technical summary of the work undertaken and the results obtained;
 2. the aims and methods adopted in the course of the relevant aspect of the project;
 3. the nature, location, extent, date, significance and quality of any archaeological and environmental material uncovered;
 4. the anticipated degree of survival of archaeological deposits and structures on the site - areas of archaeological potential should be indicated on the site plan;
 5. the detailed description and specialist interpretation of all archaeological material recorded by the project. The report should, therefore, propose an interpretation for the dating and development of the site on the basis of the information collected during the project; and should provide an appropriate level of discussion of the evidence presented within the report;
 - 6(a) appropriate illustrative material including maps (current and historical). Where historic mapping is referred to in the text, appropriate extracts of those maps should be reproduced,
 - (b) Where features of archaeological interest are identified from aerial photography, the relevant photographs should be reproduced, or the features marked on a site plan
 - (c) plans, sections, drawings, and photographs; adequate photographic coverage (properly captioned) should be included regardless of whether the project produced positive or negative results; the report should also include photographs that place the site in its context
 7. specialist report(s) in full, as appropriate (e.g. human remains, finds, environmental assessments, pottery) with the author(s) acknowledged; significant finds, including pottery, should be illustrated (drawn and/or photographed, as appropriate);
 8. a detailed record of the contents of the project archive;
 9. information on the arrangements made for the long-term deposition of the project archive (HEPPG para. 137);
 10. an HER entry summary sheet (available on request from this office);
 11. the HER Enquiry number (entered on the HER summary sheet);
 12. a detailed schedule of the archaeological contractors on-site time, including details of the staffing levels present on site and a description of the ground-works monitored on each occasion.
- 6.2 In addition to the copies of each report supplied to the client, the contractor will submit one digital copy to the Historic Environment Advisor for approval. Further to its acceptance the contractor will supply further copies (paper and electronic) as necessary for inclusion in the HER.
- 6.3 A report (of a level appropriate to the project's findings) will be submitted, accompanied by appropriate resources, for publication in *Hertfordshire Archaeology & History* or another agreed publication within six months of the completion of the fieldwork.

- 6.4 Hertfordshire Historic Environment Record is registered with the Online Access to Index of Archaeological Investigations (OASIS). Appropriate details relating to this project must be provided by completing the OASIS form at <http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/oasis>, in accordance with guidelines provided by English Heritage and the Archaeology Data Service.

7. ARCHIVE CONTENTS & DEPOSITION

- 7.1 A full project archive will be compiled in accordance with English Heritage (MORPHE), RCHME, and IFA standards (*Archaeological Archives, a guide to best practice in creation, compilation, transfer and curation* IFA/Archaeological Archives Forum (2007), and the HEPPG (para. 147).
- 7.2 All photographs (prints and transparencies) will be clearly numbered and labelled with the subject, orientation, date taken, name of photographer, and cross referenced (where applicable) to their film and negative numbers.
- 7.3 The project will use archive-quality recording, photographic and storage material - all negatives, transparencies and prints should be stored in archival sleeves prior to deposition.
- 7.4 All record drawings will be placed in the archive on a dimensionally secure medium (e.g. draughting film).
- 7.5 A copy of the report will accompany the archive when it is deposited at the agreed place of deposition.

8. RECEIPT OF REPORT

- 8.1 If the report requires amendments before it meets the requirements of this design brief, it will be re-submitted within one month of the request, by this office, for amendments. Any amended copies will be clearly identified as such, and include the date(s) of revision.
- 8.2 The programme of archaeological works will only be regarded as completed once this office has received and approved a report on the archaeological investigations at the above site, and arrangements for the deposition of any archives have been secured.

Should (as per 1.2.3 etc., above) the project findings require publication an undertaking in writing from the archaeological contractor that sufficient funds are in place to ensure the completion of any such publication will be required.

If you wish to comment on the contents of this brief or require additional information then please contact the Historic Environment Advisor, at the address below:

**Historic Environment Unit, Postal Point 108,
Environment Department,
Hertfordshire County Council, County Hall, Hertford SG13 8DN**

**Tel. (01992) 555288 - Fax (01992) 555251
e:mail kate.batt@hertscc.gov.uk**