

## **Appendix A: Buckinghamshire Archaeological Officers' Report**

To: Buckinghamshire Historic Environment Forum  
Date: 19<sup>th</sup> September 2016  
Authors: Senior Archaeology Officer, Archaeology Officer, Historic Environment Record Officer, Historic Environment Record Assistant

### **A. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1 To advise the Forum of the work of the County Archaeological Service since the last BHEF meeting.

#### **Report Summary**

- HS2 Ltd discussions and advice are ongoing
- Woodlands, Aston Clinton: Evaluation has recorded at least five archaeological sites of Iron Age to Roman date, of which three are significant settlement sites.
- Eaton Leys: Evaluation south of the Roman town of Magiovinium has produced few features or finds associated with the geophysical survey; however Roman features and finds have been recorded near the river at the southern edge of the development area.
- Bishopstone Road, Stone: Excavation of a medieval 'industrial estate' made headlines when children from Stone school attended a successful open day and had a go at digging for finds.
- New Road, Weston Turville: Excavation has recorded a Roman trackway and associated field system with an area of settlement which may have been a roadside tavern due to the amount of drinking vessel bases recorded.

### **B. PROPOSED ACTION**

- 2 The Forum is particularly invited to NOTE:
  - resources
  - strategic issues and projects
  - recent planning-related archaeological work

### **C. RESOURCES**

- 3 The County's archaeological service forms part of the Transport Economy Environment Service's Environment Team within Environment Services. Philip Markham is the Senior Archaeology Officer, Eliza Alqassar is the

Archaeology Officer (part-time), Julia Wise is the HER Officer, Paul Clements is the HER Assistant (part time) and Simon Newell is the Environment Team Leader.

Eliza Alqassar also has a permanent part-time post with Historic England as an Assistant Inspector of Ancient Monuments. Eliza currently works two days a week for Bucks County Council.

## **D. SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

### **4 Strategic Issues/Projects**

**High Speed 2** –We continue to advise HS2 Ltd on draft documents and revisions and these documents now resemble standard practice through the Planning system and the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges. We provide advice through the HS2 Ltd Heritage Sub-Group. HS2 Ltd historic environment documents that we have been dealing with include:

- Burial Grounds, Human Remains and Monuments Procedures
- Procedure for the unexpected discovery of archaeological remains of national importance
- Historic Environment Research and Delivery Strategy
- Generic Written Scheme of Investigation
- Generic Written Scheme of Investigation – Built Heritage
- Generic Written Scheme of Investigation – Archaeology
- Technical Standard: Specification for historic environment investigations
- Technical Standard: Specification for Project Plans and Location Specific Written Schemes of Investigation
- Technical Standard: For the recording of the setting of Heritage Assets
- Technical Standard: Archaeology and built heritage approach to geotechnical investigation
- Historic Environment Physical Archiving Strategy
- Technical Standard: Historic Environment Physical Archive Procedure
- Historic Environment Digital Data Management and Archiving Strategy
- Technical Standard: Historic Environment Digital Data Management and Archiving Procedure

The Heritage Sub Group has had two meetings since the last BHEF meeting and the next is scheduled for the 15<sup>th</sup> September. These alternate between London and Birmingham.

The BCC HS2 team has been in discussion with HS2 Ltd over a service level agreement covering BCC and the Districts. These

discussions are based on the HS2 Information paper C13: Local Authority Funding and New Burdens arising from HS2. Of the 14 activities which HS2 will provide funding for, the historic environment is included or will have an input in 6 of these. Currently HS2 Ltd are proposing to fund an additional days work per week. The Environment Team currently has a service level agreement with HS2 for the provision of information, both data and spatial, and this will probably be included in the more overarching service level agreement.

Geophysics is still being undertaken when HS2 has access. There are some interesting results from around Fleet Marston. No archaeological ground works are expected until the Bill is passed, which is expected to be in November or December this year. Geotechnical test pitting has been taking place however.

If/when the Bill is passed it is expected that significant archaeological works will begin March/April 2017 and will continue for a number of years. It is expected that this will lead to a shortage of available archaeological field teams for normal planning and DMRB schemes.

We now have the HS2 LIDAR data on the HER and it is proving useful. This complements the Environment Agency data which is also now available on the HER.

As far as we are aware the location specific written schemes of investigation will be based on the generic written scheme of investigation and on the Historic Environment Research and Delivery Strategy document. These will be written by the archaeological contractor, approved by HS2 and provided to us for comment. HS2 will ensure that all field work and recording is undertaken to the same standard and format. BCC will be invited to monitor the work but comments will currently go to HS2 and not the field team. HS2 say that most of the recording will be digital and available on-line quickly to inform other investigations along the route and interested individuals. Archiving has not been agreed but Historic England appears to favour a single repository for the archive, such as the Cheshire salt mines. It is envisaged that the information produced will be in an appropriate HER format for easy data entry.

Greatmoor Railway Sidings/Calvert – A Transport and Works Act application is forthcoming which is a linked proposal between HS2 Ltd, East-West Rail, FCC and is supported by the County Council. This application will be decided by a Planning Inspector and not through the normal planning procedure. The Inspector will decide if the proposal is acceptable and if so will impose conditions. The currently proposed archaeological conditions, while worded differently to normal, are acceptable and include evaluation, preservation in situ where appropriate and excavation.

**New National Designations** – DCMS added 8 buildings to the List between January and June 2016, all at Grade II: 7 are war memorials (Ashley Green, Great & Little Kimble, Holmer Green, Long Crendon, The Lee, Waddesdon and Weston Turville) and the other is ‘Jorrocks’, an early 19<sup>th</sup> century cottage in Oving. In addition the listing description for Lower End Farmhouse at Thornborough has been updated.

## 6 Planning related archaeological work

| <b>Volume measures</b>  | <b>1st Quarter 2016</b> | <b>2nd Quarter 2016</b> |
|---|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| Total number of consultations handled                           | 113                     | 144                     |
| Number of planning applications handled                         | 89                      | 135                     |
| Planning applications responded to within 21 days (target 90%)  | 97%                     | 96%                     |
| Number of development-related archaeological fieldwork projects | 23                      | 24                      |
| Success rate at appeal (target 50% annual success rate)         | 0 of 0                  | 0 of 0                  |

A full list of development-related fieldwork (January to June 2016) is provided as Appendix B.

Significant archaeological investigations include:

**Woodlands, Aston Clinton** – Archaeological evaluation in the form of a geophysical survey and now trial trenching has taken place for this proposed large-scale mixed use development. The geophysical survey identified evidence relating to at least six different archaeological sites of probable Iron Age to Roman date. These included rectilinear enclosures, possible trackways and medieval ridge and furrow. At the time of writing around two thirds of the Phase 1 trenches have been opened and these record at least three significant settlement sites within the development area, including one high status site producing imported pottery, bone and building remains (roof tiles, tesserae, patches of mortared stone) all overlain by a demolition layer. When these investigations have been complete we will be better able to assess how significant these Roman settlement sites are.

**Eaton Leys** – Archaeological evaluation in the form of a geophysical survey and limited trial trenching has taken place for this proposed large scale residential development. The geophysical survey recorded potential settlement and a trackway south of the Scheduled Roman town of Magiovinium; mostly within the Milton Keynes authority area. On the southern boundary of the site further potential settlement was recorded and the trial trenching is recording a large amount of Roman pottery and tile. This area is outside of the construction area and is

likely to be preserved in situ. Surprisingly the trial trenching south of the Roman town revealed very little finds or features and the current hypothesis is that ploughing has reduced the archaeology to residual remains within the topsoil which can be recorded by geophysics but are not of any depth to excavate.

**Stone** – excavation of a medieval ‘industrial estate’ dating from the 11<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> centuries took place earlier in the summer. A successful open day was held and pupils from Stone School attended and tried their hands at digging for finds.

**Weston Turville** – a Roman trackway and associated field system was excavated by MoLA. The trackway appeared to link up with the Roman road Akeman Street, building up our knowledge and understanding of the Roman road network around Aylesbury. The discovery of a small area of settlement alongside the road with an abundance of Roman drinking vessels suggests this may have been the site of a small roadside tavern.

## 7 **Publication update (Appendix C)**

## 8 **Outreach and Publicity**

5 public outreach events have taken place:

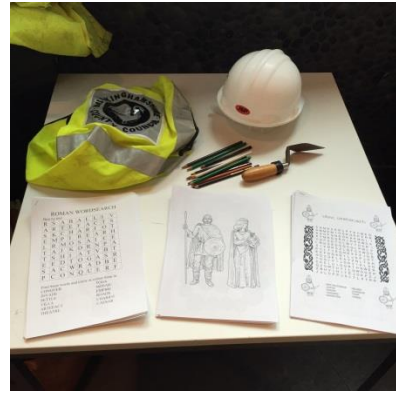
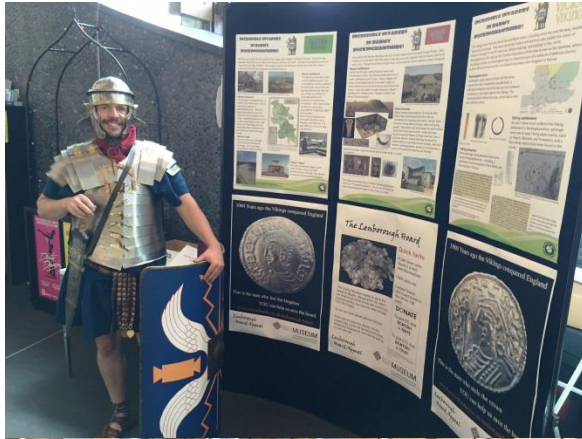
Julia gave a presentation on the Role of HERs in Planning to the national Gardens Trust in March. Following the Bucks Herald running a story on the Scheduling proposals discussed at the last BHEF meeting, Julia was involved in preparing a press release and gave a live interview on BBC 3 Counties radio.

Eliza attended a careers event at Thomas Harding Junior School (Chesham) and talked to pupils about archaeology. Julia and Eliza laid on a display about Buckinghamshire’s Horrible History at the Waterside Theatre to coincide with a week of Horrible History performances and ran childrens’ activities, with help from Arwen and Brett from the County Museum.

More recently Eliza produced a display about Romans in the Vale to celebrate the Festival of Archaeology for two weeks in County Hall, and was responsible for arranging the public open day at Stone.

Forthcoming events include a poster display and talks by Eliza at the Bucks Local History Network Conference, BAS Active Archaeology Group and Archaeology in Marlow, and a poster display and stall for a proposed Buckinghamshire History Fair.

# HORRIBLE HISTORIES



Photos by Eliza Alqassar  
Public open day at Stone excavations



Photos by Richard Wells, BCC



## 9 Historic Environment Record (HER) report

The HER performance indicator statistics are shown in the tables below:

| Performance Indicator  | 1st Quarter 2016                             | 2nd Quarter 2016                             |
|--|--|--|
| Historic Environment Records data inputting backlog<br>(targets: reports < 30 by March 2016) | Reports = 21<br>Collect = 518<br>Total = 545 | Reports = 15<br>Collect = 518<br>Total = 533 |

| Volume measures   | 1st Quarter 2016 | 2nd Quarter 2016 |
|---|------------------|------------------|
| Number of Countryside Stewardship applications handled    | 0                | 0                |
| Number of reports received by the HER                     | 46               | 14               |
| Number of Historic Environment Records enquiries handled: |                  |                  |
| commercial  | 44               | 37               |
| non-commercial  | 37               | 25               |
|   | 7                | 12               |

### Staffing

Paul's contract has been extended to the end of the 2016/17 financial year and he continues to be a great asset to the team.

### HER data provision

In September 2015 we reported on possible challenges to the current HER charging policy and data supply provisions following the EU Court of Justice ruling on Environmental Information Regulation charges. This is now being dealt with at a national level by ALGAO UK.

### HER enhancement and volunteer projects

Paul has loaded LiDAR data from the Environment Agency and HS2 Ltd into the HER's GIS mapping and we are now using the data to inform our planning and management advice. Paul is also geo-rectifying contractors' geophysical survey plots and loading them into GIS mapping

Progress is still being made by one of the HER volunteers on the milestones project. The other regular volunteer has returned, and having brought us up to date with entering local note buildings for recent Conservation Area appraisals, is currently inputting new records for the turnpike roads in Buckinghamshire.

The Buckinghamshire Gardens Trust Research and Recording Project is continuing to make good progress with 31 reports completed, 6 reports in draft and work underway on a further 9 gardens. The Gardens Trust volunteers are again helping our team and District planners with casework by researching the gardens at Alderbourne Manor in South Bucks.

E. BACKGROUND PAPERS

1. Archaeological Reports submitted to the Bucks HER

**CONTACT OFFICERS: PHILIP MARKHAM 01296 382705,  
ELIZA ALQASSAR 01296 383798, JULIA WISE 01296 382072  
AND PAUL CLEMENTS 01296 382624**