

Appendix A: Buckinghamshire Archaeological Officers' Report

To: Buckinghamshire Historic Environment Forum
Date: 18th September 2017
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A. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1 To advise the Forum of the work of the County Archaeological Service since the last BHEF meeting (19th September 2016).

Report Summary

- HS2 Ltd: discussions and advice are ongoing with Helen Vass's Team and with Fusion's (Company overseeing the archaeological field work) Director Jay Carver, over project designs and written schemes of investigation
- East–West Rail: advice and information is being provided for their ecological mitigation sites
- Heathrow New Runway: We have been invited to a number of meetings on this and have provided advice to a number of documents and the forthcoming environmental statement.
- Berry Hill Farm Taplow: Excavation prior to sand and gravel extraction has recorded a Romano-British 'ladder settlement' and earlier prehistoric settlement and landscape.
- Marlow Flood Alleviation Scheme: Excavation prior to the flood alleviation scheme works is currently being undertaken with linear ditches appearing to run towards a series of Bronze Age burial sites together with probable Neolithic pottery recorded in a number of pits.
- Wainwrights, Long Crendon: Excavation prior to a residential development revealed three north–south aligned ditches, probably all of prehistoric date, a curving ditch and a small number of other features more certainly of early/middle Anglo-Saxon date indicating occupation of this date.

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.

Since the last report Eliza Alqassar has left her part-time post with Historic England as an Assistant Inspector of Ancient Monuments and currently works three days a week for Bucks County Council, increasing to four days per week from the end of September.

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 which provide the basis for the working procedures 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 generally has two meetings per year and the next meeting is scheduled for the 26th September 2017. These meetings 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.

Geophysics is still being undertaken when HS2 has access. There are some interesting results from around Fleet Marston. Archaeological groundworks have now begun, mostly in Hertfordshire but we are expecting evaluation works at Stoke Mandeville in early autumn. At the time of writing we have yet to receive the written scheme of investigation.

It is expected that significant archaeological works will begin this autumn for the line and will continue for a number of years. This is expected to lead to a shortage of available archaeological field teams for normal planning and DMRB schemes.

We understand that 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 Fusion and HS2 Ltd and provided to us for comment. Fusion and 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 Fusion and 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 although this has not yet been discussed with the HER community. HS2 have recently agreed a three-year SLA for HER data and this will be supplied imminently.

- **East–West Rail:** This has been ongoing for a number of years and consultants have been in touch with us over the environmental statement and for providing advice on approximately two dozen ecological mitigation sites. These sites are now beginning to appear on the district council's planning weekly lists. Where agreed these sites will usually have a geophysical survey and trial trenching, on smaller sites a strip, map and sample excavation will take place. A service level

agreement has been agreed for our input into this proposal. The HER has provided data for an updated environmental statement.

- **Heathrow New Runway:** We have been invited to a number of meetings on this and have provided advice on a number of documents and the forthcoming environmental statement. A service level agreement has been agreed for our input into this proposal. The HER has been approached to supply data for the environmental statement and is awaiting agreement to proceed.

New National Designations – DCMS added 17 buildings to the List between July 2016 and June 2017, all at Grade II: 16 are war memorials (Akeley, Aylesbury, Burnham, Drayton Parslow, Granborough, Haddenham, Hazlemere, Mursley, Naphill, Newton Longville, Padbury, Radnage, Stewkley, West Wycombe, Wingrave and Winslow) and the other is 10 Rowsham Road, a 16th century timber-framed house in Bierton. Three parks and gardens were added to the Register, all at Grade II: Stoke Place, Wakefield Lodge Park and the formal gardens at Stockgrove House. In addition the landscaped park at Wotton House has been upgraded from Grade II* to Grade I.

6 Planning related archaeological work

Volume measures	3rd Quarter 2016	4th Quarter 2016
Total number of consultations handled	177	161
Number of planning applications handled	87	137
Planning applications responded to within 21 days (target 90%)	Target Achieved	Target Achieved
Number of development-related archaeological fieldwork projects	19	10
Success rate at appeal (target 50% annual success rate)	N/A	N/A

Volume measures	1st Quarter 2017	2nd Quarter 2017
Total number of consultations handled	142	162
Number of planning applications handled	111	74
Planning applications responded to within 21 days (target 90%)	Target Achieved	Target Achieved
Number of development-related archaeological fieldwork projects	9	28
Success rate at appeal (target 50% annual success rate)	N/A	N/A

A full list of development-related fieldwork (July 2016 – June 2017) is provided as Appendix B.

Significant archaeological investigations include:

Berry Hill Farm Taplow: Archaeological excavation has been undertaken on this site for a number of years as different phases of sand and gravel extraction have been programmed. These works have been undertaken by Wessex Archaeology and prior to excavation a desk based assessment, geophysical survey and trial trenching took place. This prehistoric to Romano-British settlement site was recognised at an early stage and its excavation was timetabled so that it could be fully recorded prior to the sand and gravel extraction. Although carefully timetabled aggregate demand was such that it was agreed that the site would be worked north to south and completed areas would be signed off when completed. With flexibility on both sides this was amicably achieved and at the time of writing the on-site investigations would be completed in two to three weeks. As work progressed and the site weathered further features came to light with what appear to be a number of phases of 'ladder settlement' and earlier hut circles. Two sunken floor buildings were recorded and although appeared to of a typical Saxon plan were dated to the Roman period. Two interesting burials were found: a full cow skeleton and a human burial (photos below). We look forward to the report in due course. A training day run by Wessex Archaeology for the BCC Planning Team was a great success.



Marlow Flood Alleviation Scheme: This scheme has been about to start for a number of years and is now taking place. Difficulties have arisen over this complex scheme as the site has a number of stakeholders and contains significant archaeological features such as Neolithic/Bronze Age burial mounds (which are being preserved) and other prehistoric features. The BCC Archaeological Service has been in discussion with the Environment Agency, their in-house archaeological advisers, the Marlow Archaeological Society, Trent and Peak's archaeological field team and Wycombe District Councils

Planning Department. Some of the difficulties have been over the Marlow Archaeological Society gaining access to undertake their investigations, the timing of the field work and the extent of the ground works and the height of the required bund which will go over the burial mounds to protect them. Meetings have taken place to try to get everyone 'singing from the same hymn sheet' and with the site works progressing and weekly site meetings taking place all is happily going well. This is a complex site and may be a ritual landscape used over a period of time. Two linear features appear to be a trackway leading from the River Thames to the burial site. At the time of writing approximately 30% of the site remains to be stripped and significant archaeological features and finds are likely to be present. An open day is being planned for the end of September 2017.



General site shot at Marlow and Neolithic pottery (c.5 thousand years old)

- **Wainwrights Long Crendon:** On a smaller scale to the above sites, excavation here was undertaken prior to a residential development and revealed a moderate number of linear features, pits and post-holes, much of which was not identified by geophysical survey, but was revealed in some of the earlier evaluation trenches. The earliest activity is represented by a few finds of prehistoric struck flint and sherds of Later Bronze Age pottery. The earliest features are dated to the Iron Age and consist of a number of ditches. The majority of the deposits appear to reflect the presence of early/middle Anglo-Saxon occupation. Most early and middle Saxon occupation is recognised by the presence of houses, either sunken floored buildings or halls, neither of which were recorded here. The most significant and unusual feature observed was a curvilinear ditch with pottery and a radiocarbon date of the late 7th or 8th century. Along with the modest amount of animal bone, these features all suggest occupation on the site. A single fragment of smithing hearth bottom from the ditch is scant evidence for smithing on the site, and while the bone-handled awl is suggestive of leatherworking, it cannot be definitively tied to this period. The environmental remains were likewise limited, but suggest arable

crops and the usual domesticated animals were consumed on the site. In summary, this modest amount of fieldwork and modest range of finds has, nevertheless added to an understanding of the historic topography of Long Crendon before nucleation of the village in medieval times.

7 **Publication update (Appendix C)**

8 **Outreach and Publicity**

Ten public outreach events have taken place over the past year:

2016

Eliza gave a joint talk on research into the Iron Age and Roman settlement around Aylesbury to the Buckinghamshire Local History Network's annual conference in Aylesbury in September 2016. In October she gave a presentation to the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (the UK's professional body) on good practice in preparing archaeological project designs. Julia arranged a poster display and demonstrated the HER live at the Buckinghamshire History Fair in November.

2017

In January Eliza gave a talk to the BAS Active Archaeology Group and a talk on 'Romans in the Vale' to both of the Marlow archaeological groups in February; Julia was involved in a fieldwalking event at Cuddington, organised by Mike Farley for the Buckinghamshire Archaeological Society; whilst Eliza was instrumental in arranging a fieldwalking event at Quarrendon in April. Later in April Eliza gave a talk on Iron Age and Roman settlement around Aylesbury to the Aston Clinton U3A group.

In May Eliza gave a presentation on careers in archaeology to students at St Michael's Catholic School in High Wycombe and in June she gave a presentation on the 'Archaeology of the Chilterns' to the Chilterns Conservation Board.

More recently Julia and Eliza laid on a display about Saxon and Viking Buckinghamshire with childrens' activities for the County Museum's Festival of Archaeology fun day in July and a poster display on the Medieval and Tudor earthworks at Quarrendon for the Bucks Conservation Trust's public open day. Eliza, Julia and Phil also helped with stewarding the open day, acting as expert guides.

The Archaeology Service has also hosted work shadowing students in April and in July.

Thanks to Paul, the Archaeology Service is now using Facebook and Twitter to keep local residents in touch and up to date through social media.



Fieldwalking at Quarrendon medieval village

9 Historic Environment Record (HER) report

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

Performance Indicator	3rd Quarter 2016	4th Quarter 2016
Historic Environment Records data inputting backlog (targets: reports < 30 by March 2017)	Reports = 11 <u>Collect = 518</u> Total = 529	Reports = 9 <u>Collect = 518</u> Total = 527
	1st Quarter 2017	2nd Quarter 2017
Historic Environment Records data inputting backlog (targets: reports < 30 by March 2018)	Reports =5 <u>Collect = 518</u> Total = 523	Reports = 5 <u>Collect = 517</u> Total = 522

Volume measures	3rd Quarter 2016	4th Quarter 2016
Number of Countryside Stewardship applications handled	66	23
Number of reports received by the HER	14	51
Number of Historic Environment Records enquiries handled:		
commercial	34	21
non-commercial	30	16
	4	5

	1st Quarter 2017	2nd Quarter 2017
Number of Countryside Stewardship applications handled	0	29
Number of reports received by the HER	35	32
Number of Historic Environment Records enquiries handled:		
commercial	42	30
non-commercial	38	25
	4	5

Staffing

Paul's contract has been extended to the end of the 2017/18 financial year and he continues to be a great asset to the team.

HER software

The HER database and GIS was upgraded to the latest version of the specialist industry-standard software in January. Due to the complexity of the Bucks HER bespoke elements, we were the first HER to upgrade to version 5 and the consultants spent a lot of time and effort ensuring the upgrade went to plan.

HER enhancement and volunteer projects

As reported at the last meeting Paul is continuing with geo-rectifying AP plots and contractors' geophysical surveys and loading them into GIS. Julia has recently acquired and loaded a 2012 update of surviving Medieval and post-medieval ridge and furrow earthworks for 6 priority parishes in the north of the county.

Progress is still being made by one of the HER volunteers on the milestones project. The other regular volunteer has completed inputting new records for the turnpike roads in Buckinghamshire and is moving on to recording theatres and cinemas.

The Buckinghamshire Gardens Trust Research and Recording Project is continuing to make good progress with 44 reports completed, 4 reports in draft and work underway on a further 10 gardens. In 2015 and 2016 the Gardens Trust volunteers concentrated on 20 parks and gardens in Buckinghamshire where Capability Brown is known or alleged to have worked; in 2017 the volunteers are concentrating on the parks and gardens where Humphrey Repton was involved.

Julia was involved in a national project piloting the enhancement of Historic England's online National Heritage List by external partners and members of the public through the submission of additional information, website links and images. The HER was one of only three HERs testing and developing the software, which is now live.

Julia has also been involved in developing national HER outcomes and detailed performance indicators in partnership with Historic England and the Association of Local Government Archaeological Officers. She was one of 5 HER Officers working on the project which sets national standards against which all HERs can be measured as part of regular audits.

E. BACKGROUND PAPERS

1. Archaeological Reports submitted to the Buckinghamshire HER

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