

Appendix A: Buckinghamshire Archaeological Officers' Report

To: Buckinghamshire Historic Environment Forum
Date: 10th September 2018
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 (5th March 2018).

Report Summary

- Staff changes: Eliza Alqassar has now been promoted to Environment Manager, interviews were undertaken in early August to fill the Assistant Archaeologist post and Lucy Lawrence has accepted the offer of the post and is expected to start in October.
- HS2 Ltd: Eliza attended the Heritage sub Group meeting in Birmingham during June and we have been kept up to date by Fusion over the last few months. Evaluation works are being undertaken in a number of places including the Stoke Mandeville area where Bronze Age, Roman, Saxon and post medieval remains have so far been recorded. At a recent site update Fusion said that they have a number of plans for public visits and updates.
- East–West Rail: Phil Markham attended a meeting with Atkins at their Birmingham office to discuss the cultural heritage chapter of the environmental statement included with the TWAO. It was pointed out that the document was not clear in places and this was agreed. To address the archaeological evaluation and mitigation issues another document is going to be produced and the contents of this were discussed. A draft will be supplied in due course. Phil Markham responded to our strategic planning colleagues consultation over the TWAO saying that as the Environmental Statement was not clear and the document to address the archaeological issues has not yet been produced it would be appropriate to apply a number of conditions to any consent so that the archaeology is adequately covered by the scheme. We have good working relations with Atkins and have agreed a number of ecological mitigation schemes associated with this development.
- Western Rail Link to Heathrow: Phil Markham attended a Network Rail meeting at their Reading Offices to discuss their overarching written scheme of investigation for the works. We and the other local authority archaeological services had made comments on their draft and our points were accepted as being reasonable and acceptable. A revised version of this document is expected in the near future. Network Rail wants the evaluation works to be completed as soon as possible,

ideally before October 2018. These works tie in with the current excavation works taking place at the Langley/Richings Park mineral site where Wessex Archaeology are working.

- Heathrow New Runway: A number of meetings have taken place over the heritage strategy and comments from us and other local authority archaeological services comments have been acknowledged and documents have been revised.
- Oxford/Cambridge Expressway: We have been invited to a number of meetings over this and have expressed the need to assess the historic environment implications of the proposed corridors and routes. The Highways Agency said that this would not be done until the corridor has been chosen and that the historic environment information would inform the chosen route. At the time of writing they have not requested the HER information.

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, Lucy Lawrence will be the Archaeology Officer, Julia Wise is the HER Officer (part time), Paul Clements is the HER Assistant and Eliza Alqassar is the Environment Team Leader.

D. SUPPORTING INFORMATION

4 **Strategic Issues/Projects**

- **High Speed 2:** We continue to provide advice through the HS2 Ltd Heritage Sub-Group and the next meeting is scheduled for 20th September in London. Historic England keeps us updated on Schedule 17 works and we discuss appropriate responses where required. The Schedule 17 works come through the district council planning departments and we are usually consulted when the applications come in.

Field work has and is taking place in a number of areas including Calvert, Fleet Marston, Stoke Mandeville, Great Missenden and in the

Colne Valley. Fusion supplies us with draft project specifications for comment and we sometimes request minor amendments. The field work around St Mary's Stoke Mandeville has been taking place for a number of weeks and an open day is planned for Sunday 9th September from 12pm to 5pm at the Stoke Mandeville Village Community Centre.

The service level agreement between HS2 Ltd and Bucks County Council has now been signed and we are now being paid for our time spent on this project. Fusion and HS2 will ensure that all field work and recording is undertaken to the same standard and format. We are being invited to monitor the work and make comments which appears to be working well. Archiving has not yet 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 agreed with the HER community. HS2 has agreed a three year service level agreement for our HER data.

- **East–West Rail:** Phil Markham attended a meeting with Atkins at their Birmingham office to discuss the cultural heritage chapter of the environmental statement included with the TWAO. It was pointed out that the document was not clear in places and this was agreed. To address the archaeological evaluation and mitigation issues another document is going to be produced and the contents of this were discussed. A draft will be supplied in due course.

Phil Markham responded to our strategic planning colleagues consultation over the TWAO saying that as the Environmental Statement was not clear and the document to address the archaeological issues has not yet been produced it would be appropriate to apply a number of conditions to any consent so that the archaeology is adequately covered by the scheme. We have good working relations with Atkins and have agreed a number of ecological mitigation schemes associated with this development. It is understood that this scheme goes to public inquiry in March 2019. At the meeting with Atkins it was hoped that the historic environment content could be agreed so that this would not be an issue to take time at the inquiry.

- **Heathrow New Runway:** A number of meetings have taken place over the heritage strategy and comments from us and other local authority archaeological services have been acknowledged and documents have been revised. We are expecting a draft document covering the archaeological issues to be made available in the autumn. A service level agreement to pay for our time spent on this scheme has been agreed.
- **Western Rail Link to Heathrow:** Phil Markham attended a Network Rail meeting at their Reading Offices to discuss their overarching written scheme of investigation for the works. We and the other local

authority archaeological services had made comments on their draft and our points were accepted as being reasonable and acceptable. A revised version of this document is expected in the near future. Network Rail wants the evaluation works to be completed as soon as possible, ideally before October 2018. These works tie in with the current excavation works taking place at the Langley/Richings Park mineral site where Wessex Archaeology are working.

- **Oxford/Cambridge Expressway:** We have been invited to a number of meetings over this and have expressed the need to assess the historic environment implications of the proposed corridors and routes. The Highways Agency said that this would not be done until the corridor has been chosen and that the historic environment information would inform the chosen route. At the time of writing they have not requested the HER information. We understand that the corridor will be announced this September.
- **Chalk, Cherries, Chairs and the Chilterns Hillforts Project:** These are two projects being run by the Chilterns Conservation Board. Members of the Environment Team attend steering group meetings and provide advice and we have provided financial support to both projects. The application for funding for the *Chalk, Cherries, Chairs* landscape partnership scheme from the Heritage Lottery Fund has now been submitted and we await the results. The *Chilterns Hillforts Project* has now commenced and survey work will begin this Autumn.
- **New National Designations:** DCMS added 2 buildings to the List between January and June 2018, both at Grade II: both are war memorials (Buckland and Chalfont St Peter).

5 Planning related archaeological work

Volume measures	1 st Quarter 2018	2 nd Quarter 2018
Total number of consultations handled	167	269
Number of planning applications handled	104	109
Planning applications responded to within 21 days (target 90%)	94% Target Achieved	100% Target Achieved
Number of development-related archaeological fieldwork projects	19	17
Success rate at appeal (target 50% annual success rate)	N/A	N/A

A full list of development-related fieldwork is provided as Appendix B.

Significant archaeological investigations include:

A Roman ladder settlement has been partially excavated by Archaeological Solutions at Fenny Road, Stoke Hammond in advance of residential development. The main part of the site is being preserved in situ as open green space as part of the development scheme. The excavation has revealed a Roman trackway, square enclosure, boundary ditches and a cremation burial. An open day was held in August 2018.

A multi-period site has been excavated at Weston Turville/Broughton ahead of major residential development. Cotswold Archaeology uncovered archaeological remains stretching back to the Neolithic period as well as Roman enclosures, trackways, and medieval house platforms. Members of Bucks Arch Soc were invited to visit the site in July 2018.

6 Publication update (Appendix C)

7 Outreach and Publicity

In April 2018 Eliza gave a joint talk with Sandy Kidd on their recently published paper '*Joining the Dots*' at the CBA South Midlands Conference.

A Community Archaeology Day was run by Bucks County Museum in July 2018. Eliza and Julia from the County Archaeology Service ran a community dig as part of this event, which was well-attended and very successful.

Both Julia and Eliza have assisted with 'Muddled Museum' events organised by Buckinghamshire Archaeological Society as part of their 170th anniversary year.

8 Historic Environment Record (HER) report

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

Performance Indicator	1 st Quarter 2018	2 nd Quarter 2018
Historic Environment Records data inputting backlog (targets: reports < 30 by March 2018)	Reports = 6 Collect = 517 Total = 523	Reports = 19 Collect = 517 Total = 536

Volume measures	1 st Quarter 2018	2 nd Quarter 2018
Number of Countryside Stewardship applications handled	13	128
Number of reports received by the	51	37

HER		
Number of Historic Environment Records enquiries handled:		
commercial	23	28
non-commercial	0	3

Countryside Stewardship Consultations

In 2018 the HER was consulted on 157 Countryside Stewardship applications covering 15,713 hectares within Buckinghamshire. Of these, 15 (10%) were for Higher Tier schemes and 142 (90%) were for Mid-tier schemes. The HER was able to provide added value to 54% of the applications and we responded to all the consultations within the 20-day period required by Natural England.

HER enhancement and volunteer projects

Paul is currently working on checking and creating new database records for South Bucks Metal-Detecting Club finds dating from the 1980s and 1990s in the West Wycombe area. This is a substantial backlog task that has been waiting to be tackled for 20 years and has only been possible with the extra capacity provided by the HER Assistant.

The HER volunteer working on the milestones project is still making final edits to the existing entries. As previously reported, if she wishes to continue volunteering for us, we may ask her to tackle the turnpike tollhouses.

The Buckinghamshire Gardens Trust Research and Recording Project is continuing to make good progress with 51 reports completed, 4 reports in draft and work underway on a further 10 gardens. In 2017 and 2018 the volunteers have also been researching the 16 parks and gardens in Buckinghamshire where Humphry Repton was involved, as part of the national Repton 200 festival, which culminated in an illustrated publication on Repton's work in Buckinghamshire and a conference at Ashridge in August.

E. BACKGROUND PAPERS

1. Archaeological Reports submitted to the Buckinghamshire HER

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