

**19/01974/MAO - LAND OFF HOOKHAMS LANE, RENHOLD
BEDFORDSHIRE**

PINS Ref: APP/K0235/W/20/3256134

STATEMENT OF COMMON GROUND: ARCHAEOLOGY

**AGREED BETWEEN BEDFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL AND MANOR
OAK HOMES LTD**

AND SIGNED ON 25th OCTOBER 2020

19/01974/MAO - STATEMENT OF COMMON GROUND: ARCHAEOLOGY

1. This Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) addresses matters relating to archaeology. It has been agreed between Manor Oak Homes Ltd (herein referred to as 'the Appellant') and Bedford Borough Council (herein referred to as 'BBC' or 'the Council'). It sets out the matters on which the parties agree and where there are matters of difference between the parties.
2. A planning application (19/01974/MAO) has been submitted to Bedford Borough Council (BBC); namely, *Outline application with all matters reserved except access for up to 400 dwellings, land for a new primary school, open space, drainage, footpath improvements and vehicular access via 25 Hookhams Lane on Land Off Hookhams Lane Renhold Bedfordshire*. Comments on the application provided by the BBC Archaeological Officer (Geoff Saunders – BBCAO), in their capacity as archaeological advisor to BBC, have identified the requirement for a field evaluation by trial trenching to be undertaken prior to determination of the application, in order to allow an informed assessment of the presence/ absence, extent and significance of any archaeological remains within the site. The request for a field evaluation by trial trenching follows on from a previous geophysical survey that identified several areas of probable archaeological remains. These comprised a large but seemingly incomplete trapezoidal enclosure in the north-east of the site, a possible very small ring ditch on the eastern boundary, and a probable roundhouse close to the southern boundary. On morphological grounds these features are suggested to date to the late prehistoric or Roman period. Medieval ridge and furrow, post-medieval field boundaries, and a number of undated ditches were also identified (MOLA 2020 – document appended).
3. The scope of this evaluation was defined by the BBCAO in consultation with the client and Cotswold Archaeology and set out in a Written Scheme of Investigation dated September 2020 (CA 2020 – CD1.14).

Assessment Method

4. The parties agree that the field evaluation method, consisting of geophysical survey followed by trial trenching, is appropriate for the proposed development site and has been undertaken in accordance with the agreed Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI – a detailed method statement for the works).

Assessment Results

5. The parties agree that the geophysical survey identified several areas of probable archaeological remains. These comprised a large but seemingly incomplete trapezoidal enclosure in the north-east of the site, a possible very small ring ditch on the eastern boundary, and a probable roundhouse close to the southern boundary. On morphological grounds these features are suggested to date to the late prehistoric or Roman period. Medieval ridge and furrow, post-medieval field boundaries, and a number of undated ditches were also identified (MOLA 2020).
6. The parties agree that the subsequent trial trenching identified archaeological remains of putative Iron Age - Roman date, comprising an enclosure, likely used for stock management rather than settlement, located in the north-east part of the site, broadly corresponding with the trapezoidal enclosure identified by the geophysical survey. A single undated pit and four undated potential pits or ditch terminals were identified in Trench 10, broadly corresponding with the suggested roundhouse identified in the south part of the site. Furrows running on a north-east/south-west alignment were also identified. Other geophysical anomalies of possible archaeological origin were found to be geological in origin. No remains were identified corresponding with the possible ring-ditch in the east part of the site.
7. The parties agree that the Iron Age – Roman remains identified are of low/ local to, at most, medium/ regional significance. The cultivation remains (furrows and field boundary ditches) are of very low/ local significance.
8. The parties agree that archaeological remains identified are not of such significance as to prevent development and that any further archaeological works that are required in order to preserve the remains by record so as to mitigate the harm caused by development works can be secured and implemented by means of suitably worded condition(s) attached to any grant of planning permission. The suggested condition reads:

No development shall take place until an archaeological mitigation strategy has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

The archaeological mitigation strategy shall include a timetable and the following components (the completion of each to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority will result in a separate confirmation of compliance for each component):-.

(i) fieldwork and/ or preservation “in situ” of archaeological remains;

(ii) a post-excavation assessment report (to be submitted within six months of the completion of fieldwork);

(iii) a post-excavation analysis report, preparation of site archive ready for deposition at a store approved by the Local Planning Authority, completion of an archive report, and submission of a publication report (to be completed within two years of the completion of fieldwork).

The archaeological mitigation strategy shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details and timings.

REASON: *To safeguard archaeological assets within the approved development boundary from impacts relating to any groundworks associated with the development scheme and to ensure the proper and timely investigation, recording, reporting and presentation of archaeological assets affected by this development, in accordance with Policy 41s of the Bedford Borough Local Plan 2030 and according to national policies contained in the National Planning Policy Framework (MHCLG 2019). The Local Planning Authority is satisfied that the timing of compliance is fundamental to the development permitted and that the permission ought to be refused unless the condition is imposed in this form.*

References

CA 2020. Land off Hookhams Lane, Renhold Bedfordshire. Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Evaluation. Cotswold Archaeology project no. MK0328

MOLA 2020. Archaeological geophysical survey of land north of Hookham's Lane, Salph End, Bedford. MOLA Northampton report no. 20/062