

**Hatfield Motor Dealership Site,
Gypsy Moth Lane, Hatfield, Hertfordshire**

Project specification for archaeological evaluation

14th December 2017



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Hatfield Motor Dealership Site, Gypsy Moth Lane, Hatfield, Hertfordshire Proposal for an archaeological evaluation

1.0 Background

- 1.1 Planning permission (6/2015/2043/OUTLINE)) has been gained from Welwyn Hatfield District Council to construct a new car showroom on a 1.74ha parcel the site to the east of at Gypsy Moth Lane, Hatfield (TL 2154 0921). It is subject to a condition (8) relating to archaeology.
- 1.2 The archaeological potential of the site stems from its location. In summary, the site lies in an area where a moderate number of features and findspots are recorded in the county Historic Environment Record. Palaeolithic finds were recovered c.500m to the south of the site, comprising two hand axes, and a Mesolithic tranchet axe or Thames pick c.400m to the south. Later prehistoric activity is represented by a find of Middle Bronze Age pottery, and in the wider vicinity by Bronze Age pits, an arrowhead, and a scatter of Bronze Age flints. Occupation evidence of later Bronze Age or Iron Age date was recorded elsewhere within the land previously occupied by the aerodrome, these included a ditch and several other features, with a late Iron Age cremation urn also recorded. Nearby at Suttons Farm, excavation in advance of quarrying revealed a group of Iron Age features, alongside more extensive medieval (12th to 13th century) archaeological features. Ditches and pits of Roman date are also recorded and abraded Saxon pottery sherds. However, a recent evaluation (Beaverstock and Platt 2016) carried out in on a parcel of land 1km to the southwest revealed surprisingly few deposits of archaeological interest, with the majority of the investigated features of modern or late post-medieval date. In the north-eastern area of the site, several Roman and one Saxon feature were identified indicating an area of higher archaeological potential.

2.0 Requirement for Work

- 2.1 As a consequence of the possibility of archaeological deposits on the site, field evaluation is required as set out in *Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF 2012, 141) and the Borough policies on archaeology in order to draw up a scheme to mitigate the impacts of development on archaeology if necessary.
- 2.2 A further phase of fieldwork may be required if significant archaeological deposits are revealed.

3.0 Aims and Objectives

- 3.1 The aims of the evaluation are to determine the presence/ absence, extent, condition, character, quality and date, state of preservation and importance of any archaeological or palaeoenvironmental deposits within the area of development.
- 3.2 This work will be carried out in a manner which will not compromise the integrity of archaeological features or deposits which warrant preservation in-situ, or might better be excavated under conditions pertaining to full excavation.
- 3.3 The specific research aims of this project are;
- a) To determine if archaeologically relevant levels have survived on the site.
 - b) To determine if archaeological deposits of any period are present.
 - c) To determine if any deposits representing Iron Age or Roman activity are present.
 - d) To provide sufficient information to enable an appropriate mitigation strategy to be produced if necessary.
- 3.4 The potential and significance of any such deposits located will be assessed according to the research priorities such as set out in *English Heritage Research Agenda* (English Heritage 2005) and *Research and Archaeology: a framework for the Eastern Counties- 1 and 2* (Glazebrook, 1997; Brown and Glazebrook 2000) Medlycot and Brown 2008) or any more local or thematic research priorities as necessary.

4.0 Methodology

- 4.1 We propose to dig 16 trenches each 1.6-2m wide and 25m long, comprising a 4% sample of the site area. The proposed trenches will be located as shown on Fig. 1.
- 4.2 The trench positions may need to be adjusted further and subdivided once details of any services are known and to avoid other obstructions such as preserved trees.
- 4.3 A contingency for an additional 25m of trenching is included within the proposal should this be needed to clarify the initial findings.

5.0 Excavation Methodology

- 5.1 Topsoil and any other overburden will be removed by a JCB-type or 360°-type machine. A ditching bucket will be used to expose archaeologically sensitive levels.
- 5.2 Where archaeological features are certainly or probably present, the stripped areas will be cleaned using appropriate hand tools.
- 5.3 Sufficient of the archaeological features and deposits exposed will be excavated or sampled by hand to satisfy the aims of the brief, without compromising the objective set out in 3.2. Any strategy will be in agreement with the county archaeological office. All discrete features will be investigated by hand and at least 50% of the volume of each pit or posthole will be dug. A 25% sample of each linear feature will also be dug (a minimum of a 1m wide slot per feature).
- 5.4 In general, all finds and artefacts will be retained on-site. At the post-excavation stage (see 4.5 below) the collection policy of the recipient museum will be followed and which may involve the discarding of some classes of building material, such as brick and tile or flint nodules after recording with only a representative sample being retained.
- 5.5 Conservation on site will follow guidelines in First Aid for Finds with any other specialist conservation work subcontracted to our conservation advisor (see below).
- 5.6 Discovery of any human remains will be reported to the coroner but no further action will be taken as part of the evaluation exercise, unless requested as additional work by the client in consultation with the Hertfordshire Archaeological Officer. Burials will be covered and protected before reburial if it is proposed that they will be addressed under excavation conditions at a later stage.
- 5.7 A programme of environmental sampling will take place should sufficient well stratified subsoil deposits be located. Typically this involves samples of up to 40l depending on the size of the feature examined. If waterlogged samples are encountered, they will be sampled at 40l or 100% of the deposit if less than 40l. Sampling will be carried out in consultation with our environmental consultants and the County Archaeological Officer. Sampling will take place according to Historic England guidance (HE 2015b).
- 5.8 Spoilheaps will be searched for finds both visually and using a metal detector.
- 5.9 Where metal find are encountered in archaeological context, there will be no removal without reference to contextual information. No title will be assumed by the finder of any gold, silver or prehistoric base metal objects and the provisions of the Treasure Act (1996) and its subsequent amendments, will be implemented where appropriate.
- 5.10 Following completion of all excavation and recording, the trench will be efficiently backfilled but not resurfaced, returfed or reseeded. No liability is accepted for damage to any services unless a plan of these is provided by the client

6.0 Recording Methodology

- 6.1 A single context recording system will be used in accordance with the TVAS Field Recording Manual (7th edition 2011). Descriptions of individual deposits and features will be recorded on pro-forma context recording sheets.

- 6.2 All archaeological deposits exposed will be planned at a scale of 1:20 and sections drawn at a scale of 1:10. All site drawings will be by pencil on drafting film.
- 6.3 Heights above OD will be taken and recorded on plans and sections.
- 6.4 The locations of the trenches, and of all plans and sections will be tied into the National Grid.
- 6.5 A photographic record will be made of the project, consisting of digital images. It will record the principal features and finds discovered, both in detail and in their general context.

7.0 Post-fieldwork

- 7.1 Finds processing and analysis will commence immediately following the completion of the fieldwork in accordance with guidelines in MAP2 and TVAS post-excavation procedures (6th edition 2013).
- 7.2 Artefacts/ecofacts will be cleaned, conserved and prepared for long term museum storage.
- 7.3 Specialist reports will be prepared on the artefacts recovered. Particular attention will be paid to correlating the pottery recovered with local or regional fabric type sequences.
- 7.4 Specialist analysis and reporting will be carried out by the following specialist staff or consultants as appropriate:-

Pottery Specialists	Dr Jane Timby, Mr. Paul Blinkhorn or Dr. Malcolm Lyne (consultants) or Dr Richard Tabor (TVAS)
Later Prehistoric Struck flint Stone Specialist	Dr Steve Ford (TVAS) Dr David Williams (Southampton University)
Metalwork Specialist	Mr Steve Crabb (Oxford University) or Dr. Robin Taylor (consultant)
Charred Plant Remains	Professor Mark Robinson (Oxford University) or Ms Rossy Mckenna (consultant)
Faunal Remains	Ms Sheila Hamilton-Dyer, Dr Matilda Holmes (consultants) or Ms Lizzie Lewins (TVAS)
Human Remains	Dr Ceri Falys (TVAS)
Pollen/environment Conservation	Mr Dan Young (Reading University- Quest) Wiltshire Conservation Centre

8.0 Report and Dissemination

- 8.1 A report on the results of the fieldwork should be available within three weeks following completion of the fieldwork.
- 8.2 The report will follow our established format, comprising a descriptive text, illustrations and catalogues in appendices as appropriate.
- 8.3 The text will address the aims and objectives of the project, the methodology employed, describe the basic nature of the archaeological deposits discovered, and report on the artefacts recovered. It will then attempt to place the significance of the findings in their local, regional and national setting if appropriate.
- 8.4 The report will include a frontsheet providing the following information:

- ³⁵/₁₇ *Site name
- ³⁵/₁₇ *Grid reference
- ³⁵/₁₇ *Site activity (evaluation trenching, geophysical survey, fieldwalking, watching brief, excavation, etc.)
- ³⁵/₁₇ *Date and duration of project
- ³⁵/₁₇ *Site code
- ³⁵/₁₇ *Area of site
- ³⁵/₁₇ *Summary of results
- ³⁵/₁₇ *Monuments identified (referenced to the RCHME Thesaurus of Monument Types)
- ³⁵/₁₇ *Location and reference of archive

- 8.5 The illustrations will include:
- ³⁵/₁₇ a site location plan
 - ³⁵/₁₇ a plan of the distribution of archaeological finds by material, type and date generated from the fieldwalking
 - ³⁵/₁₇ a plan of archaeological deposits
 - ³⁵/₁₇ profiles/sections of excavated features
 - ³⁵/₁₇ photographs of significant/representative features
 - ³⁵/₁₇ photographs of all trenches
- 8.6 Any findings even if negative will be published as a note or article in an appropriate journal such as *Hertfordshire Archaeology and History* or monograph, popular publication or book as necessary. A draft publication report will be prepared within four years of completion of fieldwork and appropriate resources for publication will be allocated.
- 8.7 Copies of the results (2) will be supplied to the Hertfordshire Historic Environment Record and a HER summary sheet will be appended.
- 8.8 A digital version of the report will be provided to the OASIS project.
- 8.9 Copies of digital images will be supplied to the Hertfordshire HER (if requested).

9.0 Archive Deposition

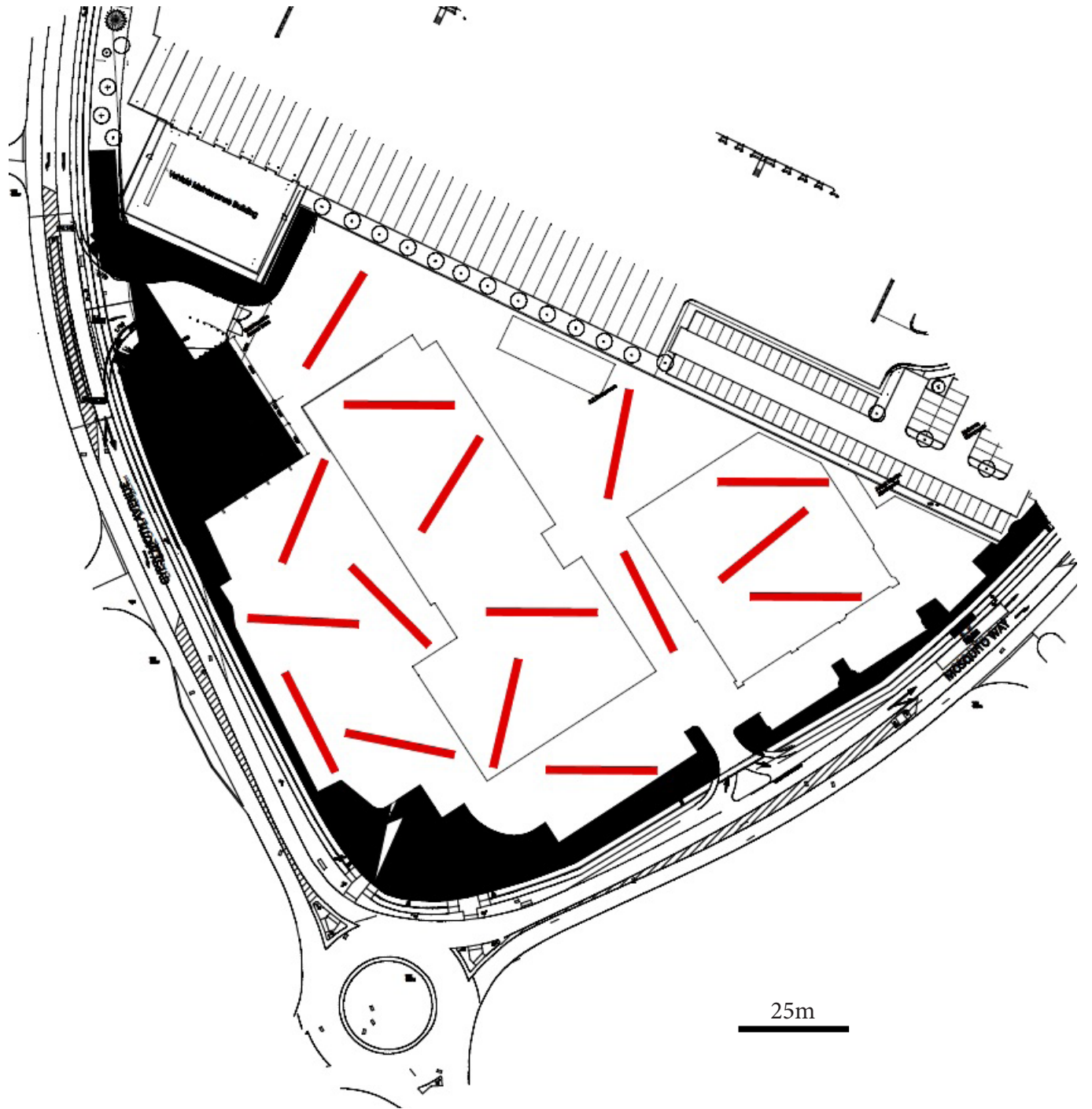
- 9.1 The finds and site archive will be prepared in accordance with guidelines in MoRPHE (HE 2015a), CIfA guidance (CIfA 2014a) and after consultation with the recipient museum. Guidance produced by the Museum and Galleries Commission's Standards in the Museum Care of Archaeological Collections (1992), the Society of Museum Archaeologist's Selection, Retention and Dispersal of Archaeological Collections (1993) and the United Kingdom Institute for Conservation Guidelines for the preparation of excavation archives for long term storage (1990) will be followed. The records will be copied onto microfiche and a copy sent to the National Archaeological Record.
- 9.2 The site archive will be deposited with an approved local museum (Welwyn Hatfield Museum Service) and an accession number will be obtained prior to a commencement on site if required.
- 9.3 With the agreement of the landowner, the finds will be deposited with an approved local museum (Welwyn Hatfield Museum Service).
- 9.4 The records will be copied onto microfiche for the National Archaeological Record.

10.0 General Items

- 10.1 The project will be managed on a regular basis by a Member of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists with an appropriate area of competence (S. Ford BA PhD MCIfA FSA, J. Pine BA MA MCIfA or A. Taylor, BA MSc MCIfA).
- 10.2 The project will be carried out in accordance with the CIFA Standard and Guidance for archaeological excavation (2014b) and Code of Conduct (2014c) and the quality control mechanisms set out in the TVAS fieldwork and post-fieldwork manuals. In addition the guidance provided by Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England (Gurney 2003) will be followed.
- 10.3 Safe working practices will be adopted as set out in the TVAS health and safety manual and current health and safety standards will be adhered to.
- 10.4 Our insurance cover comprises £10 million for public liability, £10 million for employee liability, cover for any hired-in plant, and professional indemnity cover of £5m.
- 10.5 The archaeological advisor to the Council will be contacted both prior to work commencing on site, and during the evaluation itself, to arrange a site monitoring visit. Any changes in the agreed project design will be discussed and agreed with the archaeological advisor to the Council before implementation.

11.0 References

- Beaverstock, K and Platt, D, 2016 'Hatfield Aerodrome, Albatross Way, Hatfield, Hertfordshire, An archaeological Evaluation' Thames Valley Archaeological Services report 15/267, Reading
- CIfA, 2014a, *Standard and guidance for the creation, compilation, transfer and deposition of archaeological archives*, Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, Reading
- CIfA, 2014b, *Standard and guidance for archaeological evaluation*, Chartered Institute for Archaeologists Reading
- CIfA, 2014c, *Code of Conduct*, Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, Reading
- English Heritage 2005, *Research Agenda*, English Heritage, London.
- Glazebrook, J, 1997, *Research and Archaeology: a framework for the Eastern Counties-1*, E Anglian Archaeol Occas Pap **8**
- Gurney, D, 2003, Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England, E Anglian Archaeol Occas Pap **14**
- HE, 2015a, *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment, MoRPHE project planning*, Historic England, London
- HE 2015b, *Environmental Archaeology*, Centre for Archaeology Guidelines 1, English Heritage, Portsmouth, 3rd edn
- Medlycot, M and Brown, N 2008, *Revision of the Regional Archaeological Framework for the Eastern Region, Algae East of England*



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Proposal for Archaeological Evaluation
Figure 1. Location of trenches