

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Drayton Parish Council requires a targeted excavation of the footprint of a multi-use game area (MUGA) proposed to be constructed on land at Drayton near Abingdon.
- 1.2 The work is being undertaken as a condition of Planning Permission (planning ref: P14/V2504/FUL).
- 1.3 All work will be undertaken in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists Code of Conduct (CIfA 2014a) and relevant Standards and Guidance (CIfA 2014b), and local and national planning policies.

2 Location, topography & geology

- 2.1 The site lies on the northern edge of Drayton, Oxfordshire (SU 47799 95151; Fig 1).
- 2.2 The area of proposed development consists of partially developed former agricultural land. The site is bounded to the south-east by Abingdon Road, to the south-west by Barrow Road, and to the north-east and north-west by agricultural land.
- 2.3 The underlying geology of the area is mapped as Ampthill and Kimmeridge clay formations, a sedimentary mudstone, which is overlain by superficial deposits of Wolvercote sand and gravel (BGS Online).

3. Historical Background

- 3.1 A Desk Based Assessment established that there are no designated heritage assets within or adjacent to the area of development that would be affected by the works. Late Neolithic/early Bronze Age flints have been recovered in the surrounding area. The Sutton Wick Scheduled Ancient Monument, a series of cropmarks which includes a suspected Bronze Age round barrow, lies just over 500m to the north.
- 3.2 A late Iron Age settlement has also been identified 650m to the north. Roman activity in the local area is confirmed by pottery recovered within 500m of the development area, and a cropmark interpreted as a potential Romano-British farmstead is present on the western edge of the site.
- 3.3 The development area is situated beyond the Saxon and medieval limits of the settlement of Drayton. The site lay within an agricultural landscape throughout the Post-Medieval and Modern period.
- 3.4 It is clear from evidence gathered for the DBA and from the previous investigations immediately to the south of the MUGA, that the immediate and surrounding landscape was extensively settled and exploited during the later prehistoric and Roman periods.
- 3.5 Based on the results of the previous investigations, it can be concluded that there is a moderate to high potential to identify remains of a Bronze Age date. There is also a high potential to encounter archaeological remains dating from the late Iron Age/early Roman period within the proposed development area. The north-west/south-east aligned ridge and furrow system is also likely to be present.

4. Objectives

- 4.1 The general aims of the strip, map and sample excavation (SMS) are to determine and understand the nature, function, and character of the archaeological remains within their cultural and environmental setting. This will be achieved through the excavation and recording an appropriate sample of the features identified.
- 4.2 The specific aims and objectives of the works are:
- To determine the presence or absence of any archaeological remains which may survive.
 - To determine or confirm the approximate extent of any surviving remains.
 - To determine the date range of any surviving remains by artefactual or other means.
 - To determine the condition and state of preservation of any remains.
 - To determine the degree of complexity of any surviving horizontal or vertical stratigraphy.
 - To assess the associations and implications of any remains encountered with reference to the historic landscape.
 - To determine the potential of the site to provide palaeoenvironmental and/or economic evidence, and the forms in which such evidence may survive.
 - To determine the implications of any remains with reference to economy, status utility and social activity.
 - To ensure there is no detrimental impact on archaeological remains that are to be preserved in situ
- 4.3 The programme of archaeological investigation will be conducted within the general research parameters and objectives defined by the Solent-Thames Research Framework for the Historic Environment (Hey and Hind 2014).

5. Specific Excavation & Recording Methodology

- 5.1 The footprint of the proposed MUGA, located in the north-east corner of the development site, lies within an area of archaeological potential and will be subject to a programme of SMS excavation (Fig. 2 and 3).
- 5.2 Site specific methodologies for the SMS will be as follows:
- The area of excavation will be set out by a trained surveyor using a GPS system with a sub-15mm accuracy.
 - Removal of the overburden will be undertaken by a suitably powered excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket under constant archaeological supervision. Removal of the overburden will be undertaken in level spits of no more than 100mm down to the first archaeological horizon, or natural geology, whichever is encountered first.
 - Once removal of the overburden deposits is completed a digital pre-excavation plan showing any revealed features will be produced using a GPS with sub-15mm accuracy. Abingdon Road, Drayton 1 6 7 February 2023
 - A sufficient sample of the revealed features will be investigated by hand to establish their character and date, where possible. Focus will be on establishing the date and nature of the features and how they might have functioned. It is anticipated that this will equate to:
 - All structural features or those relating to a specialised activity will be subject to a 100% sample.

- All post and stake holes that related to specialised activities will be subject to a 100% sample. Others will be subject to a 50% sample.
- A 50% sample of all pits will be undertaken.
- A minimum of 10% or 10m, whichever is greater, of all linear features will be sampled.
- All kilns and hearths etc. will be sampled and excavated.

- 5.3 The level of hand investigation will be discussed with the Local Planning Authorities' (LPA) archaeological advisor, or their appointed representative, during on-site monitoring meetings.
- 5.4 Machine excavation of features will only be undertaken upon agreement of the LPA's archaeological advisor, or their appointed representative.
- 5.5 Should cremation or inhumation burials be encountered, excavation will be undertaken in consultation with OA's Heritage Burials Services, under a license from the Ministry of Justice. All burial contexts will be 100% excavated.
- 5.6 Environmental samples will be taken from a range of datable features that exhibit the potential to contain ecofacts. Advice on the specific environmental sampling strategy will be determined by the types of features revealed, in consultation with the LPA's archaeological advisor, or their appointed representative, and the archaeological contractor's specialist team. If present, all kilns, and hearths will be sampled and excavated, with appropriate samples taken for radiocarbon dating.
- 5.7 No development of the mitigation areas will proceed until the area has been signed off by the LPA's archaeological advisor, or their appointed representative. The LPA's archaeological advisor will respond to sign off request within five working days.

6. Human Remains

- 6.1 If human remains are encountered, the LPA's archaeological advisor, or their appointed representative, will be notified as soon as is practicable.
- 6.2 All human remains will be excavated under the appropriate Ministry of Justice licence and will be supervised by an experienced osteoarchaeologist.
- 6.3 Human remains will be cleaned and placed in boxes following the methods described by Mitchell and Brickley (n.d.). Current guidance issued by English Heritage and the Church of England (2005, 43) states that human remains must be marked. However, the recent Code of Practice published by BABAO (BABAO 2019), acknowledges that marking bone is not always feasible and that there are economic, curatorial, conservational, and ethical issues associated with this practice.
- 6.4 Any changes both to the above methodology and the final specification will be agreed with the LPA's archaeological advisor, or their appointed representative.

7. Treasure

- 7.1 Finds discovered by the archaeological contractor falling under the statutory definition of Treasure (as defined by the Treasure Act of 1996 and its revision of 2002) will be reported immediately to the relevant Coroner's Office, the landowner and SCC. A Treasure Receipt (obtainable from either the Finds Liaison Officer (FLO) or the DCMS website) will be completed and a report submitted to the Coroner's Office and the FLO within 14 days of

understanding the find is Treasure. Failure to report within 14 days is a criminal offence. The Treasure Receipt and Report must include the date and circumstances of the discovery, the identity of the finder (put as unit/contractor) and (as exactly as possible) the location of the find.

- 7.2 All metal objects, other than late post-medieval objects, will be x-rayed unless otherwise agreed with the LPA's archaeological advisor, or their appointed representative.

8. Monitoring of Works

- 8.1 At least 10 days' notice of the commencement of the SMS works will be given to the Planning Archaeologist for Oxfordshire County Council (OCC).
- 8.2 The Planning Archaeologist will have free access to the site (subject to Health and Safety considerations) and all records to ensure the works are being carried out in accordance with this WSI and all other relevant standards.

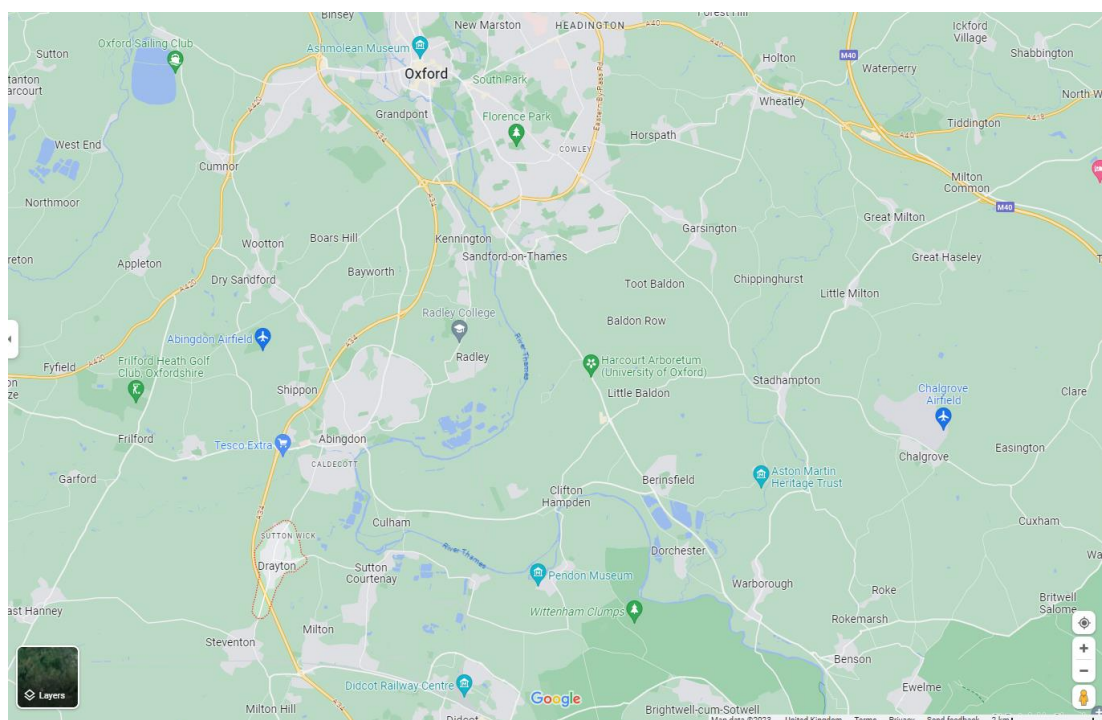


Figure 1 Drayton Location



Figure 2 Site Location

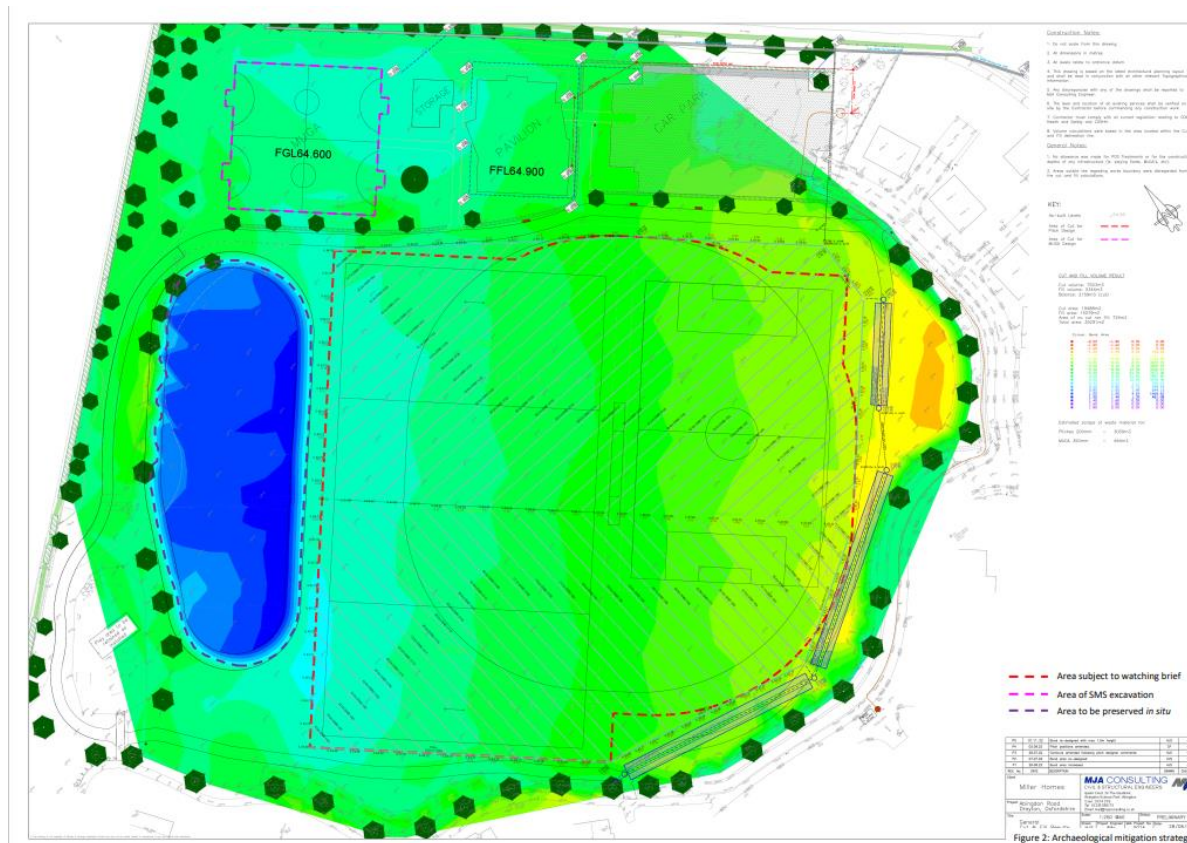


Figure 3 Site Location

9 Schedule

9.1 The following timetable is anticipated:

- 15th September - Tenders received for Archaeological SMS (to be valid until 13th October)
- 22nd September – contract awarded.
- 2nd October – Archaeological SMS commences.

10 Process

- 10.1 Drayton Parish Council operates a sealed bid system for tenders. Tenders should be delivered by email to: The Clerk at Drayton Parish Council – Dianne Rickaby (locum@draytonpc.org) by 5pm on 14th September 2023. The email should be clearly marked as containing tender documents.
- 10.2 You must specify what supplies and work packages you are using subcontractors for, and which are using your own manufactured items and staff.
- 10.3 Any collusion with competitor suppliers will lead to disqualification from the contract.