



Proposed Commercial Centre, A27, Emsworth, Hampshire

Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment

**PROPOSED COMMERCIAL CENTRE,
A27, EMSWORTH,
HAMPSHIRE**

ARCHAEOLOGICAL DESK-BASED ASSESSMENT

Prepared on behalf of

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Figure 1 – Site Location

Figure 2 – Ordnance Survey 1st Edition Map, c1870

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ARCHAEOLOGICAL DESK-BASED ASSESSMENT

Summary

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Harebell Ltd (the Client), to undertake an Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment on an area of land for a proposed commercial centre (the Site), at Emsworth, Hampshire, centred on NGR 474500 106500.

This Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment and associated Phase 1 Ecology Survey (a separate report prepared by RPS) are prepared in advance of a planning application for a proposed development of commercial and light industrial units on land located to the west of Emsworth in Hampshire.

The purpose of this report is to provide an appraisal of the archaeological potential of the land in accordance with national and local planning policy and guidance. This is achieved by a study of known archaeological sites and findspots within a study area, an assessment of cartographic evidence and a consideration of the historical background of Emsworth and the impact of previous land use.

A site walkover provided an assessment of the current condition of the land and its archaeological and historical context.

The evidence collated in this assessment concludes that the Site has no archaeological potential. Cartographic and documentary evidence suggests that the Site has always been used for agricultural purposes.

Acknowledgements

Wessex Archaeology would like to thank Ms G Wyatt, Harebell Ltd for commissioning the project. Rachel Salter of Hampshire County Council provided the SMR and listed buildings data as well as providing useful background information. Thanks are also extended to the staff at the Hampshire Record Office, Winchester.

The assessment was researched and written by Peter Reeves and illustrated by Mark Roughley. The site walkover was undertaken by Peter Reeves on 18th November 2005. The project was managed by Peter Reeves.

**PROPOSED COMMERCIAL CENTRE,
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ARCHAEOLOGICAL DESK-BASED ASSESSMENT

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Ms G Wyatt, Harebell Ltd (the Client), to undertake an Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment (DBA) ahead of a planning application for a proposed mixed development of commercial and light industrial units on land located to the west of Emsworth, Hampshire, (the Site) centred on NGR 474500 106500.

Proposed Development

- 1.1.2 A planning application is to be lodged with Havant Borough Council for development on former agricultural land which has lain dormant for a decade. In advance of the application, following advice from Havant Borough Council, the Client has commissioned an Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment and a Phase 1 Ecology Survey (Fauna and Habitats only).

Scope of this document

- 1.1.3 The purpose of this DBA is to provide an appraisal of the archaeological potential of the Site in accordance with national and local planning policy and guidance (see section 3 below). This is achieved by a study of known archaeological sites and findspots within the Study Area (see 4.1.2 for Study Area definition), an assessment of cartographic evidence and a consideration of the historical background of the Site and the impact of previous land use.
- 1.1.4 The DBA will seek to establish whether the Site contains any structures, features or deposits that are likely to be of archaeological/historical importance, and will consider the likely impacts of the proposed development if such parameters are present.
- 1.1.5 The DBA also incorporates the conclusions of a walkover of the Site establishing, where appropriate, the visual impact of the proposed development upon the surrounding landscape.
- 1.1.6 The assessment was carried out in accordance with the guidelines contained in the Institute of Field Archaeologist's *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Desk-based Assessments* (IFA 1994, revised September 2001).

2 SITE BACKGROUND

2.1 Location

- 2.1.1 The Site is located approximately 0.5km to the West of Emsworth Railway Station in Hampshire within the parish of Emsworth. The Site lies in undulating former farmland at a height of approximately 10m aOD. (**Figure 1**).
- 2.1.2 The Site is located adjacent and to the south of the A27 coast road between Chichester and Portsmouth and adjacent and to the north of the Havant to Chichester railway, centred on NGR 474500 106500.
- 2.1.3 The site consists of an elliptical area of land, covering approximately 3.2 hectares, partially subdivided into three areas by water filled ditches. The land is currently used as rough pasture for the upkeep of horses.
- 2.1.4 The site is approached via a rough track leading in from the east.
- 2.1.5 The site is bounded by hedges and embankments and is largely concealed from external view.

2.2 Geology and Topography

- 2.2.1 The Site and the surrounding fields are situated on the London Clay and Tertiary Gravel drift that covers much of the central area of the south coast. In turn these deposits overlie the chalk.
- 2.2.2 The site is low lying, averaging 10m AOD, and generally level although overall a slight rise is encountered as the site is traversed from east to west.
- 2.2.3 The site is very damp although well drained with field ditches dissecting the site into three major areas. At the time of the site visit all the boundary ditches, aligned north to south, contained water. The water relief channel paralleling the A27 and the associated balancing pond also contained water.
- 2.2.4 The Site joins a minor road at its east end between the bridges carrying the A27 (north) and the railway (south).

3 PLANNING POLICY AND GUIDANCE

3.1 National Planning Legislation and Guidance

- 3.1.1 Principal legislation concerning protection of important archaeological sites comprises the *Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979* (as amended). Guidance on the importance, management and safeguarding of

the archaeological resource within the planning process is provided by *Planning Policy Guidance Note 16: Archaeology and Planning* (PPG 16) (DoE 1990). This sets out the policy of the Secretary of State on archaeological remains on land, and provides many recommendations that have subsequently been integrated into Local and Unitary Development Plans. The underlying principle of this guidance is that archaeological resources are non-renewable, stating that:

‘where nationally important archaeological remains, whether scheduled or not, are affected by proposed development there should be a presumption in favour of their physical preservation. (Para 8)’

3.1.2 In addition, Paragraph 19 states:

“ in their own interests... prospective developers should in all cases include as part of their research into the development potential of a site... an initial assessment of whether the site is known or likely to contain archaeological remains.”

3.1.3 Paragraph 22 also states:

‘Local planning authorities can expect developers to provide the results of such assessments and evaluations as part of their application for sites where there is good reason to believe there are remains of archaeological importance.’

3.1.4 The Site is within view of two Listed Buildings which are protected by PPG 15 Planning and the Historic Environment. Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas are also protected under the Planning Act 1990. The view from the site is obstructed by trees and a hedgerow which are to remain.

3.1.5 PPG 15 provides a full statement of Government policies for the identification and protection of historic buildings, conservation areas, and other areas of the historic environment and compliments the guidance on archaeology and planning given in PPG 16.

3.1.6 With specific regard to the setting of Listed Buildings paragraph 2.17, Section 2 of PPG 15 states:

‘Local planning authorities are required under section 67 of the Act to publish a legal notice of all applications they receive for planning permission for any development which, in their opinion, affects the setting of a listed building. This provision should not be interpreted too narrowly: the setting of a building may be limited to obviously ancillary land, but may often include land some distance from it.’

3.2 Regional and Local Planning Guidance

3.2.1 The *Hampshire County Structure Plan* (2003) also contains policies and explanatory text relating to the management and development of the

landscape and archaeology. The document sets out the planning strategy up to 2011. It recognises that archaeological sites and monuments and their settings are a finite and non-renewable resource and that the historic built heritage is a significant environmental, cultural and educational resource.

3.2.2 Policy **E14** states:

‘Where nationally important archaeological sites and monuments, whether scheduled or not, and their settings are affected by a proposed development, there will be a presumption in favour of their physical preservation in situ. The need for the preservation of unscheduled sites of more local importance will be considered on merit. Where preservation is not possible then, before planning permission is granted, it should be demonstrated that appropriate arrangements have been made for a programme of excavation and recording prior to development taking place.’

3.2.4 The *Havant Borough District – Wide Local Plan* (adopted in September 2005) seeks to conserve and enhance the historic character of towns and villages with particular attention to buildings and areas which are of architectural, historic or archaeological interest:

3.2.5 Policy **HE5 Listed Buildings. Preservation of Listed Buildings**, states:

‘The Borough Council, when considering applications for development, will have regard to the desirability of preserving the character and identity of each Listed Building, any group of buildings to which it relates and its setting. Buildings of architectural or historic interest should be preserved unless there are overriding justifications for demolition.’

3.2.6 Policy **HE6 Changes of Use to Listed Buildings** states:

‘Planning permission will be granted for changes of use to Listed Buildings provided one of the following apply:

(i) The new use is required to secure retention, repair and rehabilitation.

(ii) The change would not result in alterations which would be detrimental to the buildings character.’

3.2.7 Policy **HE8 Setting of Listed Buildings** states:

‘Development proposals which would adversely affect the setting of Listed Buildings will not be permitted’

3.2.8 Policy **HE10 Buildings of Local Interest** states:

‘Planning permission will only be granted for alterations and/or extensions provided they do not adversely affect the architectural character of the buildings included in the List of Buildings of Local Interest, or their settings.’

3.2.9 Policy **HE11 Preservation of Archaeological Sites and Monuments of National Importance** states:

‘Development that would adversely affect a Scheduled Ancient Monument or other nationally important archaeological features, or their settings will not be permitted.’

3.2.10 Policy **HE12 Preservation of Archaeological Sites and Monuments of Local Importance** states:

‘Development that would adversely affect archaeological sites or features of local importance or their settings, will not be permitted unless the need for the development outweighs the need to preserve the site or feature.’

3.2.11 Policy **HE13 Archaeological Assessments** states:

‘Applications for development which are likely to affect archaeological remains should be accompanied by an assessment of their value, the impact of the proposals and the opportunities for conservation. Such an expert assessment will have to be prepared and approved by the Council in advance of any formal determination of the relevant planning application.’

3.2.12 Policy **HE14 Archaeological Investigations** states:

‘Where the preservation of archaeological remains is not possible or feasible development should not begin until an agreed programme of archaeological investigations and recording has been carried out to an acceptable professional standard and at the applicant’s expense.’

3.2.13 The subheading of Landscape of New Development, Policy **L6 Conservation and Protection of Existing Natural Features** states:

‘Development will not be permitted if it would damage or destroy natural features of nature conservation and/or amenity importance on a site, e.g. trees, woodlands, hedgerows, streams, ditches or ponds. Some of these features may have additional protection under the Hedgerows Regulations, by Tree Preservation Order or by location in a Conservation Area. Existing natural features shall be protected during development and sympathetically incorporated into the overall design of the scheme with measures taken to ensure their continued survival.’

4 ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

4.1.1 The assessment comprises principally of an appraisal of records held by the Hampshire County Council Environment (Archaeology) Section and the Hampshire Record Office both of which are located in Winchester.

4.1.2 All records located in Hampshire within a 1km radius of the Site (the Study Area), centred on NGR 474500/106500 (**Figure 1**) were assessed and those that were considered significant or relevant to the Site were included in the appraisal.

- 4.1.3 Other available cartographic, photographic and documentary sources held by the HAHBR and Hampshire Record Office were also consulted.
- 4.1.4 The Site and the immediate surrounding vicinity were subject to a site visit and walkover on 18th November 2005.

5 ASSESSMENT RESULTS

5.1 Statutory Protection

- 5.1.1 The site is not located within an area subject to statutory protection.
- 5.1.2 Although there are no records within the SMR this is likely to be a true reflection of the lack of archaeological activity in the area rather than lack of entries due to little or no development and any consequential archaeological investigation that has occurred in the region.

5.2 Prehistoric (500,000 BC – AD43)

- 5.2.1 There is no direct evidence for any prehistoric activity within the study area. Early hunter gatherer activity would most likely have been confined to the coastal lagoons and estuaries to the south and east. The heavy London Clay would have been covered in tracts of woodland until the Neolithic period. Throughout the later prehistoric period the heavy clay may have deterred agricultural settlements when communities were beginning to settle the drier more fertile chalk based soils of the South Downs and the better drained gravel terrace soils located toward Chichester to the east.
- 5.2.2 There is no evidence for prehistoric activity outside the study area.

5.3 Romano-British (AD 43 – 410)

- 5.3.1 There is no evidence of activity relating to this period held within the HAHBR either within or without the study area.
- 5.3.2 A Roman villa is recorded at Warblington, located over 800m to the west. The villa is located on higher and better drained ground. A further villa is located, but now submerged at high tide in Langstone Harbour, 1.5 km to the south west.
- 5.3.3 The principal Roman settlement in the area was *Noviomagnus*, modern day Chichester, and the nearby Palace at Fishbourne located approximately 11 km to the east.
- 5.3.4 It is likely that this low lying area which at the same time was still thickly wooded was avoided both agriculturally and as a transport route.

5.4 Saxon and Medieval (AD 410 – 1499)

- 5.4.1 The place-name Emsworth translates as Aemals worth, or Aemels enclosure and is first mentioned in 1224.

5.4.2 In the Domesday survey in 1086 Emsworth does not appear, the majority of the surrounding land was owned by the Bishopric of Winchester including the Manor of Warblington.

5.4.3 There are no medieval finds within the study area.

5.5 Post-Medieval (AD 1500 – 1900)

5.5.1 There are no entries for the post-medieval period within the study area. Two post-medieval Listed Buildings are noted, the railway station and railway cottage at Emsworth. These buildings are Local Listings by Havant Borough Council, both are directly related to the construction of the railway. The station (reference **55671**) is one of the original stations constructed on the Portsmouth to Brighton line. Of local interest is the down side part of the station which is furthest away from the proposed development area. The railway cottages (reference **55672**) are located immediately to the east of the railway station at 102 and 104 North Street. The two buildings are unaffected by the proposed development and are screened from the north end of the site by intervening houses, the surrounding hedges and, at the southern end by hedges and the intervening railway embankment.

5.6 Map Regression

5.6.1 Early map coverage of the area is poor and the area is not shown.

5.6.2 The number of retained copies of the OS Series covering the area is extremely poor. The only surviving 6 Inch to the Mile map is reproduced at the end of this report (**Figure 2**). The larger scale maps, of which only two survive unfortunately divide the site in two and have therefore not been reproduced. However, these maps (1898 and 1910) consistently shows three fields separated by water filled ditches.

5.6.3 Throughout the map coverage available no buildings are shown on the site.

5.6.4 The fields are truncated with the construction of the A27 which replaced the main south coast road located to the south of the site.

5.7 Site Walkover

5.7.1 The site visit was undertaken on 18th November 2005 in dry, slightly overcast conditions. The visit was in order to assess the Site's current condition and its context within the surrounding landscape from an archaeological perspective.

5.7.2 The Site is a long elliptical shaped area sandwiched between the Havant to Chichester railway (forming its southern boundary) and the A27 curving around and forming the northern boundary. The site was approached from New Brighton Road at its eastern end.

5.7.3 The east end of the site is relatively narrow and has recently been scraped clear of topsoil and laid down with coarse grade hardcore. This

development is recent and the mounding of the topsoil behind the five bar gate at the eastern end suggests measures taken to prevent the occupation of the land by ‘travellers’.

- 5.7.4 The walkover included an assessment of the hedgerows and the ditches on either side of the proposed development area and running through it in a north south orientation. Within the Site the hedgerows and ditches are well-preserved historic features, whereas the hedgerows forming the northern boundary were planted to partially screen and dampen the noise level from the A27.
- 5.7.5 To the north of this point the eastern side of the Site loses much of its hedgerow and the ditch becomes largely silted up, although still present. This allows the fields to the east and the buildings to the north to be seen from the Site. The western side of the Site retains both ditch and hedgerow, the trees of which grow to approximately 7m high. The Site is also covered in bracken and low scrub from this point northwards with only a narrow path leading through it.
- 5.7.6 The lower two fields (eastern) are coarse pasture with rough grass and are relatively level. The western field contains much rough scrub and brambles and is extensively rutted and pitted. This field remains ungrazed.
- 5.7.7 Throughout the walkover no archaeological features, earthworks or standing buildings were observed. No artefacts were observed either on the field surfaces or in the hedges and ditches forming the boundary of the site and subdividing it.

6 EXISTING IMPACTS

- 6.1.1 There are no existing impacts on the Site.
- 6.1.2 The current owner of the fields leases them for the keeping of horses.
- 6.1.3 There are no public rights of way across the land.
- 6.1.4 All the ditches both bounding and bisecting the area are reasonably well maintained and do not show significant silting.

7 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT IMPACTS

- 7.1.1 The proposal is for the construction of commercial and light industrial units.

Direct Impacts

- 7.1.2 The most obvious of impacts will be the construction of buildings on what is currently pasture.

- 7.1.3 Under the local planning policy it is likely that the ditches and hedgerows will be retained as part of the landscape design. Through a maintenance agreement it is likely that these will be better maintained following development.

Indirect Impacts

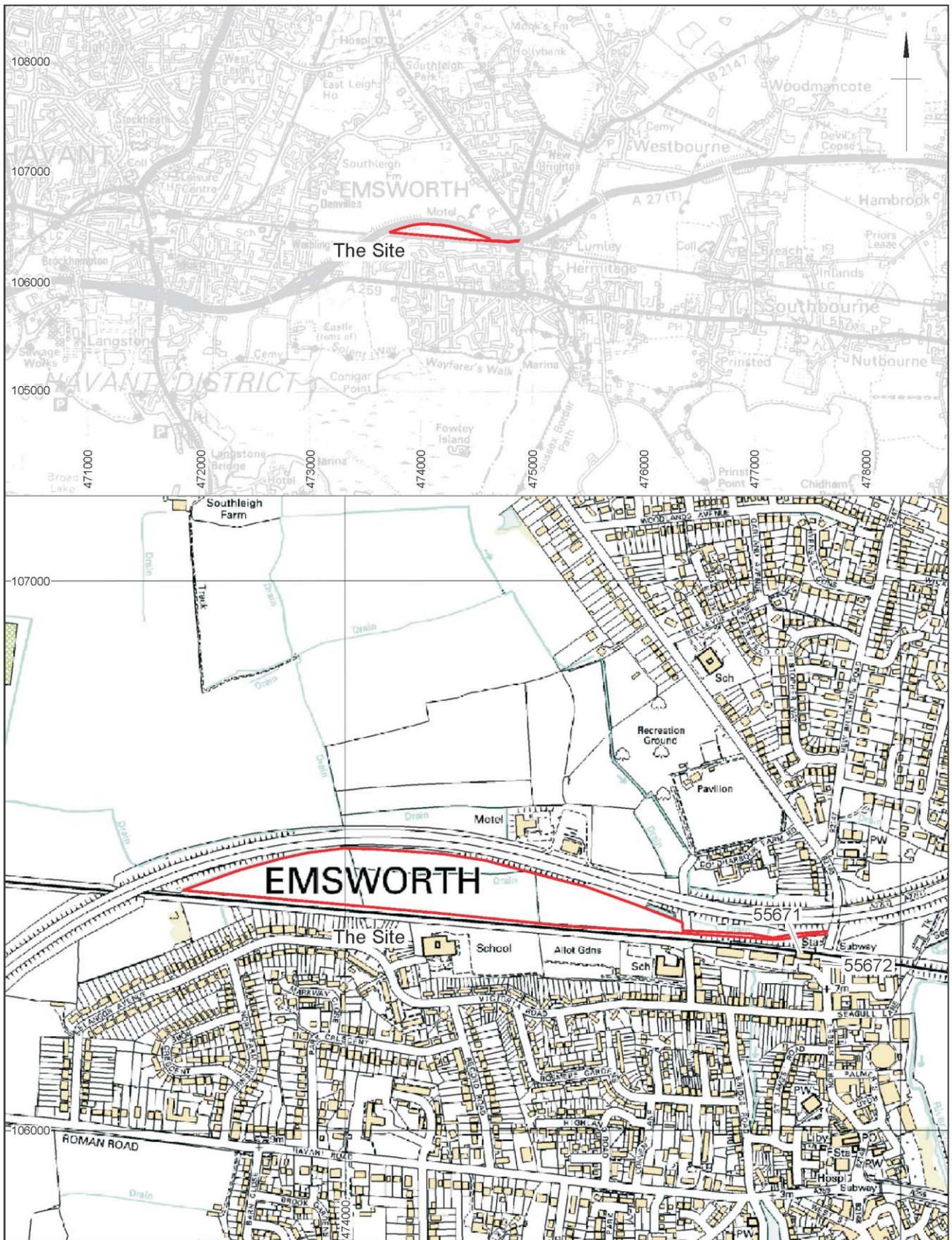
- 7.1.4 The site is screened from external view through a combination of embankments and hedges and therefore will have no direct impact on areas adjacent to the site.

8 ASSESSMENT CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1.1 The assessment can find no evidence of archaeological or historical activity on the site.
- 8.1.2 The assessment concludes that the proposed development will have no impact on the known archaeological resource.
- 8.1.3 The assessment concludes that based on the topographical and hydrological characteristics of the site impact on unknown archaeological deposits is extremely low.

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Site location

Figure 1



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