



**The Boughton Centre
Chester, Cheshire**

**Written Scheme of Investigation for Archaeological Mitigation
(Strip, Map and Record)**

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The Boughton Centre Chester Cheshire

Written Scheme of Investigation for Archaeological Monitoring (Strip, Map and Record)

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Figure 1: Proposed Mitigation Areas



The Boughton Centre Chester Cheshire

Written Scheme of Investigation for Archaeological Monitoring (Archaeological Strip, Map and Record)

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Background

- 1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology has been commissioned by CgMs Consulting Limited, 'the Client', to prepare a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for a programme of Archaeological Monitoring and reporting on land at The Boughton Centre, Chester (hereafter 'the Site'), situated at NGR 3414 3665, for Areas 1 and 2 (**Figure 1**). The mitigation forms part of a phased programme of works which follows on from desk-based assessment (CgMs 2012) archaeological watching brief during a scheme of geotechnical trial pitting (Pack 2013) and an archaeological field evaluation by trial trenching (Wessex Archaeology forth.).
- 1.1.2 Planning consent (12/0198/FUL) has been granted for the development of the Site. The archaeological monitoring works will comprise a Strip, Map and Record investigation and archaeological excavation in areas of proposed groundworks to mitigate damage to the archaeological record.
- 1.1.3 This Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) has been prepared in accordance with current industry best practice (IfA 2008a-b and 2010), and will be submitted to the Client and the Cheshire West and Chester (CWC) Historic Environment Team for approval.

1.2 Site Location and Description

- 1.2.1 The Site covers approximately 1.65ha in area and is situated adjacent to Boughton Road in the urban centre of Chester. The Site is bounded by the Shropshire Union Canal to the north, retail units and a health centre to the east, commercial/residential properties to the south of Boughton Road, and residential properties to the west (**Figure 1**).
- 1.2.2 The underlying solid geology is Chester Pebble Beds Formation comprising pebbly sandstone. Superficial Till deposits overlie the pebbly sandstone, comprising Devensian Diamicton (British Geological Survey map 109). Lying between the canal and the River Dee, the Site has an average height of 21mAOD and is relatively flat, though the natural topography is likely to have been obscured by extensive development.

2 HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Introduction

- 2.1.1 The following background information is summarised from an archaeological desk-based assessment for the Site (CgMs 2012).
- 2.1.2 There are no designated heritage assess within the Site boundaries. Though lying outside Chester City's Area of High Archaeological Potential, the Site lies partly within two

conservation areas. The desk-based assessment identified a potential for Romano-British and Medieval archaeological deposits to be present within the Site.

2.2 Prehistoric, Roman and Medieval

- 2.2.1 There is no evidence for Prehistoric activity on the site.
- 2.2.2 The Site lies close to the line of the former Roman road heading eastwards from the fort and settlement of Chester (Deva), but is not thought to be within the area of the main settlement.
- 2.2.3 The Site is located beyond the limits of Early Medieval and Medieval Chester and the adjacent extramural settlement which does not appear to have extended east of the Barrs. Evidence of Medieval agricultural activity, however, may be contained within the Site.

2.3 Post-medieval and Modern

- 2.3.1 During the 16th and 17th centuries, the Site appears to have been used for pasture and gardens, with some development along the road during the 17th and 18th centuries.
- 2.3.2 The Shropshire Union Canal was constructed to the north of the site in the 1770s and there is potential for evidence to be recovered from the Site which may reflect any associated changes to the landscape and topography of the area.
- 2.3.3 By the mid-19th century, terraced buildings appear along the newly laid-out Stevens Street within the west boundary of the Site. Similar buildings are shown on the 1874 Ordnance Survey map within the Site along the newly laid-out Fosbrook Street running parallel to Stevens Street. During the later 19th and early 20th century, residential buildings, gardens, public houses, a school and a works are constructed on the Site. These are still shown on the 1968 Ordnance Survey, but the 1982 Ordnance Survey shows that these have all been demolished.

2.4 Recent Archaeological Investigations

- 2.4.1 Archaeological monitoring during a scheme of geotechnical trial pitting identified buried archaeological structures and deposits associated with former 19th-century terraced houses and a Romano-British soil horizon within the former gardens/backyards of these properties (Pack 2013).
- 2.4.2 Following the initial monitoring, Wessex Archaeology undertook evaluation by trial trenching in line with a project design and specification agreed with CWC (Smalley 2013). The trial trenching revealed three main phases of activity predating modern structures. The earliest phase was represented by the putative Romano-British soil horizon observed in Trenches 10, 16, 18, 19 and 20. Three linear features were visible cut into the natural clay at the base of Trench 10. These were putatively dated as being of Romano-British date on the basis of their stratigraphic relationships as no cultural material was recovered from these features or the associated soil. The identical deposit seen in Trench 16 was not investigated due to the high level of contamination by hydrocarbons in both the soil and the groundwater. Similar contamination, though much reduced, was also present in Trenches 19 and 20. A second phase of activity was represented by two timber-lined, sub-rectangular features, identified in Trench 8. The pits contained red brick fragments, pottery sherds (18th to 19th-century) and animal bone. The third phase phases included deposits and structures associated with primarily 19th-century to mid 20th-century terraced housing, backyards and streets. Brick-built structures were seen in Trenches 1-3, 5-11, 14, 15 and 22. The majority of features exposed during the evaluation were associated with the



domestic housing erected during the 19th-century development of the site including an early phase of terracing on Victoria Terrace, and terraces and backyards associated with Fossbrook Street and Albert Street and a former highway running between Victoria Terrace and Albert Terrace.

3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

3.1 General

3.1.1 The general aim of the project is to seek preservation *in-situ* for identified features of importance, and to ensure that all other surviving evidence relating to former activity on the Site is **preserved by record** during archaeological works.

3.1.2 The general aims can be summarised as:

- to determine the extent, condition, character, significance and date of any archaeological deposits encountered that will be removed or disturbed by groundworks;
- to accurately record the location and stratigraphy of areas excavated;
- to prepare a comprehensive record and report of any archaeological deposits or structures or artefacts identified;
- to gain an understanding of the development of the Site;
- to put the results of the excavation in context by comparing it with similar/related Sites within Chester as well as its regional and national contexts.

3.2 Specific

3.2.1 The more specific aims are

- to determine the extent, character, significance and date of features associated with the Romano-British soil horizon;
- to determine the extent of, and to further characterise, the Romano-British soil horizon;
- to further examine and determine the extent, character and significance of those structures pre-dating the terraced housing and identifying any further associated remains;
- to expose and record the structure and deposits associated with the 19th-century terraced housing and yards;
- to fully characterise any industrial activity associated with domestic properties.

4 METHODOLOGY

4.1 General

4.1.1 The archaeological mitigation comprises archaeological Strip, Map and Record. The archaeological scheme is targeted on two specific zones of pre-modern activity, based on



the results of previous archaeological work on the site: (a) the area of the former terraced housing and yards; and (b) the area of the Romano-British soil horizon (**Figure 1**).

- 4.1.2 It is proposed that the machine strip, mapping and hand excavation of the terraced housing is undertaken and completed prior to the commencement of archaeological investigations in the area of the Romano-British soil horizon. These two target areas lie within both Areas 1 and 2 of the proposed development scheme. In each phase of the development, it may be required that a flexible approach is adopted to the archaeological fieldwork programme with the target areas being investigated as part of a staged approach.
- 4.1.3 Two areas have been excluded from the archaeological mitigation programme. The area of the former petrol station has been subject to extensive modern disturbance and the proposed development has limited ground impact in this area. The area of the proposed service yard and car park entry, likewise, have limited ground impact under the currently proposed development scheme. **However, the areas to be mitigated may alter depending on proposed construction levels, the methodologies employed by the developer's groundworks contractor or changes to the development proposals.**
- 4.1.4 Also excluded from the archaeological fieldwork are areas 5m in diameter centred on currently active and proposed boreholes. **Depending on the results of the mitigation fieldwork, further monitoring may be required under Archaeological Watching Brief when the boreholes are removed.** Also, no excavation will take place within 5m of the south edge of the canal towpath for safety reasons.
- 4.1.5 In areas covered by the archaeological mitigation scheme all archaeological features and deposits revealed will be investigated and recorded prior to any further construction work either by rapid recording or more detailed excavation.

4.2 Machine Excavation – Terraced Housing and Yards Zone

- 4.2.1 This zone comprises the central and western parts of Area 1, including the Boughton Road frontage, and the entirety of Area 2.
- 4.2.2 Following the breaking up of the existing slab and other modern hardstanding surfaces, all material and overburden will be removed using a mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket, working under the continuous direct supervision of a suitably experienced archaeologist. Overburden will be removed in a series of level spits down to the level of the upper archaeological horizon or the level of the natural geology, whichever is reached first. It is anticipated based on the archaeological evaluation (Wessex Archaeology 2013) that **the Post-Medieval archaeological horizon will be found at a depth of 0.3-0.5m below current ground level.**

4.3 Mapping and Recording of Archaeological Remains – Terraced Housing and Yards Zone

- 4.3.1 Where archaeological features and deposits are encountered, the archaeology will be cleaned and assessed before excavation and recording will be carried out. Mapping of archaeological structures and deposits will be carried out utilising a RTK GPS system and tied into the OS grid (within 0.1m).
- 4.3.2 Following initial mapping of exposed archaeology, up to 20% of the area of the earlier terraced housing, including that along the Boughton Road frontage, will be investigated by hand-excavation. Up to 10% sample excavation of an area of later terraces and yards in Area 1 is also required. These investigations will target any potential features associated



with industrial activity, and any features associated with earlier post-medieval activity including the first phase of housing at the west end of the Site. The targeting of specific features, which may include 100% excavation, will be undertaken in consultation with the CWC Historic Environment Team.

- 4.3.3 All archaeological features and deposits encountered will be recorded using Wessex Archaeology *pro forma* recording sheets and a continuous unique numbering system. A stratigraphic matrix will be compiled to record the relationships between features and deposits.
- 4.3.4 All excavated areas will be located in relation to the OS grid, and plans, sections and elevations of archaeological features and deposits will be drawn as necessary at 1:10, 1:20 and 1:50 as appropriate. All drawings will be made in pencil on permanent drafting film.
- 4.3.5 The spot height of all principal features and levels will be calculated in metres relative to Ordnance Datum, correct to two decimal places. Plans, sections and elevations will be annotated with spot heights as appropriate.
- 4.3.6 Photographs will be taken of all archaeological features to produce a photographic record consisting of digital images (at least 10 megapixel).

4.4 Machine Excavation – Romano-British / Medieval Features

- 4.4.1 This zone initially comprises the central and eastern part of Area 1 only, subject to further recording which may be required elsewhere (see paragraph 4.4.4 below).
- 4.4.2 Following removal of the existing slab and other modern hardstanding surfaces, all overburden will be removed using a mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket, working under the continuous direct supervision of a suitably experienced archaeologist. Overburden will be removed in a series of level spits down to the level of the upper archaeological horizon or the level of the natural geology, whichever is reached first. In those areas targeted for the investigation of 19th-century housing which overlap with that in which the Romano-British soil horizon is to be investigated, machine excavation will commence once all hand excavation of the Post-Medieval features in the area of overlap has been completed. It is anticipated based on the archaeological evaluation (Wessex Archaeology 2013) that **the Romano-British archaeological horizon will be found at a depth of 1.0-1.5m below current ground level.**
- 4.4.3 Unless discrete archaeological features are identified within the buried soil horizon, this layer will be removed by machine in spits in order to expose the underlying natural and investigate any features similar to those identified during the evaluation phase. Prior to its removal the soil horizon will be subject to systematic metal detecting and sampled for further analysis. Metal detecting will also be carried out of any other archaeological features or deposits revealed.
- 4.4.4 **Further Strip, Map and Record or Watching Brief monitoring may be required in areas which are inaccessible during the initial phase of groundworks subject to discussions with the CWC Historic Environment Team.**

4.5 Mapping and Recording – Romano-British / Medieval Features

- 4.5.1 Where archaeological features and deposits are encountered, the archaeology will be cleaned and assessed before excavation and recording will be carried out. Mapping of



archaeological structures and deposits will be carried out utilising a RTK GPS system and tied into the OS grid (within 0.1m).

- 4.5.2 Following initial mapping of exposed archaeology, all archaeological features will be investigated in order to establish the date, nature, extent and condition of the archaeological remains in accordance with the following strategy:

Feature/deposit type	Excavation strategy
Human burials, cremations and funerary deposits	100% excavation
Structural components	Recorded sections to include all terminals, intersections and other relationships. Minimum excavation 50% of fill.
Layers/ spreads/ stratified deposits	Excavation in spits using running sections, half sections or grid system, as appropriate.
Discrete features and pits	100% excavation
Linear features associated with settlement remains	20% of length (not less than 1m length sections)
Linear field boundaries	10% of length (not less than 1m length sections)
Post-built structures of pre-modern date	100% of each p/hole, post-pit or beam slot

- 4.5.3 Following the completion of hand excavation, any baulks remaining unexcavated under the above strategy will be machine excavated to facilitate artefact recovery.
- 4.5.4 All archaeological features and deposits encountered will be recorded using Wessex Archaeology *pro forma* recording sheets and a continuous unique numbering system. A stratigraphic matrix will be compiled to record the relationships between features and deposits.
- 4.5.5 All excavated areas will be located in relation to the OS grid, and plans, sections and elevations of archaeological features and deposits will be drawn as necessary at 1:10, 1:20 and 1:50 as appropriate. All drawings will be made in pencil on permanent drafting film.
- 4.5.6 The spot height of all principal features and levels will be calculated in metres relative to Ordnance Datum, correct to two decimal places. Plans, sections and elevations will be annotated with spot heights as appropriate.
- 4.5.7 Photographs will be taken of all archaeological features to produce a photographic record consisting of digital images (at least 10 megapixel).

4.6 Finds

- 4.6.1 Finds will be treated in accordance with the relevant industry guidance (UKIC 2001; MGC 1992; English Heritage 2005, 2006; IfA 2008a) and the requirements of the receiving museum.



- 4.6.2 All recovered artefacts will be retained (except unstratified modern material) and taken to Wessex Archaeology offices in Sheffield for further work.
- 4.6.3 All retained artefacts will, as a minimum, be washed, weighed, counted and identified. Any artefacts requiring conservation or specific storage conditions were dealt with immediately in line with First Aid for Finds (Watkinson and Neal 1998).
- 4.6.4 All artefacts will be recorded by context, with summary listing of category to provide simple quantification. Artefacts will be analysed and reported by specialists.
- 4.6.5 In the event of discovery of artefacts covered or potentially covered by the Treasure Act 1996, their excavation and removal will be undertaken following notification of the Client, Coroner and the Curator. All discoveries covered by the Act will be notified to the Coroner within 14 days.

4.7 Human Remains

- 4.7.1 If human remains are encountered a Ministry for Justice Licence for the removal of human remains will be obtained. The CWC Historic Environment Team, the Coroner and the Client will also be informed. Further excavation and recording will be carried out in accordance with the conditions of the licence. All excavation and post-excavation will be in accordance with the standards set out in McKinley & Roberts (1993). Appropriate specialist guidance and/or Site visits will be undertaken by Jackie McKinley of Wessex Archaeology. Following analysis, the final placing of human remains will be subject to the requirements of the Ministry of Justice licence.

4.8 Environmental Samples

- 4.8.1 The development of an appropriate sampling strategy will depend upon the survival and condition of the deposits identified. If required, the English Heritage Regional Science Advisor will be consulted for Site-specific guidance at the earliest possible opportunity. In general terms, it is anticipated that the following strategies will be followed if they are required.
- 4.8.2 Any concentrations of organic material will be taken from appropriate well-sealed and dated/datable archaeological deposits. The collection and processing of environmental samples will be undertaken in accordance with English Heritage guidelines (English Heritage 2011).
- 4.8.3 The residues and sieved fractions of the bulk environmental soil samples will be recorded and retained with the project archive. For charred material, bulk samples of 40-60 litres in volume will be taken for processing by flotation. All samples will be floated on a 250-300µm mesh and the heavy residues washed over a 0.5-1mm mesh. The heavy residues will be scanned with a magnet to recover micro-slugs.

4.9 Industrial Samples

- 4.9.1 Industrial samples and process residues will also be collected following consultation with an appropriate specialist prior to fieldwork and in accordance with English Heritage guidelines (English Heritage 2011).
- 4.9.2 Appropriate specialist guidance and Site visits by the English Heritage Science Advisor, and agreed specialists, will be made as required.



4.10 Other Samples

4.10.1 Other samples, if required, will be taken in consultation with Wessex Archaeology specialists and the English Heritage Science Advisor (e.g. dendrochronology, soil micromorphology, monolith samples, C14, etc). Samples will be taken for scientific dating where necessary for the development of subsequent mitigation strategies.

4.11 Treasure

4.11.1 In the event of discovery of artefacts covered or potentially covered by The Treasure Act 1996 (and amendments), their excavation and removal will be undertaken following notification of the Client and English Heritage. All discoveries covered by the Act will be notified to the Coroner within 14 days.

5 POST-EXCAVATION AND REPORTING

5.1 Report

5.1.1 On completion of all archaeological works a final report detailing the results of all the archaeological works, integrating the results from the initial trial trenching, will be produced and forwarded to the Client within six months of the completion of all fieldwork. Interim reports may also be required for planning purposes.

5.1.2 The final report will be prepared in accordance with IfA guidelines (2008a). The report may include the following elements;

- a non-technical summary;
- project number, planning reference numbers, dates of fieldwork and National Grid Reference;
- an account of the background to the project and circumstances of work;
- the methodologies used;
- a phased description of the archaeology;
- tabulation of finds data by context and by material type;
- results by category of the material types recovered;
- results of the palaeo-environmental evidence recovered;
- phasing of any archaeological structures, features and deposits encountered;
- a consideration of the archaeological evidence from within the Site set in its broader landscape and historic setting;
- plans and sections at an appropriate scale locating the Site, location known archaeological structures, architectural features and observations, and deposits and their extent;
- a detailed context index;
- index to the archive.



5.2 Distribution of Reports

- 5.2.1 In addition to the provision of copies to the Client and Chester City Council, hard copies of the reports will be submitted for inclusion in the local Sites and Monuments Record and the National Monuments Record. A digital copy will also be submitted to the English Heritage Science Advisor.

5.3 OASIS

- 5.3.1 An OASIS (Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations) record will be created at the start of the fieldwork and will be updated at after each stage of work. The record(s) will be finalised once the reports have been accepted by SYAS.

6 PUBLICATION AND PUBLICITY

- 6.1.1 Illustrated notices will be displayed on site, explaining the work in progress and why (in agreement with the client).
- 6.1.2 Provision will also be made for publicising the results of the work locally. This can be in the form of a press release (in agreement with the client), the presentation of a paper at a local Archaeology Day, or talking to local societies.
- 6.1.3 In addition, contingency provision for formal publication of the results in an appropriate local, regional or national journal is in place. This will be determined by the significance of the archaeological results.

7 ARCHIVE

7.1 Preparation and Deposition

The complete project archive will be prepared in accordance with Wessex Archaeology's Guidelines for Archive Preparation and in accordance with standard guidelines for the preparation of excavation archives (UKIC 2001; Brown 2007) and the requirements of the recipient museum. The excavation archive will be deposited with Grosvenor Museum under Accession Number CHEGM:2013.228.

8 PROJECT MANAGEMENT, STAFF AND TIMETABLE

8.1 Personnel

- 8.1.1 The fieldwork will be carried out by an experienced archaeologist from Wessex Archaeology's Sheffield office staff, who will be on Site at all times for the length of the archaeological works. The overall responsibility for the conduct and management of the project will be held by Wessex Archaeology Project Manager, Richard O'Neill MifA who will visit the fieldwork as appropriate to monitor progress and to ensure that the scope of works is adhered to. The site supervisor is likely to be Sean Bell who supervised the evaluation fieldwork.
- 8.1.2 All nominated Wessex Archaeology staff are appropriately qualified and experienced for their project role. Wessex Archaeology reserves the right to vary project staff according to



the operational demands of its overall programme. Career profiles can be provided on request.

8.1.3 The processing and analysis of the finds and environmental data will be undertaken by relevant specialists. Information on Wessex Archaeology and external finds and environmental specialists can be provided on request.

8.1.4 The following key project staff are proposed.

Name	Grade	Experience	Role
Richard O'Neill BA MIfA	Senior Project Manager	> 10 years	Project Manager
Sean Bell BA MSc	Project Supervisor	> 20 years	Site Supervisor
Lorraine Mepham BA MIfA FSA	Senior Technical Manager	> 20 years	Finds Manager
Rachael Seager Smith BA	Senior Finds Specialist	> 20 years	Roman Ceramics
Chris Stevens BSc PhD	Senior Environmental Officer	>10 years	Environmental
Lynne Wootton BSc MIcon	Conservator	>30 years	Finds Conservation

8.2 Timetable

8.2.1 The exact timetable for commencement of the fieldwork and reporting to be subject to WSI approval and access arrangements. However, it is currently anticipated that the archaeological mitigation for Area 1 will commence on 18th November 2013 and is timetabled to take 6-8 weeks. A full programme of archaeological works will be submitted prior to starting on-site fieldwork.

8.3 Monitoring

8.3.1 Mike Morris, CWC Historic Environment Team, will be informed of the commencement and progress of works, and a programme of monitoring visits will be arranged as works progress. Wessex Archaeology will provide a Project Manager for any meetings.

9 STANDARDS

9.1 Quality and Code of Practice

9.1.1 Wessex Archaeology is a registered archaeological organisation with the Institute for Archaeologists.

9.1.2 Wessex Archaeology endorses the Code of Practice and the Code of Approved Practice for the Regulation of Contractual Arrangements in Field Archaeology of the Institute for Archaeologists.

9.1.3 All core staff would be of a standard approved by Wessex Archaeology, be employed in line with The Institute for Archaeologists Codes of Practice and be members of the Institute for Archaeologists or be appropriately qualified.



- 9.1.4 Wessex Archaeology operates a *Project Management System*. All projects are undertaken under the direction of the Project Manager who is responsible to a Regional Manager, who ensures the maintenance of quality standards within the organisation. The Chief Executive has ultimate responsibility for all of the Company's work.
- 9.1.5 All work will be carried out in line with current industry best practice (IfA 2008a-b).
- 9.1.6 Any changes to the agreed project design will be discussed with, and agreed by, SYAS before implementation.

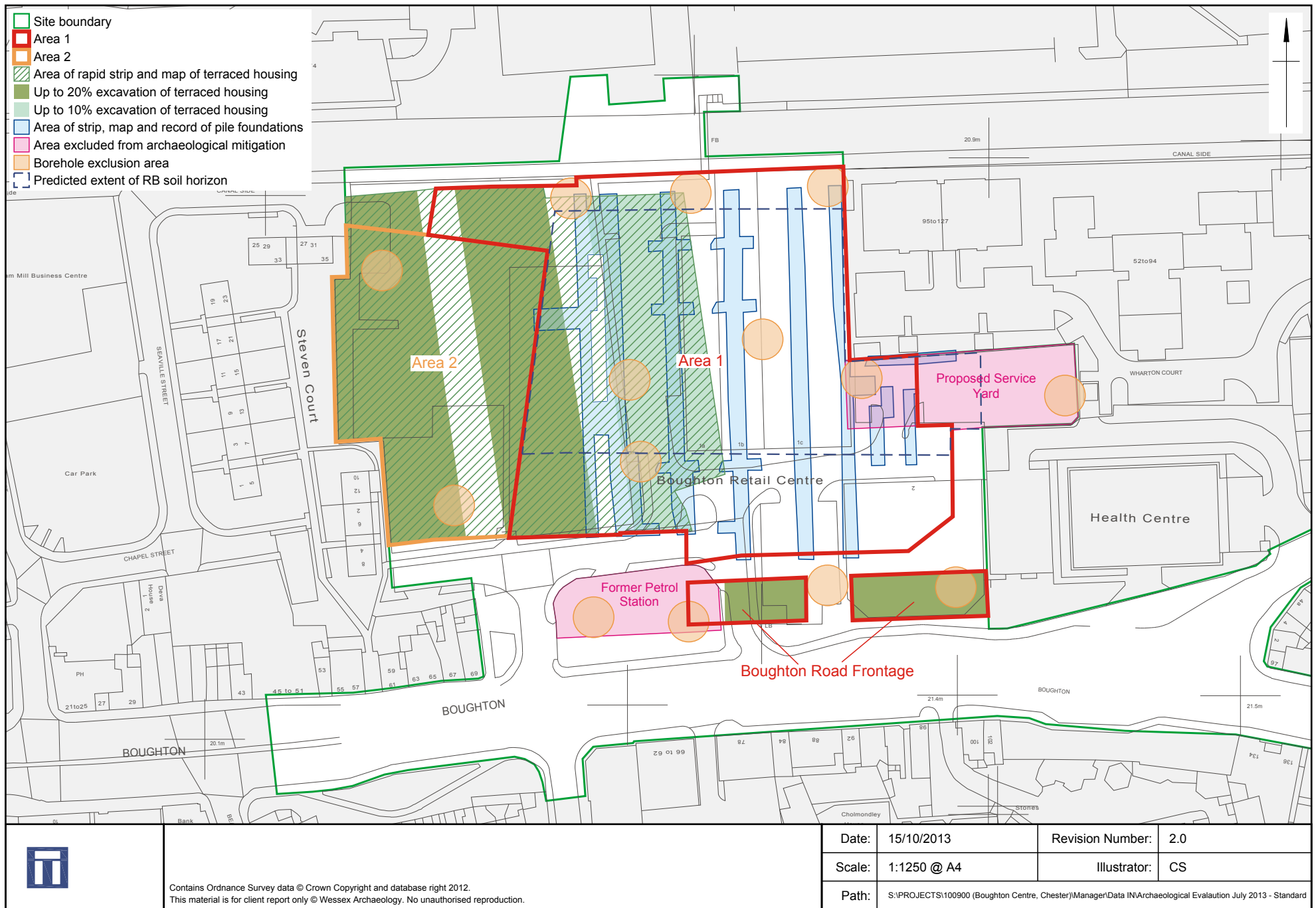
10 HEALTH AND SAFETY AND INSURANCE

10.1 Policy and Risk Assessment

- 10.1.1 Health and safety considerations will be of paramount importance in conducting all fieldwork. Safe working practises will override archaeological considerations at all times.
- 10.1.2 All work will be carried out in accordance with the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety Regulations 1992, and all other relevant Health and Safety legislation, regulations and codes of practice in force at the time and in accordance with the FAME (Federation of Archaeological Managers & Employers) health and safety manual *Health and Safety in Field Archaeology* (1997).
- 10.1.3 Wessex Archaeology will supply a Risk Assessment to the Principal Contractor before the commencement of any fieldwork. The Risk Assessment will have been read and understood by all staff attending the Site before any groundwork commences, and a copy will be kept on Site at all times. A copy of Wessex Archaeology Health and Safety Policy is available on request.
- 10.1.4 All Wessex Archaeology staff will comply with any requests by the Principal Contractor concerning health and safety, including requirements to attend Site induction prior to the commencement of fieldwork.
- 10.1.5 Archaeology as a trade (Archaeologist Technician) is recognised as a Construction-Related Occupation (CRO) by the Construction Skills Certification Scheme. The Project Manager, Richard O'Neill, holds IOSH certification in Managing Safely. All Wessex Archaeology field staff have passed the CSCS Health & Safety test at a level of Site Operative or above, and hold valid CRO CSCS cards. In addition, all Wessex Archaeology Northern Region Project Officers hold a NVQ Level 3 in Site Supervision and individual staff also hold First Aid, Confined Space and Working at Height training certification.
- 10.1.6 The Principal Contractor will be responsible for providing plant, fencing and welfare facilities for the duration of the archaeological works. In addition, the Principal Contractor will be responsible for the removal of groundwater and/or contaminated material within the areas of archaeological investigations.
- 10.1.7 Wessex Archaeology has both public liability (£10,000,000) and professional indemnity insurance (£5,000,000).

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Proposed mitigation areas

Figure 1