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A WRITTEN SCHEME OF INVESTIGATION FOR AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

FOR THE SITE AT

546 SIPSON ROAD

This report has been produced by Compass on behalf of JOMAS

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546 SIPSON ROAD,
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UB7 0JB

A WRITTEN SCHEME OF INVESTIGATION FOR AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

PLANNING REF: 11068/APP/2020/1586

NGR: TQ 07477 77259 (APPROX. CENTRE)

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This document forms a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for an archaeological evaluation to be conducted at 546 Sipson Road, London Borough of Hillingdon UB7 0JB, hereafter referred to as ‘the site’ (fig. 1).

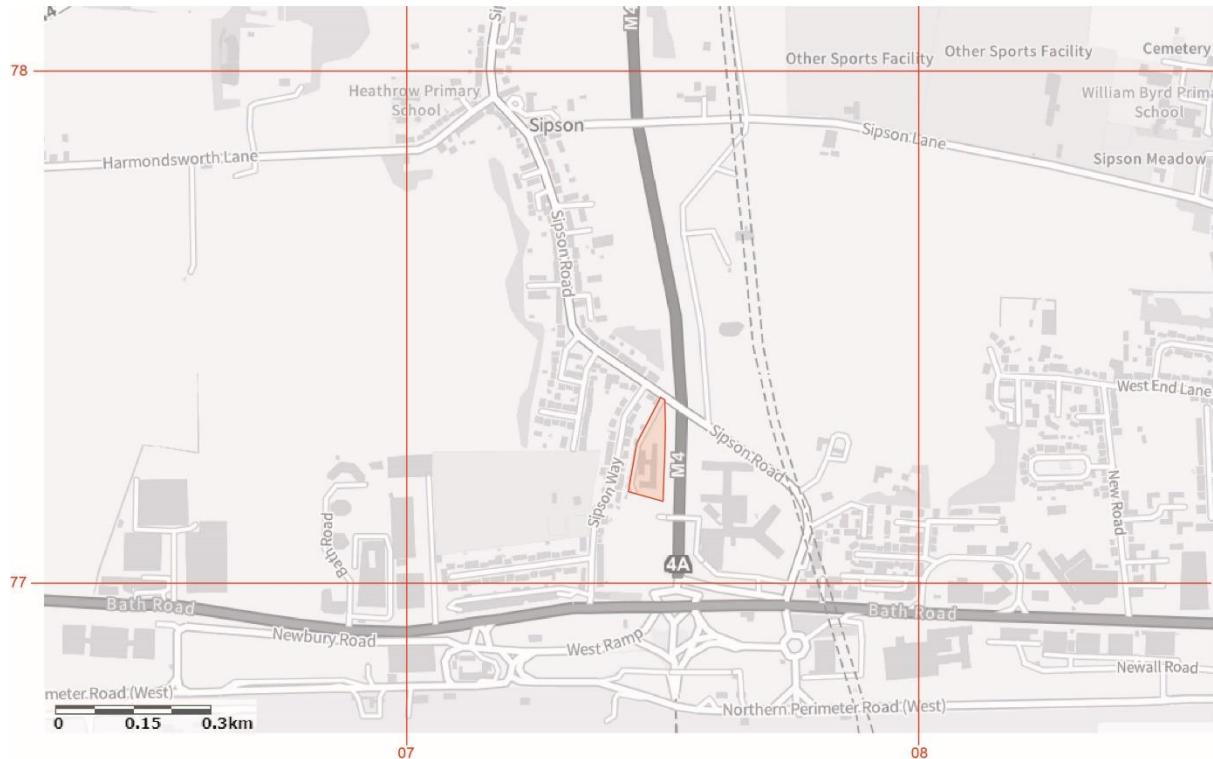


Figure 1: Site location marked in red

1.2 The WSI has been commissioned by Manjit Besely (Jomas Associates) to fulfil a condition attached to an approved planning application to redevelop the site (ref.: 11068/APP/2020/1586). The redevelopment comprises the demolition of the existing building and the erection of a new hotel ranging between 1 and 6 storeys with a basement and ancillary facilities.

1.3 The site lies within the *Heathrow Archaeological Priority Zone* (APZ) as defined by the London Borough of Hillingdon, which has the potential for prehistoric remains to survive.

1.4 This WSI follows on from an archaeological Desk-based Assessment (DBA) produced by PRS (2020) in support of the planning application. The proposed evaluation will comprise the excavation of four trenches within the footprint of the new build. The results of this Stage 1 evaluation will potentially inform the need for further Stage 2 mitigation.

2 SITE LOCATION, GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

2.1 The site is located in West Drayton, north of Heathrow Airport (fig.2). The eastern boundary borders a branch of the M4 motorway. To the south is a large NCP airport car park and to the west is the rear gardens of properties fronting Sipson Way. The site is sub-triangular in plan, with the tapered northern end providing access from Sipson Road. The site covers approximately 9,600m².

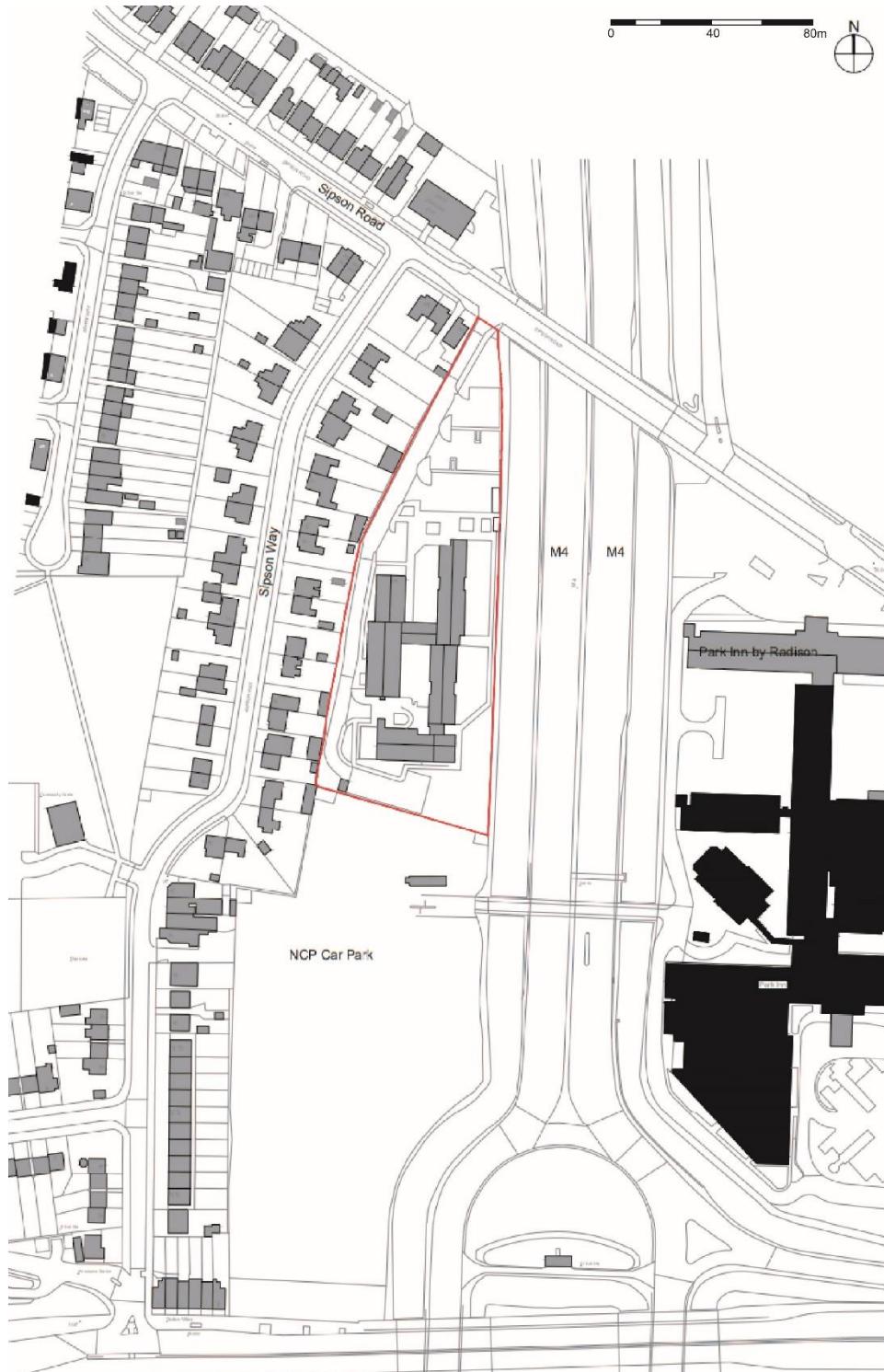


Figure 2: Site outlined in red

2.2 There are three connected existing buildings on the site, which are partly basemented. The site was previously used as officer training and accommodation by the Metropolitan Police which was decommissioned in 2016.

2.3 According to the British Geological Survey (Sheet 269: *Windsor*) the site overlies a superficial deposit of Langley Silt Member with a bedrock deposit of London Clay Formation (fig.3). To the south lies the edge of the Taplow Gravel Terrace of the floodplain of the Thames. Ground investigations were undertaken in May 2023 which comprised seven boreholes across the site (Jomas Associated 2023). The results revealed made ground deposits ranging in thickness between 0.20m to 1.30m, overlying Langley Silt encountered from 0.40m to 0.70m below ground level and Taplow Gravel encountered from 0.20m to 2m below ground level. London Clay was encountered below the silt and gravels, from a depth of 4.50m to 4.70m below ground level.

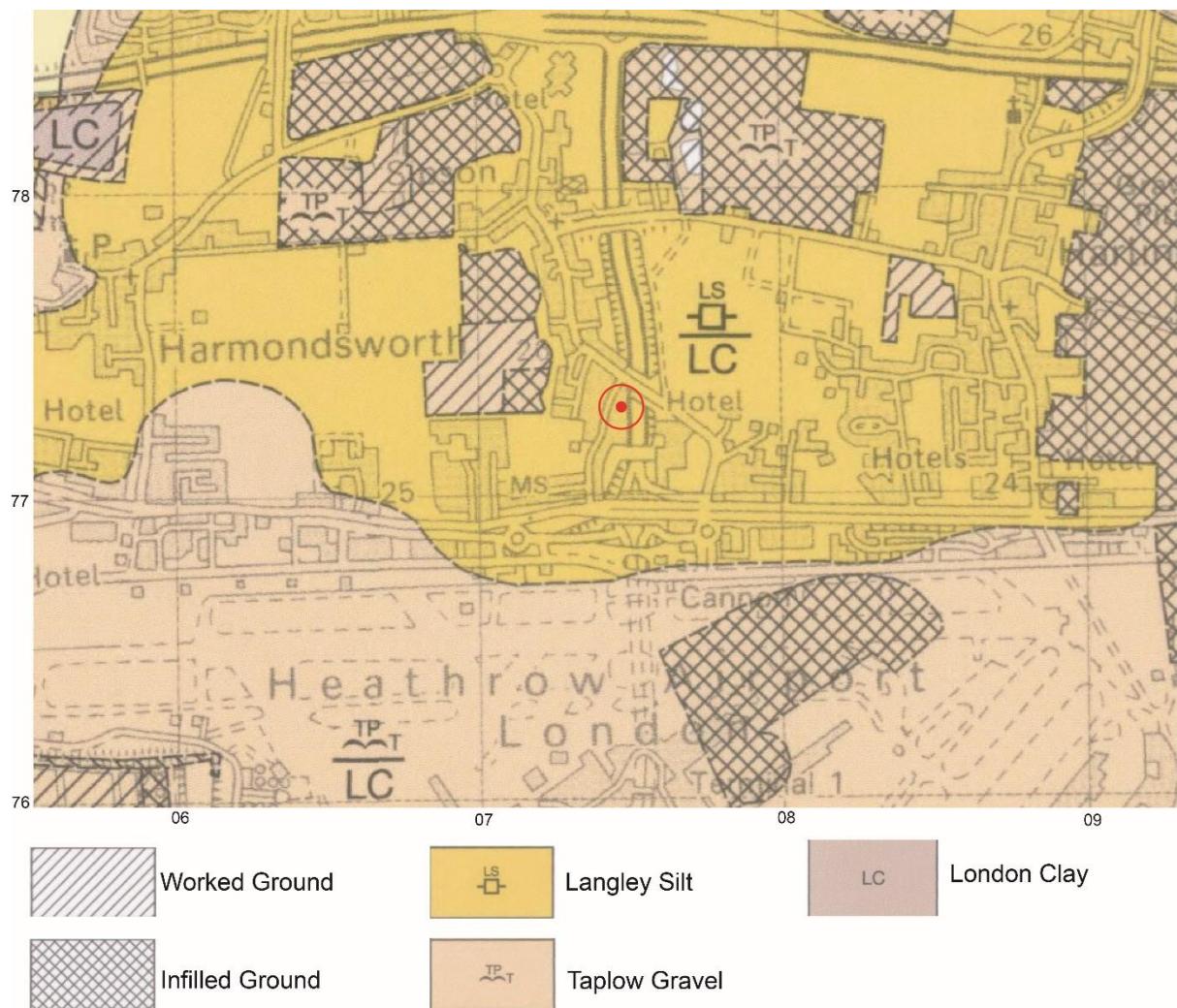


Figure 3: Extract from the British Geological Survey (Sheet 269: *Windsor*) with the site location marked in red

2.4 The site is relatively flat, with only a slight east-facing slope, dropping from the 25.66m OD at the south-west corner to 25.38m OD along the east boundary.

3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

3.1 The historical background of the area has been thoroughly covered in a DBA of the site (RPS 2020), and therefore only a general summary will be presented chronologically below. The results of a search of the Greater London Historic Environment Record (GLHER) within a 1km radius of the site centre (*TQ 07485 77271*) was discussed in the DBA. The GLHER reference number of specific entries are noted in brackets below.

3.2 *Prehistoric*

3.2.1 There is evidence of prehistoric activity recorded in the surrounding area, including residual Palaeolithic and Mesolithic flints recovered from a site *c.*380m to the north-west (MLO58506). Although the area overlies deposits of brickearth, which is known to produce early prehistoric evidence, there is a paucity of such evidence in vicinity of the site.

3.2.2 The later prehistoric periods are much more well-represented in the archaeological record for the surrounding area. Evidence of a Neolithic settlement, including a large enclosure, have been recorded during several excavations to the south of the M4 at Sipson Lane and Victoria Lane, *c.*750m to 1.25km to the north-east (MLO71995, MLO100471). Other sites have also produced evidence of Neolithic activity in the form of pits and ditches at Home Farm *c.*440m to the north-west (MLO13794, ELO3639), at Sipson Road *c.*200m to the east (MLO75747) and at Sipson Lane *c.*1.1km to the north where pits with associated flint and pottery was recovered. Further afield, during the expansion of Heathrow Airport in 1969, a Neolithic segmented ditch was identified, which was associated with a cursus monument *c.*2.5km to the south-west of the study site. Neolithic finds have also been recovered from later contexts or as unstratified findspots, which support the notion that the site was situated within a wider landscape of Neolithic occupation.

3.2.3 An extensive Bronze Age field system was recorded at Home Farm *c.*440-870m to the north-west of the site (ELO3639, ELO11450), which was associated with settlement evidence (MLO73505, ELO3640). Archaeological investigation at Sipson Farm have also revealed evidence of Bronze Age settlement and activity including structures, field systems and cremation burials (MLO99541, ELO13914, ELO8959). There is evidence that the Neolithic enclosure recorded at Sipson Lane was recut in the Bronze Age and a small, enclosed cremation cemetery established as well as further enclosures, field systems and buildings (MLO71997, ELO3712).

3.2.4 As with the preceding Neolithic and Bronze Age periods, there is substantial evidence for Iron Age occupation from the surrounding area. At Home Farm Iron Age pits and a ditch were recorded (MLO58490, ELO3640). An Iron Age settlement was recorded at Sipson Road, *c.*125m to the east of the site (ELO8959, MLO75379) and several Iron Age features have been identified at site *c.*870m to the north (ELO8965, MLO75991). During the construction of Heathrow Airport in 1944, an extensive Iron Age settlement was discovered, *c.*1.2km to the south-east of the site, including numerous roundhouses within a defined occupation area and a temple structure. Residual Iron Age pottery and findspots of coins have also been recovered from the surrounding area.

3.2.5 It is evident that the study site was situated within a significant prehistoric landscape, which was occupied from at least the Neolithic period, with a continuation of settlement activity into the subsequent periods. There appears to have been centres of activity and settlement to the north-east, east and south-east of the study site, and therefore, there is a moderate potential for encountering prehistoric remains on the study site.

3.3 *Roman*

3.3.1 Following the successful Claudian invasion of AD43, the Romans founded *Londonium* and set about creating a system of roads linking the city with other established settlements. One road connected *Verulamium* (St Albans) to *Calleva* (Silchester), following the route of the Colne River to the west of the site. The Roman settlement of *Pontes* (Staines) was situated c.6.5km to the south-west of the site along this road.

3.3.2 There is evidence that several of the prehistoric sites in the surrounding area had continued occupation into the Roman period (MLO71998, MLO100474, ELO5196, MLO75379, ELO8959, ELO13914). The evidence for Roman activity includes enclosures, field systems roundhouses, cremations, inhumations and unstratified finds. A Roman farmstead was excavated at Sipson Lane, with evidence of gravel extraction.

3.4 *Saxon*

3.4.1 Harmondsworth is first mentioned in a charter of AD780, which documented the granting of land called Hermonds to a servant of King Offa of Mercia (Sherwood 2009). A possible sunken feature building was recorded at Home Farm c.560m to the north-west of the site (MLO22674, ELO3639, ELO11450). Other Saxon evidence includes a number of pits on Bath Road c.440m to the west (MLO71680, MLO71679, ELO4135), the remains of a building at Imperial College Sports Ground c.500m to the north (MLO73806, ELO4596) and further evidence of ploughing and enclosure between 500m and 875m to the east (MLO72001, MLO74428, ELO568, ELO3626, ELO13914, ELO5609).

3.5 *Medieval*

3.5.1 The study site was situated between the settlements of *Hermodesworde* (Harmondsworth), *Herdintone* (Harlington) and *Draitone* (West Drayton), which are all mentioned in the Domesday Survey of 1086 as large settlements with extensive ploughlands and meadows (Open Domesday).

3.5.2 The settlement of Sipson is first mentioned in 1150 as *Sibwinestone*, meaning 'farmstead of Sibwine'. Sipson is further mentioned in 1214 along with Harmondsworth, Longford and Southcote, and is recorded as having only 14 houses in 1337 (Bolton 1971).

3.5.3 There is limited evidence dating to the medieval period from the surrounding area, with only scatters of medieval pottery recorded c. 360m west of the site (MLO58492, ELO3640).

3.6 Post-medieval and Modern

3.6.1 Harmondsworth and Sipson were situated on the coaching route between London and the west, which prompted many inns to be built. Evidence of post-medieval occupation, including the remains of walls, wells and rubbish pits has been recorded around Sipson, between 250m and 350m north of the site (MLO85042, MLO63843, MLO76945, ELO9549). Post-medieval field systems and evidence of enclosures have been recorded between 700m and 1km west of the site (MLO68118, MLO73506, ELO3664), *c.* 750m north (MLO76933) and *c.* 1km east (MLO72000).

3.6.2 The site was located within open fields to the south of Sipson, near an area known as Sipson Green, in the mid-18th century (fig.4). By the late 19th century part of the site was occupied by an orchard and other parts were left open or marshland with a pond present across the south-east part of the site (fig.5). The pond had been filled and the marshland drained during the early 20th century (fig.6).



Figure 4: Extract from Rocque's Map of Middlesex (1754), with the approximate site location marked in red

3.6.3 The orchards were cleared by 1935 and the surrounding land was developed with residential buildings, including immediately to the west along Sipson Way (fig.7). The site remained undeveloped, being used as allotment gardens until the 1970s when part of the site was used for car parking. The existing structures were built by the end of the 20th century. Significant changes occurred in the surrounding area from the mid-20th century, including the construction of Heathrow Airport and the excavation for the corridor for the M4 branch road to the airport.



Figure 5: Extract from the OS 1895 25-inch map with the site outlined in red

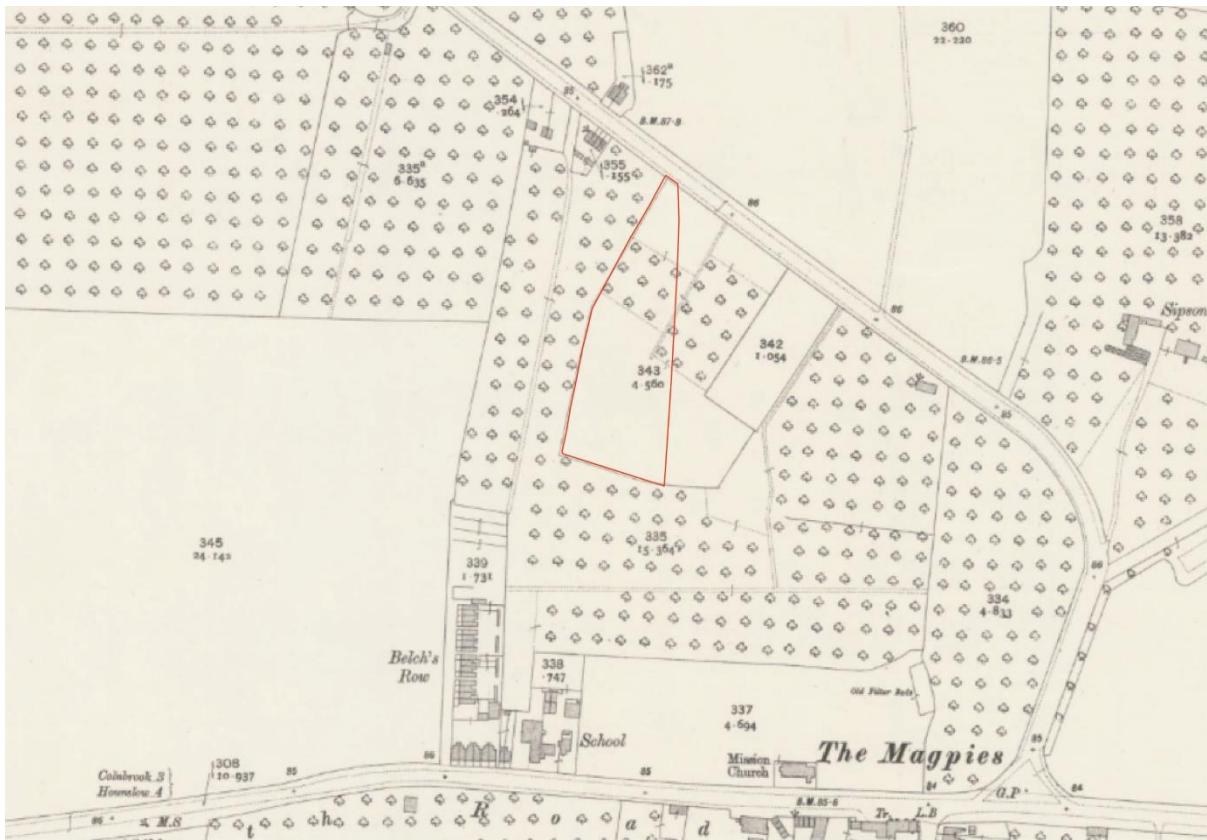


Figure 6: Extract from the OS 1914 25-inch map, with the site outlined in red



Figure 7: Extract from the OS 1936 25-inch map with the site outlined in red

4 THE DEVELOPMENT, PLANNING AND OBJECTIVES

4.1 The development

4.1.1 The proposed redevelopment will consist of:

Redevelopment including the demolition of the existing building and the erection of a new building ranging between 1 and 6 storeys to provide a 302-bedroom hotel (Use Class C1) with basement and ancillary facilities including restaurant, car parking, coach parking, hard and soft landscaping and associated works.

4.1.2 The new development footprint will roughly cover the same as the existing building (fig.8). The basement will comprise a car park with an access ramp, and plant, storage and guest rooms (figs.9 & 10). The ground floor will comprise guest rooms and amenity spaces and the upper floors will consist of guest rooms.

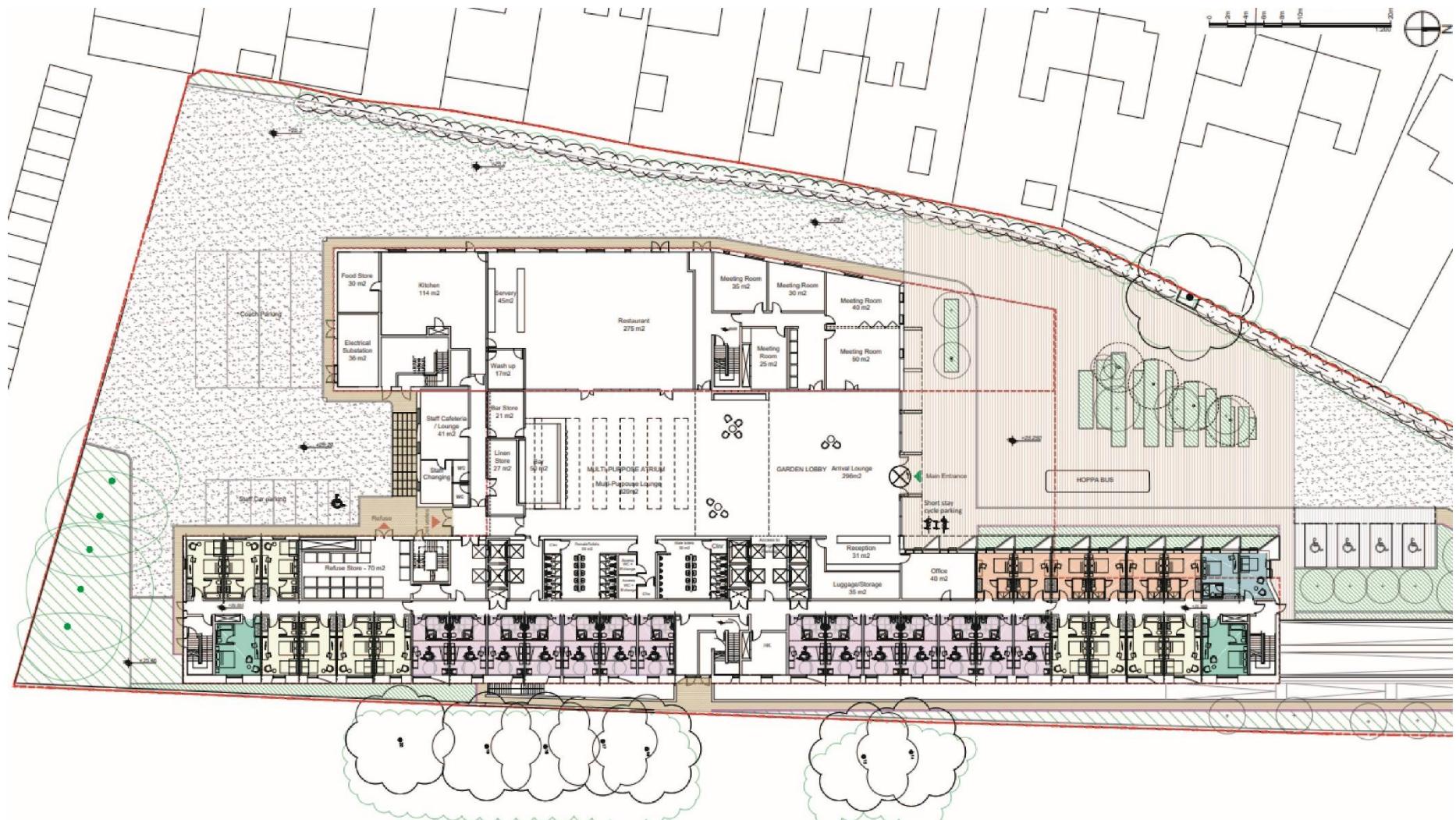


Figure 8: Proposed ground floor plan. Drawing No. 1025 P 1011 E by Fraser Brown Mackenna Architects Ltd.

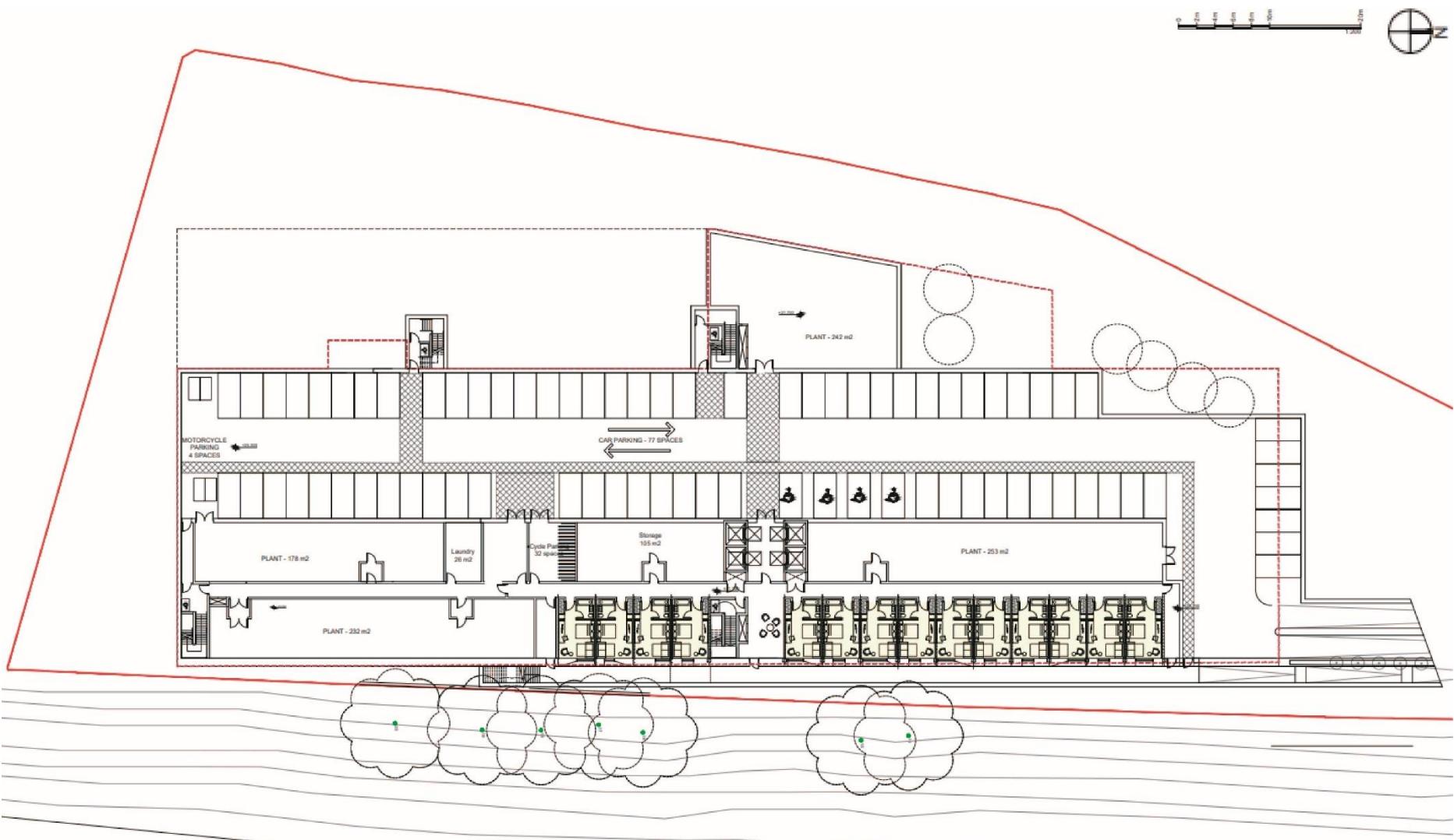


Figure 9: Proposed basement floor plan. Drawing No. 1025 P 1010 E by Fraser Brown Mackenna Architects Ltd.

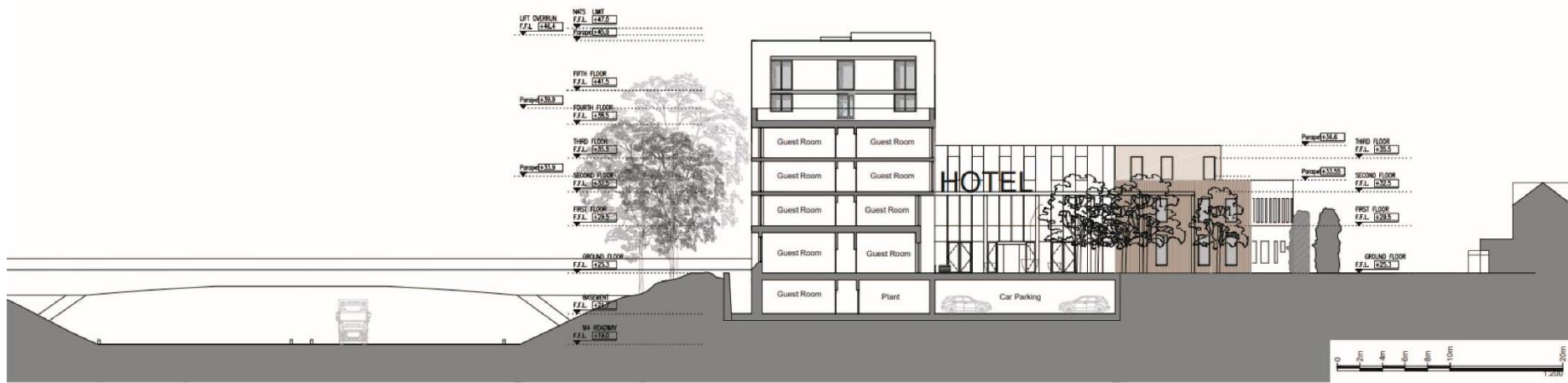


Figure 10: E-W section through the proposed building. Drawing No. 1025 P 3000 D by Fraser Brown Mackenna Architects Ltd.

4.1.3 The following planning condition has been attached to the approved application (ref. 11068/APP/2020/1586):

No demolition or development shall take place until a stage 1 written scheme of investigation (WSI) has been submitted to and approved by the local planning authority in writing. For land that is included within the WSI, no demolition or development shall take place other than in accordance with the agreed WSI, and the programme and methodology of site evaluation and the nomination of a competent persons or organisation to undertake the agreed works.

If heritage assets of archaeological interest are identified by stage 1 then for those parts of the site which have archaeological interest a stage 2 WSI shall be submitted to and approved by the local planning authority in writing. For land that is included within the stage 2 WSI, no demolition/development shall take place other than in accordance with the agreed stage 2 WSI which shall include:

- A. The statement of significance and research objectives, the programme and methodology of site investigation and recording and the nomination of a competent person(s) or organisation to undertake the agreed works;*
- B. Where appropriate, details of a programme for delivering related positive public benefits; and*
- C. The programme for post-investigation assessment and subsequent analysis, publication & dissemination and deposition of resulting material. this part of the condition shall not be discharged until these elements have been fulfilled in accordance with the programme set out in the stage 2 WSI.*

REASON To protect and the archaeological interests of site in accordance with Policy DMHB 7 of the Local Plan: Part Two - Development Management Policies (2020), policy 7.18 of the London Plan (2016) and para 189 of the NPPF (2019).

4.2 Planning

4.2.1 This WSI represents one element in the archaeological planning process whereby early consideration of potential archaeological remains can be achieved, and if necessary, further appropriate mitigations put in place. This conforms to the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), adopted in March 2012, updated in June 2019 and revised in July 2021.

4.2.2 The NPPF integrates planning strategy on ‘heritage assets’ - bringing together all aspects of the historic environment, below and above ground, including historic buildings and structures, landscapes, archaeological sites, and wrecks. The significance of heritage assets needs to be considered in the planning process, whether designated or not, and the settings of assets taken into account. NPPF requires using an integrated approach to establish the overall significance of the heritage asset using evidential, historical, aesthetic and communal values, to ensure that planning decisions are based on the nature, extent and level of significance.

4.2.3 Due to the site's location within an area of archaeological sensitivity the following policy, taken from the current *London Plan* (updated 2021) is deemed relevant:

Chapter 7 – Heritage and Culture

Policy HC1 Heritage conservation and growth

A Boroughs should, in consultation with Historic England, local communities and other statutory and relevant organisations, develop evidence that demonstrates a clear understanding of London's historic environment. This evidence should be used for identifying, understanding, conserving, and enhancing the historic environment and heritage assets, and improving access to, and interpretation of, the heritage assets, landscapes and archaeology within their area.

B Development Plans and strategies should demonstrate a clear understanding of the historic environment and the heritage values of sites or areas and their relationship with their surroundings. This knowledge should be used to inform the effective integration of London's heritage in regenerative change by:

- 1) setting out a clear vision that recognises and embeds the role of heritage in place-making*
- 2) utilising the heritage significance of a site or area in the planning and design process*
- 3) integrating the conservation and enhancement of heritage assets and their settings with innovative and creative contextual architectural responses that contribute to their significance and sense of place*
- 4) delivering positive benefits that conserve and enhance the historic environment, as well as contributing to the economic viability, accessibility and environmental quality of a place, and to social wellbeing.*

C Development proposals affecting heritage assets, and their settings, should conserve their significance, by being sympathetic to the assets' significance and appreciation within their surroundings. The cumulative impacts of incremental change from development on heritage assets and their settings should also be actively managed. Development proposals should avoid harm and identify enhancement opportunities by integrating heritage considerations early on in the design process.

D Development proposals should identify assets of archaeological significance and use this information to avoid harm or minimise it through design and appropriate mitigation. Where applicable, development should make provision for the protection of significant archaeological assets and landscapes. The protection of undesignated heritage assets of archaeological interest equivalent to a scheduled monument should be given equivalent weight to designated heritage assets.

E Where heritage assets have been identified as being At Risk, boroughs should identify specific opportunities for them to contribute to regeneration and place-making, and they should set out strategies for their repair and reuse.

4.2.4 The site is located within London Borough of Hillingdon's *Local Plan: Part 1 – Strategic Policies* (adopted 2012), with the following policy deemed relevant:

Policy HE1: Heritage

The Council will:

1. *Conserve and enhance Hillingdon's distinct and varied environment, its settings and the wider historic landscape, which includes: Historic village cores, Metro-land suburbs, planned residential estates and 19th and 20th century industrial areas, including the Grand Union Canal and its features; Designated heritage assets such as statutorily Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas and Scheduled Ancient Monuments; Registered Parks and Gardens and historic landscapes, both natural and designed; Locally recognised historic features, such as Areas of Special Local Character and Locally Listed Buildings; and Archaeologically significant areas, including Archaeological Priority Zones and Areas.*
2. *Actively encourage the regeneration of heritage assets, particularly those which have been included in English Heritage's 'Heritage at Risk' register or are currently vacant.*
3. *Promote increased public awareness, understanding of and access to the borough's heritage assets and wider historic environment, through Section 106 agreements and via community engagement and outreach activities.*
4. *Encourage the reuse and modification of heritage assets, where appropriate, when considering proposals to mitigate or adapt to the effects of climate change. Where negative impact on a heritage asset is identified, seek alternative approaches to achieve similar climate change mitigation outcomes without damage to the asset.*

4.2.5 The site lies within the *Heathrow APZ* as designated by Hillingdon Borough Council (fig.11). This APZ covers an area where previous extensive excavations have revealed significant prehistoric evidence dating from the Upper Palaeolithic to the Iron Age. The London Borough of Hillingdon also has a policy regarding Archaeological Priority Areas and APZs within its *Local Plan: Part 2 – Development Management Policies* (adopted 2020):

Policy DMHB 7: Archaeological Priority Areas and Archaeological Priority Zones

The Council, as advised by the Greater London Archaeological Advisory Service, will ensure that sites of archaeological interest within or, where appropriate, outside, designated areas are not disturbed. If that cannot be avoided, satisfactory measures must be taken to mitigate the impacts of the proposals through archaeological fieldwork to investigate and record remains in advance of development works. This should

include proposals for the recording, archiving and reporting of any archaeological finds.

4.2.6 The site does not contain or lie adjacent to any Listed Buildings, and it does not contain any Scheduled Monuments and will not affect any.

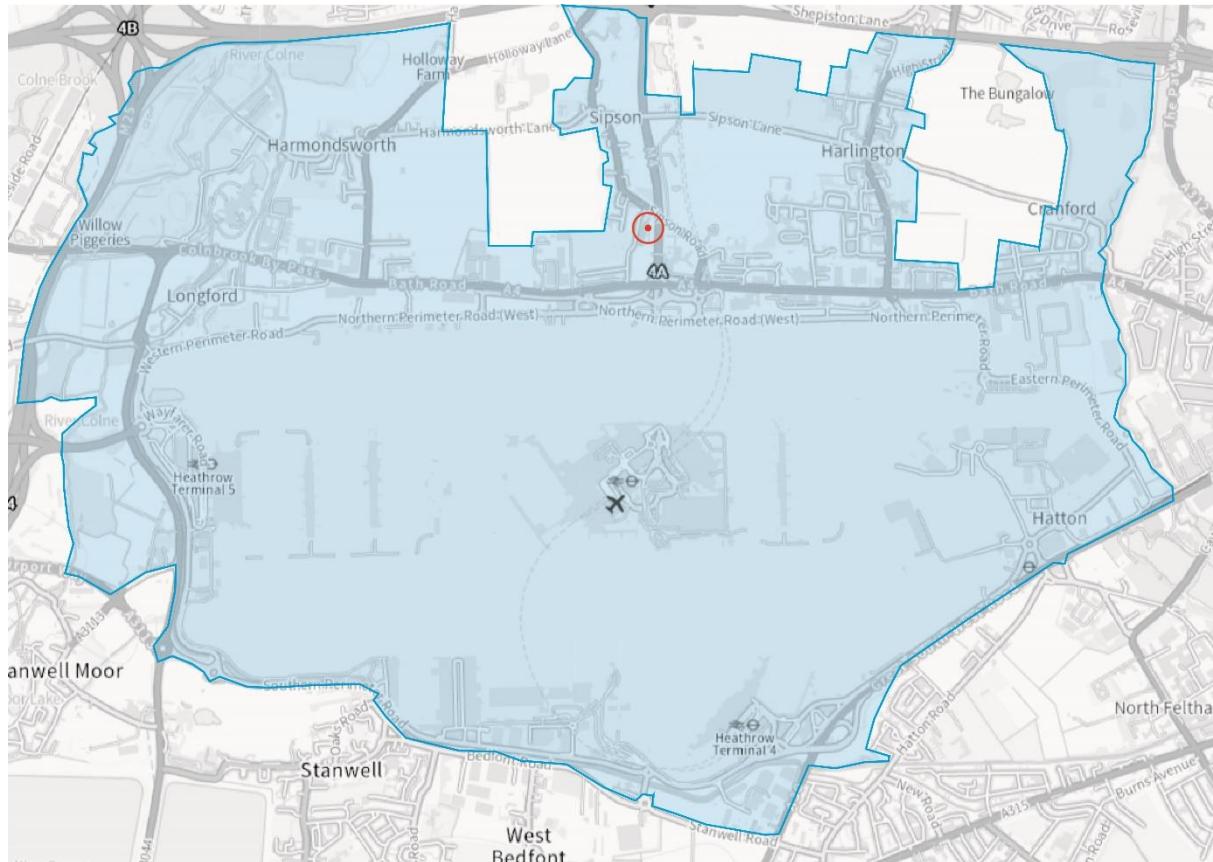


Figure 11: The site (red) in relation to the Heathrow APZ (blue)

4.3 Objectives

4.3.1 The proposed field evaluation presents the opportunity to explore the following general and specific research questions:

- Is there any evidence for prehistoric activity on the site? If present, is the evidence *in situ* or residual?
- Is there any Roman evidence on the site? If present, does the evidence indicate that a settlement was present in the area during the period?
- Is there any evidence of Saxon or medieval activity on the site?
- What evidence is there for post-medieval activity on the site?
- At what level does archaeology survive across the site as a whole and in what condition?

- If encountered, what is the natural geology and at what level does it exist across the site?

5 METHODOLOGY

5.1 Standards

5.1.1 The fieldwork and post-excavation work will be carried out in accordance with Historic England guidelines (in particular, GLAAS: *Guidelines for Archaeological Projects in Greater London*, 2015). Works will also conform to the standards of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (*Standard and guidance for an archaeological field evaluation*, 2020). Overall management of the project will be undertaken by a full Member of the Institute.

5.1.2 Fieldwork will be carried out in accordance with the Construction (Health, Safety & Welfare) Regulations. All members of the fieldwork team will have valid CSCS Cards, (Construction Skills Certificate Scheme), and wear hi-visibility jackets, hard-hats, and steel-toe-capped boots as required during the evaluation. All members of the fieldwork team will also follow the contractors' health and safety guidelines.

5.2 Fieldwork

5.2.1 The archaeological evaluation will take place prior to groundworks for the redevelopment as described above (Section 4.1.1).

5.2.2 The fieldwork will involve the excavation of four 1.8m x 20m trenches (fig.12). The trenches are sited to give a suitable coverage of the development footprint, and potential archaeological deposits.

The coverage, 144m², represents just above a 3% sample of the c.4,780m² proposed development footprint.

5.2.3 Initial bulk excavation of the test pits will be undertaken by a mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless grading bucket under constant archaeological supervision. Deposits will generally be removed in this way in shallow spits to the latest significant archaeological horizon, or in the absence of remains to a clean natural / subsoil layer.

5.2.4 Following initial clearance an on-site decision will be made as to the extent and likely significance of archaeological deposits and features within the trenches and dictate the extent of hand-excavation required. Sufficient work will be undertaken to establish the nature of deposits and features, with adequate recovery of finds dating and other evidence. Additional techniques will be applied as appropriate, for example metal detecting and environmental sampling. Should significant environmental deposits be found the advice of a specialist at QUEST (University of Reading) will be sought.

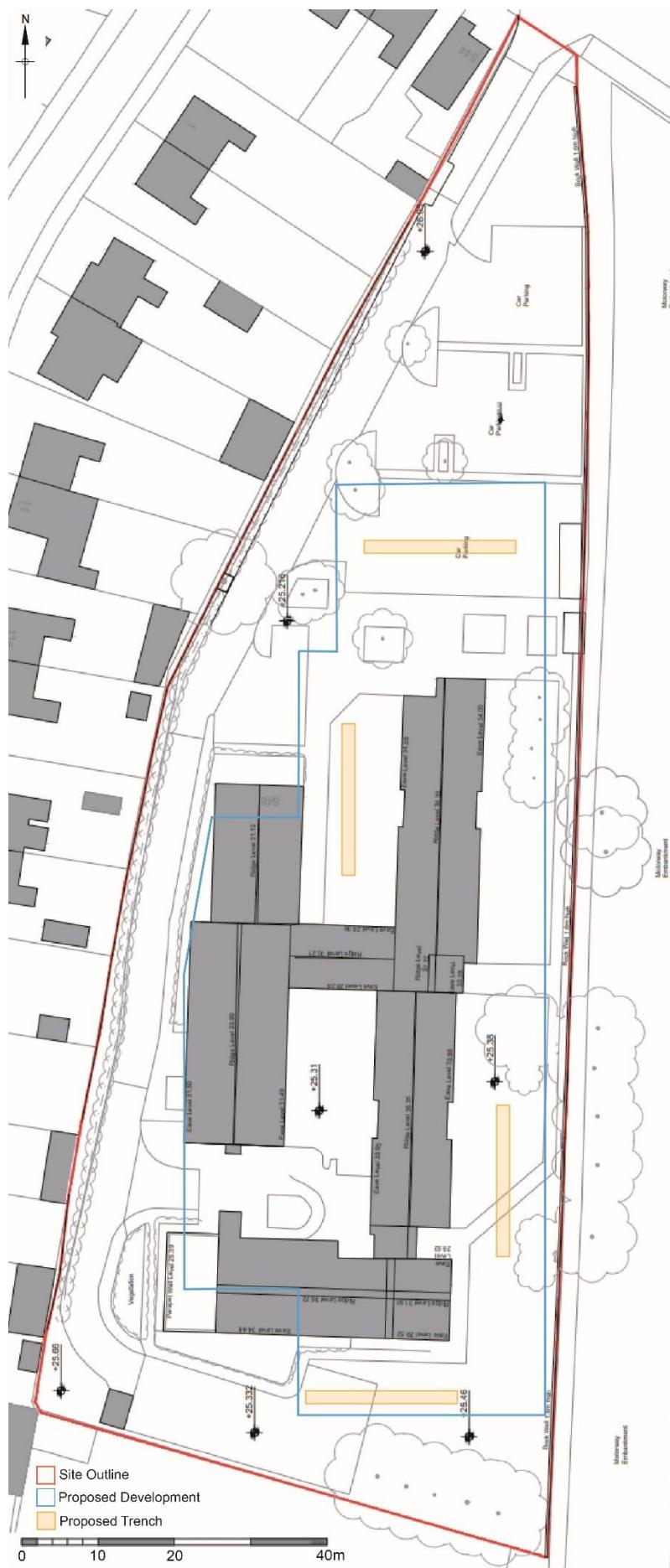


Figure 12: Proposed trench locations (orange) in relation to the new build footprint (blue) and site outline (red)

5.2.5 Archaeological contexts will be recorded as appropriate on *pro-forma* sheets by written and measured description, and/or drawn in plan or section, generally at scales of 1:10 or 1:20. The investigations will be recorded on a general site plan and related to the Ordnance Survey grid. Levels will be taken on the top and bottom of any archaeological features or deposits, transferred from the nearest Ordnance Datum Benchmark. The fieldwork record will be supplemented by digital photography, in.jpeg and RAW formats.

5.2.6 The recording system will follow the procedures set out in the Museum of London recording manual. By agreement the recording and drawing sheets used will be directly compatible with those developed by the Museum.

5.2.7 Should human remains be encountered during the course of the fieldwork they will, if at all possible, be preserved *in situ*. If necessary, the Ministry of Justice will be contacted and an AASI licence obtained. The procedures will all be in accordance with the Ministry of Justice's 2008 statement: '*Burial Law and Archaeology*'. This document sets out the requirements for licence applications to be made under the Burial Act of 1857 wherever human remains are buried in sites to which the Disused Burial Grounds (Amendment) Act 1981 or other burial ground legislation does not apply.

5.2.8 Any finds identified as treasure under the Treasure Act (1996) and the Treasure (Designation) Order (2002) will be recorded, protected as necessary and removed to a safe place as soon as possible – ideally on the same day.

5.3 Post-excavation

The fieldwork will be followed by off-site assessment and compilation of a report, and by ordering and deposition of the site archive.

5.3.1 Finds and samples

5.3.1.1 Assessment of finds will be undertaken by appropriately qualified staff (see Appendix I). Finds and samples will be treated in accordance with the appropriate guidelines, including the Museum of London's '*Standards for the Preparation of Finds to be permanently retained by the Museum of London*'. All identified finds and artefacts will be retained and bagged with unique numbers related to the context record, although certain classes of material may be discarded if an appropriate record has been made. Sensitive artefacts will be properly treated, in line with the appropriate Standards.

5.3.2 Report procedure

5.3.2.1 The report will contain a description of the fieldwork plus details of any archaeological remains or finds, and an interpretation of the associated deposits. Illustrations will be included as appropriate, including at a minimum a site plan located to the OS grid. A short summary of the project will be appended using the OASIS Data Collection Form, and in paragraph form suitable for publication within the 'excavation round-up' of the *London Archaeologist*.

5.3.2.2 Copies of the report will be supplied to the Client, Historic England, and the Borough Council. The results of this evaluation will potentially inform the need for further Stage 2 mitigation.

5.3.2.4 There is no provision for further analysis or publication of significant findings. Should these be made, the requirements would need to be discussed and agreed with the Client and with the Archaeological Advisor to the London Borough of Hillingdon.

5.3.3 The site archive

5.3.3.1 Assuming that no further work is required, an ordered indexed and internally consistent archive of the evaluation will be compiled in line with MoL Guidelines for the Preparation of Archaeological Archives and will be deposited in the Museum of London Archaeological Archive. The integrity of the site archive should be maintained, and the landowner will be urged to donate any archaeological finds to the Museum.

6 SOURCES

6.1 Bibliography

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6.3 Cartographic sources (chronological)

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APPENDIX I SPECIALIST STAFF

The following specialists have previously worked with Compass Archaeology and may be consulted on this project, depending on the artefacts/other material recovered during the fieldwork:

Katie Anderson (ABCeramic Specialists)	Prehistoric ceramics
Paul Blinkhorn (Independent Consultant)	Saxon to post-medieval ceramics
Rose Broadley (Independent Consultant)	Roman to Post-medieval glass
Jon Cotton (Independent Consultant)	Prehistoric flintwork and metalwork and ceramics
Stephen Freeth (Independent Consultant)	Manuscript Research and Inscriptions
Mike Hammerson (Independent Consultant)	Roman coins; later coins & tokens
Matilda Holmes (Independent Consultant)	Animal bone
Lynne Keys (Independent Consultant)	Metal working slag and by-products
Susan Pringle (Independent Consultant)	Ceramic building material
Quaternary Scientific (QUEST)	Environmental Archaeology
Dr Mark Samuel (Independent Consultant)	Worked stone
Dr Ruth Schaffrey (Independent Consultant)	Worked stone: Loomweights, querns, etc.
Dr Jörn Schuster (Independent Consultant)	Small finds
Anthony Yendall (Independent Consultant)	Metal Detectorist