

Harvestslade, Burley, New Forest, Hampshire



Archaeological Watching Brief Report

oxfordarchaeology

southsouthsouth
December 2015

Client: The Forestry Commission

Issue No:1
OA Job No: 5951
NGR: SU 2073 0562



Client Name: The Forestry Commission
Client Ref No:
Document Title: Harvestslade, Burley, The New Forest, Hampshire
Document Type: Archaeological Watching Brief Report
Issue/Version Number: 1
Grid Reference: SU 2073 0562
Planning Reference:
Invoice Code: BUHANF WB
OA Job Number: 5915
Site Code: A2015.39
Receiving Museum: Hampshire County Museum
Museum Accession No.:
Event No.:

Issue	Prepared by	Checked by	Approved by	Signature
1	Vix Hughes Project Officer	Ianto Wain Senior Manager	Ianto Wain Senior Manager	

Document File Location: \\Server1\projects\n\New Forest Pondhead, Harvestslade and Amberslade\Report-Harvestslade\A2015_39_Harvestslade_WB

Graphics File Location:

Illustrated by:

Disclaimer:

This document has been prepared for the titled project or named part thereof and should not be relied upon or used for any other project without an independent check being carried out as to its suitability and prior written authority of Oxford Archaeology being obtained. Oxford Archaeology accepts no responsibility or liability for the consequences of this document being used for a purpose other than the purposes for which it was commissioned. Any person/party using or relying on the document for such other purposes agrees, and will by such use or reliance be taken to confirm their agreement to indemnify Oxford Archaeology for all loss or damage resulting therefrom. Oxford Archaeology accepts no responsibility or liability for this document to any party other than the person/party by whom it was commissioned.

© Oxford Archaeology Ltd 2015

Janus House

Osney Mead

Oxford OX2 0ES

t: +44 (0) 1865 263800

e: info@oxfordarch.co.uk

f: +44 (0) 1865 793496

w: oxfordarchaeology.com

Oxford Archaeology Limited is a Registered Charity No: 285627



Harvestslade, Burley, The New Forest, Hampshire

Archaeological Watching Brief Report

Written by Vix Hughes

Table of Contents

Summary	3
1 Introduction	3
1.1 Scope of work	3
1.2 Location, geology and topography	3
1.3 Archaeological and historical background	4
2 Project Aims and Methodology	5
2.1 Aims.....	5
2.2 Specific aims and objectives	5
2.3 Methodology	5
2.4 Site specific methodology	6
3 Results	7
3.1 Site results.....	7
3.2 Finds and Environmental remains.....	7
4 Discussion and Conclusions	8
Appendix A. Archaeological Context Inventory	9
Appendix B. Finds Report	11
B.1 Burnt unworked flint.....	11
Appendix C. Bibliography and references	12
Appendix D. Summary of Site Details	13

List of Figures

- Fig. 1 Location Map
- Fig. 2 Proposed site plan (courtesy of Forestry Commission)
- Fig. 3a Archaeological Features Map, within the study area
- Fig. 3b Archaeological Features Map, within the Harvestslade Wetland Restoration area

List of Plates

- Plate 1 **OA 27**, work near possible mound, looking south-west
- Plate 2 **OA 28 - 29**, section through stream bank showing previous meander, looking west
- Plate 3 **OA 28 - 29**, section through stream bank showing previous meander, looking south-west



Summary

Oxford Archaeology South (OAS) was commissioned by The Forestry Commission to undertake an archaeological watching brief at Harvestslade, Burley, in the New Forest (centred on SU 2073 0562). The work was carried out as part of the planning application for the Wetlands Restoration Project. The work was undertaken over one day on the 9th September 2015.

*During the restoration of meanders through the area the works slightly impacted upon two sites, two sites where burnt flints are eroding from the stream bank, possibly relating to a burnt mound **OA 28** and **29**.*

*The works revealed the nature of the previous meander cut by the current stream, seen in the area of **OA 28** and **29**.*

A small number of unworked burnt flints were uncovered in one of the upper deposits within the earlier meander. The origin of these was uncertain as they have been eroded from a nearby area either adjacent or upstream of the deposit. It is unknown as to whether the flints were burnt by natural or human means, nor were there any associated artefacts or datable material.

The archaeological watching brief was able to record deposits in the area of known archaeological features, where they were exposed by the works.

During the works no previously unknown archaeological sites and finds were encountered, nor were any identified that might have been exposed by works incorporating the wider scheme.

INTRODUCTION

Scope of work

Oxford Archaeology (OA) was commissioned by Land Use Consultants (LUC) on behalf of the Forestry Commission to produce a Desk Based Assessment (DBA) and a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for the proposed Wetland Restoration Project at Harvestslade.

An application for planning consent for the wetland restoration works was submitted to the New Forest National Park Authority and the DBA and WSI were prepared to accompany the application (OA 2014a and b). The DBA identified a mitigation strategy to ensure the protection of archaeological assets. This report outlines how OA implemented the mitigation strategy in accordance with the submitted WSI.

All work was undertaken in accordance with local and national planning policies.

Location, geology and topography

The watercourse arises on Backley Plain, flowing in an eroding channel with drop-off points through mire, wet heath, scrub and grassland habitats until it reaches woodland, where it becomes a deeply incised and eroding drain. After the Sir Dudley's Ride footbridge the incised channel continues across Ridley Green through wet heath and grassland, eventually entering pasture woodland as it follows the field margin of Turf Croft Farm until it joins the Mill Lawn Brook at the boundary of the farm property.

The site is identified on Figure 1 and the area of the proposed restoration works is shown on Figure 2.



The bedrock consists mainly of the Becton Sand Formation. Overlying it along the lines of the watercourse are some clay and silt head deposits (BGS Website: <http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>). There are some superficial deposits of sand and gravel associated with the watercourse.

The site varied in height between 55m and 65m aOD (above Ordnance Datum).

Archaeological and historical background

The archaeological and historical background to the site has been described in detail in the DBA (OA 2014a). The site has lain within the New Forest since the 11th century. During the post-medieval period the use of the forest including the site moved away from hunting to wood production and quarrying. Key details are summarised below. Figures 3a and b illustrates the archaeological features identified in the DBA.

The potential archaeological remains within the site included a number identified features. These comprise:-

- **OA 27** Bronze Age mound, possibly a Burnt Mound although no archaeological evidence has been found.
- **OA 28** Bronze Age area where burnt flints are eroding from the stream bank, possibly relating to a burnt mound.
- **OA 29** Bronze Age area where burnt flints are eroding from the stream bank, possibly relating to a burnt mound.
- **OA 77** Medieval field system (possibly earlier in date).
- **OA 104** Medieval site identified from Forestry Commission constraints map: no further information. FC record shows an SE/NW linear on the ground, there is a distinct corner and southward return on the western end of the earthwork that would appear to connect to the larger field system **OA 77**.
- **OA 12** Post-medieval pit visible as an earthwork on LiDAR imagery. It is considered likely to be the remains of a post medieval extractive pit, most probably related to the extraction of sands and gravels.
- **OA 60** Post-medieval probable former quarry site.
- **OA 90** Post-medieval field boundaries and trackways.
- **OA 102** Post-medieval probable pillow mound (artificial rabbit warren). Measuring c. 4m E/W x 3m N/S, the earthwork is c. 0.4m in height, and surrounded by a shallow ditch 0.5m wide x 0.15 in depth. The western side of the mound and ditch have been damaged by, but are still visible within, the adjacent track.
- **OA 106** Post-medieval quarry adjacent to, and opening onto, a forest track presumably to provide gravel for its light metallurgy. Measures c.10m N/S x 3.5 E/W and an irregular 0.6 in depth.

There are various banks, ditches, enclosures and trackways (**OA 21, 26, 62, 74, 75, 103, 107, 108**) which extend into the site, which may date from the medieval or post-medieval periods.

It appears that the area was used by the military during World War II. An airfield decoy or anti-glider defence site (**OA 1**) was located close to the A31 to the north of the site and is thought to have extended across the northern access route. Another bombing decoy (**OA 9**) was located to the east of this access route and the surrounding area contains a number of shell holes or fox holes (**OA 6**).



A generally high potential for Harvestslade to contain further archaeological deposits of the Bronze Age period was identified. The site also contains evidence for medieval fields, later quarrying and for 20th century wartime activity.

The work may provide opportunities to explore the dating of burnt mounds, an aim identified in the *Solent Thames Research Framework* (2014). These mounds have traditionally thought to be of Late Bronze Age date, but some earlier examples have been identified.

PROJECT AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

Aims

The aim of the overall project is to restore the wetland mire habitat in Harvestslade by replacing later drainage channels with restored natural meanders and raising the level of eroded beds within existing channels. This will reinstate the seasonal inundations of the lawns that are required to maintain the wetland habitat.

The aim of the archaeological aspects of the work was to record any deposits encountered that may add to the archaeological record and facilitate the better understanding of the archaeology of the New Forest.

Specific aims and objectives

The specific aims and objectives of the project were:

- To record known archaeological features where they are exposed by the proposed works.
- To examine the specified aspects of the proposed works for unknown archaeological sites and finds.
- To be vigilant for the potential identification of archaeological deposits that may be exposed by works incorporating the wider scheme.

Methodology

The nature of the proposed works was laid out in the document *SSSI Wetland Restoration Plan 2014* (see Appendix A of the Construction Environment Management Plan LUC 2014 submitted with the application). In summary the proposal to restore the wetlands (see Figure 2) was to involve several main areas of work. These are summarised below, with reference to their potential archaeological impacts as relevant.

Items 8 and 9: *Works to restore stream channel meanders, and raise the stream bed level.* The items that might impact significantly upon potential archaeological deposits were:

- Item 8A. *Excavation of the line of the original meander.* Work took place close to the location of possible Burnt Mounds represented by burnt flints eroding from the stream bank (**OA 28, 29**).
- Item 8C. *Squaring off of the channel prior to installation of a substantial clay plug into the bed and banks of the existing stream channel to divert the flow into the restored meander.* Work took place close to the location of possible Burnt Mounds represented by burnt flints eroding from the stream bank (**OA 28, 29**).
- Item 9. *Ramping down from restored meander bed level to link in to unrestored channel bed level.* Work took place close to the location of possible Burnt Mounds represented by burnt flints eroding from the stream bank (**OA 28, 29**). Works was not designed to involve any intrusion into/removal of stream bed deposits but any



intrusion into/recutting of stream banks ran the risk of affecting archaeological deposits.

Construction Traffic Management Plan (Appendix 3 LUC 2014a) states that the Site work was to be undertaken by 13 tonne excavators, 8 tonne tracked dumpers and 7 tonne excavators.

None of the materials access routes or stockpile locations were close to any known archaeological features within the site. The identified access routes within the site ran close to or across a number of earthwork features, probably of medieval or post-medieval date (**OA 21, 26, 62, 74, 75, 77, 90, 107**). The western access route also ran alongside a probable pillow mound (artificial rabbit warren) (**OA 102**), the west side of which had already been damaged by the existing track. It was possible to demarcate most of these to ensure they were avoided. Site traffic had the potential to change such features, possibly removing surface features and causing compression damage to below-ground archaeological deposits. In all cases it was possible to avoid damage by installing bog mats. Any site clearance, with potential impact was to be subject of an archaeological watching brief, although this was found to not be the case.

Site specific methodology

A summary of OA's general approach to excavation and recording can be found in Appendix A of the WSI (OA 2014b). Standard methodologies for Geomatics and Survey, Environmental evidence, Artefactual evidence and Burials can also be found below (Appendices B, C, D and E respectively).

The lead archaeologist retained the right to stop groundwork on Site in the event of the discovery of significant deposits, and the groundwork contractor allowed sufficient time for those deposits to be fully archaeologically recorded.

It was recommended that the works outlined in Items 8 and 9 should be the subject of an archaeological watching brief, where these works required the removal of bank or stream bed deposits in the vicinity of known archaeological sites. Sites potentially affected included:

- **OA 27** Bronze Age mound, possibly a Burnt Mound although no archaeological evidence has been found.
- **OA 28** Area where burnt flints are eroding from the stream bank, possibly relating to a burnt mound.
- **OA 29** Area where burnt flints are eroding from the stream bank, possibly relating to a burnt mound.

Prior to the commencement of work known features were identified during the walkover to prevent accidental damage by plant.

RESULTS

Site results

Site OA 27 – Items 8A, 8C and 9

The area around site **OA 27** was essentially avoided. However there was a visible mound and meander works were done 1m away from the base of the slope. The works revealed 0.15m of dark greyish brown silty clay forming the current topsoil. This directly overlay the natural gravel and flint bands. There were no defined archaeological deposits visible.

Sites OA 28 and 29 – Items 8A, 8C and 9

The area around sites **OA 28** and **29** was subject to excavation of the line of the original meander and ramping down from restored meander bed level to link in to unrestored channel bed level.



The watercourse at this point was aligned NE-SW. There were no defined banks and the river had worn the present course through the surrounding deposits. The western side of the current course revealed an area of the original meander, seen as a broad 'U'-shaped interface (21) which cut the natural (1). Within the previous channel a series of deposits was visible.

The earliest deposits were 3, 4, 5 and 13 generally yellowish-grey brown silty clays with high proportions of rounded flinty gravel. Above this were pale grey silty clays (6 and 15). Sequentially above were irregular patches of soft humic silts that were formed by the inundation of organic material, forming peaty deposits (10, 18 and 19). A lens of silty clay had washed over deposit 10 before another period of organic growth (7) was inundated by the river. The upper deposits (8, 11, 14 and 17) were variable grey to reddish brown silty clays resulting from deposition of sediments during the rivers course. The small particle size of the deposits indicated that the stream was at a normal flow with a steady level of energy. The deposits had rarely occurring inclusions of flinty gravel and charcoal flecks. These represent the general background conditions and became incorporated into the deposits either as they eroded through sediments upstream or by natural accumulation.

At the top of the stratigraphic sequence was a similarly reddish brown clay which contained a small numbers of burnt flints (16). The flints were rounded and unworked. They appeared to have been eroded from downstream and were therefore not in situ. There was no evidence of human related activity and the flints may have been burnt by a natural event or may have originated from a burnt feature upstream. The size of the flints suggests that at that point the stream had a greater degree of energy and may have been in flood.

Overlying this deposit were two remaining channel fills (12 and 20) and the old meander channel was sealed by the current organic topsoil (O horizon, context 2).

The original meander (21) has been truncated by the later sinuous water course visible at the commencement of the project.

Finds and Environmental remains

Deposit 16 contained 16 fragments of burnt, unworked flint. There was no other artefactual material. No sediments with environmental potential were encountered during the watching brief.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

During the restoration of meanders through the site, the works slightly impacted upon two sites, **OA 28** and **29**.

At this point in Harvestslade the stream is part of the natural sequence of meandering channels. The stream is at the mid point and has more energy and a higher volume of water. The gradient is gentle and lateral erosion has widened and deepened the channel. The river eroded laterally, to the right side then the left side, and formed bends. The force of the water erodes and undercuts the river bank on the outside of the bend where water flow has most energy due to decreased friction. Eventually as the bend becomes tighter there is a breakthrough and the stream essentially straightens itself. The works revealed the nature of the previous meander cut by the current stream, seen in the area of **OA 28** and **29**.

A small number of unworked burnt flints were uncovered in one of the upper deposits within the earlier meander. The origin of these was uncertain as they have been eroded from a nearby area either adjacent or upstream of the deposit. It is unknown as to whether the flints were burnt by natural or human means, nor was there any associated artefacts or dating material.

The archaeological watching brief was able to record deposits in the area of known archaeological features, where they were exposed by the works.



During the works no previously unknown archaeological sites and finds were encountered, nor were any identified that might have been exposed by works incorporating the wider scheme.

Appendix A. ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONTEXT INVENTORY

Context	Type	Depth (m)	Comments	Finds
1	Deposit	-	Geological natural: firm pale yellowish brown clay	-
2	Deposit	0.1-0.22	Topsoil: dark greyish brown silty clay, organic inclusions, occ flinty gravel, occ charcoal (O horizon)	-
3	Deposit	0.43	Channel deposit: friable mid yellowish brown silty clay with bands of sand, 30% flinty gravel,	-
4	Deposit	0.08	Channel deposit: firm pale grey silty clay, patches of yellowish brown clay, 25% flinty gravel	-
5	Deposit	0.29	Channel deposit: friable dark greyish brown silty clay (some sand patches), 20% flinty gravel	-
6	Deposit	0.26	Channel deposit: friable pale grey silty clay, 1% flinty gravel, 1% charcoal	-
7	Deposit	0.08-0.2	Channel deposit: friable-soft mid greyish black humic silty, peat, 1% flinty gravel	-
8	Deposit	0.23	Channel deposit: friable pale grey sandy silt, 25% patches of reddish brown silty clay, 1% flinty gravel, 1% charcoal	-
9	Deposit	0.19	Channel deposit: friable pale greyish brown silty clay, 2% flinty gravel, 1% charcoal	-
10	Deposit	0.3	Channel deposit: friable – soft black humic silt, peat, 1% flinty gravel, 1% charcoal	-
11	Deposit	0.25	Channel deposit: friable dark reddish brown silty clay, some patches of pale grey clay, 10% flinty gravel, 1% charcoal	-
12	Deposit	0.5	Channel deposit: friable pale grey silty clay, 25% patches of reddish brown clay, 10% flinty gravel, 1% charcoal	-
13	Deposit	0.4	Channel deposit: soft pale yellowish brown silty sand, 60% flinty gravel	-
14	Deposit	0.41	Channel deposit: firm pale reddish brown silty clay, 2% flinty gravel, 1% charcoal	-
15	Deposit	0.42	Channel deposit: firm pale grey silty clay, 15% patches of reddish brown clay, 1% gravel, 1% charcoal	-
16	Deposit	0.07	Channel deposit: firm pale reddish brown silty clay, 15% patches of grey clay , 1% flinty gravel, 1% charcoal	Burnt unworked flint (16 fragments)
17	Deposit	0.12	Channel deposit: firm pale grey silty clay, 2% flinty gravel, 1% charcoal	-
18	Deposit	0.24	Channel deposit: soft dark greyish brown (black patches) silty sand, humic silt, peat, 1% flinty gravel, 1% charcoal	-
19	Deposit	0.38	Channel deposit: friable – soft black humic silt, peat, 1% flinty gravel, 1% charcoal	-
20	Deposit	0.17	Channel deposit: friable mid reddish brown silty clay, 20% flinty gravel, 1% charcoal	-
21	Cut	0.98	Channel 'cut', erosional interface for original meander, aligned NE-SW	-



Appendix B. FINDS REPORT

B.1 Burnt unworked flint

By Geraldine Crann

Context	Description
16	16 fragments of burnt unworked flint, 299g.

Discussion and recommendations.

The burnt unworked flint is of low potential and requires no further work. Having been recorded it may be discarded.



Appendix C. BIBLIOGRAPHY AND REFERENCES

General

Department for Communities and Local Government, 2013 *National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)*

English Heritage, 2008 *Conservation Principles*

Hampshire County Council, 2012 *Hampshire Archaeological Strategy*

Hey, G and Hind, J, 2014 Solent Thames Research Framework for the Historic Environment: Resource Assessment and Research Agenda

Stagg, D, J, 1979. *New Forest Documents. AD 1244 – AD 1334*. Hampshire CC

Stagg, D, J, 1983 (a). *The Origin of the A & O Woods – An Archaeological View*. Proceedings of the Hampshire Field Club Archaeological Society (New Forest Section)

Stagg, D, J, 1983 (b). *A Calendar of New Forest Documents. The Fifteenth to the Seventeenth Centuries*. Hampshire CC

Stagg, D, J, 1992. *Silvicultural Inclosure in the New Forest from 1850 to 1877*. Proceedings of the Hampshire Field Club Archaeological Society

Tubbs, C, R, 1968 *The New Forest: An Ecological History*. David and Charles

Project Specific

LUC, July 2014, *Construction Environment Management Plan*

OA, May 2014, *Harvestslade, Burley, The New Forest, Desk based Assessment for the Forestry Commission*

OA, July 2014 *Harvestslade, Burley, The New Forest, Written Scheme of Investigation for the Forestry Commission*



Appendix D. SUMMARY OF SITE DETAILS

Site name:	Harvestslade, Burley, The New Forest, Hampshire
Site code:	A2015.39
Grid reference:	Centred at NGR SU 2073 0562
Type of watching brief:	One visit.
Date and duration of project:	One day 9 th September 2015
Area of site:	1-5ha
Summary of results:	<p>Oxford Archaeology South (OAS) was commissioned by The Forestry Commission to undertake an archaeological watching brief at Harvestslade, Burley, in the New Forest (centred on SU 2073 0562). The work was carried out as part of the planning application for the Wetlands Restoration Project. The work was undertaken over one day on the 9th September 2015.</p> <p>During the restoration of meanders through the area the works slightly impacted upon two sites, two sites where burnt flints are eroding from the stream bank, possibly relating to a burnt mound OA28 and 29. The works revealed the nature of the previous meander cut by the current stream, seen in the area of OA28 and 29.</p> <p>A small number of unworked burnt flints were uncovered in one of the upper deposits within the earlier meander. The origin of these was uncertain as they have been eroded from a nearby area either adjacent or upstream of the deposit. It is unknown as to whether the flints were burnt by natural or human means, nor was there any associated artefacts or dating material.</p> <p>The archaeological watching brief was able to record deposits in the area of known archaeological features, where they were exposed by the works.</p> <p>During the works no previously unknown archaeological sites and finds were encountered, nor were any identified that might have been exposed by works incorporating the wider scheme.</p>
Location of archive:	Deposition being arranged. Archive is currently held at OA's offices, Janus House, Osney Mead, Oxford and will be deposited with the Hampshire County Museum Service following completion of the project under the accession number: xxx



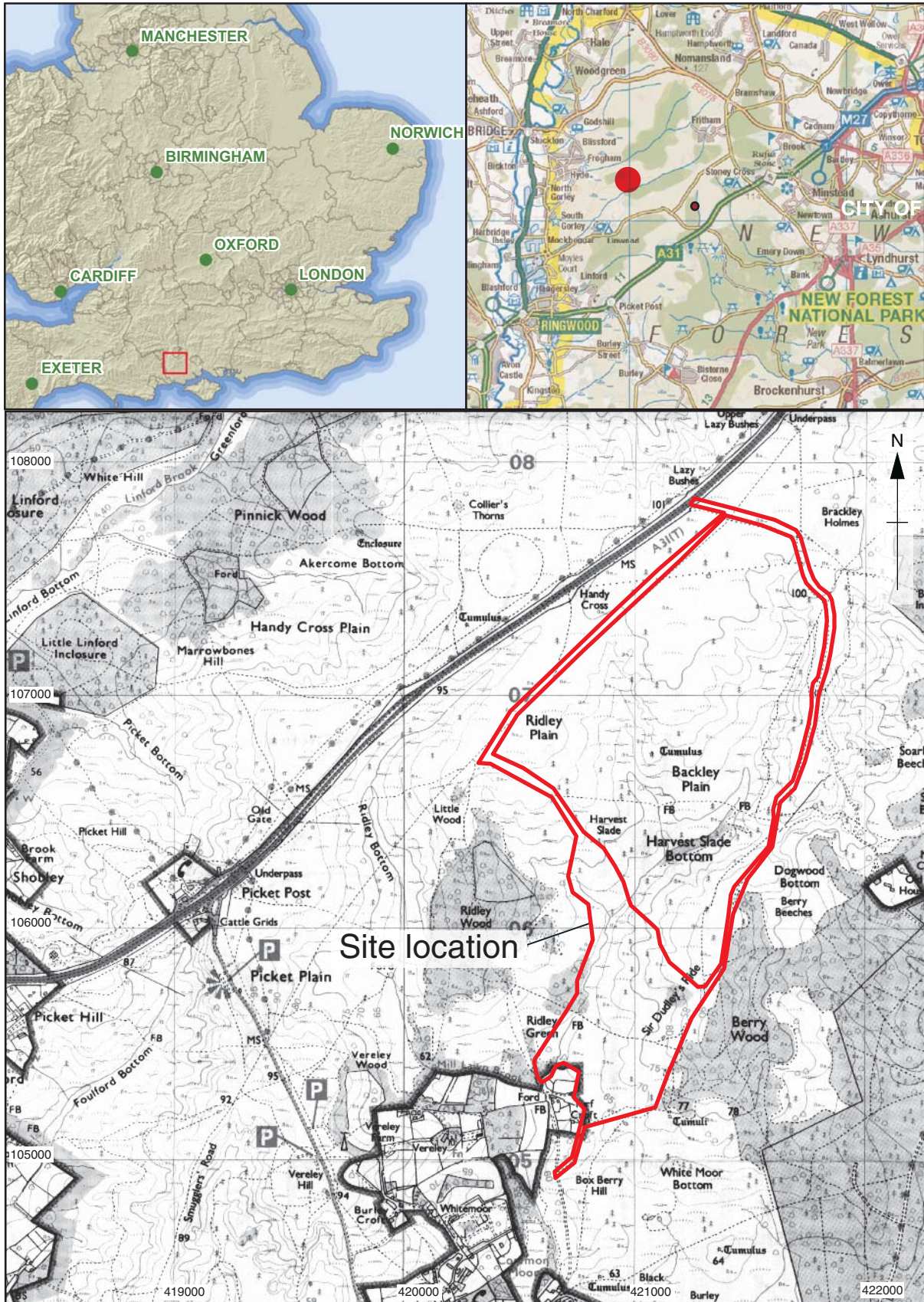
Plate 1: OA 27, work near possible mound, looking south-west



Plate 2: OA 28 - 29, section through stream bank showing previous meander, looking west



Plate 3: OA 28 - 29, section through stream bank showing previous meander, looking south-west



Reproduced from the Landranger 1:25,000 scale by permission of the Ordnance Survey on behalf of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office © Crown Copyright 2014. All rights reserved. Licence No. AL 100005569

Figure 1: Site location

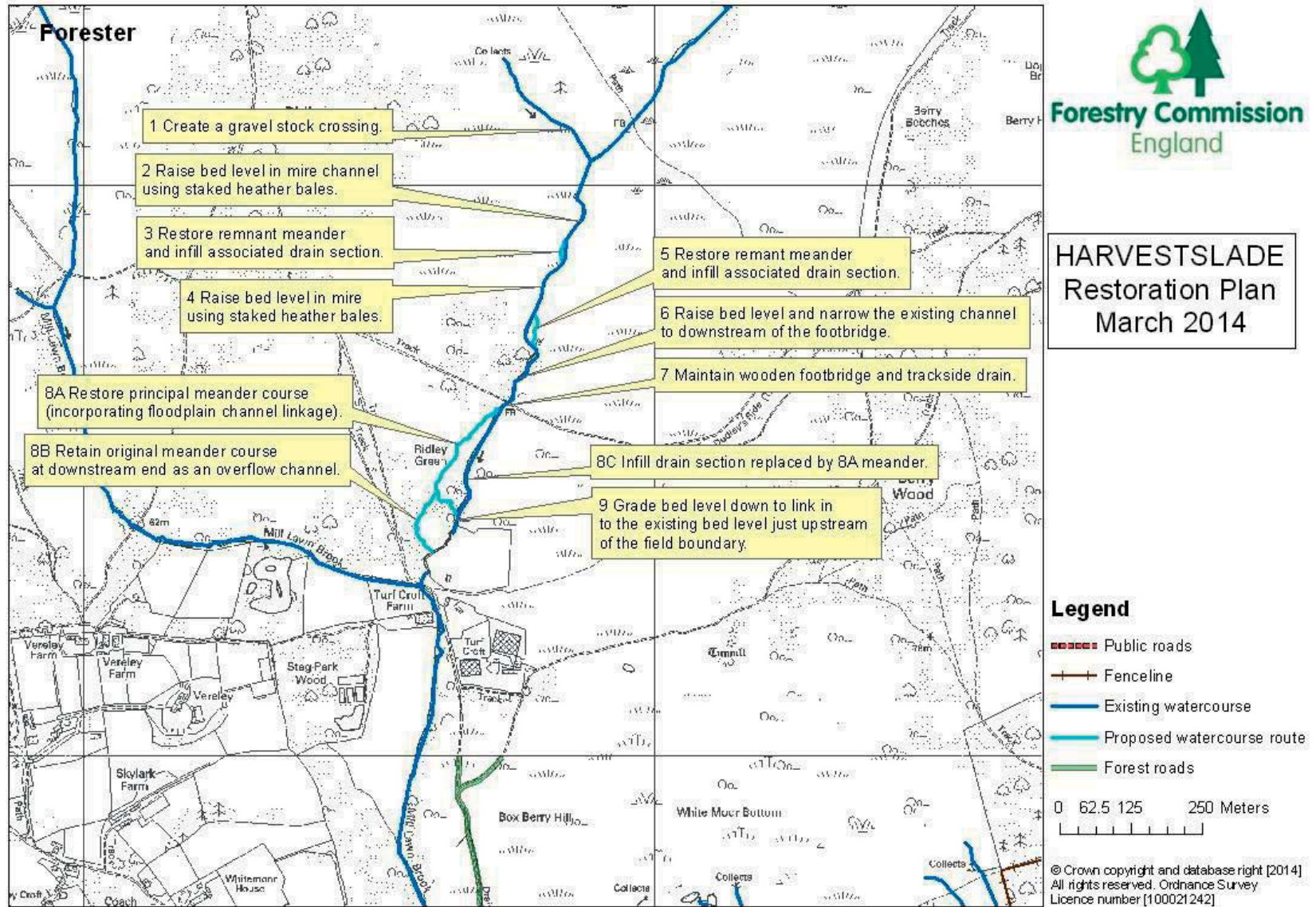
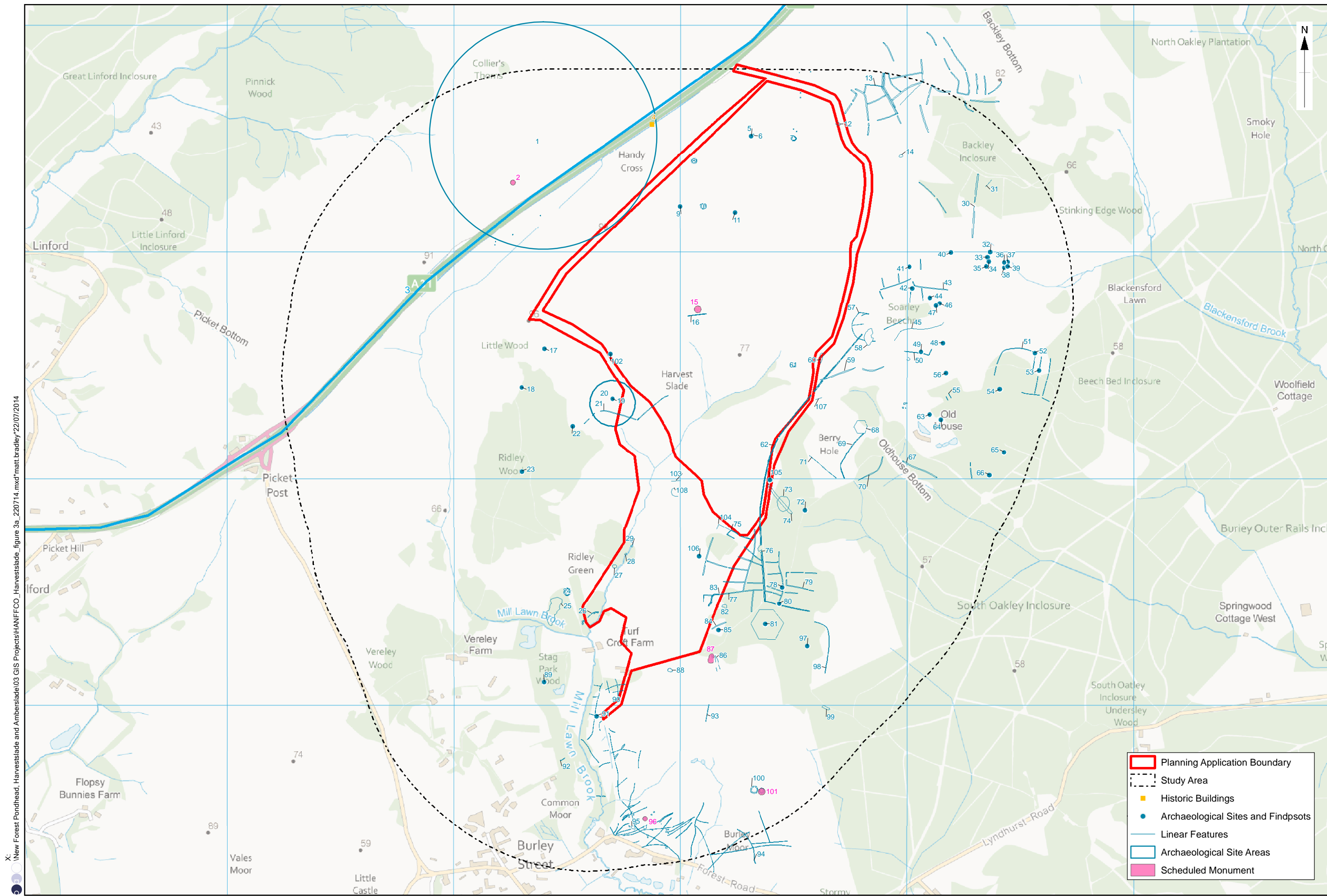


Figure 2: Proposed site plan (courtesy of Forestry Commission)



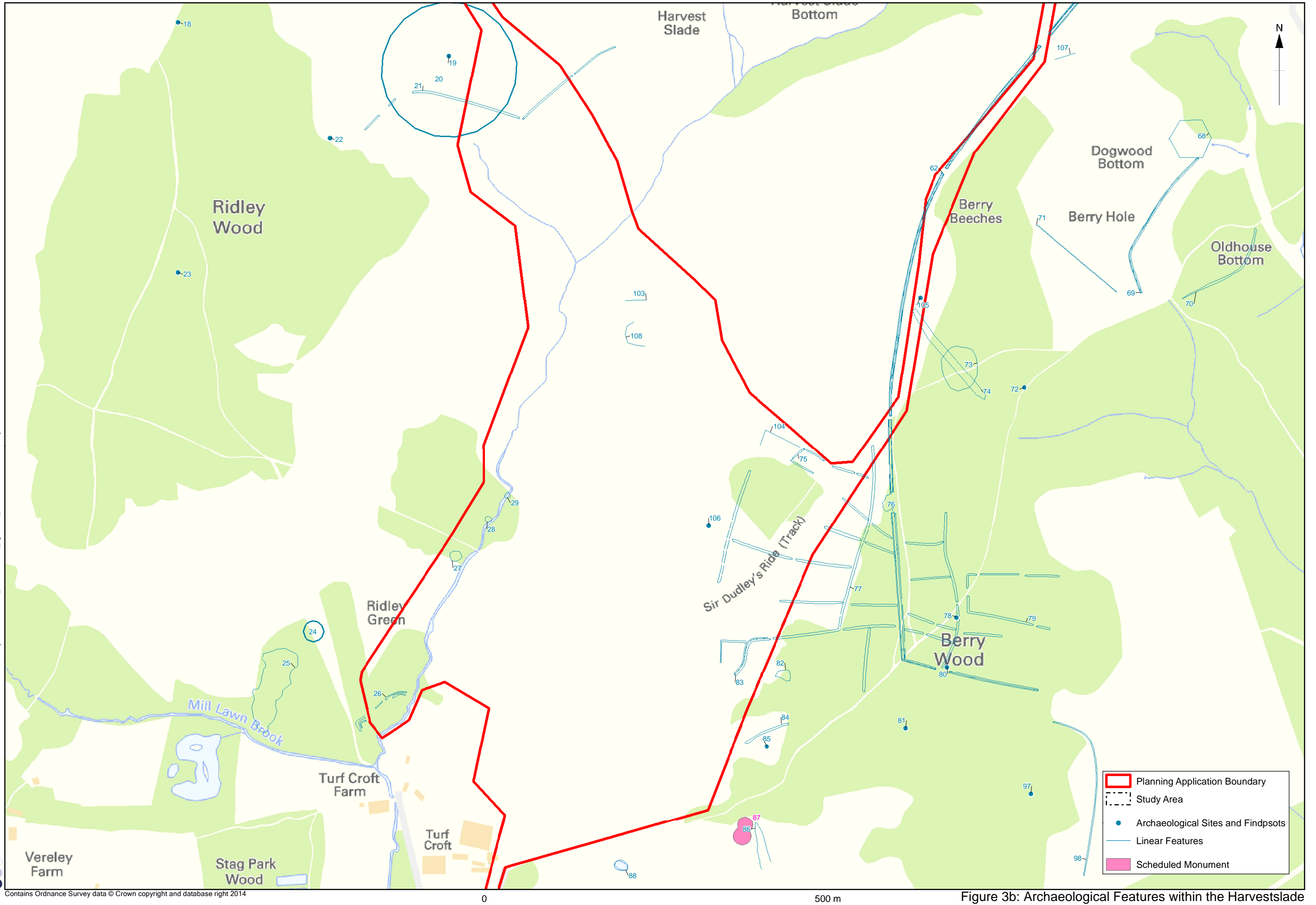
X:\New Forest Pondhead, Harvestslade and Amberlade\03 GIS Projects\HANFFCO_Harvestslade_figure 3a_220714.mxd\matt bradley*22/07/2014

Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2014

0 1 km
1:15,000 @ A3

Figure 3a: Archaeological Features within the Study Area

X:\New Forest Pondhead, Harvestslade and Amberlade\03 GIS Projects\HANFFCO_Harvestslade_figure 3b_140714.mxd*
matt.bradley*14/07/2014



Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2014

0 500 m

1:5,000 @ A3

Figure 3b: Archaeological Features within the Harvestslade Wetland Restoration Site



**Head Office/Registered Office/
OA South**

Janus House
Osney Mead
Oxford OX2 0ES

t: +44 (0) 1865 263 800
f: +44 (0) 1865 793 496
e: info@oxfordarchaeology.com
w: <http://oxfordarchaeology.com>

OA North

Mill 3
Moor Lane
Lancaster LA1 1QD

t: +44 (0) 1524 541 000
f: +44 (0) 1524 848 606
e: [oanorth@oxfordarchaeology.com](mailto: oanorth@oxfordarchaeology.com)
w: <http://oxfordarchaeology.com>

OA East

15 Trafalgar Way
Bar Hill
Cambridgeshire
CB23 8SQ

t: +44 (0) 1223 850500
e: [oaeast@oxfordarchaeology.com](mailto: oaeast@oxfordarchaeology.com)
w: <http://oxfordarchaeology.com>



*Chief Executive Officer
Ken Welsh, BSc, MCifA
Oxford Archaeology Ltd is a
Private Limited Company, N^o: 1618597
and a Registered Charity, N^o: 285627*