DigVentures



Earth Trust Visitor Centre:

Planning Phases 2 & 3: Archaeological Strip Map and Strip, Map and Sample (SMS) Excavations

Little Wittenham, Oxfordshire

Written Scheme of Investigation

Stuart Noon, Chris Casswell and Joshua Hogue

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Written Scheme of Investigation

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Purpose of document

This document has been prepared as a Written Scheme of Investigation for the Earth Trust, describing archaeological works associated with Planning Phases 2 & 3 of the Earth Trust's Gateway Project development. The purpose of this document is to provide an outline of planned fieldwork, aims and objectives of the work, and methodology to be employed.

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Project summary

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Social Value Act

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INTRODUCTION AND SCOPE

1.1 Project background

1.1.1 DigVentures has been appointed by the Earth Trust (hereafter the Client) to prepare a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for a programme of proposed works to be undertaken at the site of the Earth Trust Visitor Centre, formerly Hill Farm, Little Wittenham (hereafter the Site). The programme of works has been prepared in consultation with Richard Oram, Planning Archaeologist for Oxfordshire County Archaeological Services (hereafter OCAS) (planning application reference P16/S3133/FUL).

1.1.2 The development area, centered on SU56299257 (Figure 1), is located to the southwest of the Wittenham Clumps, off Little Wittenham Road, in the parish of Little Wittenham, Oxfordshire. The Site is situated on an area of Upper Greensand, comprising sandstone and siltstone geology at roughly 80m AOD (BGS 2019). Due to significant archaeological potential of the site, a condition has been placed on planning consent in order for the development to comply with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2019) and will be carried out in accordance with the relevant *Standards and guidance* of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA 2014).

1.1.3 The programme of works was originally designed as three main phases of development for the Earth Trust's Gateway Project all requiring some degree of archaeological works (see Stammitti-Campbell and Casswell 2018a, b). Planning Phase 1, the development of the skills and Learning Building was completed in 2018 (Casswell et al 2018). For a summary of this work see Section 2.1.6. This proposed programme of works incorporates Planning Phases 2 & 3: -

- Planning Phase 2, tree planting and infrastructure
- Planning Phase 3, roundhouse reconstruction and services.

1.1.4 The above phases of work require a stage specific WSI to be agreed in advance by the Planning Archaeologist for Oxfordshire County Council.

1.1.5 The current Written Scheme of Investigation specifies archaeological works to be undertaken during Planning Phase 2 & 3 of the development and incorporates material from an archaeological strategy which was defined previously by Oxford Archeology for the Earth Trust (OA 2016).

1.2 Scope of document

1.2.1 This WSI sets out the overarching strategy and archaeological methodology by which the archaeological contractor will implement the archaeological works relating to Planning Phases 2 & 3 of the development. In format and content, it conforms with current best practice and to the guidance outlined in the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Standards and Guidance* (2014). This WSI is to be submitted for approval to the Planning Archaeologist for Oxfordshire County Council who provides archaeological planning advice to the Local Planning Authority. Prior to the

commencement of archaeological works, a WSI specific to each stage is prepared and requires approval by the Planning Archaeologist.

1.2.2 This WSI follows the completed Planning Phase 1, the development of the skills and Learning Building area and comprises the methodology relating to a strip, map and sample of Areas A – D incorporating an area for the purpose of public engagement involving a community dig, finds lab sessions and schools sessions. These works relate to Planning Phases 2 & 3 as previously outlined (Stammitti-Campbell and Casswell 2018a, b) as illustrated in Figure 2.

1.3 Site location and geology

1.3.1 The site is located at NGR SU 56290 92570, and is part of the Earth Trust Centre, which is situated to the southwest of the Wittenham Clumps, off Little Wittenham Road, in the parish of Little Wittenham, Oxfordshire (Figure 1). The Earth Trust Centre occupies the west end of a gently shelving plateau south of the more westerly of the Clumps at around 90m AOD, and the ground drops away more steeply to the west and south. The area of the site has been cultivated for a long period of time (Rhodes 1948). Historic mapping and aerial photography of the area around the Earth Trust Centre indicate that cultivation extends back before the 19th century, possibly into the medieval period (Allen et al. 2010, Plate 1.9; 1843 Tithe Map).

1.3.2 The proposed development comprises the area of the current Earth Trust Centre with an extension to the southwest, south and east of up to 100m wide. It does not extend north of Little Wittenham Road. The development links existing access for visitors to the minor road over Sires Hill, which runs from Brightwell to the east with White Lees Farm and Long Wittenham to the west. The new road will run southwest of the Earth Trust Centre, joining an existing track continuing 500m downslope along a field boundary and across a second field.

1.3.3 The geology is shown as Upper Greensand – sandstone and siltstone (BGS 2019). Streams rise 200-300m south of the south end of the proposed development and drain south-eastwards towards Brightwell. The land at the south end of the proposed development is often wet and was shown as `liable to flooding' on early OS maps before drainage was improved.

2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORIC BACKGROUND

2.1 Archaeology at Wittenham Clumps

2.1.1 The site lies some 700m west of Castle Hill, which is encircled by the ramparts of an Iron Age hillfort and is a Scheduled Ancient Monument (Oxfordshire SAM No. 208). Buried within the hillfort is a Late Bronze Age hilltop enclosure, together with features of Iron Age, Roman and medieval date (Allen et al. 2010). A number of archaeological findspots are known in and around the hillfort (information from the Oxfordshire HER). These include Anglo Saxon Pottery (SMR Number: 9001) and a Roman bracelet (SMR Number: 11605) found immediately within the hillfort, and Iron Age pottery (SMR Number: 27616), a Roman bracelet (SMR Number: 3163) and Roman awl (SMR Number: 3164) found immediately outside it.

2.1.2 The area surrounding the hillfort and including the proposed development site has been the subject of a series of archaeological investigations, beginning with work by Rhodes (1948), who found a Roman building (SMR Number: 3161) approximately 200m east of the Earth Trust Centre. Fieldwalking was carried out in advance of the construction of one of the gas pipelines that now crosses the proposed road (Brooks 1992), and this suggested the presence of a Neolithic and Bronze Age activity (SMR Number: 26095), later Iron Age prehistoric activity (SMR Number. 3160) and Roman settlement (SMR Number: 17392) immediately south and east of the Earth Trust Centre. In 1995, a geophysical survey of 2 ha. east and south-east of the Earth Trust Centre revealed a north – south aligned boundary cut by a triple-ditched enclosure (SMR Number: 16818), with internal pits (Price 1995), although geophysical survey along the line of the gas pipeline failed to identify any significant anomalies (Lingard and Wilson 1995, 2). In 1999, fieldwalking organised by the Northmoor Trust (now the Earth Trust) east of the centre gave similar indications of human activity spanning from prehistory to the Roman era.

2.1.3 A programme of archaeological investigations comprising fieldwalking, geophysical survey, and excavations was carried out between 2002 and 2005 by Oxford Archaeology during the conversion of the redundant Hill Farm (SMR Number: 26376) into the Earth Trust Centre. A complete account of the results is deposited in the Oxfordshire HER (Allen et al. 2006), and the work directly related to Castle Hill and the adjacent settlement (including the area of the Earth Trust Centre) was published (Allen et al. 2010). The publication includes reference to all previous work on the site and a summary of the most relevant information is given below. One further archaeological feature was found in the vicinity of hill farm during a watching brief for a Dipping Pond. This consisted or a dark linear feature running SSW-NNE which appeared to have been cut at least twice and then filled during the Roman Period (SMR Number: 26223)

2.1.4 Fieldwalking carried out in the fields immediately to the southwest and south of the Earth Trust Centre in 2002-3 recovered a widespread scatter of worked flint. Earlier fieldwalking in this area (Eeles pers. comm.) had apparently also recovered worked flints. This suggests a focus of earlier prehistoric activity west of the Earth Trust Centre. An Early Neolithic pit was excavated at the western edge of the present Visitor's Car Park, confirming activity here (Allen et al. 2010, 109). The 2002-3 fieldwalking also confirmed the presence of later prehistoric and Roman pottery close to the Earth Trust Centre on the south and east, but also included a concentration of Roman ceramic building material south-east of the Earth Trust Staff Car Park (SMR Number: 26223). It was thought that this might represent the remains of a Roman building or other structure.

2.1.5 A number of incomplete cropmarks (SMR Numbers: 15360, 15361, 15362) are recorded south of the Earth Trust Centre in the HER, and these and the marks recorded by Price's geophysical survey have now been confirmed and expanded by the more recent geophysical surveys (Allen et al. 2010, figures 5.2 and 5.4). Aerial photographs taken by Stuart Ainsworth of Time Team during 2003 also showed further cropmarks correlating with the geophysical survey results (ibid., plate 5.2). The more recent geophysical surveys covered the area around the Earth Trust Centre for a radius of 200m, and so include all the proposed development immediately adjacent to it. Geophysical survey data showed several small circular, sub-

rectangular and trapezoidal enclosures (SMR Number: 28679), the first characteristic of Iron Age roundhouse enclosures, together with a dense spread of pits. It is possible that the Bronze Age, Iron Age and Roman Pottery found by Dr H. Watts in 1937 from a near ploughed out rampart (SMR Number: 3154) relate to these features. West of the Earth Trust, Saxon and Roman remains including an iron lamp stand, brass key and large cut stones were identified in late 19th and early 20th century excavations while excavating for the foundations of a barn (SMR Number: 3158).

2.2 Previous archaeological investigation

2.2.1 In advance of the planning application, geotechnical test pits were dug along the line of the proposed new road in 2015, and these were monitored, and any archaeology recorded by Oxford Archaeology in line with the brief provided by Richard Oram of OCAS (Oram 2015a). Only one archaeological feature was found (OA 2015). An archaeological evaluation of the site was also requested by Richard Oram, and this was carried out in 2015 by Oxford Archaeology in accordance with the brief provided (Oram 2015b). In the light of the known archaeological background immediately around the Earth Trust Centre, investigation in this area was kept to a minimum. A report upon the results of the watching brief and evaluation was submitted to Richard Oram of OCAS and approved (OA 2015). The principal additions to the previously known archaeological background are summarised below.

2.2.2 The southern limit of the dense archaeological activity suggested by the geophysical survey was broadly confirmed by the evaluation trenches. A single pit of Roman date was found in Trench 20 south of the Roman trackway crossing Trench 19, but no other definitely archaeological features south of that until the southernmost field bordering Sires Hill, where a boundary ditch of early post-medieval date was found. The evaluation trenches in the area of dense geophysical anomalies interpreted as archaeological features successfully located most of these. Confidence in the geophysical survey interpretation has been strengthened by the evaluation.

2.2.3 The evaluation trenches also demonstrated the presence of small pits and postholes, too small to locate by normal geophysical survey. The postholes were concentrated within circular or penannular ditches indicated by the geophysical survey, and support the interpretation of these as the ditches surrounding Iron Age roundhouses and other structures. No trace of a Roman masonry building was found south-east of the Earth Trust Centre where fieldwalking had indicated a concentration of Roman tile. Either this was a wooden building roofed with tile, a smaller structure such as a corndrier that was not located by the evaluation trench, or it simply represents an area of disposal of ceramic building materials.

2.2.4 Roman activity appeared to be concentrated in the second and third centuries AD, as suggested by the previous fieldwalking and limited excavations. Some first and fourth century activity was also indicated. Two extended Roman inhumation burials were found, both towards the edge of the area of dense activity, one on the south-west (OA 2015, fig. 3 Trench 14 and plate 4) and the other on the south (ibid., fig. 3 Trench 17 and plate 8). Combined with a later Roman burial found west of the Earth

Trust Centre in 2005, they suggest a pattern of peripheral scattered burials in this period, a common phenomenon on rural Roman settlements.

2.2.5 DigVentures was previously commissioned by the Earth Trust to undertake a strip, map and sample excavation on the proposed site of the new Skills and Learning Building as part of the first stage of Planning Phase 1 of the Earth Trust's Gateway Project. Fieldwork took place between 8th and 29th October 2018 (DigVentures project code: WIT18). This stage of the project was designed to investigate suspected archaeological remains between the existing office building and the staff car park, where Iron Age and Roman remains had been recorded before. The work was conducted in the area immediately east of the existing office building where a scout hut had previously stood. This fieldwork followed a watching brief conducted in July 2018 during the demolition of the scout hut. The scout hut, along with several trees and shrubs were removed to make way for the development of the Skills and Learning Building. During the watching brief, no archaeological remains were disturbed.

2.2.6 In October 2018, the footprint of the former scout hut and nearby area was subject to an archaeological strip, map and sample excavation. The earliest archaeological feature encountered was a Late Bronze Age or Early Iron Age pit in the southeast part of the site. The majority of features investigated dated to the Early or Middle Iron Age with a noticeable lack of material dating to the Late Iron Age. Evidence for Roman activity on the site was particularly scarce and is only represented through a small number of features and a limited number of artefacts. Similarly, the occurrence of medieval and post-medieval features was also limited. Special deposits of pottery were found in three Iron Age pits. These pits contained very large assemblages of pottery in good condition, including near-complete vessels and a decorated bowl. Additionally, part of an Iron Age cremation was identified in the upper fills of one of the backfilled storage pits. Overall, the excavation suggested that the Iron Age settlement in the area may have been more comprehensive than originally believed. While the full extent is still unknown, it is likely that there are further storage pits to the east and north of the site (Casswell et al 2018).

3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

3.1 Archaeological aims

3.1.1 The areas of highest archaeological potential are concentrated around the periphery of the development area, and include known areas of Neolithic, Iron Age and Roman activity. While some elements of the archaeological resource will be more extensively covered than others (e.g. the Roman trackway), the areas investigated provide the opportunity to extend previous investigations, allowing for clarification of the true distribution, extent and nature of archaeological resources.

3.1.2 The list below takes into account the aims and objectives for the Iron Age and Roman periods set out in the Regional Research Framework for the Solent-Thames Region (Hey and Hind 2014):

- To establish whether remains of any periods other than those already confirmed in the dense area of archaeological activity around the Earth Trust Centre are

present in the areas to be investigated archaeologically, and if so, to date and characterise the exposed remains, and if possible to provide an indication of the environment, contacts, status and significance of activity in these periods.

- For periods already known to be present, to establish whether their extent is greater than presently known from previous survey and excavation.
- If further Neolithic features are found, to investigate whether the occupation was of short or long duration, the types and range of activities being carried out at the site, whether further information on the environment can be obtained, and to place the site within the context of other Neolithic activity in the area.
- To investigate the character of settlement activity within the areas to be investigated archaeologically in the Early, Middle and Late Iron Age, and if and how it changed over time.
- To investigate whether there was any difference in the types of activities carried out across the development area within each phase of the Iron Age.
- To investigate the range of 'special deposits' suggestive of ritual activity found in Iron Age pits and ditches in the areas to be investigate archaeologically, and what light this might shed on Iron Age beliefs.
- Should long sequences of intercutting Iron Age features rich in artefacts occur, to recover good assemblages of pottery to assist in refining artefact chronologies.
- The excavations should aim to recover evidence to assist in clarifying the extent of late Iron Age and early Roman activity within the proposed development area, to distinguish to which of the two periods belong, and whether changes in the character of activity occur between them.
- To clarify the layout of the Roman settlement within the proposed area of development area, and in particular, the relationship between the trackway and north-south ditches visible on the geophysical survey.
- The excavations should aim to clarify the character, complexity, status and duration of Roman settlement within the proposed development area, and the relationship of this to the probable villa enclosure 200m to the north-east.
- To investigate whether inhumations are the only type of human burial evidence of the Roman period within the proposed development area, and to gather further information of the distribution and date of inhumation burials here in the Roman period.

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

4.1 Monitoring of archaeological works

4.1.1 A programme of archaeological works will be carried out in advance of Planning Phases 2 and 3. A breakdown of the development stages has been previously been provided by DigVentures (Stammitti-Campbell & Casswell 2018a). Updated programme delivery schedules based on minimum and maximum levels of archaeology are given in Appendix 1 and 2.

4.1.2 DigVentures will inform OCAS prior to the commencement of fieldwork. There are four areas to be stripped designated A-D (Figure 2). All these areas have been identified for strip and mapping, or SMS excavation. All stripping of the Site will be

undertaken in one mobilization beginning the week commencing 4th November 2019. A summary of the programme delivery dates is given according in Table 1.

4.1.3 Areas to be stripped of topsoil will be done so under constant archaeological supervision down to the archaeologically relevant layer. The area will be cleaned and all features will be recorded on plan. Once the planning phase is completed a site visit will need to be undertaken and the sampling strategy agreed between the archaeological contractor (acting on behalf of the Client) and OCAS. A copy of the pre-excavation plan will be submitted prior to these meetings.

Stage	Area	Size	Method	Topsoil Stripping & Review Dates
Stage 2	B – sewage tank only	60m^2	SMS	4th – 11th Nov
Stage 3	C	3,200m^2	SMS Strip map	4th- 11th Nov
Stage 4	D	3,350m^2	SMS	11th – 18th Nov
Stage 5	A	2,945m^2	SMS Strip map	18th – 25th Nov
Stage 6	B	1,400m^2	Strip map	11th - 18th Nov (based on minimum archaeology) 25th Nov - 2nd Dec (based on maximum archeology)
Stage 7	Community Fieldwork	An area will be stripped for the proposed community dig which will be discussed and finalised, in terms of area and strategy, once the strip and map has commenced	SMS	March 2020 tbc

Table 1: Stages, areas, and topsoil stripping and review dates

4.2 Archaeological strip and mapping / excavation methodology

4.2.1 All work will comply to CIfA *Standard and guidance for archaeological excavation* (2014). All works will be undertaken in accordance with the standards set out within the WSI provided by DigVentures and the requirements of OCAS. The Client will afford reasonable access in order that all archaeological features and deposits revealed during excavations and groundwork can be investigated and recorded appropriately.

4.2.2 All areas identified for strip and mapping, or SMS excavation (Figure 2) will be stripped of overburden deposits with a mechanical excavator under continuous archaeological supervision down to the first archaeological horizon. All machine excavation will be carried out under constant archaeological supervision using a toothless bucket, and will include visually scanning spoil for artefacts. The area will then be assessed by a professional archaeologist to establish the extent of survival and preservation of archaeological remains. Stripping will continue in this manner, removing material in successive spits until significant archaeological remains are

encountered or, should buried archaeology be absent, the natural horizon is reached. Spoil will be removed in a systematic order, with overburden and topsoil kept separate from subsoil, and stored in designated areas (Figure 2).

4.2.3 For areas of archeological strip and mapping, archaeological features exposed at maximum impact depth will be cleaned by hand if necessary, photographed and surveyed using a GPS. Exposed fills will be described and any surface finds recovered, but no further archaeological excavation will take place.

4.2.4 Where archeological SMS excavation is planned, a sufficient sample of each feature type/deposit will be examined in order to establish the date, nature, extent and condition of the archaeological remains, encompassing the following percentage interventions:

- 100% excavation of structural remains and other areas of significant and specific activity (domestic, industrial, religious, hearths, 'special'/patterned deposits in pits or ditches etc.);
- 10% of non-structural linear features, including all intersections, terminals and at least one 'clean' intersection to minimise the risk of intrusive and/or residual finds;
- 50% sample of all pits;
- All post and stake holes that relate to specialised activities will be subject to a 100% sample;
- Post and stake holes that do not relate to specialised activities will be subject to a 50% sample.

4.2.5 In the event that unexpectedly complex and widespread archaeological remains are revealed, the Client and OCAS will be informed in order that the provisions of this WSI may be reviewed. Archaeological trenches, the location of archaeological finds of particular interest and environmental samples taken will be surveyed using a Total Station or GPS and tied in to the Ordnance Survey. Variations to the WSI and Method Statement will be agreed in advance with the Client and OCAS. The trenches will not be backfilled without the approval of OCAS.

4.3 Finds and environmental samples

4.3.1 Finds will be treated in accordance with the relevant guidance given in the Chartered Institute for Archaeologist's *Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation* (revised 2014), and the *Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials* (2014), excepting where they are superseded by statements made below. Archaeological material will be handled and sorted following advice in Watkinson and Neal (1998).

4.3.2 All artefacts will be retained from excavated contexts, except features or deposits undoubtedly of modern date. In these circumstances, sufficient artefacts will only be retained to elucidate the date and function of the feature or deposit. Finds recovered will be assessed by appropriately qualified specialists, who will examine the finds to provide an identification, date and provenance of the material, and will also evaluate the significance of the assemblage.

4.3.3 All artefacts from the investigation will, as a minimum, be washed, counted, weighed and identified. Any stratified ironwork will be x-rayed and stored in a stable condition along with other fragile and delicate material. Suitable material, primarily the pottery and non-ferrous metalwork, will be scanned to assess the date range of the assemblage. The results of this scan will be appended to the submitted report.

4.3.4 Bulk environmental soil samples for plant macrofossils, small animal bones and other small artefacts will be taken from appropriate sealed and dateable archaeological contexts (each context will normally be sampled). Samples of between 40-60 litres will be taken or 100% of smaller contexts. Samples will not be taken from the intersection of features. Bulk environmental soil samples will be processed by flotation and scanned to assess the environmental potential of deposits, but will not be fully analysed. The residues and sieved fractions will be recorded and retained with the project archive. A statement on the environmental potential of excavated deposits will be included to the evaluation report. Environmental finds will be treated in accordance with relevant guidance, including reference to the following Historic England guidance documents;

- 2011 Environmental Archaeology: A Guide to the Theory and Practice of Methods, from Sampling and Recovery to Post-excavation (second edition)
- 2014 Animal Bones and Archaeology: Guidelines for Best Practice
- 2015 Geoarchaeology: Using earth sciences to understand the archaeological record

4.3.5 The project manager will ensure that the results of palaeoenvironmental investigation, industrial residue assessments, analyses and other scientific analyses are included in a full evaluation report.

4.4 Human remains

4.4.1 In the event of discovery of any human remains, the OCAS will be informed immediately. Any remains will be left in situ, covered and protected, until the Client, Coroner and Local Planning Authority Advisor have been informed. Where development will unavoidably disturb them, they will be fully recorded, excavated and removed from the site subject to compliance with the relevant Ministry of Justice Licence, which will be obtained by DigVentures.

4.4.2 Should human remains be excavated, all excavation and post-excavation will be in accordance with the standards set out in CIfA Technical Paper 13 *Excavation and post-excavation treatment of cremated and inhumed remains* (1993) and Historic England 2004 *Human Bones from Archaeological Sites A guideline for best practice for producing human osteological assessments and analytical reports.* The final placing of human remains following analysis will be subject to the requirements of the Ministry of Justice Licence.

4.5 Treasure

4.5.1 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, British Museum and OCAS. Advice on reporting and

management of any Treasure finds will be sought from the appropriate Finds Liaison Officer.

5 PUBLIC IMPACT AND ENGAGEMENT

5.1 Accessible archaeology

5.1.1 DigVentures specialises in delivering participatory archaeological projects in collaboration with communities, researching and recording the past to professional standards. Earth Trust has identified the ambition to include public impact and engagement throughout the development programme, linked in with the archaeological works. The desired outcomes for public engagement and participation within the project have been articulated below.

5.1.2 DigVentures will offer a range of opportunities for local community members, school children and visitors to the area to get involved and learn more about the archaeology of Wittenham Clumps. Working closely with the wider project team at Earth Trust and responding to allowances within the development schedule, appropriate participation opportunities should include a community dig, guided site tours, finds laboratory sessions and an embedded public programme of events and school's sessions. Specifically, this will;

- involve volunteers in digging and supervised finds handling and processing sessions during the excavation, learning how archaeological materials are recovered and managed from professional staff
- engage with local school children with DigVentures' CyberDig sessions
- host a series of open-days where visitors will enjoy a guided tour of the site
- reach thousands through digital engagement with project microsite
- provide full access to the archaeological results via the project microsite as the trenches, finds and feature are recorded
- disseminate results of the excavations via media, broadcast, print and popular publications.

5.1.3 During the excavation, regular site tours will be included as appropriate, providing opportunities for local community members and visitors to the area to look around the excavations. A public programme will aim to present the results of the excavation and the online archaeological archive using DigVentures unique Digital Dig Team software will provide direct access to the finds and features we record. Results should be published directly onto the project microsite, providing live updates of both technical data and social media.

5.1.4 Following the excavations, a community fieldwork project will be undertaken in which volunteers will be able to learn some of the skills necessary for becoming an archaeologist. An area will be stripped for the proposed community dig which will be discussed and finalised, in terms of area and strategy, once the strip and map has commenced. Each volunteer will learn a variety of archaeological skills as guided through the DigVentures Fieldschool Curriculum (Appendix 3) by professionally qualified archaeologists. All work will conform to relevant guidelines including the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' (2014) *Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation*.

6 POST-EXCAVATION AND REPORTING

6.1 Archaeological fieldwork report

6.1.1 Within six weeks of completion of all fieldwork, a draft report setting out the results will be produced and forwarded to the Client and OCAS for approval. The report will be prepared in accordance with the guidance given in the CIfA *Standard and Guidance for excavation* (Revised 2014) and CIfA *Standard and Guidance for an archaeological watching brief* (Revised 2014), except where superseded by statements below. On approval, a final of the report will be submitted the CHER and a digital copy uploaded to OASIS within two weeks of approval.

6.1.2 Emphasis will be given to placing the results into the context of the archaeology of the region, and their significance in the context of the priorities outlined in the research framework for the Regional Research Framework for the Solent-Thames Region (Hey and Hind 2015). The report will comply with the requirements of OCAS and, in any case, may include:

- a non-technical summary
- a site location plan to at least 1:10,000 scale and with an 8-figure grid reference
- the site code, planning application number, and dates of work carried out
- aims, objectives and methodology of the work undertaken
- a summary by category of the material types recovered
- a summary of the palaeoenvironmental evidence
- results and conclusions, including 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, the, known and projected archaeological deposits and the extent and nature of colluvial and/or alluvial deposits, including od heights
- tabulation of finds data by context and by material type
- tabulation of contexts and archaeological features recorded
- statement of archive location

6.1.3 The preparation of the report may involve the following elements:

- the conservation of appropriate material, including x-rays of ironwork
- the spot dating of all pottery from excavated contexts. Spot dating will be corroborated by scanning of other categories of material
- the preparation of a preliminary phased site matrix with supporting lists of contexts by type (ditch fill, pit fill etc.), by spot-dated phase (early bronze age, middle iron age, roman etc.), by structural grouping (e.g. contexts by pit, by building etc.), supported by preliminary phase plans
- a statement on each category of material, including reference to quantity, provenance, range and variety, condition and existence of other primary sources
- the selection and prioritisation of bulk soil samples taken for environmental and artefactual data in the light of preliminary phasing. sieving, processing and scanning of selected soil samples will be undertaken and an assessment statement on charred food and plant remains, including references as for the categories of material

- a statement of potential for each material category and for the data collection as a whole will be prepared, including specific questions that can be answered and the potential value of the data to local, regional and national investigation priorities

6.1.4 All specialist reporting will be undertaken by experienced specialists, including;

- Animal bone – Hannah Russ
- Environmental – Rosalind McKenna
- Geoarchaeology – Joanne MacKenzie
- Prehistory pottery – Emily Edwards
- Roman pottery – Rob Perrin
- Human bone – Natasha Powers
- Medieval / post medieval pottery – Stephanie Ratkái
- Glass – Cecily Cropper
- Lithics – Joshua Hogue
- Small finds and leather – Quita Mould

6.1.5 Where appropriate and subject to further agreement, further analysis may be undertaken and the results published in a journal appropriate to the significance of finds.

7 ARCHIVE

7.1 Preparation and deposition

7.1.1 The complete project archive will be prepared in accordance with the CIfA *Standard and Guidance for the creation, compilation, transfer and deposition of archaeological archives* (2014), and in line with guidance from the Oxfordshire County Council.

7.1.2 The Earth Trust Visitor Centre unique archaeological event number will be clearly marked on any documentation relating to the work. The material archive from the project, including the finds and subject to the wishes of the landowner will be deposited at the County Archive Facility. Transfer of Title will be secured from the landowner where agreement has been achieved to deposit the archive with the County Archive Facility.

7.1.3 Guidelines for preparation and deposition have been fully reviewed to ensure that the curator's requirements can be fully met. Deposition of the Digital Archive will follow guidelines outlined by the Archaeological Data Service (ADS 2015), and a digital version of the project archive will be deposited with ADS.

8 PROJECT MANAGEMENT, STAFFING AND PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

8.1 Staffing

8.1.1 The fieldwork will be directed and supervised by Chris Casswell MCIfA, Head of Fieldwork, DigVentures, supported by a team of professional archaeologists, who will be on site, having been given prior notification by the Client, as soon as groundworks are being undertaken that could have an impact on potential

archaeological features. No groundworks that could have an impact on extant archaeology should be undertaken prior to the archaeological excavation if it has been determined that mitigation is required. The overall responsibility for the conduct and management of the project will be held by one of DigVentures' Projects Directors, Brendon Wilkins MCIfA, who will visit the fieldwork as appropriate to monitor progress and to ensure that the scope of works is adhered to. The appointed Projects Director and Head of Fieldwork will be involved in all phases of the project through to its completion.

8.1.2 The analysis of the finds and environmental data will be undertaken by DigVentures' core staff or external specialists (identified above), using DigVentures' standard pro forma recording system. The work will be carried out under the supervision of the following departmental managers under the overall direction of the Projects Director. Further information on DigVentures' external finds and environmental specialists can be provided on request.

8.2 Quality and professional standards

8.2.1 DigVentures is a Registered Organisation with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists. All senior managers are MCIfA registered. The company endorses the *Code of conduct* of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists and complies with the Institutes' *Standards and guidance* documents.

8.2.2 All core staff employed by DigVentures are appropriately qualified and employed in line with Chartered Institute for Archaeologists *Code of conduct*. DigVentures operates a Project Management System based on MoRPHE. All projects are undertaken under the direction of the Project Manager who is responsible to the Projects Director, who ensures the maintenance of quality standards within the organisation. The Managing Director has ultimate responsibility for all of the company's work. CVs of core staff can be found in the Appendices.

9 INSURANCE, HEALTH AND SAFETY

9.1 Policy and Risk Assessment

9.1.1 Health and safety considerations will be of paramount importance in conducting all fieldwork. Safe working practices will override archaeological considerations at all times. DigVentures will ensure that all work is carried out in accordance with its company Health and Safety Policy (2018), to standards defined in The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, and The Management of Health and Safety Regulations 1992, and in accordance with the SCAUM (Standing Conference of Archaeological Unit Managers) health and safety manual Health and Safety in Field Archaeology (1996). Trench excavation and design shall conform to Health and Safety legislation, incorporating current best engineering practice where possible.

9.1.2 A Risk Assessment will be undertaken in advance of fieldwork, under the direction of Chris Casswell (Head of Fieldwork) and approved by Brendon Wilkins (Projects Director) in liaison with the Client and OCAS. A copy will be given to OCAS prior to the commencement of works. DigVentures holds public liability insurance

(£5,000,000), employers liability insurance (£10,000,000) and professional indemnity insurance (£5,000,000).

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DigVentures

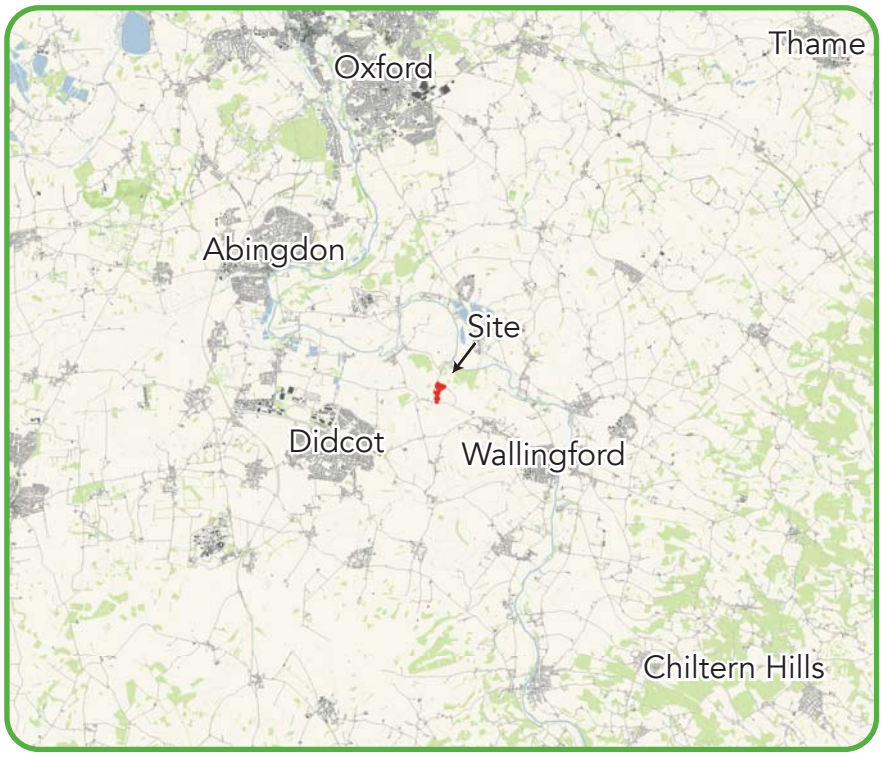




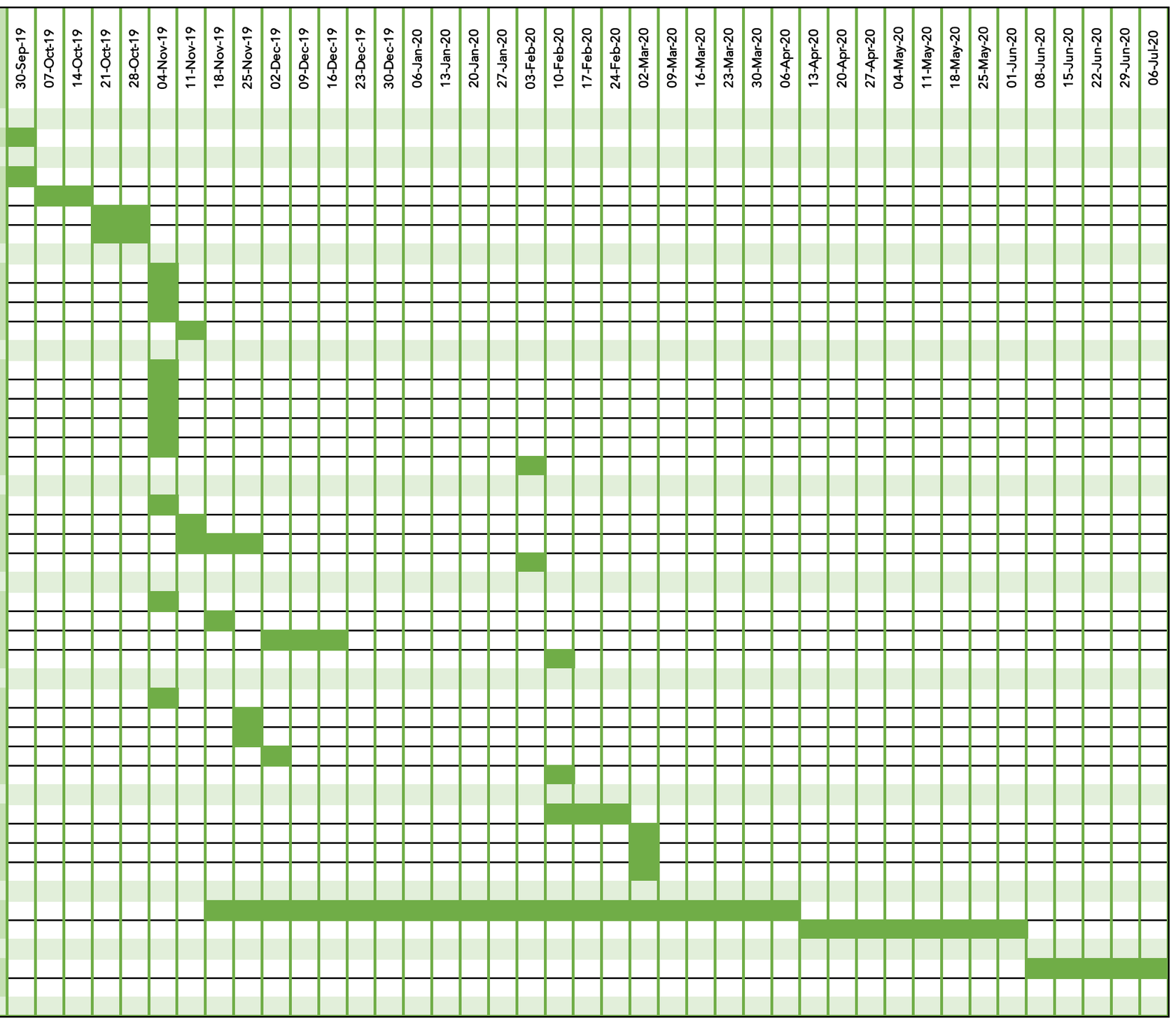
Figure 1 - Earth Trust: Site location



Figure 2 - Gateway Project staged plan of archaeological works in Phases 2 & 3

APPENDIX 1 – PROGRAMME DELIVERY FOR MINIMUM LEVEL OF ARCHAEOLOGY

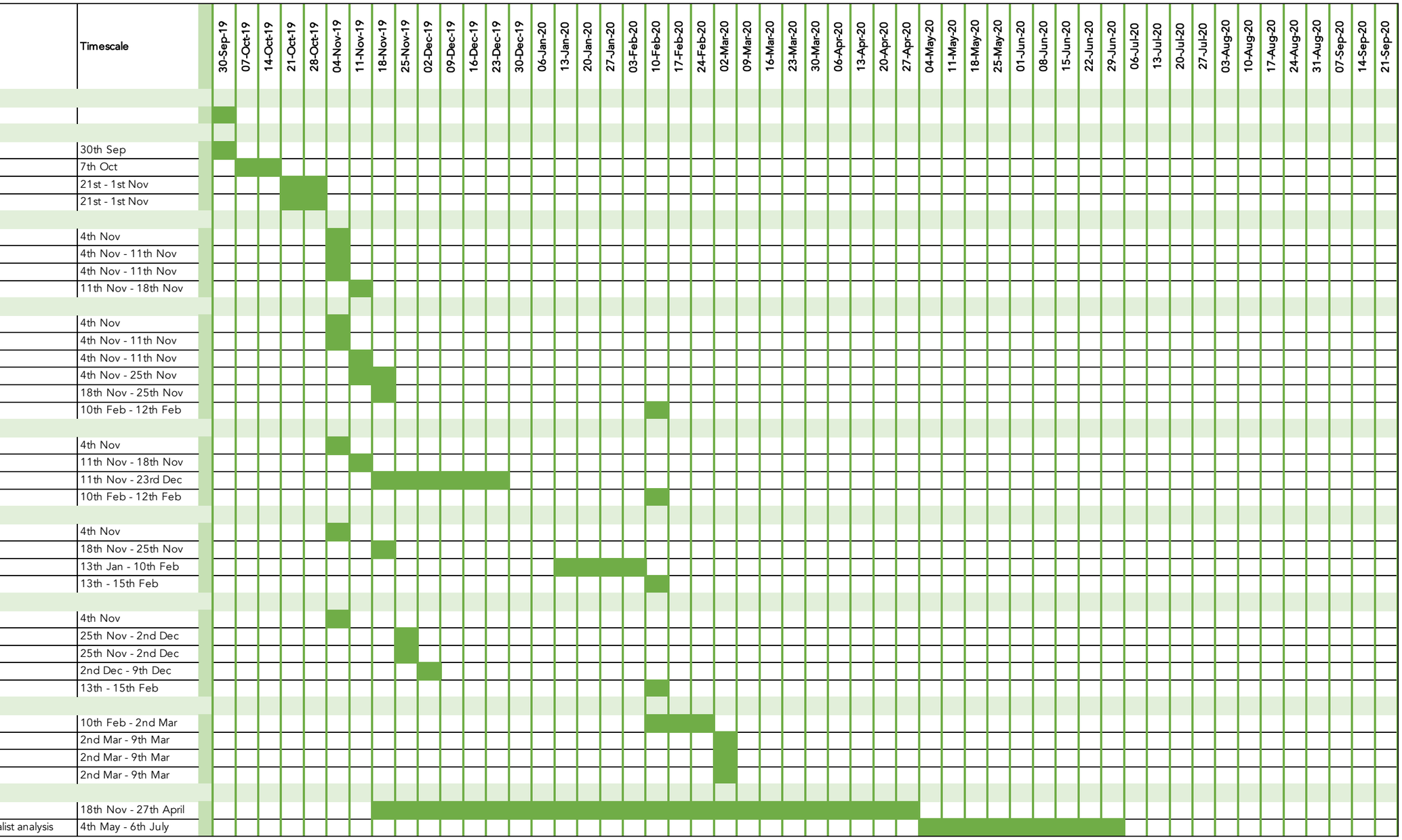
Tasks	Stage and Task details	Timescale
Project Initiation		
0.1	Commission and initiation	
Stage 1	**Project start up**	
1.1	Comprehensive WSI	30th Sep
1.2	Health and Safety (RAMS)	7th Oct
1.3	DDT set up	21st - 1st Nov
1.4	Mobilisation	21st - 1st Nov
Stage 2	**Area B excavation - sewage tank (60m^2)**	
2.1	Survey areas	4th Nov
2.2	Machine topsoil strip	4th Nov - 11th Nov
2.3	Hand excavation and recording	4th Nov - 11th Nov
2.4	Machine backfill	11th Nov - 18th Nov
Stage 3	**Area C excavation (3,200m^2)**	
3.1	Survey areas	4th Nov
3.2	Machine topsoil strip	4th Nov - 11th Nov
3.4	Strip Map	4th Nov - 11th Nov
3.3	Hand excavation and recording	4th Nov - 11th Nov
3.5	Review of Strip Map area	4th Nov - 11th Nov
3.6	Machine backfill	3rd - 5th Feb
Stage 4	**Area D excavation (3,350m^2)**	
4.1	Survey areas	4th Nov
4.2	Machine topsoil strip	11th Nov - 18th Nov
4.3	Hand excavation and recording	11th Nov - 2nd Dec
4.4	Machine backfill	20th - 27th Jan
Stage 5	**Area A excavation (2,945m^2)**	
5.1	Survey areas	4th Nov
5.2	Machine topsoil strip	18th Nov - 25th Nov
5.3	Hand excavation and recording	18th Nov - 25th Nov
5.4	Machine backfill	10th Feb - 12th Feb
Stage 6	**Area B excavation (1,400m^2)**	
6.1	Survey areas	4th Nov
6.2	Machine topsoil strip	11th Nov - 18th Nov
6.3	Strip Map	11th Nov - 18th Nov
6.4	Hand excavation and recording	18th Nov - 25th Nov
6.5	Machine backfill	10th Feb - 12th Feb
Stage 7	**Community Fieldwork**	
7.1	Community setup and engagement	Dates TBC
7.2	Mobilistation of team, plant and equipment	
7.3	Excavation	
7.4	Finds lab	
Stage 8	**Archaeological Post-Excavation**	
8.1	Post-excavation processing	18th Nov - 13th April
8.2	Post-excavation assessment reporting / specialist analysis	13th April - 8th June
Stage 9	**Post-excavation analysis, publication and archiving**	
9.1	Post-excavation analysis and reporting	8th June - 2nd Nov
9.2	Preparation / deposition archive	28th Sept - 2nd Nov
	Project Closure	



Tasks	Stage and Task details	Timescale	13-Jul-20	20-Jul-20	27-Jul-20	03-Aug-20	10-Aug-20	17-Aug-20	24-Aug-20	31-Aug-20	07-Sep-20	14-Sep-20	21-Sep-20	28-Sep-20	05-Oct-20	12-Oct-20	19-Oct-20	26-Oct-20	02-Nov-20
Project Initiation																			
0.1	Commission and initiation																		
Stage 1	**Project start up**																		
1.1	Comprehensive WSI	30th Sep																	
1.2	Health and Safety (RAMS)	7th Oct																	
1.3	DDT set up	21st - 1st Nov																	
1.4	Mobilisation	21st - 1st Nov																	
Stage 2	**Area B excavation - sewage tank (60m^2)**																		
2.1	Survey areas	4th Nov																	
2.2	Machine topsoil strip	4th Nov - 11th Nov																	
2.3	Hand excavation and recording	4th Nov - 11th Nov																	
2.4	Machine backfill	11th Nov - 18th Nov																	
Stage 3	**Area C excavation (3,200m^2)**																		
3.1	Survey areas	4th Nov																	
3.2	Machine topsoil strip	4th Nov - 11th Nov																	
3.4	Strip Map	4th Nov - 11th Nov																	
3.3	Hand excavation and recording	4th Nov - 11th Nov																	
3.5	Review of Strip Map area	4th Nov - 11th Nov																	
3.6	Machine backfill	3rd - 5th Feb																	
Stage 4	**Area D excavation (3,350m^2)**																		
4.1	Survey areas	4th Nov																	
4.2	Machine topsoil strip	11th Nov - 18th Nov																	
4.3	Hand excavation and recording	11th Nov - 2nd Dec																	
4.4	Machine backfill	20th - 27th Jan																	
Stage 5	**Area A excavation (2,945m^2)**																		
5.1	Survey areas	4th Nov																	
5.2	Machine topsoil strip	18th Nov - 25th Nov																	
5.3	Hand excavation and recording	18th Nov - 25th Nov																	
5.4	Machine backfill	10th Feb - 12th Feb																	
Stage 6	**Area B excavation (1,400m^2)**																		
6.1	Survey areas	4th Nov																	
6.2	Machine topsoil strip	11th Nov - 18th Nov																	
6.3	Strip Map	11th Nov - 18th Nov																	
6.4	Hand excavation and recording	18th Nov - 25th Nov																	
6.5	Machine backfill	10th Feb - 12th Feb																	
Stage 7	**Community Fieldwork**																		
7.1	Community setup and engagement	Dates TBC																	
7.2	Mobilistation of team, plant and equipment																		
7.3	Excavation																		
7.4	Finds lab																		
Stage 8	**Archaeological Post-Excavation**																		
8.1	Post-excavation processing	18th Nov - 13th April																	
8.2	Post-excavation assessment reporting / specialist analysis	13th April - 8th June																	
Stage 9	**Post-excavation analysis, publication and archiving**																		
9.1	Post-excavation analysis and reporting	8th June - 2nd Nov																	
9.2	Preparation / deposition archive	28th Sept - 2nd Nov																	
	Project Closure																		

APPENDIX 2 – PROGRAMME DELIVERY FOR MAXIMUM LEVEL OF ARCHAEOLOGY

Tasks	Stage and Task details	Timescale
Project Initiation		
0.1	Commission and initiation	
Stage 1	**Project start up**	
1.1	Comprehensive WSI	30th Sep
1.2	Health and Safety (RAMS)	7th Oct
1.3	DDT set up	21st - 1st Nov
1.4	Mobilisation	21st - 1st Nov
Stage 2	**Area B excavation - sewage tank (60m^2)**	
2.1	Survey areas	4th Nov
2.2	Machine topsoil strip	4th Nov - 11th Nov
2.3	Hand excavation and recording	4th Nov - 11th Nov
2.4	Machine backfill	11th Nov - 18th Nov
Stage 3	**Area C excavation (3,200m^2)**	
3.1	Survey areas	4th Nov
3.2	Machine topsoil strip	4th Nov - 11th Nov
3.4	Strip Map	4th Nov - 11th Nov
3.3	Hand excavation and recording	4th Nov - 25th Nov
3.5	Review of Strip Map area	18th Nov - 25th Nov
3.6	Machine backfill	10th Feb - 12th Feb
Stage 4	**Area D excavation (3,350m^2)**	
4.1	Survey areas	4th Nov
4.2	Machine topsoil strip	11th Nov - 18th Nov
4.3	Hand excavation and recording	11th Nov - 23rd Dec
4.4	Machine backfill	10th Feb - 12th Feb
Stage 5	**Area A excavation (2,945m^2)**	
5.1	Survey areas	4th Nov
5.2	Machine topsoil strip	18th Nov - 25th Nov
5.3	Hand excavation and recording	13th Jan - 10th Feb
5.4	Machine backfill	13th - 15th Feb
Stage 6	**Area B excavation (1,400m^2)**	
6.1	Survey areas	4th Nov
6.2	Machine topsoil strip	25th Nov - 2nd Dec
6.3	Strip Map	25th Nov - 2nd Dec
6.4	Hand excavation and recording	2nd Dec - 9th Dec
6.5	Machine backfill	13th - 15th Feb
Stage 7	**Community Fieldwork**	
7.1	Community setup and engagement	10th Feb - 2nd Mar
7.2	Mobilistation of team, plant and equipment	2nd Mar - 9th Mar
7.3	Excavation	2nd Mar - 9th Mar
7.4	Finds lab	2nd Mar - 9th Mar
Stage 8	**Archaeological Post-Excavation**	
8.1	Post-excavation processing	18th Nov - 27th April
8.2	Post-excavation assessment reporting / specialist analysis	4th May - 6th July



Tasks	Stage and Task details	Timescale	28-Sep-20	05-Oct-20	12-Oct-20	19-Oct-20	26-Oct-20	02-Nov-20	09-Nov-20	16-Nov-20	23-Nov-20	30-Nov-20	07-Dec-20	14-Dec-20
Project Initiation														
0.1	Commission and initiation													
Stage 1	**Project start up**													
1.1	Comprehensive WSI	30th Sep												
1.2	Health and Safety (RAMS)	7th Oct												
1.3	DDT set up	21st - 1st Nov												
1.4	Mobilisation	21st - 1st Nov												
Stage 2	**Area B excavation - sewage tank (60m^2)**													
2.1	Survey areas	4th Nov												
2.2	Machine topsoil strip	4th Nov - 11th Nov												
2.3	Hand excavation and recording	4th Nov - 11th Nov												
2.4	Machine backfill	11th Nov - 18th Nov												
Stage 3	**Area C excavation (3,200m^2)**													
3.1	Survey areas	4th Nov												
3.2	Machine topsoil strip	4th Nov - 11th Nov												
3.4	Strip Map	4th Nov - 11th Nov												
3.3	Hand excavation and recording	4th Nov - 25th Nov												
3.5	Review of Strip Map area	18th Nov - 25th Nov												
3.6	Machine backfill	10th Feb - 12th Feb												
Stage 4	**Area D excavation (3,350m^2)**													
4.1	Survey areas	4th Nov												
4.2	Machine topsoil strip	11th Nov - 18th Nov												
4.3	Hand excavation and recording	11th Nov - 23rd Dec												
4.4	Machine backfill	10th Feb - 12th Feb												
Stage 5	**Area A excavation (2,945m^2)**													
5.1	Survey areas	4th Nov												
5.2	Machine topsoil strip	18th Nov - 25th Nov												
5.3	Hand excavation and recording	13th Jan - 10th Feb												
5.4	Machine backfill	13th - 15th Feb												
Stage 6	**Area B excavation (1,400m^2)**													
6.1	Survey areas	4th Nov												
6.2	Machine topsoil strip	25th Nov - 2nd Dec												
6.3	Strip Map	25th Nov - 2nd Dec												
6.4	Hand excavation and recording	2nd Dec - 9th Dec												
6.5	Machine backfill	13th - 15th Feb												
Stage 7	**Community Fieldwork**													
7.1	Community setup and engagement	10th Feb - 2nd Mar												
7.2	Mobilistation of team, plant and equipment	2nd Mar - 9th Mar												
7.3	Excavation	2nd Mar - 9th Mar												
7.4	Finds lab	2nd Mar - 9th Mar												
Stage 8	**Archaeological Post-Excavation**													
8.1	Post-excavation processing	18th Nov - 27th April												
8.2	Post-excavation assessment reporting / specialist analysis	4th May - 6th July												

APPENDIX 3 – FIELDSCHOOL CURRICULUM

Archaeology Field Schools 2019

DigVentures' field school curriculum for archaeology forms the basis of all our on-site vocational training opportunities. Field schools are available to participants of all skills levels to attend and receive hands-on training over the course of one day, two days or one week (or more). Field schools are designed and run by professional archaeologists, working alongside our Venturers to excavate and record archaeology to the highest standards. Due the unique nature of each of the archaeological sites we work at, the content of the field schools may vary from project to project. However, our core learning curriculum will remain consistent across all our projects and provides an outline of the minimum our participants (or Venturers) should expect to achieve during their time with us on site.

Our archaeology field school is endorsed by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists and designed to support the Archaeology Skills Passport.

About the projects

Each of our archaeological sites has a specific Project Design attached to it. This document will provide the research background to the excavation, outlining some very important details about the period, the location and what we hope to find. This is the place to find out what the aims and objectives are, where we will be putting our archaeological trenches and what the overarching strategy is for recovering all that vital archaeological information. You can also find the general methods statements here, and learn about the particular approaches we might be taking.

Each archaeological project is supported by a project microsite – and this should be your first point of call for your site preparations. Once you have had a look through the archaeological project design, you can have a look over the 'Plan Your Visit' section which includes the project set up and all the information you need to know to make your archaeological experience run as smoothly as possible. As the archaeological project continues, this is the place where the technical data recovered will be stored and where you can look up the archaeological information you have helped to excavate and record!

About the field school

Archaeology is a profession, as well as an academic field of study. Many years of experience, skills development and education are necessary in order to develop the expertise, and attain the necessary qualifications, to run archaeological excavations. Archaeology is also an activity which inspires enthusiasts all around the world, from active volunteers through to armchair archaeologists who devour every book, programme and magazine they can get their hands on. We are consistently amazed at the passion and level of knowledge of the people we meet through our work at DigVentures, and everyone has one thing in common: they want to learn more about how to do archaeology.

We have designed our field schools to help support anyone who is keen to roll up their sleeves, jump in the trenches and learn how archaeology is done. Whether you can join us

for one day, a weekend or a full week (or two), we can teach you what you need to know to get the most out of your archaeological experience.

Our core learning curriculum

Our field schools provide a step-by-step guide through the core skills needed to contribute to an archaeological excavation. What do you need to know about the archaeology before you begin to dig? How do you recognise and excavated archaeological layers? What's the point of drawing in the age of digital? What's with all the string, and funny red and white sticks in the trenches? If you are with us for a single day, we will make sure you get to grips with the fundamental skills, such as using a trowel. The longer you can stay, the more you will learn. You can use the look-up table below to see which of the core archaeological skills you will learn on a DigVentures field school depending on the length of your experience.

Skill	Learning outcome	One Day	Two Days	Week +
Professional ethics	Can anyone just turn up and dig an archaeological site? Or is there more to it than that?	✓	✓	✓
Site Safety	Be aware of the particular Health & Safety issues on the archaeological project	✓	✓	✓
Small hand tools	Understand the correct use of the trowel and other smaller hand tools including their safe use and maintenance.	✓	✓	✓
Large hand tools	Understand the correct and safe use of larger tools as well as appropriate loading for buckets and wheelbarrows.	✓	✓	✓
Site formation processes	Understand the process of site formation, including fills, layers, structures or natural deposits. Everything is in the ground for a reason and sites come to look the way they do now for a number of different reasons. By the time you leave site you will have a basic understanding of why the site looks the way it does.	✓	✓	✓
Stratigraphic excavation	Understand the concept of physical and chronological stratigraphy as well as the methods of recording the sequences and be able to remove layers and fills in the correct order for structured excavation.		✓	✓
Artefact recording	Understand how to recover artefacts safely from archaeological deposits, how to store finds on-site and how to complete the Small Finds record.		✓	✓
Context recording	Understand the procedure for the completion of a standard context record sheet using Digital Dig Team.		✓	✓
Survey	Appreciate the concept of site/national			✓

Skill	Learning outcome	One Day	Two Days	Week +
	grid systems and placement of trenches within this. It is important we know exactly where archaeological remains were found and you will be familiarised with the use of traditional hand tape measurements and in the application of GPS and total station readings.			
Measured drawing (planning and section drawing)	Understand the various elements that must be present on a plan and section drawing, including the use of conventions and how the drawing is located.			✓
Photography	Have a basic grasp of the fundamental requirements for camera use and the sequenced methodology of photographic recording.			✓
Sampling	Understand the procedure for the collecting archaeological samples for artefacts and ecofacts, including why we take them, how they are recorded and what happens next.			✓

National Occupational Standards

All our training programmes are built upon the framework of National Occupational Standards (NOS) developed by the Chartered Institute of Archaeologists. The NOS for archaeological practice defines the range of skills that archaeologists may need to perfect in order to do their job. They provide the perfect framework for training programmes as they break down a complicated job into a collection of individual skills and tasks. This is great for both practising and avocational archaeologists as it provides a clear roadmap for skills development.

To help that skills development, you can find the individual NOS standards which this course supports below. If you would like to record your own skills development, we recommend you use the Archaeology Skills Passport. This has been developed in line with NOS, and provides a simple record book of your learning achievements.

The learning outcomes from this course are defined using National Occupational Standards (NOS). This course *supports* and *contributes* to the Knowledge Requirements for particular units within the NOS for Archaeological Practice. These are:

AC5 Contribute to intrusive investigations
https://www.ukstandards.org.uk/PublishedNos/CCSAPAC5.pdf

This includes:

- Preparing for operations, including understanding the methods used, the safety arrangements, identifying suitable equipment and applying technical standards

- Undertaking intrusive investigation, including identifying, investigating and recording archaeology and using appropriate tools competently
- Preparing records and schedules, including making accurate records and verifying data

Recording your archaeology skills

For those participants who are keen to develop their archaeological skills-set, we recommend using the Archaeology Skills Passport to record the skills you learn as you progress. Depending on whether you are joining us for a couple of days or a full week, you will have the opportunity to learn or add to the skills you already have. The course contributes to a number of Core Skills as identified in the Skills Passport, and the table above provides an outline of which should be expected to be achieved during your experience.

Providing feedback

Once you have completed your fieldwork with us, we will ask a couple of additional questions about your experience. This helps us see how much you have learnt while you have been part of our excavations and also makes sure we are doing a great job! If there is anything you would like to know or would like to tell us while you are still digging, just speak to a member of the team.

The Field School Curriculum – what to expect!

Dig For One Day

Morning briefing

On the first morning of your arrival to site, you will be greeted by the DigVentures welcoming party where members of the team will introduce themselves and their roles. We will ask you to introduce yourself as well, and ask a little about why you decided to join the dig. All new Venturers will then receive a full project briefing and site induction, while existing Venturers will head out to the trenches to make a start. The project briefing will include a background to the archaeological research, detailing why we are digging the site, what we are hoping to achieve and what our archaeological strategy and methodology is. As part of the site induction, all Venturers will be talked through our site Risk Assessment, where a member of the team will highlight any particular Health and Safety issues or advice. We will also create your own Venturer profile on the project Digital Dig Team website and then head out to the trenches.

To the trenches!

When you arrive on site you will receive a full orientation from one of the DigVentures team. This begins with a background to the period we are investigating, re-capping the aims of the dig and the site's significance. You'll be shown any relevant aerial maps, previous research and geophysics results of the area. Venturers are then introduced to each trench, where you can see what we've found so far and what we plan to achieve by the end of the dig. You will learn about the tools of the trade, why we excavate and record the way we do and what to do when you find something. Finally, we will run through the day's tasks and what you will be doing while you are on-site.

Trowelling 101

The most important tool in an archaeologist's kit is their trowel. No matter what site you're on there's always plenty of trowelling to be done. This may be the first time you come face to face with archaeology which is still in the ground and yet to be discovered - it's important we get the basics nailed before developing your skills further.

Skills and learning

Learning opportunities will present themselves throughout the day while we are on site and will vary from site to site, depending on what we are investigating, what we have found and what stage the project is at. As a minimum, you will walk away from site having learnt the following skills:

Skill	Learning outcome
Professional ethics	Can anyone just turn up and dig an archaeological site? Or is there more to it than that?
Site Safety	Be aware of the particular Health & Safety issues on the archaeological project
Small handtools	Understand the correct use of the trowel and other smaller hand tools including their safe use and maintenance.
Large handtools	Understand the correct and safe use of larger tools as well as appropriate loading for buckets and wheelbarrows.
Site formation processes	Understand the process of site formation, including fills, layers, structures or natural deposits. Everything is in the ground for a reason and sites come to look the way they do now for a number of different reasons. By the time you leave site you will have a basic understanding of why the site looks the way it does.

Dig For Two Days

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Artefact recovery and recording	Understand how to recover artefacts safely from archaeological deposits, how to store finds on-site and how to complete the Small Finds record. Where possible, participants will also learn how to wash and quantify different artefact types and materials.
Stratigraphic excavation	Understand the concept of physical and chronological stratigraphy as well as the methods of recording the sequences and be able to remove layers and fills in the correct order for structured excavation.
Context recording	Understand the procedure for the completion of a standard context record sheet using Digital Dig Team.

Dig For A Week (or more)

Morning briefing

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Context recording	Understand the procedure for the completion of a standard context record sheet using Digital Dig Team.
Survey	Appreciate the concept of site/national grid systems and placement of trenches within this. It is important we know exactly where archaeological remains were found and you will be familiarised with the use of traditional hand tape measurements and in the application of GPS and total station readings.
Measured drawing (planning and section drawing)	Understand the various elements that must be present on a plan and section drawing, including the use of conventions and how the drawing is located.
Photography	Have a basic grasp of the fundamental requirements for camera use and the sequenced methodology of photographic recording.
Sampling	Understand the procedure for the collecting archaeological samples for artefacts and ecofacts, how to record them, why we take them and what happens next.