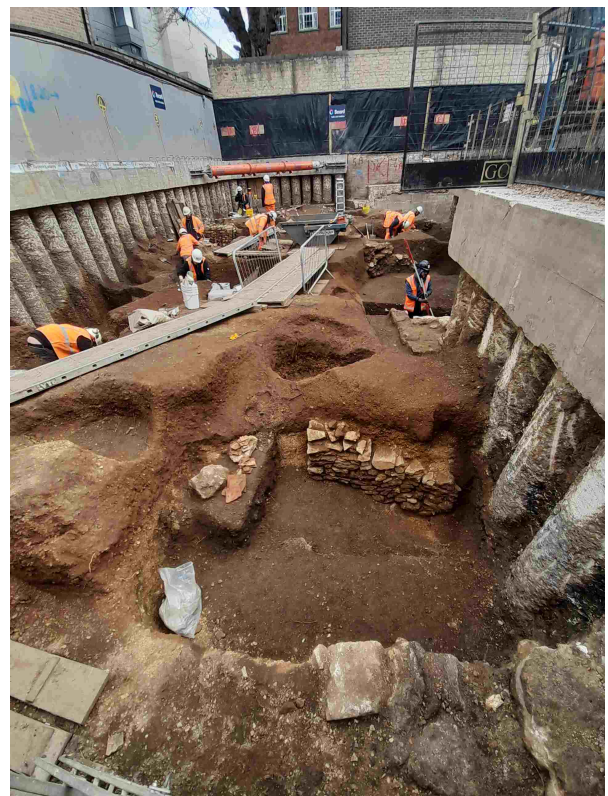
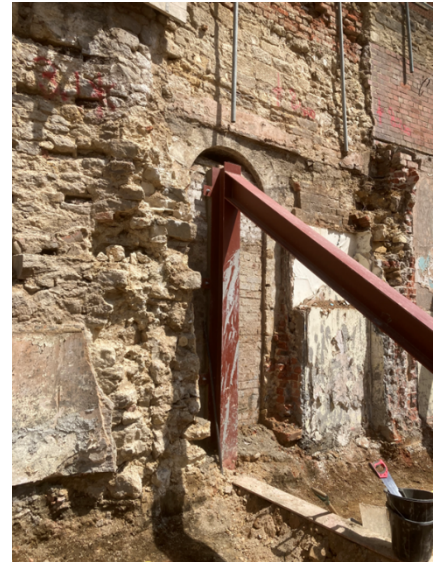


Annual Monitoring Statement for Archaeological Assets 2022



Oxford City Council, Urban Design and Heritage Team
Annual Monitoring Statement for Archaeological Assets 2022



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Cover photographs-. Top left: The Open day at the Frewin Hall excavation. Top right: The post-medieval tunnel under Bulwarks Lane. Bottom left: The Norman Castle Bailey ditch and older ditch below at Castle Hill House. Bottom right: Prehistoric and medieval remains being excavated at Frewin Hall.

Executive summary

The following report provides an overview of the impact of development on archaeological assets in the Oxford Local Authority Area in 2022.

This year saw two compact but significant excavations within the historic core of Oxford at Frewin Hall (Brasenose College) and Castle Hill House (St Peter's College) both the result of infilling development within physically constrained college sites and both producing exciting new archaeological discoveries relating to the development of Saxon and medieval town. Part of a prehistoric barrow with evidence for associated mid-late Saxon activity and medieval tenement and college archaeology was excavated at Frewin Hall. At Castle Hill House a large late Saxon feature may be the lost ditch of the primary burh (late Saxon defences).

Elsewhere the current local development trends relating to the provision of hotel capacity, the provision of life science laboratory space and the demand for housing led to significant new information being produced by evaluation trenching. This included evaluation work on the site of the Oxford Blackfriars, which has seen many investigations over the years, this time focusing on the priory church and its cemetery. At the southern edge of the local authority area an evaluation at Littlemore Priory revealed new information about the priory precinct and its buildings. Just to the west of the historic core of Oxford, on the edge of the Thames floodplain, an evaluation exercise at the large Oxpens development site, located just to the east of the site of Oseney Abbey, was of a different character, involving borehole work and stepped trenches revealing the prehistoric landscape, medieval activity associated with the nearby Abbey and Victorian bottle dumps.

Introduction

The National Planning Policy Framework requires that local planning authorities should make information about the significance of the historic environment, gathered as part the development management process, publicly accessible. The Oxford Archaeological Action Plan (2018) * established the objective of producing an annual monitoring statement for archaeological heritage assets and this is the fifth such report. The aim being to capture data about the patterns of development impacts across the years and also monitor the effectiveness of heritage management processes.

The following report provides a short overview of the scope and impact of development led archaeology in Oxford in 2022. It records the number of planning applications submitted over the calendar year and the number assessed to have likely archaeological implications. It records the types of archaeological fieldwork undertaken and summarises how development and archaeological mitigation have impacted on known archaeological heritage assets. Furthermore, it relates the year's archaeological discoveries to an evolving research agenda to show how our knowledge and understanding of Oxford and its people is developing and expanding over time. The annual statement also provides a basis for monitoring the on-going cumulative impact of both development and asset management on the city's archaeological resource.

(*[Link to Oxford Archaeological Plan](#))

The asset base

The designated assets within the Oxford City local authority area comprise:

- Over 1,500 listed buildings (this number relates to the number of buildings rather than designations as these can encompass multiple buildings. At the end of 2022 the National Heritage List recorded 1186 listed building designations for Oxford, this is an increase of one since the following year) The list includes:
 - 12% grade I listed buildings (the national average is 2%)
 - 8% grade II* listed buildings (the national average is 4%)
- 18 Conservation Areas – representing 20% of the city area
- 10 Scheduled Ancient Monuments (NB The National Heritage List now records ten monuments rather than the previously stated 12 because the Bridge West of Godstow Abbey (County No 173) and the extension to Port Meadow (County No 120003) are amalgamated with Godstow Abbey (County Number 35542) and Port Meadow (County Number 143) respectively.
- 15 Registered Parks and Gardens

In addition to these designated assets further archaeological monuments are recorded on archaeological databases covering the city. The monument database includes extant and documented monuments (i.e. those which may no longer survive).

At present two complementary archaeological data sets are maintained for Oxford: The Urban Archaeological Database (UAD) which covers the historic core of Oxford and the Oxford Historic Environment Record (HER) which covers the area outside the UAD. These two sets of data are both now maintained by the City Council and have been recently combined into the City of Oxford Urban Historic Environment Record (COUHER).

The combined monument database (which includes a number of duplicate records that need revision) totals **3291** records (Oxford District Search). This number is likely to decline in the short term as duplicates are removed.

Planning advice and fieldwork statistics

The tables below provide data about the number of applications assessed and commented on by the City Council Archaeologist and the number of archaeological recording events undertaken by archaeological contractors in Oxford in 2022. Additional data is provided on the number of Scheduled Monument Consent notices issued by Historic England over the course of the year.

Table 1: Planning applications to Oxford City Council

| | | |
|---|--|------|
| Number of applications assessed for heritage interest (excluding renewals and amended schemes): | 1,544 (including full, outline, pre-applications, major applications, listed building applications) | |
| Number of applications with archaeological implications in 2022: | 46 | |
| Number of applications with archaeological implications as a % of planning applications | 2019 | 3.6% |
| | 2020 | 2.6% |
| | 2021 | 3.4% |
| | 2022 | 3.1% |

| Table 2: Archaeological Fieldwork undertaken in 2022 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 |
|---|------|------|------|------|------|
| Evaluation trenching | 8 | 13 | 9 | 11 | 8 |
| Trial trenching (keyhole investigation secured through a planning condition, usually because of pre-existing site constraints) | 8 | 7 | 2 | 5 | 3 |
| Archaeological excavations | 6 | 9 | 2 | 10 | 7 |
| Archaeological watching briefs (observation of ground works by a qualified archaeologist) | 19 | 21 | 23 | 17 | 15 |
| Historic building recording | 11 | 9 | 9 | 5 | 4 |
| Geophysical survey | 1 | 4 | 8 | 3 | 3 |
| Salvage record (reactive recording of an asset either because of non-compliance with a condition or because activity is outside planning control) | 1 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 |

| Table 3 Impacts on Scheduled Monuments within the Local Authority Area | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 |
|--|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Number of cases requiring Scheduled Monument Consent | 4 | 0 | 5 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Number of Scheduled Monument consents for complete or partial loss of fabric or character requiring mitigation of damage | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Number of Scheduled Monument consents for minor works without significant implications | 1 | 0 | 4 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Number of Scheduled Monument consents for repair and restoration of monuments | 3 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 |

Outcomes from previous planning advice

The tables below provide data on the outcomes of development on archaeological assets and an assessment of impact based on definitions provided by the National Planning Policy Framework.

| Table 4 Monitoring outcomes from previous planning advice | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 |
|---|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Number of significant breaches of planning condition or damage cases recorded over the year | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| Non-compliance with an archaeological condition with unknown impact on asset/s | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Non-compliance with archaeological condition with subsequent mitigation undertaken | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| Number of appeals allowed where archaeological policies are cited as a reason for refusal | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Number of developments in 2022 within the City Centre Archaeological Area (defined in the Local Plan) that required a full excavation more than 25m ² | 2 | 3 | 4 | 2 | 3 | 2 |
| Number of developments in 2022 outside the City Centre Archaeological Area (defined in the Local Plan) that required an excavation more than 100m ² | 2 | 0 | 4 | 0 | 2 | 0 |
| Number of major archaeological excavations awaiting publication more than two years after the completion of fieldwork | 10 | 13 | 13 | 9 | 8 | 12 |
| Number of fieldwork events that did not encounter archaeologically significant assets (these may include sites where archaeological monitoring has been required to ensure that consented development does not impact on significant remains) | 16 | 7 | 11 | 14 | 15 | 6 |
| Number of cases in City Centre Archaeological Area (defined in the Local Plan) where design was agreed, or design changes made, to avoid or achieve significant reduction in harm to or achieve significant preservation in situ of archaeological assets | 3 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 2 |

| Table 4 Monitoring outcomes from previous planning advice | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 |
|--|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Number of cases outside City Centre Archaeological Area (defined in the Local Plan) where design was agreed, or design changes made, to avoid or achieve significant reduction in harm/significant preservation in situ to archaeological assets | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

Table 5: Summary of archaeological assets impacted by development in 2022 (blank page below)

| Site Name | Type of Asset | Loss of asset without mitigation | Loss of asset with mitigation | Substantial loss of asset without mitigation | Substantial loss of asset with mitigation | Less than substantial loss of asset without mitigation | Less than substantial loss of asset with mitigation | Further characterisation of asset with limited intervention | New asset identified with limited intervention | Notes |
|--|---|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|--|---|--|---|---|--|---|
| No 39 Pembroke Street | Grade II listed 17 th century town house | | | | | | | • | | Works to the kitchen and first floor revealed building detail of the 17 th century structure. |
| No 13 Mill Lane, Alan Court, Old Marston | Grade II listed 17 th century house | | | | | | | • | | A watching brief and historic building recording. Two early 17 th century phases were identified. |
| No 2 St Peters Road, Upper Wolvercote | Iron Age settlement | | | | | | | | • | Two phases of ditch, a gully and a post hole of Early to Middle Iron Age date (800-400BC) recorded. |
| Frewin Hall, New Inn Hall Street | 15 th -16 th century college of St Mary's | | | | • | | | | | Footings of the southern cloister (?) of the college of St Mary's recorded (founded in the 15 th century). |
| Frewin Hall, New Inn Hall Street | Medieval buildings | | | | • | | | | | Multiple medieval buildings (kitchens, hall cellar), pits and ditches from tenement occupation. |
| Frewin Hall, New Inn Hall Street | Bronze Age Barrow | | | | • | | | | | Extant Bronze Age Barrow mound (previously buried and unknown) and ditch. |
| Frewin Hall, New Inn Hall Street | Middle Saxon burial | | | | • | | | | • | Redeposited bones of two individuals, one scientifically dated to the later Middle Saxon period. |
| Frewin Hall, New Inn Hall Street | Late Saxon cellar pit | | • | | | | | | • | Late Saxon cellar pit dug into extant barrow mound. |
| Castle Hill House, New Road | Castle Bailey ditch | | | | | | • | | • | Norman Castle Bailey ditch, possible primary late Saxon burh |

| Site Name | Type of Asset | Loss of asset without mitigation | Loss of asset with mitigation | Substantial loss of asset without mitigation | Substantial loss of asset with mitigation | Less than substantial loss of asset without mitigation | Less than substantial loss of asset with mitigation | Further characterisation of asset with limited intervention | New asset identified with limited intervention | Notes |
|--|--|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|--|---|--|---|---|--|--|
| | | | | | | | | | | defensive ditch and 18 th century tunnel under Bulwark's Lane. |
| Deaf and Hard of Hearing Centre, Littlegate Street | Medieval Blackfriars Priory | | | | | | | • | | Careful identification of grave cuts to allow the proposed structure to build around and over these. The investigated remains included substantial limestone foundations (heavily robbed in places) forming the western wall/foundation of a small internal space interpreted as the porch of the friary church. associated with the rebuilding of the west end of the Church. |
| Godstow Bridge and Godstow Weir | Edwardian garden and medieval/post medieval bridge | | | | | | | • | | Recording work of exposed sections of Godstow Bridge and Weir and of the early 19th century garden features on Trout Island in advance of the construction of a new fish pass and weir replacement. |
| Trinity College | Medieval college | | | | | | | • | | A watching brief during initial test pitting within a basement located west of Durham Quad, revealing |

| Site Name | Type of Asset | Loss of asset without mitigation | Loss of asset with mitigation | Substantial loss of asset without mitigation | Substantial loss of asset with mitigation | Less than substantial loss of asset without mitigation | Less than substantial loss of asset with mitigation | Further characterisation of asset with limited intervention | New asset identified with limited intervention | Notes |
|---|--|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|--|---|--|---|---|--|---|
| | | | | | | | | | | post-medieval infill material. Historic building recording was also undertaken during refurbishment works. |
| North Bailey House, New Inn Hall Street | Medieval tenement plot | | | | | | | • | | A small number of medieval pits were investigated which produced an impressive collection of pottery, some worked horn core and some slag. |
| No 11 Beaumont Buildings | Precinct of 12 th century Royal Beaumont Palace | | | | | | | • | | The site is located within the precinct of the former Royal Beaumont Palace and later Carmelite Friary. Two residual pieces of medieval pottery were recovered and late post-medieval stone foundations were noted. |
| Headington Hill Park | Civil War Redoubt | | | | | | | | • | An examination of Lidar coverage of Oxford by Civil War specialist Sam Wilson has identified the likely position of a Parliamentary redoubt shown on De Gomme's 1644 map of Oxford in Headington Hill Park. This is the first confident location of the Parliamentary siege line. |
| St Edmund Hall, Norham Gardens | | | | | | | | | • | An evaluation identified several ditches apparently forming part of a rectilinear enclosure system along with a small quantity of early to |

| Site Name | Type of Asset | Loss of asset without mitigation | Loss of asset with mitigation | Substantial loss of asset without mitigation | Substantial loss of asset with mitigation | Less than substantial loss of asset without mitigation | Less than substantial loss of asset with mitigation | Further characterisation of asset with limited intervention | New asset identified with limited intervention | Notes |
|--------------------------------------|---|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|--|---|--|---|---|--|---|
| | | | | | | | | | | mid-Roman pottery. The NE-SW and NW-SE alignments of these ditches fit well with the cropmark features recorded in University Parks to the south and they are likely to be related. |
| University Parks | Middle to Early Bronze Age ritual and funerary landscape and Iron Age to Roman rural settlement landscape | | | | | | | | • | A magnetometer survey was completed across c10.3 ha of land University Parks as part of the process of producing a management plan for the parks. Eight separate areas were examined. The survey identified a range of likely archaeological features relating to the extensive prehistoric and Roman landscapes known to be present in this part of the Oxford gravel terrace. |
| BMW practice track, Oxford Road | Roman settlement | | | | | | • | | | . A small number of features of likely Roman date were recorded. The work was required because of the proximity of Roman features previously recorded to the east. The report is forthcoming. |
| <i>The Queen's College, Porter's</i> | | | | | | | • | | | Targeted excavation recorded demolition layers belonging to buildings predating the 18th century rebuilding of the college, a |

| Site Name | Type of Asset | Loss of asset without mitigation | Loss of asset with mitigation | Substantial loss of asset without mitigation | Substantial loss of asset with mitigation | Less than substantial loss of asset without mitigation | Less than substantial loss of asset with mitigation | Further characterisation of asset with limited intervention | New asset identified with limited intervention | Notes |
|------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|--|---|--|---|---|--|---|
| Lodge and Front range | | | | | | | | | | square cut post-medieval pit and an undated linear cut parallel to the street frontage, containing brick earth/loess fill, potentially a beam slot. |
| Exeter College Library | Medieval tenements | | | | | | • | | | Medieval well was recorded, along with two post-medieval pits and a stone structure of likely post-medieval date. |
| Oxpens | Prehistoric flints and land surface | | | | | | | • | | The evaluation and assessment work demonstrated an area in the central part of the site was capped by a brickearth-type subsoil which may represent the remains of an intact land surface of probable prehistoric date. Here an evaluation trench recorded five probably early prehistoric flint tools that seemed to have been deliberately placed in a tree-throw hole. |
| Oxpens | Medieval settlement | | | | | | | • | | Within the north-western part of the site the trenching revealed two medieval pits, a medieval trackway and a ditch. These may be associated with the nearby Oseney Abbey or (perhaps less likely) previously unrecorded activity |

| Site Name | Type of Asset | Loss of asset without mitigation | Loss of asset with mitigation | Substantial loss of asset without mitigation | Substantial loss of asset with mitigation | Less than substantial loss of asset without mitigation | Less than substantial loss of asset with mitigation | Further characterisation of asset with limited intervention | New asset identified with limited intervention | Notes |
|-----------|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|--|---|--|---|---|--|---|
| | | | | | | | | | | along Osney Lane. One of the pits contained a variety of coprolite material and plant and animal remains including pig, sheep/goat, rabbit and cat bones. It also contained goose bones, which can be associated with high status or ecclesiastical sites. The east-west medieval stone trackway found within this trench may have led from the eastern end of the Osney Abbey precinct into central Oxford |
| Oxpens | Medieval and Post medieval boundaries | | | | | | | • | | A trench was located in the middle of the Oxpens site revealed an east-west ditch with an area of raised ground to the north, probably the latest phase of part of a network of drainage channels shown on 17th century maps that survived and were mapped into the late 19th century. Radiocarbon dating of an upper deposit from this positive feature was dated as 13th-14th century. |
| Oxpens | Harts Sconce, Civil War fort. | | | | | | | • | | At the southern end of the site a trench recorded archaeological features that may relate to the Civil War defensive outwork known as 'Harts Sconce'. This included an |

| Site Name | Type of Asset | Loss of asset without mitigation | Loss of asset with mitigation | Substantial loss of asset without mitigation | Substantial loss of asset with mitigation | Less than substantial loss of asset without mitigation | Less than substantial loss of asset with mitigation | Further characterisation of asset with limited intervention | New asset identified with limited intervention | Notes |
|----------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|--|---|--|---|---|--|---|
| | | | | | | | | | | <p>extensive area covered by several layers containing 17th-century finds along with two steep-sided pits, a stakehole and a shallow pit or ditch. It is possible the shallow pit is the remains of the northern part of the sconce ditch.</p> <p>Southeast of the Ice Rink the structural remains of the 20th century St Ebbe's Bathing Place were recorded in one trench. A 19th-20th century deposit of made-ground (including a significant quantity of dumped glass bottles) was recorded southeast of the Ice rink.</p> |
| Plot 27, Littlemore Priory | Prehistoric peat deposits | | | | | | | • | | <p>A tier one water environment assessment was undertaken on land at Littlemore Priory by Quest (University of Reading). This involved a series of archaeological boreholes, radiocarbon dating of Minchery Farm Peat Fen deposits. The Lower peat appeared to date to the Neolithic period (5290 - 4980 cal BP). Three basal dates on the Upper Peat indicate that formation across the site also dates to the Mid-Holocene/Neolithic (5900-5660</p> |

| Site Name | Type of Asset | Loss of asset without mitigation | Loss of asset with mitigation | Substantial loss of asset without mitigation | Substantial loss of asset with mitigation | Less than substantial loss of asset without mitigation | Less than substantial loss of asset with mitigation | Further characterisation of asset with limited intervention | New asset identified with limited intervention | Notes |
|----------------------------|------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|--|---|--|---|---|--|---|
| | | | | | | | | | | cal. BP, QBH22: 5590-5460 cal. BP). In parts of the site peat formation began in the Bronze Age (3450-3250 cal BP). |
| Plot 27, Littlemore Priory | Medieval nunnery | | | | | | | • | | The trenching identified a previously unrecorded precinct wall of Littlemore Nunnery along with several previously unidentified structures and walls that substantially add to our understanding of the layout of the priory. The likely 12th century barn and 14th century high status building (perhaps a boarding house or Prioresses lodgings) and water channel previously identified by the East Oxford Community Archaeology Project (Archeox) were also subject to light touch investigations to help further determine their character and extent. |
| TOTAL | | 0 | 1 | 0 | 4 | 0 | 4 | 12 | 7 | |

An overview of the patterns of archaeological fieldwork in 2022

The sites assessed in table 5 are mapped below in order to show the broad pattern of investigation.



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Fig 1. The historic core of Oxford with sites mentioned in table 5 marked in red.



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Fig 2. The wider Oxford area with sites mentioned in table 5 marked in red.

Current archaeological planning policy and the preservation of archaeological remains

The Oxford Local Plan Policy DH4 is reproduced below, it introduces a new emphasis on assessment of cumulative impacts on specific heritage asset types and community involvement (where feasible).

Within the City Centre Archaeological Area, on allocated sites where identified, or elsewhere where archaeological deposits and features are suspected to be present (including upstanding remains), applications should include sufficient information to define the character, significance and extent of such deposits so far as reasonably practical. This information should generally include:

a) a Heritage Assessment that includes a description of the impacted archaeological deposit or feature (including where relevant its setting), an assessment of its significance and the impact of the proposed development on its significance, in all cases using a proportionate level of detail that is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal. The Statement should reference appropriate records (including the information held on the Oxford Historic Environment Record); and

b) If appropriate, a full archaeological desk-based assessment and the results of evaluation by fieldwork (produced by an appropriately qualified contractor. Pre-application discussion is encouraged to establish requirements). In the City Centre Archaeological Area where significant archaeological asset types can be shown to be subject to cumulative impact from development, the desk-based assessment should contain appropriate contextual assessment of this impact.

Development proposals that affect archaeological features and deposits will be supported where they are designed to enhance or to better reveal the significance of the asset and will help secure a sustainable future for it.

Proposals which would or may affect archaeological remains or features which are designated as heritage assets will be considered against the policy approach as set out in policy DH4 DH3 above.

Archaeological remains or features which are equivalent in terms of their significance as to a scheduled monument are given the same policy protection as designated heritage assets. Proposals which affect the significance of such assets will be considered against the policy test for designated heritage assets set out in policy DH4 above.

Subject to the above, proposals that will lead to harm to the significance of non-designed archaeological remains or features will be resisted unless a clear and convincing justification through public benefit can be demonstrated to outweigh that harm, having regard to the significance of the remains or feature and the extent of harm.

Where harm to an archaeological asset has been convincingly justified and is unavoidable, mitigation should be agreed with Oxford City Council and should be proportionate to the significance of the asset and impact. The aim of mitigation should be where possible to preserve archaeological remains in situ, to promote public enjoyment of heritage and to record and advance knowledge. Appropriate provision should be made for investigation, recording, analysis, publication, archive deposition and community involvement.

Overview of 2022

This year saw two compact but significant excavations within the historic core at Frewin Hall (Brasenose College) and Castle Hill House (St Peter's College) both the result of infilling development within physically constrained college sites and both producing exciting new archaeological discoveries. In each case previous investigation work pre-determination was unable to establish the full character of below ground deposits because of physical site constraints. Subject to the details of the post excavation work both sites are likely to significantly advance our understanding of the Saxon town and its evolution. Both sites presented significant logistical and programming challenges that were resolved by close cooperation between the build teams, contracted archaeologists and local government officers.

Elsewhere the current local development trends relating to the provision of hotel capacity, the provision of life science laboratory space and the demand for housing led to significant new information being produced by evaluation trenching. The year saw further evaluation work on the site of the Oxford Blackfriars, which has seen many investigations over the years, this time focusing on the priory church and its cemetery. The work was aimed at enabling the preservation in-situ of burials related to the Blackfriars Church by identifying and designing around grave cuts.

At the southern edge of the local authority area an evaluation at Littlemore Priory revealed new information about the medieval priory precinct and its buildings. The Plot 27 site is an example of the trend for Life Science buildings impacting on the historic environment though a rare example of such structures having an impact on significant below ground remains, in this instance negotiations are ongoing with the aim of amending the proposals to secure substantive preservation in-situ of identified medieval Nunnery remains.

The evaluation exercise at the large Oxpens development site, located just to the east of the site of Oseney Abbey, was of a different character, involving borehole work and stepped trenches within the Thames floodplain. The investigation investigated prehistoric, medieval and post medieval remains and allowed further modelling of the Thames floodplain buried gravel islands, peats and paleochannels. The Oxpens development, along with the Oxford North development (the site previously produced negative evaluation results), constitute significant infilling of greenfield and brownfield plots within the city boundary. In the case of Oxpens careful design work has ensured the preservation of the site of a Civil War Sconce (Harts Sconce) in the meadow to the south of the development.

Public engagement with archaeological heritage

Outreach work continued to be well received with increased social media interest in local archaeological discoveries in addition to the usual well attended public talks by the City Council archaeologist.

The Oxford Archaeological Action Plan 2013-2018 sets out the aspiration of the Urban Design and Heritage Team to maintain a programme of public outreach including talks, walks and media engagement. Below a selection of outcomes related to archaeological outreach work in 2022 are highlighted:

- Outreach activities of The City Council Archaeologist (CCA) included a talk on recent archaeological work in Oxford for the Festival of Archaeology (Organised by Oxford Archaeological Trust) and also talks to the Jericho Residents Association, the Friends of Headington Hill Park and the annual OXPAST festival.
- I am pleased to report that archaeology has featured in the OPT awards for the first time. Oxford Archaeology and New College were awarded a certificate for their outreach work at the Frewin Hall dig.
- The excavation undertaken at Frewin Hall by Oxford Archaeology was also featured on the BBC Digging for Britain Series, where exciting new information was announced.
- The March edition of Current Archaeology featured a reconstruction drawing of the Royalist Civil War defences in Mansfield Road by Museum of London Archaeology along with a picture of the plaque commemorating the inner line of defences being uncovered by the Mayor at New College Music Room.
- The top ten Oxford archaeological digs/events of the year tweet series that was tweeted at Christmas 2022 was very successful (See https://twitter.com/DavidRadford_ox/status/1604762658447704064).

Stats from the most popular tweets are given below:

- 1) Frewin Hall #1: 20,150 impressions
- 2) Civil War reconstruction drawing #8: 16,745 imps
- 3) Castle Hill House #2: 7,833 imp
- 4) 84 St Aldates #7: 5,034 imps
- 5) Littlemore Priory #3: 3,583 imps

Further information on the results of archaeological fieldwork in the City can be found in the regularly produced Oxford City and County Archaeological Forum reports which are posted onto the archaeological page of the council website: [Link to City Council archaeology webpage](#)

Developing an archaeological research agenda for Oxford

In 2012 the City Council completed an English Heritage funded project to produce a synthesis of the available archaeological information for Oxford and set out a research agenda to inform future investigations. These reports formed part of the Oxford Archaeological Plan and can be viewed on the council website: [Link to Oxford Archaeological Plan webpage](#).

The archaeological investigations undertaken in 2022 have produced significant new data relevant to the 2012 research agenda and the table below seeks to illustrate how the various investigations fit into the agenda. It should be noted that many of the larger sites investigated in 2022 have not yet been subject to a detailed post-excavation study and therefore the full results are not yet known. The statements below are therefore provisional.

| Site | Notes | Research Question | Period |
|---|--|--|-------------------------|
| Oxpens | Flints placed in tree throw and modelling of Thames floodplain | 2.3.4. There is considerable potential for the investigation of peat deposits within the LAA to contribute towards our understanding of climatic and environmental change during these periods, including patterns of woodland clearance and evidence for the development of agriculture. The careful examination of tree bowls may also be fruitful with regard to understanding patterns of tree clearance during these periods. | Neolithic to Bronze Age |
| Plot 27 Minchery Farm Oxford Science Park, Littlemore | Neolithic and Bronze Age Peat deposits | 2.3.4. There is considerable potential for the investigation of peat deposits within the LAA to contribute towards our understanding of climatic and environmental change during these periods, including patterns of woodland clearance and evidence for the development of agriculture. The careful examination of tree bowls may also be fruitful with regard to understanding patterns of tree clearance during these periods. | |
| Frewin Hall | Extant barrow mound | 2.3.2 The identification and scientific dating of further Neolithic to early Bronze Age monuments on the 2nd gravel terrace would contribute to the existing data set from a wide range of funerary monuments in the region. | |

| Site | Notes | Research Question | Period |
|----------------------------|--|---|----------|
| St Peters Road, Wolvercote | Early to Middle Iron Age settlement. Previously unknown area of activity | <p>3.5.1 Evidence for early Iron Age settlement is sparse and remains a high priority for investigation.</p> <p>3.4.9 Lambrick (2010) has suggested that in the Thames Valley the transition from earlier Bronze Age hunter-gatherer groups to settled farms may have been a gradual trend from recurrent but dispersed occupation (both within and separate from enclosure) to more compact, organised settlements. By the early to middle Iron Age compact tightly constrained settlements, often indicative of more permanent year-round settlement, were typically located on topographical and/or land-use divisions. To what extent can this model be confirmed within the LAA?</p> <p>3.5.4 A general model for MIA settlement in the Upper Thames would be intensified occupation of the gravel terraces by the early 3rd century BC followed by a shift or abandonment in the 1st century BC possibly coinciding with the onset of clay alluviation. Can this model be confirmed and developed? How does this model for the gravel terraces contrast with activity on the Corallian Ridge?</p> | Iron Age |
| University Parks | Geophysical survey provided further details character of north Oxford IA settlement/activity zones | 3.4.7 Can mixed farming patterns be demonstrated to be reasonably uniform and un-specialised across the floodplain, terrace and ridge? | |
| BMW Test track | Domestic Roman settlement activity | <p>4.5.6 Can patterns of landscape re-organisation, migration of boundaries and patterns of disuse be further characterised?</p> <p>4.5.7 To what extent is the general regional pattern of 2nd century relocation and re-organisation of settlement patterns reflected within the LAA? There is some suggestion that Oxford was not as significantly affected as other areas. Why might this be?</p> <p>4.5.9 Is there a distinction between the material culture of settlements on the</p> | Roman |

| Site | Notes | Research Question | Period |
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| | | Dorchester-Alchester Road and rural settlement on the gravels? | |
| St Edmund's Hall, Norham Gardens | Roman domestic settlement Previously unknown settlement site | 4.5.6 Can patterns of landscape re-organisation, migration of boundaries and patterns of disuse be further characterised? 4.5.7 To what extent is the general regional pattern of 2nd century relocation and re-organisation of settlement patterns reflected within the LAA? There is some suggestion that Oxford was not as significantly affected as other areas. Why might this be? | |
| Frewin Hall | Middle Saxon structure and burial | 5.5.5. Can the archaeological record tell us anything about the period of Mercian control in the Oxford area? 5.5.6. Aside from the area next to the Thames crossing at St Aldates, a number of other potentially significant Middle-Late Saxon activity centres have been suggested in the LAA (e.g. Royal Estate at Headington, a trading wic at Eastwyke Farm, a monastery at Binsey, the recovery of Ipswich ware from two Beaumont Street sites but not elsewhere in the town). The further investigation of these sites/areas is therefore of considerable interest. 5.5.7. What is the relationship, if any, between early settlement sites and later village cores? What happened between the 6th century settlement evident at Walton Street (Radcliffe Infirmary) and the appearance of Walton in the late Saxon period? | Saxon |
| Castle Hill House | Primary Late Saxon burh ditch? | 5.10.1. Can the date of the primary burh and its proposed eastern (and potentially western) extension be established archaeologically? Can the variously proposed defensive lines be tested? Excavations at the Castle have demonstrated the continuation of the burh defences to the west but have not definitively resolved the matter of whether these were primary or part of a westward extension of the burh that may have originated with a more conventional rectilinear pattern with the original western line of defence | |

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| | | following the break of slope close to New Inn Hall Street. Interventions into this area will therefore present opportunities to resolve this mater. | |
| Castle Hill House | Castle bailey ditch sectioned. | 6.11.1 The character and extent of the early Norman Castle precinct and its impact on the west end of the burh require further investigation. How did the Castle precinct develop? | Norman |
| Frewin Hall | Identification of cloister of St Mary's College | 7.10.4 4. What can structural evidence, artefacts and ecofacts tell us about the lifestyle and function of early colleges and the comparative wealth and status of institutions? | Medieval |
| Frewin Hall | Multiple medieval buildings, including boundaries, foundations, kitchens, cellar and stone lined waste pit. | <p>7.6.2 Can we further record patterns of changing building techniques in timber, stone and brick; chronology and distribution of different materials (Roof tiles, floor tiles, earliest use of brick)? What can the quality of building materials (e.g. cobb, wattle and daub, stone), framing/roof types etc tell us about class/status in medieval Oxford (Munby 2008)?</p> <p>7.6.5. Can we further establish the character and ranking of town houses (Munby 2008)? What can patterns of rebuilding and growth tell us about patterns of changing wealth, agricultural change, new requirements, comfort, privacy etc (Munby 2008)?</p> <p>7.6.7. How did kitchen spaces evolve? Did every dwelling have a hearth? Was cooking usually done in the house, and if not when did it move to detached buildings on the plot, and then when did it move back into the main dwelling? Were local cookshops prevalent in Oxford?</p> <p>7.6.8. Can we relate the dating of buildings as guide to chronology of change (e.g. recovery from Black Death)?</p> | |
| Littlemore Priory | Identification of Nunnery precinct wall and several previously unknown buildings | 7.7.1 The plan-form of a number of friaries and abbeys have been archaeologically investigated; can we learn more about the daily life within religious institutions – the diet and health, daily routine? | |

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| Deaf and Hard of Hearing Centre | The Blackfriars (Dominican Studium Generale). Information on building sequence, architectural detail and density and location of burials. | 7.7.1 The plan-form of a number of friaries and abbeys have been archaeologically investigated; can we learn more about the daily life within religious institutions – the diet and health, daily routine? 7.7.10 Do the early ecclesiastical sites preserve any material culture or structural elements that can be associated with the development of learning (styli, book clasps, lamps, libraries etc.)? Such features and objects would be of particular interest. | |
| North Bailey House | Medieval tenement remains | 7.5.1.1. The archaeology of medieval Oxford has exceptional potential to clarify apparent patterns of economic expansion of the town in the 12th-early 13th century and the subsequent contraction and decline in the later 13th-15th centuries. To what extent can this pattern be refined with relation to geographical areas, trades and specific communities and institutions? Can the assumed drivers of wealth creation in the wool and cloth trades be archaeologically identified? Can the subsequent apparent shift to service industries supplying the collegiate market be likewise identified? Are these proposed patterns of change reflected in the hinterland villages? | |
| The Queen's College | Medieval tenement remains | 7.5.1. The archaeology of medieval Oxford has exceptional potential to clarify apparent patterns of economic expansion of the town in the 12th-early 13th century and the subsequent contraction and decline in the later 13th-15th centuries. To what extent can this pattern be refined with relation to geographical areas, trades and specific communities and institutions? Can the assumed drivers of wealth creation in the wool and cloth trades be archaeologically identified? Can the subsequent apparent shift to service industries supplying the collegiate market be likewise identified? Are these proposed patterns of change reflected in the hinterland villages? | |

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| Exeter College | Medieval tenement remains | 7.5.1. The archaeology of medieval Oxford has exceptional potential to clarify apparent patterns of economic expansion of the town in the 12th-early 13th century and the subsequent contraction and decline in the later 13th-15th centuries. To what extent can this pattern be refined with relation to geographical areas, trades and specific communities and institutions? Can the assumed drivers of wealth creation in the wool and cloth trades be archaeologically identified? Can the subsequent apparent shift to service industries supplying the collegiate market be likewise identified? Are these proposed patterns of change reflected in the hinterland villages? | |
| Headington Hill Park | Identification of a Parliamentary redoubt, first confirmed identification of the De Gomme siege line. | 8.12.1 Can the line, phasing and character of the Royalist defences and Parliamentary siege works be further established? Earthwork surveys of the extant defences would be of great value. Can geophysics tell us more about the Parliamentary siege works? | Post Med |
| 39 Pembroke Street | Post-medieval house | 8.7.5 Is the difference in relative wealth between the centre of the town and the suburbs and between the colleges and the town identifiable in the record? What markers might be identified (e.g. quality pottery, meat consumption etc.)? | |
| Alan Court, Mill Lane, Marston | Post-medieval house | 8.7.5 Is the difference in relative wealth between the centre of the town and the suburbs and between the colleges and the town identifiable in the record? What markers might be identified (e.g. quality pottery, meat consumption etc.)? | |

Other available monitoring data on the historic environment of Oxford

Additional monitoring indicators on the historic environment can be found in the Local Development Framework Annual Monitoring Report available on the council website:

[Link to Oxford City Council annual monitoring report](#)

This records the following:

- The number of heritage assets at risk in the Local Authority Area as assessed by Historic England. Target: a decrease in Heritage Assets at risk or no net increase in Heritage Assets at risk (target derived from the Oxford Core Strategy).
- The number of applications involving the total, substantial or partial demolition of a listed building. Target: 0% Listed Building Consents or planning permissions approved by the City Council (target derived from the Oxford Core Strategy).
- The number of applications involving the demolition of a building that contributes to the character and appearance of a conservation area. Target: 0% Conservation Area Consents approved by the City Council contrary to officers' and Historic England's recommendation (target derived from the Oxford Core Strategy)
- The number of appeals allowed where conservation policies are as a reason for refusal. Target: 80% of appeals dismissed (target derived from the Oxford Core Strategy).

Glossary and definitions

Archaeological interest: There will be archaeological interest in a heritage asset if it holds, or potentially may hold, evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point. Heritage assets with archaeological interest are the primary source of evidence about the substance and evolution of places, and of the people and cultures that made them.*

Conservation (for heritage policy): The process of maintaining and managing change to a heritage asset in a way that sustains and, where appropriate, enhances its significance.

Evaluation: Archaeological trench or trenches excavated before the determination of a planning application in order to characterise and understand any archaeological remains that may be present rather than fully record them.

Evidential value: Value deriving from the potential of a place to yield evidence about past human activity.

Geophysical survey: Non-intrusive ground-based physical sensing techniques used for archaeological imaging or mapping.

Heritage asset: A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of Significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. Heritage asset includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including through the local heritage asset register).

Historic environment: All aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time, including all surviving physical remains of past human activity, whether visible, buried or submerged, and landscaped and planted or managed flora.*

Historic environment record: An information service that seeks to provide access to comprehensive and dynamic resources relating to the historic environment of a defined geographic area for public benefit and use.*

National Planning Policy Framework: The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. The NPPF states that Local planning authorities should recognise that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and conserve them in a manner appropriate to their significance.

Mitigation: An archaeological mitigation strategy is a statement of proposals for reducing the overall effect of a development on archaeological remains within the site. The strategy will normally consist of one or more of the following: Preservation in-situ, modifications to the development design proposals and archaeological recording (excavation, watching brief etc.).

Research agenda: Research questions that we would like to answer by investigating archaeological remains.

Resource assessment: A summary of the information produced by previous archaeological fieldwork.

Significance (for heritage policy): The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting.

Substantial harm: The NPPF practice guidance states that what matters in assessing if a proposal causes substantial harm is the impact on the significance of the asset. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting. While the impact of total destruction is obvious, partial destruction is likely to have a considerable impact but, depending on the circumstances, it may still be less than substantial harm or conceivably not harmful at all. Similarly, works that are moderate or minor in scale are likely to cause less than substantial harm or no harm at all. However, even minor works have the potential to cause substantial harm i.e. the scale of the works is not necessarily determinative of whether any harm caused is substantial or less than substantial. A key factor in determining whether the works constitute substantial (i.e. serious) harm is if the adverse impact goes to the heart of why the place is worthy of designation – why it is important enough to justify special protection.

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