

Oxford City and County Archaeological Forum
Oxford City Report September 2013 – January 2014

National Planning Policy Framework related field work in Oxford

7 Norham Gardens

In September John Moore Heritage Services undertook building recording at No 7 Norham Gardens, a grade II listed building built in 1862 with later 19th century extensions. The building was the first house built on the Norham Manor Estate by the chief estate architect William Wilkinson and contains a number of original features of note including staircase and fireplaces. A further watching brief will take place during subsequent ground works.

Barton Cricket Ground, Barton Road

In October trial trenching was undertaken by Oxford Archaeology on the site of the former Barton Cricket Ground. No significant remains were identified. A single residual medieval sherd was recovered along with ditches, pits and possible postholes of likely 19th-early 20th century date. One late 19th-early 20th century feature contained a concentration of animal bone, marine shellfish, pottery, glass, metal objects, ceramic building material and stone. The trenching was required because of the proximity of known Anglo-Saxon remains and the potential for prehistoric and Roman remains in this location. The report is forthcoming.

Oriel College, High Street

In October Oxford Archaeology undertook a watching brief during the removal of backfill from a 19th century cellar within St. Marys Quad, Oriel College. The cellar was subsequently in-filled to form a crane base required for works to the Rhodes Building. The report is forthcoming.

Magdalen College Longwall Quad, High Street- Phase 2 enabling works

From October into January Oxford Archaeology have been undertaking excavations at Magdalen College, in Longwall Quad and south and east of the New Library. The works have recorded further pits, walls, yard surfaces and floors relating to the medieval and post medieval tenements previously encountered during the Phase 1 enabling works. Work has confirmed the presence of well stratified floor layers along the street frontage to the east of the New Library, although these have been partially truncated by later service routes. The work has presented a programmatic challenge for Oxford Archaeology because of the structural constraints posed by the foundations of the 19th century New Library which required the division of the site into a series of strips and boxes. Nevertheless work has progressed smoothly and the compartmentalisation of the site has not posed any significant obstacles to recording.



Excavations in front of the college reveal earlier wall lines and the surface of gravel walk which ran parallel to the High Street.

Audi Dealership Plots 8040 and 8050 Alec Issigonis Way, Oxford

In November a watching brief was undertaken by Neville Hall Archaeological Services during ground works for a new BMW garage at Alec Issigonis Way. No significant remains were recorded. The work was required because of the potential for Roman remains and structures belonging to the now demolished Cowley Car Plant.

7 Barton Road, Barton

In November additional site survey work was undertaken at 7 Barton Road by John Moore Heritage Services in order to assess the character and extent of the potentially medieval and post-medieval stone walls that partially enclose the plot. The assessment observed that the upper parts of the surviving stone walls have been considerably re-patched, but that at a lower level fabric of likely 14th-15th century and 17th century date survives. Part of the back wall of a 17th century cottage also survives within the garden and a demolition layer or cobbled surface was noted just below the current ground surface.

Green Templeton Pavilion, Observatory Street

In November trial trenching was undertaken by Oliver Jessop to the rear of Observatory Street prior to the erection of a new sports pavilion for Green Templeton College. No significant remains were recorded. The trial trenching was required because of the potential for prehistoric and Anglo-Saxon remains in this locality.

Lawn Upton School, Littlemore

In November-December a watching brief was undertaken at the former Lawn Upton School site by John Moore Heritage Services during construction work for a new residential development. No significant remains were identified. The work was required because of the potential for Roman pottery manufacturing remains in the locality.

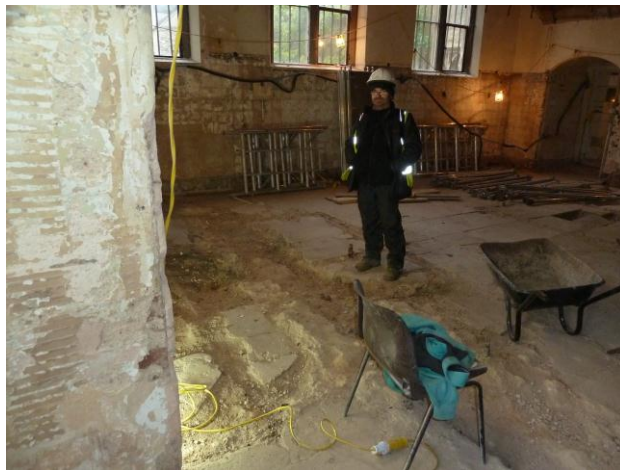
Ulfgar Road, Wolvercote

In December trial trenching was undertaken at Ulfgar Road by Graham Keevill prior to development works. The site proved to be heavily disturbed and

contaminated. The trial trenching was required because of the proximity of known prehistoric remains.

Worcester College Kitchen Yard Excavation

Between December and January Oxford Archaeology undertook a small scale excavation within the Kitchen Yard of Worcester College. A number of medieval pits were sampled and later substantial stone foundations belonging to post-medieval and 19th century buildings were exposed. At the same time Dr Roland Harris has been undertaking building recording during the refitting of a number of historic rooms including the 1844 kitchen and the exposure of parts of the internal face of the Worcester Street precinct wall.



Work within the 19th century kitchen

New College Kitchen

In December and January Oxford Archaeology undertook a watching brief during works within the 14th century kitchen at New College. The kitchen is being renovated and the removal of the modern concrete floor has revealed extensive in-situ beaten earth and plaster floors interleaved with charcoal rich occupation deposits. The remains of a key-hole shaped brick hearth-base survived in one of the two large fireplaces at the buildings eastern end. Whilst the intention is to secure the preservation of the floors in-situ, the re-routing of existing service routes may allow some localised examination of the medieval floor deposits. At the same time Dr Roland Harris has been undertaking detailed recording of the historic fabric exposed during the renovation work to the interior and exterior of the building. In the kitchen, where later plasterwork and additions have been removed an original fireplace and doorway were found in the north and south walls respectively. The internal timber-framed single jetty of the Buttery over the Kitchen has been revealed within which were redundant joints showing the original configuration of the doorways and hatches between the kitchen and servery. Surviving 14th [?] century floor boards were also noted below layers of more recent flooring.



The interior of the kitchen (photograph by Dr Roland Harris).

Other news

The East Oxford Community Archaeology Project- Archeox

In October the East Oxford Community Archaeology Project (Archeox), with the cooperation of the City Council, undertook a small scale excavation to establish whether a recent geophysical survey at Donnington Sports Ground had identified a previously unknown Neolithic pit circle. The excavation recorded features and flints that support this interpretation. A full report is forthcoming from the Archeox team.



The Archeox team excavating at Donnington Sports Ground (Picture reproduced from Archeox website: <https://www.archeox.net/>)

The Oxford Urban Archaeological Database – migration and enhancement

Further discussions have taken place between the City Council Heritage Team and the County Archaeological Service with regards to integrating the Urban Archaeological Database with the Historic Environment Record. This involves upgrading the UAD to the HBSMR software package provided by

Exegesis Spatial Data Management Consultancy. Exegesis are currently working on migrating the UAD data into the updated integrated system. In the meantime Archeox volunteers have continued to undertake preparatory work on the report backlog for the non UAD area so that once the new system is up a running the database can be rapidly brought up to date.