

## **Oxford City and County Archaeological Forum Oxford City Report October 2016 –February 2017**

### National Planning Policy Framework related field work in Oxford

#### *Oxford Flood Relief Channel*

Between August and October a programme of geophysical survey and auger and borehole transects were undertaken by Oxford Archaeology and the Bartlett-Clark Consultancy within the Oxford floodplain to further assess its archaeological potential in advance of the proposed Flood Alleviation Channel. Further evaluation work is to follow.

#### *St Aldates Chambers Car Park, St Aldate's*

In October a watching brief was undertaken by Oxford Archaeology during the excavation of a small sub-station chamber and cable trench around the City Council Offices at St Aldate's as part of the Nos 4 - 5 Queen Street And Nos 114 - 119 St Aldate's development. A number of post-medieval and early-modern walls and cobbled surfaces were recorded.

#### *No 1 Abbey Road, Osney Island*

In October trial trenching was undertaken by Oxford Archaeology at No 1 Abbey Road, Osney. The site is located on Osney island close to the Thames and was the former yard for Kinglerlee, the local building contractor. No significant archaeology was recorded.

#### *Magdalen College Smoking Room*

Between October and November a watching brief by Museum of London Archaeology (MOLA) during shallow works to the floor within the west range of the Great Quadrangle recovered a number of human bones and small finds. Detailed building recording was also undertaken by MOLA during works to the Smoking Room (the name derives from historical post dinner activity) and adjoining SCR facilities. The works revealed well-preserved oak floorboards in the attic of the 15<sup>th</sup> century west range. A detailed inspection of the existing roof structure was undertaken by Dr Dan Miles and repair work recommended.

#### *Main Quad, Worcester College*

Between October and November a watching brief was undertaken by Oxford Archaeology during the renewal of electrical cables and new ducting for data cables through Pump Quad and around Main Quad, Worcester College. The trenching revealed a series of layers dating from the 18th century overlain by modern material. Excavation through the large bank on the north side of Main Quad indicated that it was constructed up against the current buildings as opposed to predating them. The work



also encountered the footings of adjacent buildings and recovered a small finds assemblage of medieval and post-medieval pottery, animal bone, clay pipe and a 19<sup>th</sup> century coffin plate.



*Worcester College: Over page Main Quad looking south and above right a 19<sup>th</sup> century coffin plate (photographs by Oxford Archaeology)*

#### *Former Acland Hospital site, Keble College, Banbury Road*

Between October and January Oxford Archaeology undertook further phased strip and record excavation and watching brief of the full extent of the new basement at the former Acland Hospital site, now part of Keble College. Previous work had revealed Roman features in this location which is just to the north of the late Neolithic-early-Bronze Age linear barrow cemetery, however no further significant remains have been identified during the latest works. The report is forthcoming.

#### *Perrodo Quad, St Peter's College, New Inn Hall Street*

In November Oxford Archaeology undertook a watching brief during the excavation of an attenuation tank in the Perrodo Quad, St Peter's College. The investigation was required because of the potential for multi-period remains in this location. The scheme was designed to minimise below ground impact and no significant archaeological remains were impacted.

#### *Temple Cowley Pool Site, Temple Road, Temple Cowley*

In November an evaluation was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology at the former Temple Cowley Pool site. The work was required because the site is located adjacent remains that may relate to the medieval Templar Preceptory and because of the potential for Roman remains in this location. The investigation revealed limited evidence of the Roman and post-medieval land use in the form of likely boundary ditches. Elsewhere the site had previously been heavily disturbed during the construction of the former swimming pool and other nearby structures.

#### *Christ Church Cathedral*

In December a radar survey was undertaken by Stratascan Ltd within the north-transcept and northern aisle of Christ Church Cathedral to investigate the context of a possible water pipe leak. A number of likely graves and foundations were identified by the survey. The work was undertaken under faculty provision.

#### *No 31 Cowley Road Littlemore*

In January a watching brief was undertaken by John Moore Heritage Services at No 31 Cowley Road during groundworks for a new house. Previous work on the site had recorded the presence of a building, possible a coach house and cobbled yard area, associated with nearby St George's, a grade II listed house of 17<sup>th</sup> century date. The results of the work are forthcoming.

#### *No 7 Norham Gardens*

Between January and February John Moore Heritage Services have been undertaking a watching brief during building works at No 7 Norham Gardens. The work is required because of the proximity of extensive prehistoric landscape of

funerary monuments and later rural settlement in the nearby University Parks. The work is ongoing.

#### *No 96 Walton Street*

Between January and February John Moore Heritage Services have been undertaking a watching brief during building works at No 96 Walton Street. The work is required because of the proximity of the poorly understood medieval settlement of Walton. The work is ongoing.

#### *Westgate- Main phase of works*

In January a targeted watching brief was undertaken by Oxford Archaeology during public realm works for the Westgate development. No significant archaeology was recorded.

#### *Oxford Road Sports Ground*

In January an archaeological evaluation was undertaken by the University of Salford at land adjacent to Oxford Road and the adjacent to the BMW sports pitch. Further to previous investigations at this site and number of ditches and pits were recovered indicating the presence of Late Iron Age through to 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD settlement and associated enclosures and field boundaries. Further work is to follow in February.



*Trenching at Oxford Road recovering Roman pottery sherds and a quernstone fragment (Photographs by the University of Salford).*

#### *St Ebbe's Church*

In January and February Oxford Archaeology have been undertaking recording within St Ebbe's Church during investigations required to facilitate internal alterations. A number of brick-lined graves with stone capping have been encountered and left in-situ. The works are taking place under faculty provision.

### *Oxford Business Centre, Osney Lane*

In January Oxford Archaeology completed a bore hole survey at the Oxford Business Centre. The work demonstrated the presence of up to 2m of modern made ground related to the construction of the 19<sup>th</sup> century railway track, goods shed and subsequent demolition works. The site is of interest because it lies within partly within the projected extent of the precinct of the medieval Osney Abbey.

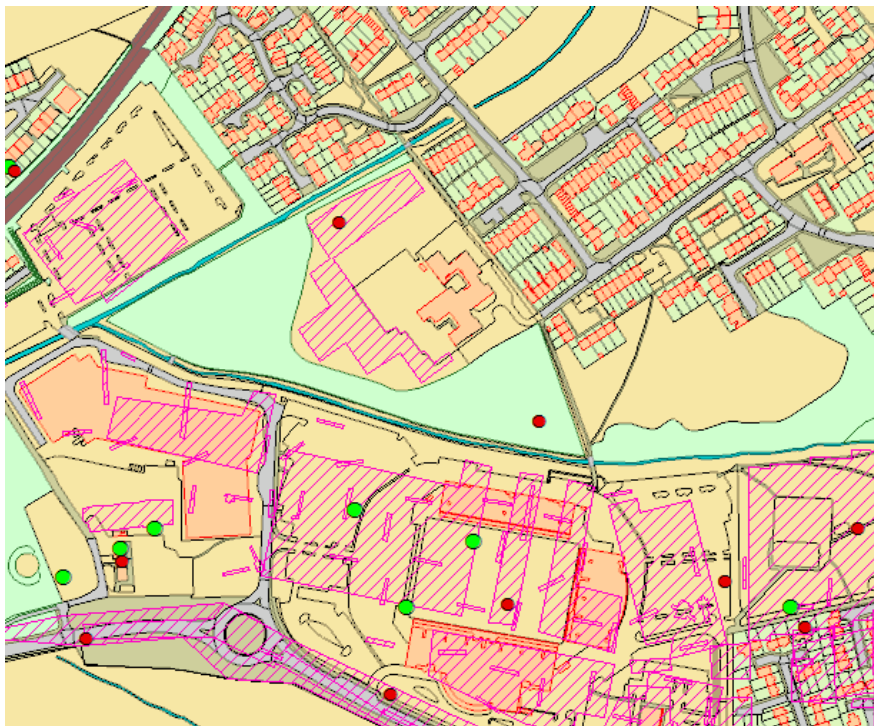
### *Land adjacent to Homebase, Horspath Driftway Car Park*

In January an evaluation trench was excavated by Wessex Archaeology within the car park of Homebase at Horspath Driftway on the site of a proposed new coffee shop. The work was required because previous archaeological works in the near vicinity identified the presence of an Iron Age-Roman enclosure ditch containing burials which can be projected into the development area. The Wessex trench revealed only modern made ground over natural geology.

## **Other news**

### *Oxford Urban Archaeological Database (UAD) and Historic Environment Record (HER)*

A programme of work has begun to scan historic 'grey literature' archaeological reports held by the City Council and to polygonise event records for the area covered by the old Historic Environment Record (data for Oxford is now held in one database) to bring it in line with the UAD.



Above: Polygonised events at Blackbird Leys © Crown Copyright and database right 2017. Ordnance Survey 100019348.

### *Oxford Museum event for the St Aldate's and Queen Street dig*

A successful display, handling session and talk was undertaken by Oxford Archaeology in co-operation with the Museum of Oxford in October presenting the

initial results of the excavations at Nos 4 To 5 Queen Street And Nos 114 - 119 St Aldate's.

*Lord Mayor's reception for Westgate excavation team*

The Lord Mayor of Oxford held a reception at the town hall in October for the staff of Oxford Archaeology to celebrate the success of the Westgate excavation which won Best Project category at the British Archaeological Awards.

*Archaeological Monitoring Statement 2015*

The 2015 Archaeological Monitoring Statement for Oxford is now available [on-line](#).

*David Radford, Archaeologist  
Oxford City Council*