

Proposed Police Facility. Grove Technology Park



Archaeological Evaluation Report

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Proposed Police Facility, Grove Technology Plant.

Archaeological Evaluation Report

Written by Steve Leech

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Summary

On January 31st 2012, Oxford archaeology undertook an archaeological evaluation at the site of proposed police facility at Grove Technology Park, Wantage, Oxfordshire. This comprised of an L shaped trench 30.0m long and 1.5m wide, situated within the South-western area of the proposed development. No archaeological deposits or remains were present.



1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Location and scope of work

- 1.1.1 Oxford Archaeology were commissioned by Thames Valley Police to carry out an archaeological evaluation at the site of proposed police facility at Grove Technology Park, Wantage, Oxfordshire (SU 3863 8977). The area of proposed development is located on the west side of the former airfield at Grove adjacent to Downsview House.
- 1.1.2 Due to the potential presence of archaeological features an archaeological field evaluation has been recommended by the Acting County Archaeologist (Hugh Coddington) in his capacity as archaeological advisor to the local planning authority. The recommendation is that work is carried out prior to a planning application being made, the results of which will then assist in the determination of an application. This is in line with PPS5 HE6.1 and Policy Hep of the Local Plan. A brief outlining the requirements for the evaluation was issued by Hugh Coddington (OCC 2011).
- 1.1.3 The proposed development area is located adjacent to Downsview House on the Grove Technology Park near Wantage (NGR SU3863 8977). This lies 1.5 kilometres, by road, east of the junction of Mably Way and Denchworth Road, north of Wantage.

1.2 Geology and topography

- 1.2.1 The site lies at approximately 82m OD and the geology is second terrace gravel overlying mudstone.

1.3 Archaeological and historical background

- 1.3.1 Aerial photographic and cartographic evidence suggests that ridge and furrow previously extended across most of area. The airfield was originally built for bombers in 1941 but was transferred to a glider training in 1942. The construction of the airfield and the concrete runways resulted in the whole area being levelled.
- 1.3.2 Most of the airfield east of Downsview House was subject to a (low percentage sample) archaeological field evaluation in 2006 when the area was being considered for housing development. This revealed evidence suggesting Romano British and Iron Age settlement some 500m to the south east (TVAS 2006. Grove Airfield. An Archaeological Evaluation, Report 06/71).

2 EVALUATION AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

2.1 Aims

- 2.1.1 The project design aims:
- (i) To determine or confirm the general nature of any remains present.
 - (ii) To determine or confirm the approximate date or date range of any remains, by means of artefactual or other evidence.

2.2 Methodology

- 2.2.1 Trench 1 was 30m long and 1.5m wide, and was L shaped in plan. It was orientated East - West and North – South.



Plate 1. Evaluation Trench



3 RESULTS

3.1 Introduction and presentation of results

3.1.1 The results are presented in basic form. No archaeological remains were found.

3.2 General soils and ground conditions

3.2.1 The topsoil was a dark grey – brown silty slay, with sparse amounts of small flint gravels 0.3m thick. The natural geology was a mixture of blueish grey clay inter-bedded with flint gravels.

3.3 General distribution of archaeological deposits

3.3.1 There were no archaeological deposits located within the area.

3.4 Trench 1

3.4.1 Trench 1 was 30m long and 1.5m wide, and was L shaped in plan. It was orientated East - West and North – South. The topsoil was 0.3m thick and overlay the natural clay.

3.4.2 There was one modern trench, that contained drainage pipes and other modern material. It was orientated east – west, and situated in the northern arm of the trench.

3.5 Finds summary

3.5.1 There was no artefactual and ecofactual evidence recovered.

3.6 Discussion

3.6.1 No archaeological deposits or remains or artefacts were revealed in the trench. There were no indicators found to cause reason to doubt that this absence of remains was indicative of the development site as a whole.

**APPENDIX A. TRENCH DESCRIPTIONS AND CONTEXT INVENTORY**

Trench 1						
General description				Orientation	E-W / N-S	
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of topsoil overlying a natural of clay with gravels.				Avg. depth (m)	0.3	
				Width (m)	1.5	
				Length (m)	30	
Contexts						
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
1000	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-
1001	Layer	-	0.3	Topsoil	-	-
					-	-

APPENDIX B. BIBLIOGRAPHY AND REFERENCES

English Heritage, 1991, Management of Archaeological Projects.

Hey, G. and Lacey, M. 2001, Evaluation of Archaeological Decision-making Processes and Sampling Strategies.

Oxford Archaeology, 1992, Fieldwork Manual, (Ed. D Wilkinson, first edition, August 1992)

Oxford Archaeology, 2000, OA Environmental Sampling Guidelines and Instruction, Manual.

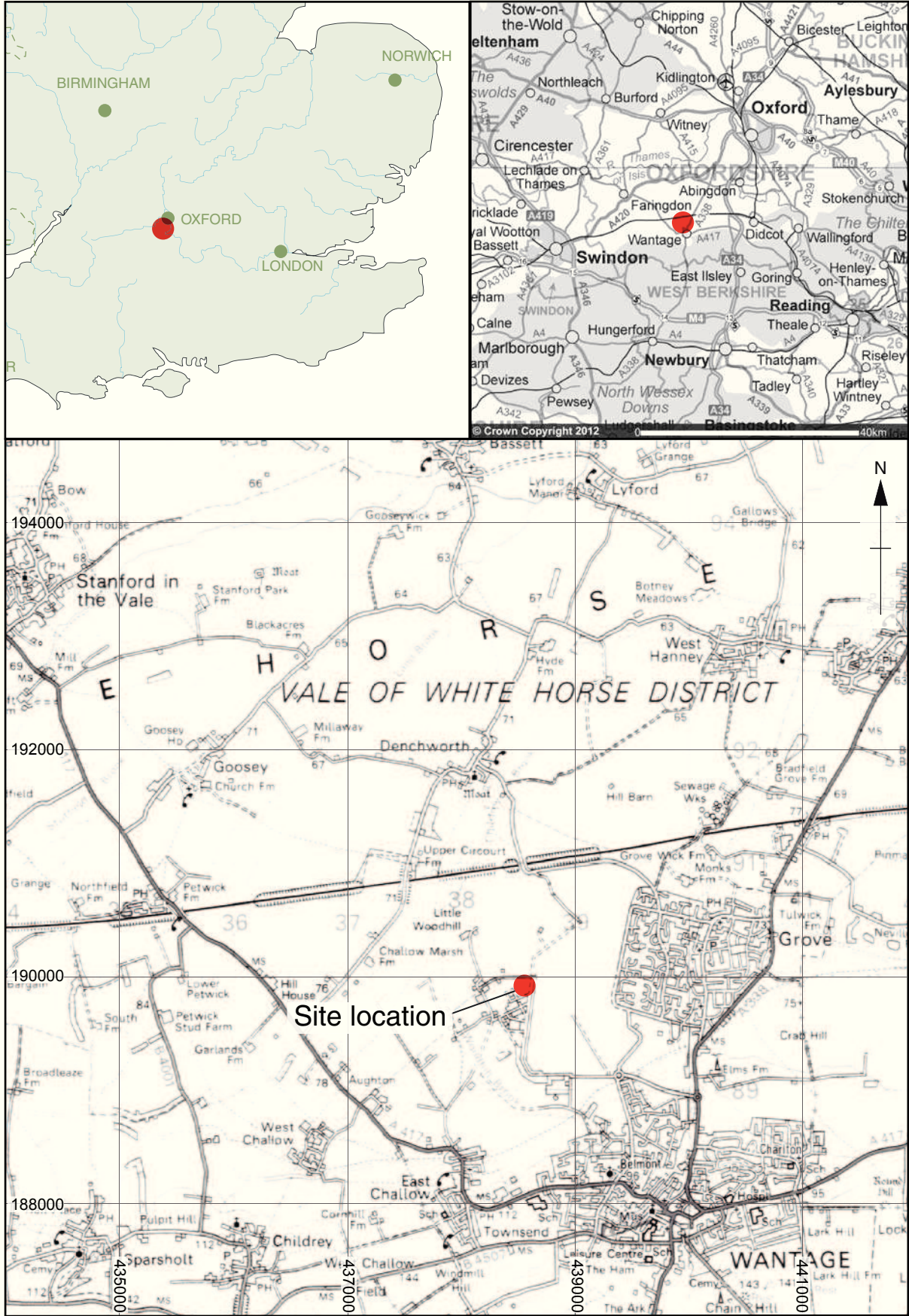
OCC 2011 Police Facility Grove. Design Brief for Archaeological Field Evaluations

TVAS 2006 Grove Airfield , An Archaeological Evaluation, Report 06/71



APPENDIX C. SUMMARY OF SITE DETAILS

Site name:	Proposed Police Facility. Grove Technology Park
Site code:	GRPOL12
Grid reference:	SU 386 897
Type:	Evaluation
Date and duration:	One day. January 31 st 2012
Summary of results:	No archaeological deposits or remains
Location of archive:	The archive is currently held at OA, Janus House, Osney Mead, Oxford, OX2 0ES, and will be deposited with the Oxfordshire Museum Service in due course. The accession number will be OXCMS 2012.20.



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Figure 1: Site location

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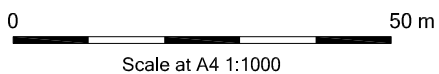


Fig.2 Trench Location