

# Tilsley Park Development, Dunmore Road, Abingdon, Oxfordshire

NGR SU 4945 9930

Archaeological Watching Brief Report



Oxford Archaeological Unit

December 1996

**TILSLEY PARK DEVELOPMENT, DUNMORE ROAD,  
ABINGDON, OXFORDSHIRE  
NGR SU 4945 9930  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF REPORT**

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

The Oxford Archaeological Unit (OAU) undertook a watching brief during the excavation of foundation trenches for a building at the site of a new sports and leisure complex during January and February 1996 (Fig. 1). The development, which is being funded by the Vale of the White Horse District Council, has been the subject of a watching brief by OAU since January 1995 as part of a negative condition in accordance with PPG 16 attached to the planning proposal. The development consists of a sports running track and grandstand, two synthetic football pitches, one grassed football pitch, a bowling green, an indoor rink and a car park.

The development area is located between Dunmore Road and the A34 on the north-west side of Abingdon. Prior to the development the site was used for floodholding and was an open area of grassland. Before 1993 the land was used for agriculture.

The foundation trenches for the building were excavated by Bickertons of Oxford, working to plans devised by Consulting Engineers Hill-Cannon Partnership of Harrogate, Yorkshire. Site visits were made upon consultation with the contractors, and timed to coincide with the groundwork.

## **2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND**

A cremation pit of unknown prehistoric date was discovered c.400 m north of the proposed development on the west edge of a pipeline easement in 1991. Medieval and Roman pottery scatters were also found during the pipeline construction, on the eastern margin of the proposed development area. During the early part of 1995 the OAU excavated a multi-period site (Abingdon Business Park, Wyndyke Furlong) c. 1.5 km to the south-west of the Tilsley Park site. Significant pre-historic, Roman and Saxon remains were discovered.

The Tilsley Park site lies on the junction of Kimmeridge Clay and Corallian beds. The underlying geology is cornbrash limestone and 1st terrace gravels. The geological horizon lies at approximately 65 m OD.

No archaeological features or finds were observed during groundwork associated with the construction of the car park and the football pitches during the 1995 watching brief.

## **3 RESULTS**

The excavation by the contractors of foundation trenches (Fig. 2) for a new building was monitored on three occasions. The new building was situated to the south of the athletics track and grandstand. In the area of the building the land slopes gently from north to south, into a natural hollow.

Following the removal of topsoil (8), on average c. 0.30 m deep, the foundation trenches were dug to a depth of 0.73-0.85m. Natural cornbrash and limestone (6) observed at the base of the trenches. The soil in the sides of the trench was a tenacious yellow-brown silty clay (7) similar to the soil observed during previous work on the same site. No archaeological features were observed in the trench sections, and no artefacts of any period were recovered from the excavated spoil.

#### 4 CONCLUSIONS

The investigation revealed a build up of soil similar to that observed during the 1995 watching brief. The thick clay layer was a colluvial deposit, derived from hillwash.

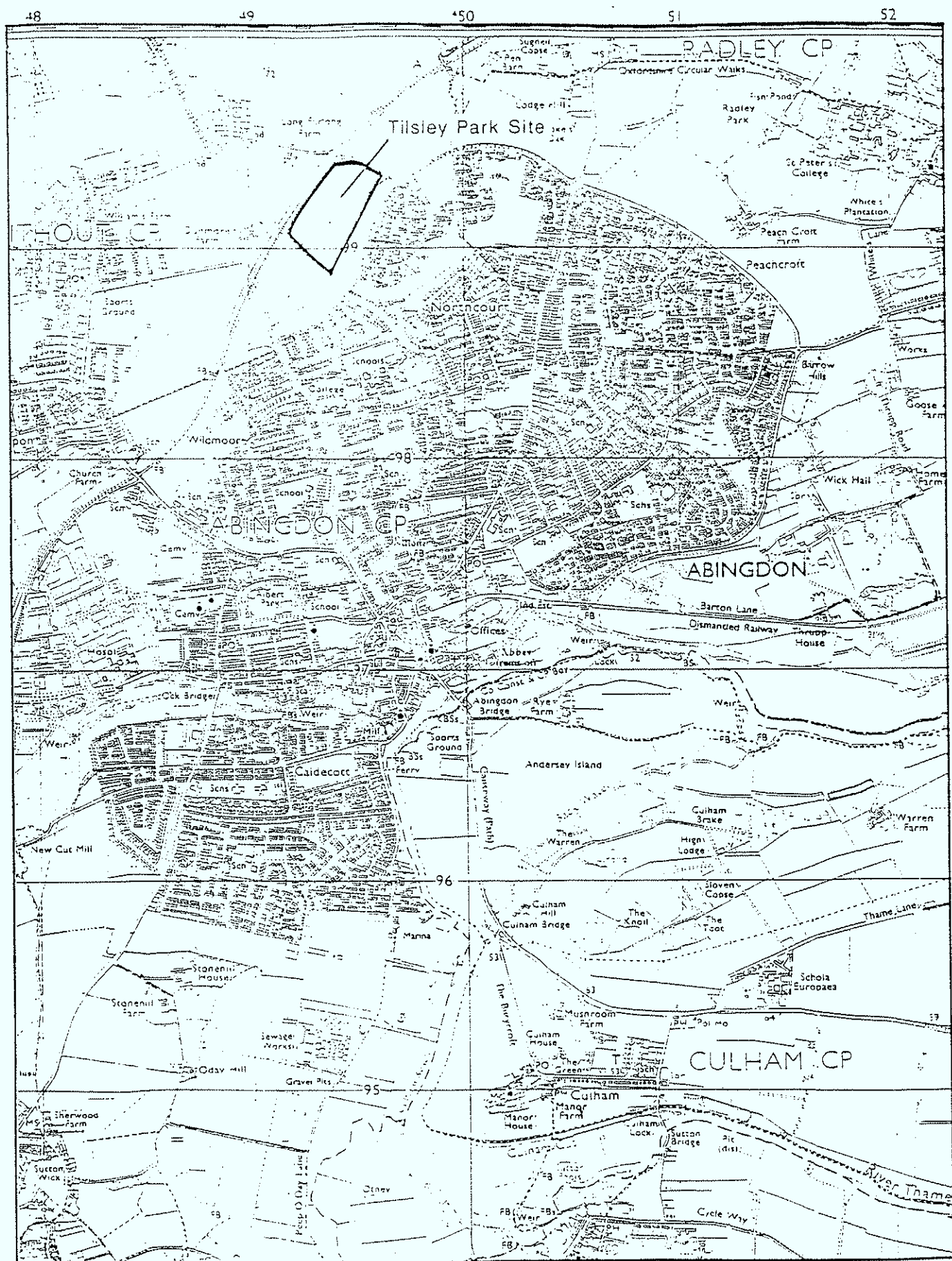
J. Hiller  
OAU  
December 1996

#### REFERENCE

OAU 1995, Land North-West of Dunmore Road, Abingdon, Oxon. Tilsley Park Sports and Leisure Complex, OAU client report

#### TABLE OF CONTEXT INFORMATION

CONTEXT	TYPE	COMMENTS
6	Layer	Natural limestone cornbrash
7	Layer	Tenacious yellow brown silty clay, colluvial hillwash deposit
8	Layer	Clay loam topsoil



Based on the Ordnance Survey's 1:25000 map of 1992 with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office, © Crown copyright

Fig. 1

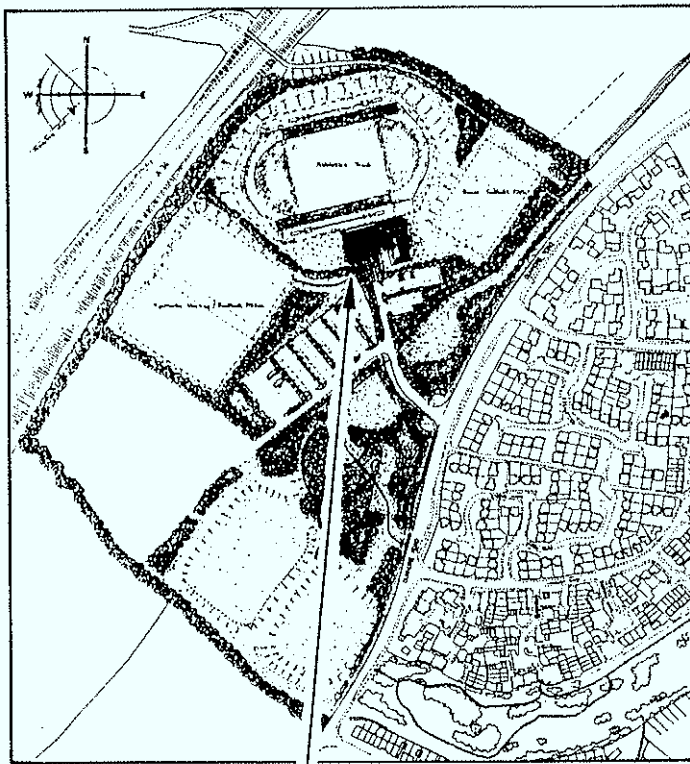
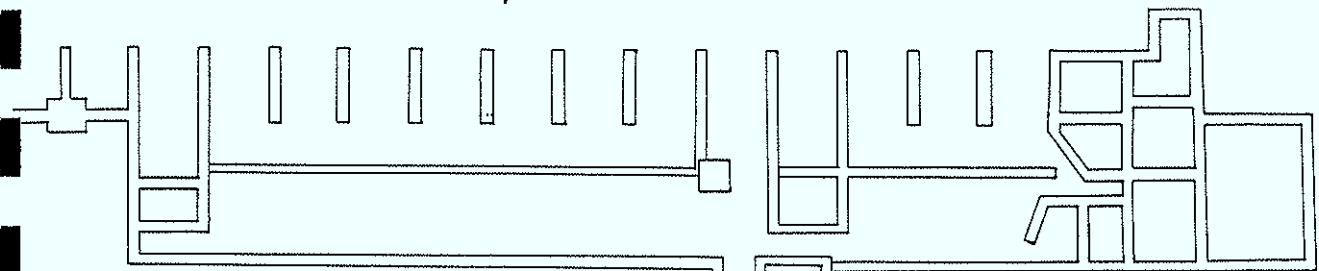
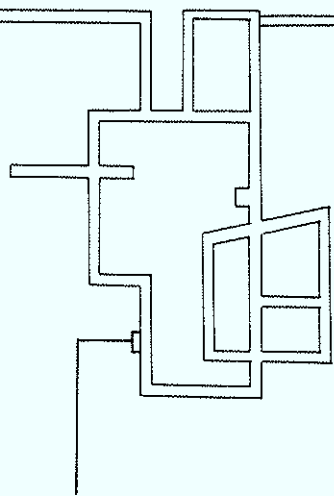


Fig. 2 Location of building



Plan of foundation trenches



sample section

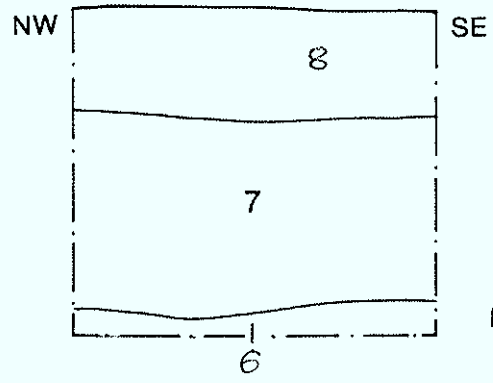
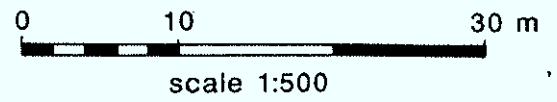
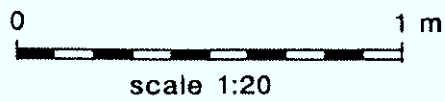


Fig. 3





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