

Watford Health Campus Area B



Archaeological Monitoring Report



September 2016

Client: Volker Fitzpatrick Ltd

OA East Report No: 1988

OASIS No: oxfordar3-216639

NGR: TQ 10878 95475

Watford Health Campus

Archaeological Monitoring in Area B

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Report Number: 1988
Site Name: Watford Health Campus Archaeological Monitoring in Area B
HER Event No:
Date of Works: 22nd July – 6th August 2015
Client Name: Volker Fitzpatrick Ltd
Client Ref: C11744-Watford Health Campus HIW
Planning Ref: 13/00971/FULM
Grid Ref: TQ 10878 95475
Site Code: XHTWHC15
Finance Code: XHTWHC15
Receiving Body: Watford Museum
Accession No: XHTWHC15
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Summary

Between 22nd July and 7th September 2015, Oxford Archaeology East carried out archaeological monitoring at Watford Health Campus, Wiggenhall Road, Watford, Hertfordshire (TQ 10878 95475). The archaeological monitoring of ground works, in area B, was an area not covered by the archaeological trenching.

The archaeological monitoring visits were carried out on five occasions and as shown in the evaluation phase of work, the site had been subject to truncation or modern build up, no archaeological remains were observed.

The monitoring at Watford Health Campus has demonstrated that no archaeological deposits or artefacts of significance are present on this site.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Location and scope of work

- 1.1.1 A phase of monitoring of ground works in area B, not covered by the archaeological trenching, was conducted at Watford Health Campus, Wiggenshall Road, Watford, Hertfordshire (Fig. 1).
- 1.1.2 This archaeological monitoring was undertaken in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation issued by AECOM Ltd for Watford Borough Council and approved by Hertfordshire County Council Historic Environment Unit (HCCHAU; Planning Application: Watford Borough Council 13/00971/FULM) (AECOM 2014).
- 1.1.3 The work was designed to assist in defining the character and extent of any archaeological remains within the proposed redevelopment area, in accordance with the guidelines set out in *National Planning Policy Framework* (Department for Communities and Local Government March 2012). The results will enable decisions to be made by HCCHAU, on behalf of the Local Planning Authority, with regard to the treatment of any archaeological remains found.
- 1.1.4 The site archive is currently held by OA East and will be deposited with the appropriate county stores in due course.

1.2 Geology and topography

- 1.2.1 The site lies immediately to the north of The River Colne in an urban setting within the Borough of Watford. The archaeological monitoring of ground works was conducted in areas along the proposed access road not covered by the evaluation trenching.
- 1.2.2 The underlying geology of the proposed development site comprises Seaford Chalk Formation And Newhaven Chalk Formation (undifferentiated) - Chalk bedrock overlain by superficial deposits consisting of Alluvium - clay, silt, sand and gravel.
<http://www.bgs.ac.uk/discoveringGeology/geologyOfBritain/viewer.html>.

1.3 Archaeological and historical background

- 1.3.1 An archaeological desk-based assessment was carried out by AECOM Ltd for the Watford Health Campus Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) in September 2013 (AECOM 2013) which details the archaeological potential of the site and should be referred to for full background. The following is a brief summary:
- 1.3.2 A total of 88 sites were recorded within 500m of the Watford Health Campus. These included 11 listed buildings and 77 non-designated sites. The geotechnical monitoring of the site indicated both areas of widespread truncation and areas where possible palaeochannel deposits or alluvial deposits survived. A Bronze Age hearth was listed within the study area, to the south of the River Colne on Eastbury Road. Stray finds were also described from the prehistoric to early medieval period but most likely out of their original context. Structural evidence dating to the later medieval period were found on the High Street to the north east of the site. The EIA concluded there is potential for previously unrecorded heritage assets within the route, primarily of Bronze Age date, although other periods could not be discounted. Therefore intrusive trial trenching was recommended along the proposed access route on the playing fields and archaeological monitoring within the industrialised areas.
- 1.3.3 Previous work undertaken for the project include archaeological evaluation by trenching along the proposed route of the access road by AOC Archaeology in 2006 (Clarke

2007). Made ground overlying alluvium was encountered in the area of the sports pitches to the east of Wigenhall road suggesting archaeological remains were likely to be preserved in this area. Archaeological monitoring of geotechnical test pits within the development area was also carried out by OA East in 2013 (Stocks-Morgan & Webster 2013). This identified the survival of possible palaeo-deposits in the near vicinity of the River Colne and a buried garden soil horizon beneath part of the industrial estate to the west of Wigenhall Road. No further areas of archaeological concern were identified.

1.4 Acknowledgements

- 1.4.1 The authors would like to thank Volker Fitzpatrick Ltd who commissioned the work, Aileen Connor of OA East who managed the project and Andy Instone who monitored the works on behalf of Hertfordshire County Council. Site monitoring visits were carried out by Graham Clark, Rebeca Jarosz Blackburn, and Louise Bush. Site survey was carried out by James Taplin of Volker Fitzpatrick Ltd. Also thanks to Anthill Ltd who provided the plant.

2 AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

2.1 Aims

- 2.1.1 The objective of this monitoring phase of work was to determine as far as reasonably possible the presence/absence, location, nature, extent, date, quality, condition and significance of any surviving archaeological deposits within the development area.

2.2 Methodology

- 2.2.1 The Archaeological Written Scheme of Investigation required:
- monitoring of ground works in areas not covered by the evaluation phase of trenching
- 2.2.2 Machine excavation was carried out under constant archaeological supervision with a wheeled 360 backhoe excavator using a toothless ditching bucket.
- 2.2.3 Survey data was produced by the principal contractor Volker Fitzpatrick Ltd.
- 2.2.4 Spoil, exposed surfaces and features were scanned with a metal detector. All metal-detected and hand-collected finds were retained for inspection, other than those which were obviously modern.
- 2.2.5 All archaeological features and deposits were recorded using OA East's *pro-forma* sheets. Trench locations, plans and sections were recorded at appropriate scales and colour and monochrome photographs were taken of all relevant features and deposits.
- 2.2.6 No features or layers were encountered that had potential for environmental sampling.
- 2.2.7 The site conditions were good with fair weather during the summer of 2015.

3 RESULTS

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 Descriptions of the ground conditions encountered, features identified and artefacts recovered are given in this section, full descriptions with dimensions are given in appendix A. The site layout, showing position of monitoring area B, are given in Figure 2.

3.1.2 The results of the archaeological works along the proposed access road route are presented by Area, this report covers Area B:

Areas B comprised monitoring of ground works in areas not covered by the evaluation phase of trenching (Plates 1-4).

3.2 Archaeological Monitoring in Area B

3.2.1 Archaeological monitoring of Area B was carried out between 22nd July and 6th August 2015.

3.2.2 The area directly west of Wigenhall Road (Plate 1), involved removing modern spoil from the railway embankment, natural deposits were not reached and no archaeology was observed.

3.2.3 Excavation reached 50m OD, around 0.6m below the level of the surface of Wigenhall Road (Plate 2). In the northern half of this monitoring area, excavations revealed 19th-century built-up material (216) for the railway embankment; this consisted of a clean light brownish yellow sand and clay mix. The embankment was bounded by a red brick retaining wall (213) which was recorded in plan and photographed; a brick was retained as a sample.

3.2.4 The material at the south end of the monitoring area was recorded as made ground (212). This consisted of modern rubble and concrete interspersed with dark silty sand and gravel layers. These contained frequent modern rubbish, concrete blocks and disused services. The natural underlying gravel was not revealed during this phase of the monitoring works due to truncation by 19th and 20th century building and industrial activity. Excavations were photographed and the levels of excavated ground were recorded.

3.2.5 Excavations further west continued to remove modern layers of construction debris and rubbish, and the underlying natural was not reached. The excavated foundation level for the road here was 52-53m OD, and the excavated level for the services was 50-51m OD (Plate 3). A concrete culvert was removed in this area (Plate 4).

3.3 Finds Summary

3.3.1 No finds were recovered during the monitoring of Area B produced only very modern building debris.

3.4 Environmental Summary

3.4.1 No archaeological deposits were identified with potential for environmental sampling.

4 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

4.1 Area B

- 4.1.1 A series of monitoring visits carried out along this area of the road corridor did not observe any archaeological remains. The area in question had been heavily truncated or built up during phases of industrial usage and abandonment in the 20th century.

4.2 Significance

- 4.2.1 The monitoring work in the corridor of the new road had revealed no archaeological remains, the site had been subjected to recent disturbance that had destroyed or sealed any earlier archaeological remains.

4.3 Recommendations

- 4.3.1 Recommendations for any future work based upon this report will be made by the County Archaeology Office.

APPENDIX A. BIBLIOGRAPHY

- AECOM Ltd 2013 *Watford Health Campus – Highway Infrastructure Works Application. Environmental Impact Assessment.* AECOM Ltd, dated 6th September 2013
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APPENDIX B. OASIS REPORT FORM

All fields are required unless they are not applicable.

Project Details

OASIS Number	Oxfordar3-263978			
Project Name	Watford Health Campus Archaeological Monitoring in Area B			
Project Dates (fieldwork)	Start	22-07-2015	Finish	06-08-2015
Previous Work (by OA East)	Yes		Future Work	Yes

Project Reference Codes

Site Code	XHTWHC15	Planning App. No.	13/00971/FULM
HER No.		Related HER/OASIS No.	oxfordar3-159700

Type of Project/Techniques Used

Prompt	Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPS 5
Development Type	Road Scheme

Please select all techniques used:

<input type="checkbox"/> Aerial Photography - interpretation	<input type="checkbox"/> Grab-Sampling	<input type="checkbox"/> Remote Operated Vehicle Survey
<input type="checkbox"/> Aerial Photography - new	<input type="checkbox"/> Gravity-Core	<input type="checkbox"/> Sample Trenches
<input type="checkbox"/> Annotated Sketch	<input type="checkbox"/> Laser Scanning	<input type="checkbox"/> Survey/Recording Of Fabric/Structure
<input type="checkbox"/> Augering	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Measured Survey	<input type="checkbox"/> Targeted Trenches
<input type="checkbox"/> Dendrochronological Survey	<input type="checkbox"/> Metal Detectors	<input type="checkbox"/> Test Pits
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Documentary Search	<input type="checkbox"/> Phosphate Survey	<input type="checkbox"/> Topographic Survey
<input type="checkbox"/> Environmental Sampling	<input type="checkbox"/> Photogrammetric Survey	<input type="checkbox"/> Vibro-core
<input type="checkbox"/> Fieldwalking	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Photographic Survey	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Visual Inspection (Initial Site Visit)
<input type="checkbox"/> Geophysical Survey	<input type="checkbox"/> Rectified Photography	

Monument Types/Significant Finds & Their Periods

List feature types using the [NMR Monument Type Thesaurus](#) and significant finds using the [MDA Object type Thesaurus](#) together with their respective periods. If no features/finds were found, please state "none".

Monument	Period	Object	Period
Wall	Modern 1901 to Present		None
Made Ground	Modern 1901 to Present		None
Culvert	Modern 1901 to Present		None

Project Location

County	Hertfordshire	Site Address (including postcode if possible)
District	Watford Borough	Watford Health Campus, Wiggenhall Road, Watford
Parish	Watford	
HER	Hertfordshire HER	
Study Area	15.6 ha	National Grid Reference
		TQ 10878 95475

Project Originators

Organisation	OA East
Project Brief Originator	AECOM
Project Design Originator	Aileen Connor (OA East)
Project Manager	Aileen Connor (OA East)
Supervisor	Graeme Clarke (OA East)

Project Archives

Physical Archive	Digital Archive	Paper Archive
Watford Museum	OA East	Watford Museum
XHTWHC15	XHTWHC15	XHTWHC15

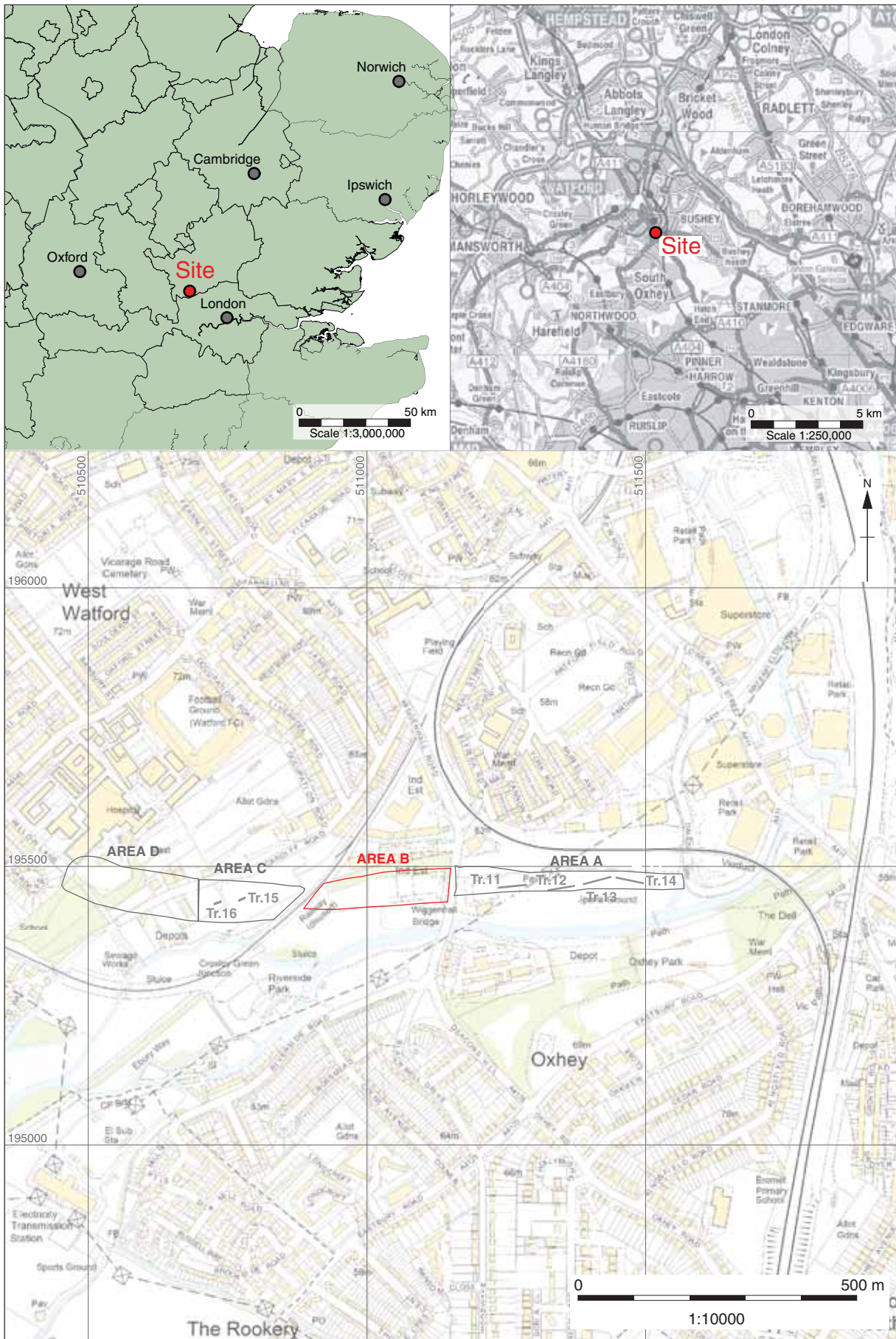
Archive Contents/Media

	Physical Contents	Digital Contents	Paper Contents
Animal Bones	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ceramics	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Environmental	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Glass	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Human Bones	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Industrial	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Leather	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Metal	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Stratigraphic		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Survey		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Textiles	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Wood	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Worked Bone	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Worked Stone/Lithic	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
None	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Digital Media	Paper Media
<input type="checkbox"/> Database	<input type="checkbox"/> Aerial Photos
<input type="checkbox"/> GIS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Context Sheet
<input type="checkbox"/> Geophysics	<input type="checkbox"/> Correspondence
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Images	<input type="checkbox"/> Diary
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Illustrations	<input type="checkbox"/> Drawing
<input type="checkbox"/> Moving Image	<input type="checkbox"/> Manuscript
<input type="checkbox"/> Spreadsheets	<input type="checkbox"/> Map
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Survey	<input type="checkbox"/> Matrices
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Text	<input type="checkbox"/> Microfilm
<input type="checkbox"/> Virtual Reality	<input type="checkbox"/> Misc.
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Research/Notes
	<input type="checkbox"/> Photos
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Plans
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Report
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sections
	<input type="checkbox"/> Survey

Notes:

This is a separate phase of work associated with the trial trenching in Areas A and C and monitoring work in Area D.



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Figure 1: Site location

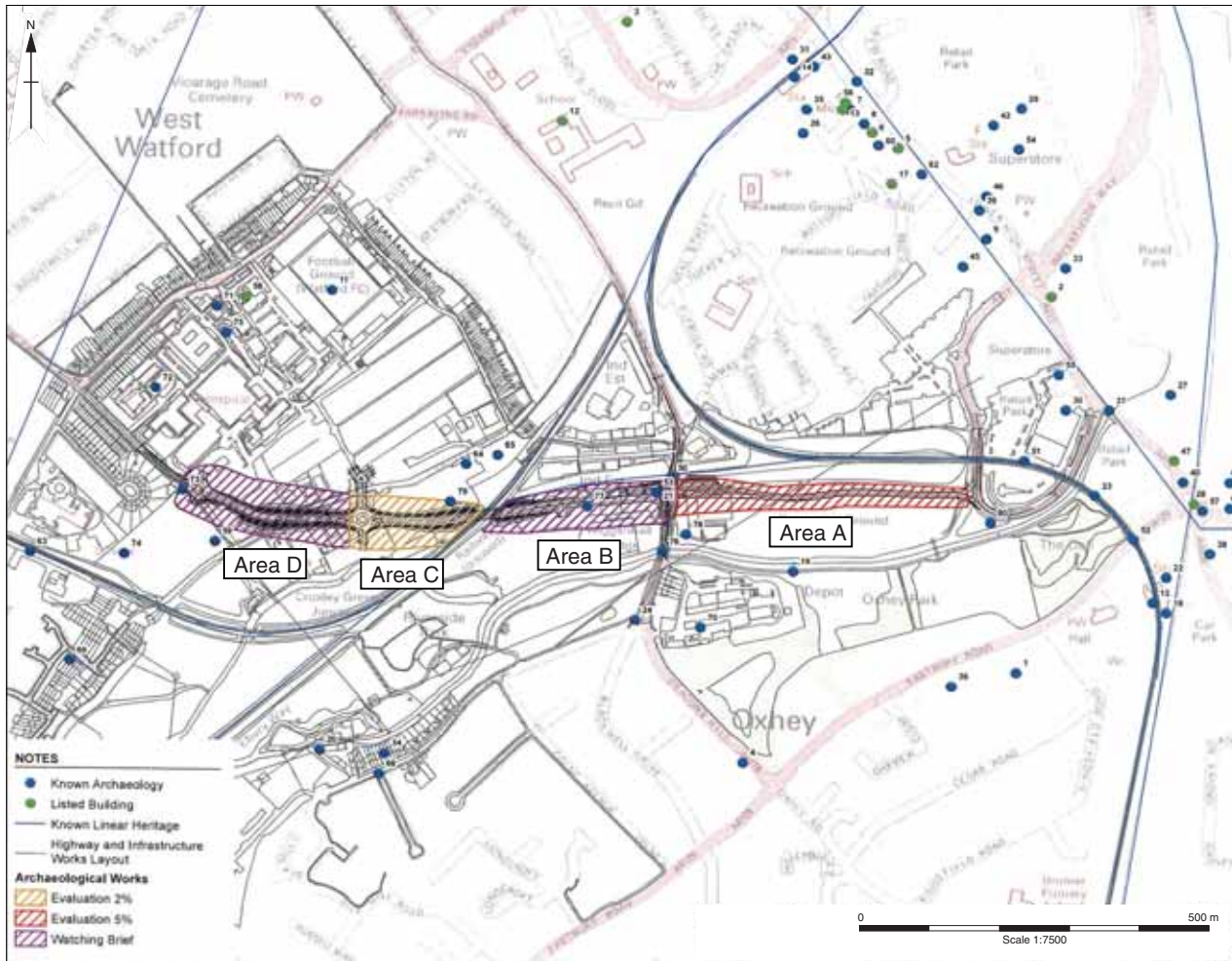


Figure 2: Area B for Archaeological works



Plate 1: Area B west of Wigenhall Road



Plate 2: Area B showing limit of excavation depth



Plate 3: Area B showing limit of excavation depth



Plate 4: Area B showing concret culvert



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