



BMW Group, Roman Way, Oxford Lorry Park Development

Archaeological Watching Brief Report

October 2018

Client: BMW Group Oxford

Issue No: 1

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BMW Group, Roman Way Oxford, Lorry Park Development

Archaeological Watching Brief Report

Written by Paul Murray

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Summary

Oxford Archaeology (OA) was commissioned by BMW Group Oxford to undertake archaeological monitoring during alterations to an existing carpark to form new parking for HGV parking facilities at Roman Way, Oxford. The archaeological work predominantly comprised monitoring the reduction of tarmac surfaces and excavations for an inspection chamber and soak away. No archaeological features or deposits were recorded although the majority of the works did not impact any potential archaeological horizons. It appears that the site had undergone significant landscaping, including the construction of a concrete and brick bedding layer for the existing car park.

Acknowledgements

Oxford Archaeology would like to thank BMW Group Oxford for commissioning this project. Thanks are also extended to David Radford who monitored the work.

The project was managed for Oxford Archaeology by Paul Murray. The fieldwork was carried out by Diana Chard and Michael McLean. Thanks are also extended to the teams of OA staff prepared the archive under the management of Nicola Scott.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Scope of work

- 1.1.1 Oxford Archaeology (OA) was commissioned by BMW Group, Oxford to undertake a watching brief during alterations to an existing carpark to form new HGV parking facilities. This included the installation of 2.4m high fencing with barriers, lighting masts and the excavation for inspection chamber and soak away.
- 1.1.2 The work was undertaken as a condition of Planning Permission (planning ref: 17/01435/FUL). A brief was set by David Radford, City Council Archaeologist, detailing the Local Authority's requirements for work necessary to discharge the planning condition. This document outlines how OA implemented the specified requirements.

1.2 Location, topography and geology

- 1.2.1 The site lies to the west of Roman Way, Garsington Oxford (NGR 56189 04288) on the site of a former carpark and social club (Fig. 1).
- 1.2.2 The area of proposed development consists of car parking areas and a former bowling green (Fig. 2). The site was occupied by a social club and associated facilities, which have been recently demolished to ground level.
- 1.2.3 The geology of the area is mapped as Wheatley Limestone Member - Limestone. Sedimentary Bedrock formed approximately 156 to 161 million years ago in the Jurassic Period (BGS).
- 1.2.4 The north end of the development area lies at c 78.5m AOD, gently sloping south to 75.5m AOD.

1.3 Archaeological and historical background

- 1.3.1 The archaeological and historical background of the site has been described in detail in Mini Plant Oxford, Impact Assessment (OA 2010), and is summarised here.
- 1.3.2 Aerial photographs taken in 1944, 1975 and 1995 show a number of cropmarks within and to the east of the site. A rectangular crop mark which lies within the development area was identified from a 1944 aerial photograph. A probable trackway, aligned east-west was identified c 200m to the north east, and a circular crop mark, thought to be modern, was identified c 200m to the south east. Rectilinear crop marks, which may date from the prehistoric or Roman periods, have been identified c 400m to the south east.
- 1.3.3 An excavation undertaken by Salford Archaeology in October 2017, 250m to the east of the application site, identified Late Iron Age and early Roman settlement remains.

Prehistoric period

- 1.3.4 A late Bronze Age or early Iron Age ditch was recorded during evaluation work c 300m to the south. Prehistoric pottery was also recovered during evaluation works c 400m to the SSW (OAU 1995).

Roman period

- 1.3.5 The site lies immediately to the east of the north-south Roman Road (HER 8033) from Dorchester to Alchester, now called Roman Way. Metalled surfaces were revealed during gas pipe works in 1960, c 600m to the south (JMHS 2001).
- 1.3.6 About six burials of probable Roman date were reported in 1941. An evaluation at the same location found Roman pottery and identified a Roman Ploughsoil (OAU 1995). Two burials of a probable Roman date were reported as being found in a stone pit in 1895 on the north side of Garsington Road, c 200m to the north. Two further burials of possible Roman date, were also found on the north side of Garsington Road c 300m to the north-west.
- 1.3.7 Roman material was also recovered during a programme of fieldwalking undertaken in 2001, some 250m to the east of the site. An evaluation carried out in the same fields in 2002 found a 1st century ditch and undated features (OA 2002).

Post medieval

- 1.3.8 The 1st Edition Ordnance Survey Map of 1886 shows the area before the construction of the motor works, with the site consisting of farmland.

2 AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

2.1 Aims

2.2 General

2.2.1 To identify and record any significant archaeological remains revealed during any invasive ground works likely to impact archaeological deposits.

2.3 Specific aims and objectives

2.3.1 The specific aims and objectives of the watching brief were to:

- i. Identify and record any significant archaeological remains bearing in mind the potential for Roman activity adjacent to the Dorchester-Alchester Road.
- ii. To mitigate the impact of the intrusive works through preservation by record.
- iii. The report will refer to the city, county and regional period based resource assessments and research agendas.

2.4 Methodology

2.4.1 Archaeological monitoring was carried out during intrusive works that impacted ground below existing surfaces and slabs, excavation of storm water drains, soak away and new service trenches.

2.4.2 All work was undertaken in accordance with OA's general approach to excavation and recording as defined in the written scheme of investigation, and the Chartered Institute for Archaeologist's 'Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs' (CIfA 2014).

3 RESULTS

3.1 Description of deposits

3.1.1 The archaeological monitoring identified made ground to a general depth of 0.7m below both the existing tarmac surface and grassed areas. The made ground generally comprised heavy limestone and brick rubble. The geological horizon was recorded at a depth of c 0.7m during the excavation of a soakaway and inspection chamber.

3.2 Finds and environmental summary

3.2.1 No finds were recovered or noted during the archaeological monitoring. No archaeological deposits were identified.

4 DISCUSSION

4.1 Reliability of field investigation

- 4.1.1 Although no archaeological features or deposits were identified, the works were carried out in dry, clear conditions, and where sections were exposed the stratigraphic sequence was clear.
- 4.1.2 Therefore, the results of the watching brief can be considered a reliable investigation into the areas of potential impact resulting from the construction works.

4.2 Discussion and Conclusions

- 4.2.1 The archaeological monitoring works did not identify any archaeological deposits. It appears that the site has undergone significant landscaping during the construction of the car park and clubhouse. A layer of heavy concrete, stone and brick rubble up to 0.7m thick had been laid prior to the construction of the current car park.

APPENDIX A BIBLIOGRAPHY

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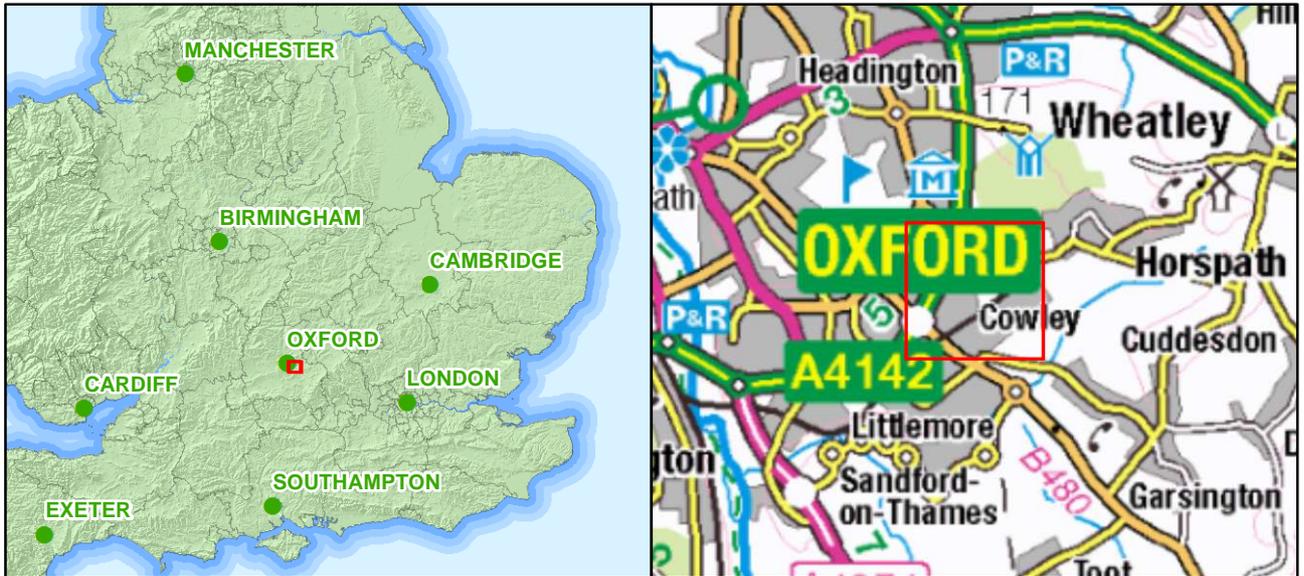
Oxford Archaeology 1995a, *Paint Shop Building, Garsington Way, Oxford: Archaeological Evaluation Report*

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Oxford Archaeology 2010, *Mini Plant Oxford, Impact Assessment*

APPENDIX B**SITE SUMMARY DETAILS**

Site name:	BMW Group, Roman Way, Oxford
Site code:	BMWG17
Grid Reference	SP 56189 04288
Type:	Evaluation
Date and duration:	6 th September – 9 th October 2017
Area of Site	12,000m ²
Location of archive:	The archive is currently held at OA, Janus House, Osney Mead, Oxford, OX2 0ES, and will be deposited with Oxfordshire County Museum Service in due course, under the following accession number: OXCMS : 2017.142.
Summary of Results:	Oxford Archaeology (OA) was commissioned by BMW Group, Oxford to undertake archaeological monitoring of the site of alterations to an existing carpark to form parking for HGV lorries at Roman Way, Oxford. The archaeological work predominantly comprised monitoring the reduction of tarmac surfaces and the excavations for an inspection chamber and soak away. The archaeological monitoring did not identify any archaeological deposits, although the majority of the works did not impact any potential archaeological horizons. It appears that the site had undergone significant landscaping and the laying of a layer of concrete, stone and brick rubble prior to construction of the current car park and former social club.



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Figure 1: Site location



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