Land East of Sutton Courtenay Lane, Sutton Courtenay, Oxfordshire

Watching Brief Report

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Land East of Sutton Courtenay Lane, Sutton Courtenay, Oxfordshire

Watching Brief Report

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Summary

In September 2018 Oxford Archaeology (OA) was commissioned by CgMs Heritage to undertake a watching brief on land east of Sutton Courtenay Lane, Sutton Courtenay, Oxfordshire, along a 250m service trench. This was the first phase of archaeological mitigation works for a new warehouse development being constructed on the site.

While large sections of the trench were heavily truncated, either by modern landscaping or extensive rooting, several concentrations of archaeological features were identified. This activity appeared to be associated with the Iron Age and Roman settlement activity identified in an adjacent evaluation dug in 2016. At least four main areas of archaeological features were identified in the trench consisting of intercutting ditches, pits, gullies and a posthole.

The pottery assemblage ranged from the middle Iron Age through to the early Roman period. The watching brief assemblage appeared to be predominantly middle Iron Age in date and may indicate that the main focus of late Roman activity was further eastwards towards the previous evaluation area. The work was also able to demonstrate evidence of Anglo-Saxon activity in the form of a possible sunken-featured building.

A well-preserved faunal assemblage of horse, cattle and sheep/goat with evidence of butchery and de-fleshing was recovered from these features. Evidence of wartime remains and rubbish deposits was also identified within or close to the service trench.

Overall the watching brief provided further evidence of a multi-phase settlement within the north-west of the development associated with middle Iron Age to Roman enclosures and structures. There is a clear settlement focus of middle Iron Age activity within the service trench, with a possible shift to the east during the late Roman period. The finds assemblage is suggestive of a moderately high-status middle Iron Age settlement that continued in use into the Roman period.

Acknowledgements

Oxford Archaeology would like to thank Paul Clark, CgMs Heritage, for commissioning this project. Thanks are also extended to Hugh Coddington who monitored the work on behalf of Oxfordshire County Council for his advice and guidance.

The project was managed for Oxford Archaeology by Carl Champness. The fieldwork was directed by John Carne, who was supported by Chris Richardson. Survey and digitizing was undertaken by John Carne. Thanks are also extended to the teams of OA staff that cleaned and packaged the finds under the management of Leigh Allen, processed the environmental remains under the management of Rebecca Nicholson, and 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 CgMs Heritage to undertake an archaeological watching brief on land east of Sutton Courtenay Lane, Sutton Courtenay, Oxfordshire. The work was being undertaken as part of a first phase of mitigation works in association with a new warehouse development at the site. The watching brief was maintained on a 250m service trench that was being installed as part of the new scheme.

1.1.2 The work was undertaken as a condition of Planning Permission (planning ref. P14/V1906/0). Following discussions with Hugh Coddington, Planning Archaeologist for Oxfordshire Country Council (OCC), it was agreed that a watching brief would be maintained during the excavation of service runs in the defined area of archaeological interest. The work follows on from a previous phase of archaeological evaluation trenching that was undertaken in 2016 (OA 2016) which identified a Romano-British settlement to the north-west of the site. This document outlines the results of the archaeological monitoring in this area.

1.1.3 All work was undertaken in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Excavation (2014) and local and national planning policies.

1.2 Location, topography and geology

1.2.1 The area of development consists of an area c. 10ha in total, bounded to the north by agricultural land, to the west by Sutton Courtenay Lane, to the south by an access road to the former power station, and to the east by industrial buildings (NGR SU 5007892420; Fig. 1; Plate 1). The service trench was located in the north-west corner of the area (Plate 2).

1.2.2 The geology of the area is mapped as Gault Formation Mudstone: sedimentary bedrock formed approximately 101 to 113 million years ago in the Cretaceous Period. This is overlain by the Summertown-Radley Sand and Gravel Member: superficial deposits formed up to 3 million years ago in the Quaternary Period (BGS 2018).

1.3 Archaeological and historical background

1.3.1 A summary of the archaeological and historical background of the site is outlined below:

1.3.2 The area was investigated by a trial trench evaluation by Oxford Archaeology in 2016 (OA, 2016). The evaluation revealed a significant number of archaeological features, consisting of a series of pits and linear/curvilinear settlement features dating from middle Iron Age to the Roman period, within 50m of the proposed service trench location.

1.3.3 The site of a Scheduled Iron Age settlement (List entry Number 1004853; 7743) is located immediately to the west of Sutton Courtenay Lane, opposite the site. The cropmark evidence for the site comprises a dense complex of circular features and

linear ditches. Late Iron Age/Roman pottery has been collected from the site by fieldwalking. Evaluation has shown that Iron Age/Roman settlement evidence continues southwards, outside the Scheduled area.

1.3.4 Extensive cropmarks of a Roman linear village and associated regular field system are recorded in the field to the north of the site. The cropmarks extend for approximately 400m to the field's northern boundary. A Roman cemetery, comprising five inhumations was found during the construction of a railway siding 315m south of the site, and a Roman pottery vessel was recovered during the construction of an American tank shelter, Didcot depot, to the south of the site. The area immediately to the south of the site was investigated prior to development by evaluation and a subsequent strip, map and sample exercise, which identified a number of linear features forming parts of Roman and later field systems. To the north-west of the site, a late Iron Age/early Roman field system and associated trackway were identified by excavation.

1.3.5 Excavations ahead of the expansion of Didcot Power Station, 215m south-west of the site, uncovered 17 Anglo-Saxon inhumation burials, dating to the 7th century and two sunken-featured buildings. Anglo-Saxon features were identified within the central part of the scheduled area part of Milton Park, to the west of Sutton Courtenay Lane, and further Anglo-Saxon features were identified in an evaluation in the southern (unscheduled) part of Milton Park.

1.3.6 Evaluation undertaken in the area to the east of the site, within Didcot B Power Station, identified no archaeological remains within the twelve trenches excavated (Trenches 8-19), with significant modern disturbance sealed by 0.4-1.2m of made ground (Oxford Archaeological Unit, Didcot 'B' Power Station Archaeological Evaluation).

1.3.7 A number of Neolithic artefacts, predominantly of uncertain provenance, are recorded on the HER within 1km of the site.

1.4 Potential

1.4.1 There is a high potential for archaeological remains in the area, with Roman settlement activity to the north, Iron Age settlement and Anglo-Saxon activity to the west and Iron Age through to Roman features recorded just 50m from the proposed service trench (OA 2016). A pill box dating to the second world war is also located within 10m of the proposed service trench.

2 AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

2.1 Aims

2.1.1 The aims and objectives of the watching brief are:

i. To determine the location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any archaeological remains within the development;

ii. To assess the vulnerability/sensitivity of any exposed remains;

iii. To determine the potential of the site to provide palaeoenvironmental and/or economic evidence;

iv. To provide sufficient information on the archaeological potential of the site to enable the archaeological implications of any proposed developments to be assessed;

v. To assess the impact of previous land use on the site;

vi. To inform a strategy to avoid or mitigate the impacts of any proposed development on surviving archaeological remains;

vii. To disseminate the results through the production of a site archive for deposition with an appropriate museum and to provide information for accession to the Oxfordshire HER;

viii. To investigate further areas of Romano-British settlement remains identified within the site;

ix. To ensure that any remains are protected and/or adequately recorded during the watching brief.

2.1.2 The programme of archaeological investigation was conducted within the general research parameters and objectives defined by the 'Solent-Thames Research Framework for the Historic Environment: Resource Assessments and Research Agendas' (Hay and Hind 2014).

2.2 Methodology

2.2.1 A summary of general approach to the watching brief and recording is outlined within the project Written Scheme of Investigation (OA 2018).

2.2.2 A single narrow trench, 1.8m wide and 1.2m deep, was excavated around the area of a Romano-British settlement identified previously on the site in an evaluation in 2016 (Fig 2). The excavations were monitored continuously during the course of the works and examined for signs of archaeological remains. Once the trench had been excavated, the exposed sections were cleaned and then recorded.

2.2.3 All features and sections were surveyed with a GPS. All archaeological and deposits were investigated by hand and issued with context numbers.

3 RESULTS

3.1 Introduction and presentation of results

3.1.1 The results of the watching brief are presented below and include a stratigraphic description of the archaeological remains.

3.1.2 The dimensions and depths of all deposits can be found in Appendix A. Finds data and spot dates are tabulated in Appendix B.

3.2 General soils and ground conditions

3.2.1 The general soil sequence along the 250m service trench varied considerably. Where observed, the natural geology consisted of a silty sand, or sand matrix with abundant flint gravel inclusions, with occasional discrete areas of chalk. Where undisturbed, the natural geology was overlain by a buried agriculturally derived subsoil, which in turn was overlain by topsoil. The entire area is capped by a modern levelling deposit of clay of varying thickness.

3.2.2 There was a large dump of 1940s rubbish material, truncating the subsoil and natural, in the southern end of the service trench (Fig. 2), roughly 70m in length, and at least 1.2m in depth. The rubbish material produced a near complete storage jar dating to 1941 (Plate 3) and further vegetation clearance revealed an old wartime guard post to the north (Plate 4).

3.2.3 In the northern section of the service trench there were some areas of extensive rooting that disturbed the subsoil and natural geology (Fig. 2).

3.3 General distribution of archaeological deposits

3.3.1 Archaeological features were present in four dense groups along the service trench, most noticeably where the trench turns from a northeast-southwest to an east-west alignment. There were several linear and discrete features that are likely to have been related to the Iron Age settlement discovered in the evaluation trenches 6 to 11 in the archaeological evaluation carried out in 2016.

3.3.2 It is highly likely that further features are present within the service trench, which were either obscured due to modern truncation or because the impact depth of the trench was too shallow to reach the level of archaeological survival.

3.4 Ditch Group 1 (Ditches 2505, 2508 and 2510)

3.4.1 Three intercutting ditches running east-west were identified within the trench (Figs 2-3). Ditch 2510 was the earliest in the sequence and was cut by ditch 2508 and a natural tree-throw hole (2512). The ditch was undated but is assumed to be part of the system of Iron Age and Roman ditches in the area.

3.4.2 Ditch 2508 was V-shaped in profile and was filled with a single fill (2509) which produced Iron Age pottery. The ditch was 1.2m wide and 0.7m deep. It was cut to the south by a larger ditch (2505).

3.4.3 Ditch 2505 was the latest in the sequence and was filled with a primary silt (2506) and a dark brown secondary fill (2507), both of which produced early Roman pottery and

animal bone. The ditch was 2.2m wide and 0.75m deep, and was truncated to the south by a modern cut and dumps of 1940's rubbish material.

3.5 Ditch Group 2 (Ditches 2514, 2516 and 2519)

3.5.1 A second series of inter-connecting small ditches/gullies were identified in the northwest corner of the trench (Figs 2-3). The earliest north to south-aligned ditch (2514) was 1.1m wide and 0.4 m deep. It was cut by an east-west ditch (2516), which had a primary silt (2517) and a secondary fill (2518), containing middle Iron Age pottery and animal bone. Ditch 2519 ran north-south and appeared to form part of the same sequences of ditches (Plate 5). The single fill (2520) again produced finds.

3.6 Ditch Group 3 (2521, 2524, 2527, 2529, 2543, 2545, 2547, 2549 and 2555)

3.6.1 The third group of features was represented by a dense cluster of intercutting ditches and pits. A total of six ditches, four pits and one posthole were identified within the north-west of the trench (Fig. 2).

3.6.2 The four pits (2527, 2529, 2543 and 2553; Plates 6-8) were either circular or oval in plan, measured between 1m and 2m wide and were, on average, 0.30m deep. The earliest pit (2529) was cut by pit 2527 (Plate 6). Most of the pits were undated and only pit 2529 produced middle Iron Age pottery. A single posthole (2521) was also investigated.

3.6.3 Six closely spaced north-south linear ditches (2524, 2545, 2547, 2549, 2555 and 2557; Plates 7-8) were also identified within this area. The ditches appeared to run parallel to each other and may represent either a droveway or enclosure ditches. The ditches were between 0.5m and 1.2m in width and 0.20 to 0.80m in depth. Two of the ditches (2524 and 2545) produced middle Iron Age pottery.

3.6.4 An isolated north-south ditch (2532) was also identified to the west of this group within an area disturbed by heavy rooting (Fig. 2; Plate 9). The ditch was 1m wide and 0.6m in depth, with its eastern edge being heavily disturbed by modern rooting.

3.7 Ditch Group 4 (2534, 2536 and 2538)

3.7.1 Further to the east, a sub-oval pit (2536), 1.8m wide and 0.22m deep, was partially investigated (Fig. 2; Plate 10). The pit was filled with a dark brown silty clay fill (2537) and produced pottery and animal bone. The pit was cut by a NW-SE ditch/gully (2538) that possibly terminated 2.5m to the south-east. The gully produced Roman pottery (mid 1st-2nd century AD).

3.7.2 The presence of a single small early Anglo-Saxon sherd in context 2537 is noteworthy. No such material was certainly identified in the previous evaluation. It is possible that the shallow pit (2536) filled by 2537 might represent a sunken-featured building, but the four other sherds from this context were of middle Iron Age character so this is at best a tentative suggestion.

3.7.3 The features identified in the service trench appear to be associated with the settlement investigated in the evaluation. Many of the ditches appeared to share the same alignments as those found in the evaluation and may represent a continuation

of features found in the evaluation phase. Ditches 2524, 2532, 2545, 2547, 2549, 2555 and 2557 appear to be in alignment with linear features in Evaluation Trenches 10 and 11.

3.8 Finds and environmental summary

3.8.1 The following provides a brief summary of the finds and environmental material recovered from the watching brief. The full reports can be found in Appendix B.

Pottery by Paul Booth

3.8.2 The watching brief produced 20 sherds (251g) of pottery, mostly of middle Iron Age date, from hand-excavated contexts. Sixteen handmade sherds were of later prehistoric character consistent with a broadly middle Iron Age date. Only three sherds, were of late Iron Age/Roman date, all falling within a mid 1st-2nd century AD date range.

3.8.3 The general character of the pottery assemblage recovered is broadly comparable to that of the assemblage from the 2016 evaluation, although Iron Age sherds formed a much smaller proportion of that assemblage. Diagnostic sherds were largely lacking in the present group, though two burnished body sherds were perhaps from globular bowls of later middle Iron Age date. Later Roman pottery is totally lacking in the present group. A single small early Anglo-Saxon sherd was recovered from shallow pit 2536 which may represent a sunken-featured building.

Animal Bone by Martyn Allen

3.8.4 A total of 19 animal bones were recovered during the work from nine contexts. The faunal remains were in an excellent condition, to the point that small and discreet cut marks could be recorded in detail.

3.8.5 The remains consist bones of horse, cattle and sheep/goat. Several of these exhibit butchery marks, some of which were certainly made using a heavy cleaver, and there are some distinctive de-fleshing scoops that are a common characteristic of Romano-British urban, military and high-status rural sites (Maltby 2007). The fact that these are observable on sheep/goat bones is testament to the good preservation at the site.

4 DISCUSSION

4.1 Reliability of field investigation

4.1.1 Ground conditions throughout the watching brief were generally good and the trench remained dry throughout. Archaeological features, where present, were easy to identify against the underlying natural geology.

4.1.2 There was sufficient time allowed to investigate the majority of features in order to provide dating evidence and to characterise the nature of the remains. It was also possible to directly compare the results of the watching brief to those from the 2016 evaluation.

4.2 Watching brief objectives and results

4.2.1 The work was able to confirm that moderately dense archaeological remains were present within the north and west of the service trench. The nature of this activity was similar and probably part of the Iron Age/Roman site identified during the previous evaluation.

4.3 Interpretation

4.3.1 The results of the watching brief have demonstrated a high-level of archaeological activity in the north-west of the proposed development. Concentrations of prehistoric and Roman remains including boundary ditches, gullies, pits and postholes were identified in the service trench. The frequency of intercutting features, particularly the enclosure ditches, may indicate multiple phases of settlement activity. This activity spans the middle Iron Age to the early Roman period, with possible hints of Anglo-Saxon activity within the wider area.

4.3.2 The pottery assemblage appeared to be predominantly middle Iron Age in date and may indicate that the main focus of late Roman activity was further eastwards towards the evaluation area. The work was also able to demonstrate evidence of Anglo-Saxon activity in the form of a possible sunken-featured building.

4.3.3 The animal bone assemblage recovered from the watching brief indicated a well-preserved fauna assemblage of horse, cattle and sheep/goat with evidence of butchery and de-fleshing. The finds assemblage is suggestive of a moderately high status middle Iron Age settlement that continued in use into the Roman period.

4.3.4 Some areas of modern truncation and disturbance as a results of tree rooting and modern landscaping were identified in the trench. Evidence of wartime remains and rubbish deposits were also identified within or close to the service trench. The potential to recover further material and finds from the 1940's should also be considered during further mitigation works at the site.

4.4 Significance

4.4.1 The watching brief identified further evidence of a multi-phase settlement within the north-west of the site associate with middle Iron Age to Roman enclosures and structures. There is a clear settlement focus of middle Iron Age activity within the service trench, with a possible shift to the east during the mid- late Roman period.

4.4.2 The site forms part of a much wider dispersed prehistoric to Anglo-Saxon landscape within the area with nearby settlement activity identified through cropmarks and previous excavations.

APPENDIX A TRENCH DESCRIPTIONS AND CONTEXT INVENTORY

Service trench						
General description					Orientation	N-S and E-W
Trench					Length (m)	250
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	1.2
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
2500	Layer	-	0.15	Modern made ground	-	-
2501	Layer	-	0.15	Topsoil	-	-
2502	Layer	-	0.20	Subsoil	-	-
2503	Layer	-	-	Bedrock	-	-
2504	Layer	-	0.80	1940 demolition material		
2505	Cut	2.2	0.8	Ditch cut		
2506	Fill	-	0.2	Fill of Ditch 2505	Pottery	Mid-late 1C
2507	Fill	-	0.75	Fill of Ditch 2505	Pottery and animal bone	Early-middle Iron Age
2508	Cut	1.2	0.7	Ditch cut		
2509	Fill	-	0.7	Fill of Ditch 2508	Pottery	Early-middle Iron Age
2510	Cut	1	0.56	Ditch cut		
2511	Fill	-	0.56	Fill of Ditch 2510		
2512	Cut	2	0.56	Ditch cut		
2513	Fill	-	0.56	Fill of Ditch 2512	Animal bone	
2514	Cut	1.1	0.4	Ditch cut		
2515	Fill	-	0.4	Fill of Ditch 2514		
2516	Cut	1	0.65	Ditch cut		
2517	Fill	-	0.6	Fill of Ditch 2516		
2518	Fill	-	0.05	Fill of Ditch 2516	Pottery and animal bone	Middle Iron Age
2519	Cut	1.4	0.3	Ditch cut		
2520	Fill	-	0.3	Fill of Ditch 2519	Pottery and animal bone	Middle Iron Age
2521	Cut	0.5	0.15	Post hole cut		
2522	Fill	-	0.06	Fill of post hole 2521		
2523	Fill	-	0.11	Fill of post hole 2521		
2524	Cut	-	1.2	Ditch cut		
2525	Fill	-	0.8	Fill of Ditch 2524		

2526	Fill	-	0.3	Fill of Ditch 2524	Pottery	Middle Iron Age
2527	Cut	2.7	0.3	Pit cut		
2528	Fill	-	0.3	Fill of pit 2527		
2529	Cut	1.5	0.4	Pit cut		
2530	Fill	-	0.3	Fill of pit 2529		
2531	Fill	-	0.1	Fill of pit 2529	Pottery and animal bone	Middle Iron Age?
2532	Cut	1	0.6	Ditch cut		
2533	Fill	-	0.6	Fill of Ditch 2532	Pottery	1-2C
2534	Cut	0.3	0.15	Gully cut		
2535	Fill	-	0.15	Fill of Gully 2534		
2536	Cut	1.8	0.22	Pit cut		
2537	Fill		0.22	Fill of pit 2536	Pottery and Animal bone	Saxon?
2538	Cut	0.30	0.15	Gully cut		
2539	Fill	-	0.15	Fill of Gully 2538	Pottery	Mid-late 1C
2540	Fill	-	0.20	Fill of pit 2543	Pottery	Middle Iron Age
2541	Fill	-	0.16	Fill of pit 2543		
2542	Fill	-	0.27	Fill of pit 2543		
2543	Cut	1.40	0.63	Pit cut		
2544	Fill	-	0.20	Fill of Ditch 2545		
2545	Cut	0.5	0.20	Ditch cut		
2546	Fill	-	0.20	Fill of Ditch 2547	Pottery	Middle Iron Age
2547	Cut	0.90	0.20	Ditch cut		
2548	Fill	-	0.20	Fill of Ditch 2549	Animal bone	
2549	Cut	2	0.20	Ditch cut		
2550	Fill	-	0.21	Fill of pit 2553	Animal bone	
2551	Fill	-	0.14	Fill of pit 2553		
2552	Fill	-	0.25	Fill of pit 2553		
2553	Cut	1.80	0.60	Pit		
2554	Fill	-	0.26	Fill of Ditch 2555		
2555	Cut	0.80	0.26	Ditch cut		
2556	Fill	-	0.23	Fill of Ditch 2557		
2557	Cut	0.7	0.23	Ditch cut		
2558	Layer	-	-	Modern demolition rubble		
2559	Layer	-	-	Rooting		

APPENDIX B FINDS REPORTS

B.1 Pottery

By Paul Booth

Introduction

B.1.1 The watching brief produced 20 sherds (251g) of pottery, mostly of middle Iron Age date, from hand-excavated contexts. The pottery was recorded using the codes set out in the Oxford Archaeology recording system for later prehistoric and Roman pottery (Booth 2014) and in line with recently-published standards (PCRG *et al*. 2016). Quantification was by sherd count, weight and rim equivalents. The pottery was generally in moderate condition, with a mean sherd weight of 12.6g; the surface condition of most of the pottery was typically moderate, but a few sherds were fairly abraded. The pottery is summarised by context and period in the table below.

Fabrics and forms

B.1.2 Sixteen handmade sherds were of later prehistoric character consistent with a broadly middle Iron Age date. The fabrics of these sherds were recorded usually in terms of their two principal inclusion types (where present) and an indicator of their coarseness on a scale from 1 (very fine) to 5 (very coarse). The inclusions types present are: A quartz sand; F flint; I iron oxides; K 'malmstone'; N none visible; P clay pellets; S shell; U ironstone ooliths; V vegetable/organic.

B.1.3 Fabrics recorded were:

- AN2 2 sherds
- AN3 3 sherds
- AK3 1 sherd
- AUV3 1 sherd
- AV3 4 sherds
- AVI3 1 sherd
- SA4 1 sherd
- SP4 1 sherd
- SP5 1 sherd
- SU5 1 sherd

B.1.4 The majority of the sherds were in a range of sand-tempered fabrics, while a shell-tempering tradition was less well represented.

B.1.5 Only three sherds, one in each of the fabrics listed below, were of late Iron Age/Roman date, all falling within a mid 1st-2nd century date range.

- E10. Organic-tempered LIA/ERB fabric.

- E30. Coarse sand-tempered LIA/ERB fabric.
- R90. Coarse grog-tempered, possibly Savernake ware (Tomber and Dore 1998, SAV GT).

B.1.6 A single small and quite battered sherd was probably of early Anglo-Saxon date. The fabric, with organic inclusions dominant, contrasted with those assigned to the middle Iron Age, and the clay matrix was notably micaceous, again in contrast to the earlier material. Close dating is not possible but a 6th-7th century date range is perhaps most likely.

Discussion

B.1.7 The quantity of pottery recovered in the watching brief is very small but the general character of the material is broadly comparable to that of the assemblage from the 2016 evaluation, although Iron Age sherds formed a much smaller proportion of that assemblage. Diagnostic sherds were largely lacking in the present group, though two burnished body sherds were perhaps from globular bowls of later middle Iron Age date. Later Roman pottery is totally lacking in the present group. The presence of a single small early Anglo-Saxon sherd in context 2537 is noteworthy. No such material was certainly identified in the evaluation. It is just possible that the shallow pit (2536) was a sunken-featured building, but the four other sherds from this context were of middle Iron Age character so this is at best a tentative suggestion.

B.1.8 Table 1: Quantification of pottery by context

Context	Prehistoric Nosh/wt	Roman Nosh/wt	Anglo-Saxon?	Context ceramic date	Fabrics
2506		1/7		Mid-late 1C	E30
2507	2/43			Early-middle Iron Age	SA4, SU5
2509	2/61			Middle Iron Age	AN3
2518	2/8			Middle Iron Age	AN2/3, SP5
2520	1/11			Middle Iron Age	AN2, possible globular bowl
2526	1/12			Middle Iron Age	AUV3, possible globular bowl
2531	1/6			Middle Iron Age?	AVI3
2533		1/18		1-2C	R95?

2537	4/36		1/3?	Early Saxon?	AV3, SP4; ?Early Saxon VA4
2539		1/30		Mid-late 1C	E10/jar rim
2540	2/12			Middle Iron Age	AK3, AN3/tiny rim
2546	1/4			Middle Iron Age	AV3
TOTAL	16/193	3/55	1/3		

APPENDIX C ENVIRONMENTAL REPORTS

C.1 Animal Bone

By Martyn Allen

Introduction

C.1.1 The watching brief produced 19 animal bone specimens from nine contexts. The faunal remains were in an excellent state of preservation, to the point that small and discreet cut marks could be observed in detail. The finds derive from features relating to a middle Iron Age/Romano-British settlement and are described below on a context-by-context basis.

Methods

C.1.2 The assemblage was analysed at Oxford Archaeology South using the in-house skeletal reference collection to aid identification. Specimens were recorded using the zones system of Serjeantson (1989). Epiphyseal fusion of the long bones was recorded, and estimated ages followed the timings presented by Sisson and Grossman (Getty 1975). Dental eruption and wear followed the methodology of Grant (1982), and estimated ages for cattle followed the work of Jones and Sadler (2012). Horse ageing was calculated from crown height measurements of the lower teeth following Levine (1982). Butchery marks, burning, carnivore gnawing, and pathologies were recorded where observed at a basic level.

Results

C.1.3 A total of 19 animal bone specimens were recovered, consisting remains of horse, cattle and sheep/goat.

C.1.4 Context 2548 contained five complete or largely complete horse bones, all probably from a single animal. These included an atlas, mandible, pelvis, tibia and radius. All the bones were from a mature individual and measurement of the mandibular teeth suggest that the horse died around the age of 6–8 years. Notably, the pelvis had two small cut marks on the ilium shaft, suggesting that the meat may have been consumed.

C.1.5 Context 2550 contained a horse premolar, part of a cattle mandible and the ilium of a cattle pelvis. A surviving 3rd molar in the cattle mandible was in a state of fairly heavy wear and gave a suggested age-at-death of 8-16 years.

C.1.6 Context 2531 produced a single, largely complete but fragmented cattle scapula. No signs of butchery were observed on the specimen.

C.1.7 Context 2540 contained a sheep/goat femur from a juvenile animal no older than 3.5 years. The femur had a scooped blade mark towards the distal end of the shaft made when de-fleshing the bone.

C.1.8 Context 2537 contained a cattle ulna, a large mammal rib and a sheep/goat tibia. The ulna had a bladed scoop on the posterior of the shaft.

C.1.9 Context 2513 contained a sheep/goat humerus.

C.1.10 Context 2520 contained a cattle pelvis fragment, mostly part of the acetabulum, and an unidentified fragment, possibly part of a rib articulation.

C.1.11 Context 2518 contained a sheep/goat tibia.

C.1.12 Context 2507 contained two fragments of a cattle pelvis. This exhibited a heavy cut/light chop mark on the ilium shaft.

C.1.13 Summary

C.1.14 The assemblage recovered during the watching brief is small but is in a superb state of preservation. The remains consist bones of horse, cattle and sheep/goat. Several of these exhibit butchery marks, some of which were certainly made using a heavy cleaver, and there are some distinctive de-fleshing scoops that are a common characteristic of Romano-British urban, military and high-status rural sites (Maltby 2007). The fact that these are observable on sheep/goat bones is testament to the good preservation.

C.1.15 Recommendations

C.1.16 While the assemblage is of little value on its own, the level of preservation means that the site has considerable potential for a sizable assemblage of well-preserved animal bones to be recovered. Should further work be undertaken at the site, appropriate provisions for the recovery and analysis of the resulting faunal remains should be made. The material from the watching brief and the previous evaluation of the site should be kept together with any additional remains.

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APPENDIX E SITE SUMMARY DETAILS

Site name:	Land East of Sutton Courtenay Lane, Sutton Courtenay, Oxfordshire
Site code:	SUEL18
Grid Reference	SU 50078 92420
Type:	Watching brief
Date and duration:	September 2018
Area of Site	250m service trench
Location of archive:	The archive is currently held at OA, Janus House, Osney Mead, Oxford, OX2 0ES, and will be deposited with Oxford Museum in due course.
Summary of Results:	While large sections of the trench were heavily truncated, either by modern landscaping or extensive rooting, several concentrations of archaeological features were identified. This activity appeared to be associated with the Iron Age and Roman settlement identified in the adjacent evaluation trenches dug in 2016. Four main areas of archaeological features were identified in the trench consisting of intercutting ditches, pits, gullies and a posthole. The pottery assemblage ranged from the middle Iron Age through to the early Roman period. The watching brief assemblage is predominantly middle Iron Age in date and may indicate that the main focus of late Roman activity was further eastwards towards the previous evaluation area. The work was also able to demonstrate evidence of Anglo-Saxon activity in the form of a possible sunken-featured building. A well-preserved faunal assemblage of horse, cattle and sheep/goat bone with evidence of butchery and de-fleshing was recovered from these features. Evidence of wartime remains and rubbish deposits were also identified within or close to the service trench. Overall the watching brief provided further evidence of a multi-phase settlement within the north-west of the site associated with middle Iron Age to Roman enclosures and structures. There is a clear settlement focus of middle Iron Age activity within the service trench, with a possible shift to the east during the late Roman period. The finds assemblage is suggestive of a moderately high-status middle Iron Age settlement that continued in use into the Roman period.

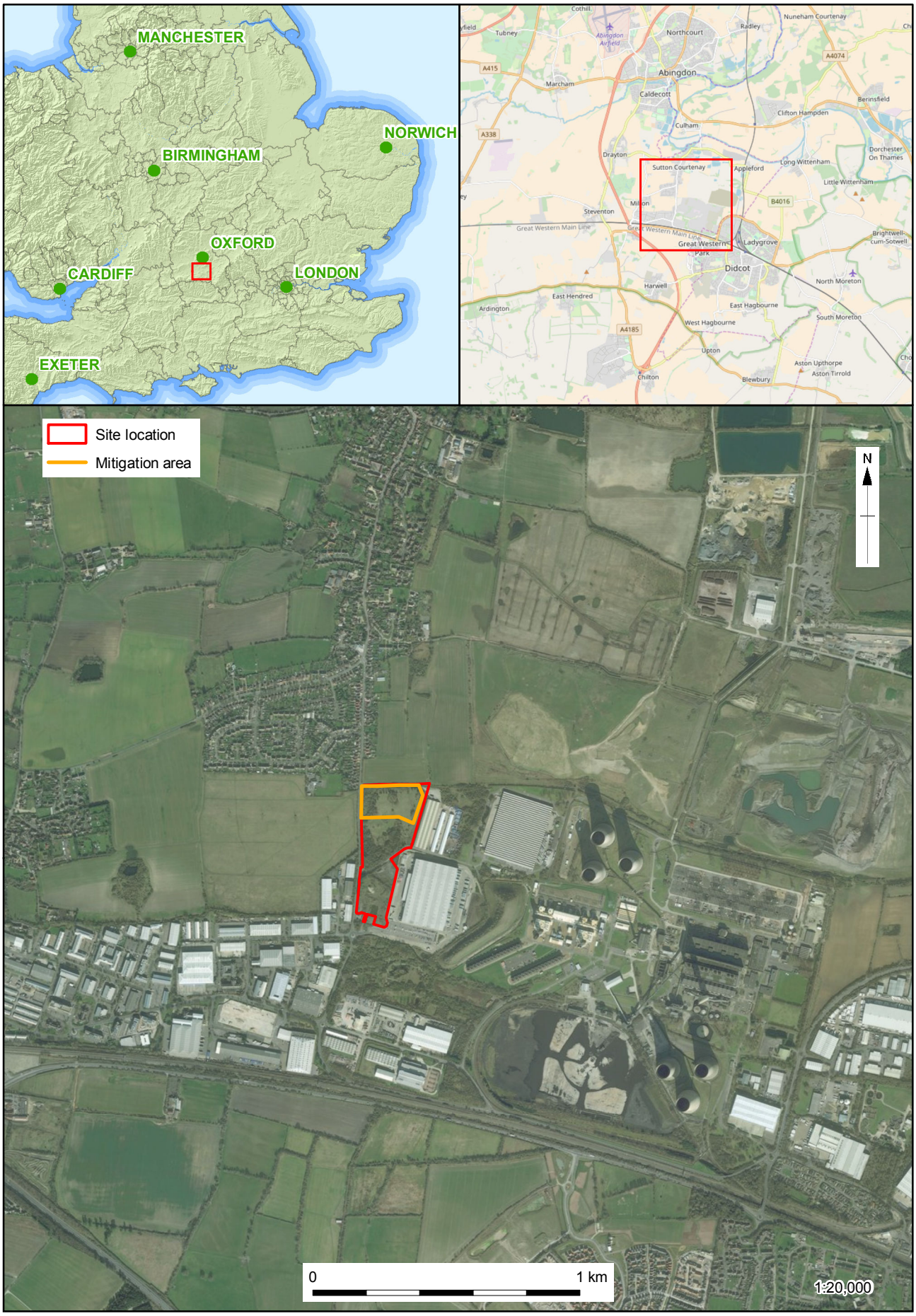

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Figure 1: Site location

449988
192547

450154
192547

N

DITCH GROUP 1
DITCH GROUP 2
DITCH GROUP 3
DITCH GROUP 4

S.2500
2510
2508
2505

S.2501
S.2502
2514
2519
2516

S.2506
2532

S.2503
2529
S.2505
2553
S.2509
2543
2521
2527
2524
2555
2547
2545
S.2504
2557
2549
0
5m
Inset scale 1:250

S.2507
2538
S.2508
2536
2534
0
5m
Inset scale 1:250

S.1003
S.1002
S.1001
1003
1005
1009
S.1000
1011
1017

1111
1103
1105
1108
1113
1115
S.1101
S.1102

904
902
S.902
906
910
S.900
911
S.901
913
915

819
815/817
813
809
807
S.802
811
805
803
S.801
S.800

S.601
605
608
611
S.600
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S.702
731
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449988
192431

Watching Brief LOE
Evaluation Trench
Archaeological Feature
Archaeological Intervention
Natural Feature
1940's Backfilled Material
Area of Heavy Rooting

CHECKED BY:

X:\ls\Sutton Courtenay Lane Oxfordshire\010Geomatics\02 CAD\SUEL18_Compiled_Maln.dwg(Figure 2 A3 landscape)***** 17 Oct 2018

0
20m
Scale at A3 1:500

Survey Data supplied by :
John Carne

Figure 2: Site Plan of Sutton Courtenay Lane
Watching Brief and Evaluation

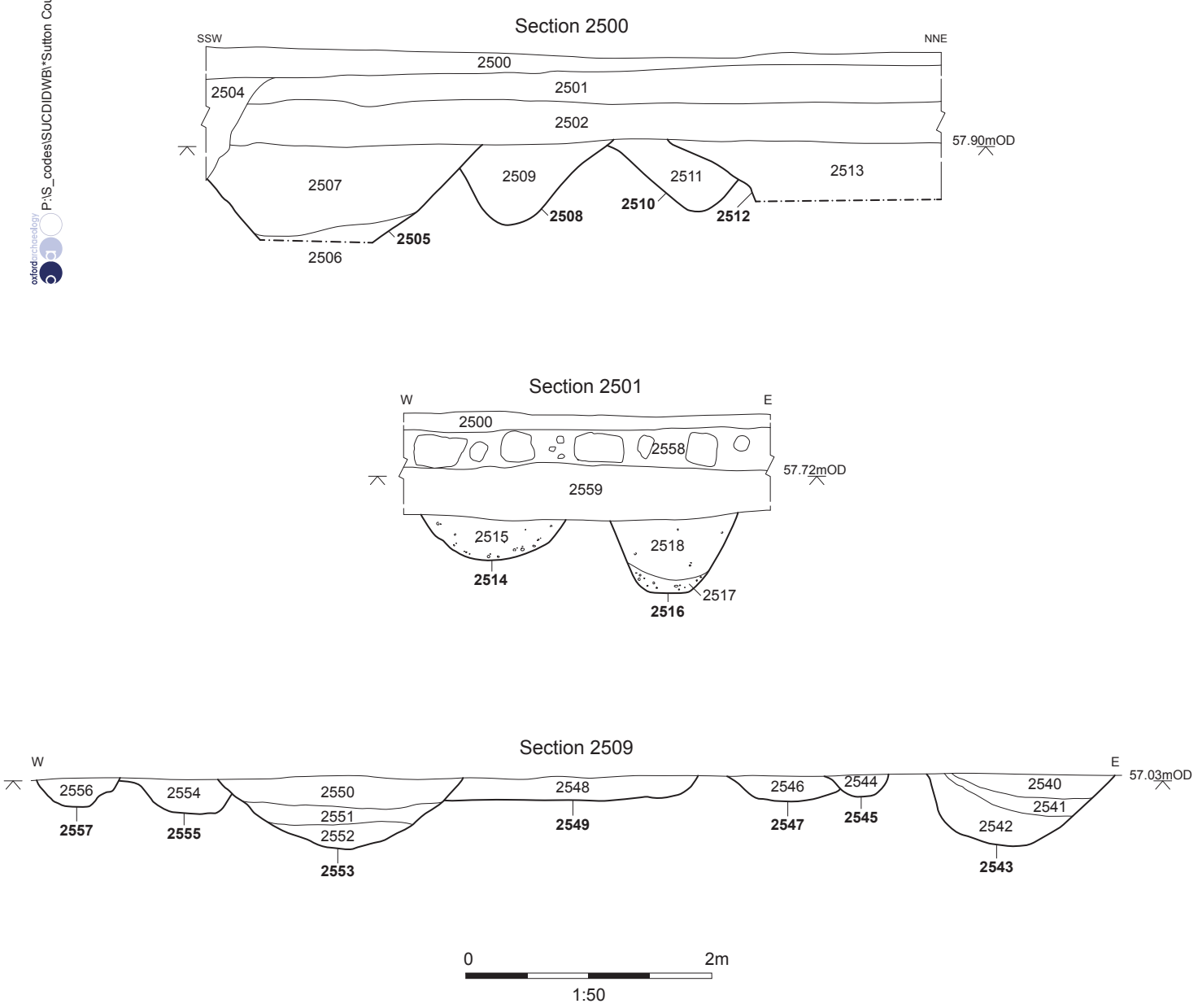

Figure 3: Watching Brief sections 2500, 2501 and 2509

Plate 1: Area of watching brief

Plate 2: Service trench

Plate 3: Storage jar dating from 1941 (0.5m scales)

Plate 4: World War II guard post

Plate 5: Ditch section 2502 looking north (1m scale)

Plate 6: Pit Section 2505 looking northwest (1m scale)

Plate 7: Ditch section 2509 looking north-west (1m scale)

Plate 8: Ditch section 2509, Ditch 2553, looking north (1m scale)

Plate 9: Ditch section 2506 looking north-east (1m scale)

Plate 10: Pit section 2508, Pit 2536, looking south-west (0.5m scale)

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