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Abingdon West Central Redevelopment Area Oxfordshire

Post Excavation Assessment and Updated Project Design

Oxford Archaeology

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LOVELL

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Abingdon West Central Redevelopment Area, Oxfordshire

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POST-EXCAVATION ASSESSMENT AND UPDATED PROJECT DESIGN

by Andrew Norton, Granville Laws and Alex Smith

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CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

1 SUMMARY

Between November 2002 and December 2003 Oxford Archaeology carried out a series of evaluations, excavations and watching briefs within the centre of Abingdon (NGR SU 4962 9702) in advance of a residential development by Lovell Partnerships Ltd. The fieldwork revealed evidence for late Iron Age - early Roman defensive ditches, which continued to function into the 2nd century AD. Roman pits and postholes were also observed.

A Saxon ditch was seen to the north of the site and may have formed part of a property boundary. Medieval structures were seen to front West St Helens Street and associated cess, tanning and rubbish pits were also revealed. Late medieval structures were observed to the north of the site, these may have formed part of the former Lamb Inn.

Medieval walls and pits were also seen within the central and western parts of the site. The features were probably associated with properties fronting Ock Street and the former vicarage of St Helens, although they may have related to the Chapel of St Edmunds.

Post-medieval evidence for the Lamb Inn was also evident and the limits of a Civil War cemetery were established within the centre of the site.

2 INTRODUCTION

2.1.1 This document forms an Assessment and Updated Project Design for the site archive generated by fieldwork undertaken by Oxford Archaeology (OA) on the development site in the centre of Abingdon, Oxfordshire between November 2002 and December 2003 (see below). The document sets out the research framework and proposed methods for the analysis and report preparation, as prescribed by English Heritage MAP 2 (Phase 4).

2.2 Location and scope of work

2.2.1 The development site lies in the centre of Abingdon (NGR SU 4962 9702), on the south side of Ock Street (Fig. 1). The site is bounded by St Edmund's Lane to the south and Ock Street and The Square to the north. It is bounded to the east by West St Helens Street and to the west by Winsmore Lane. The development site covers an area of approximately 7 ha.

2.2.2 In 1996 and 1997 Oxford Archaeological Unit (now OA) carried out a field evaluation in advance of the development of the site. An Iron Age crouch burial and ditch were revealed to the west of the site. Throughout the site several large defensive ditches were identified. They dated from the Iron Age through to the post medieval period and originally may have formed the western defences of Abingdon.

2.2.3 A large medieval building was identified within the centre of the site and a series of medieval and post medieval pits were revealed further west. In the centre of the site a

post-medieval cemetery was identified. The cemetery may have dated to the English Civil War and 21 individuals were identified.

2.2.4 The work was carried out in advance of the construction of residential homes by Lovell Partnerships Ltd. The work was undertaken in accordance with advice and a written brief issued by Hugh Coddingdon, Deputy County Archaeologist of Oxfordshire County Council. A Written Scheme of Investigation, prepared by OA, outlined proposals to mitigate the effect of the development on the surviving archaeological remains.

2.3 Geology and topography

2.3.1 The site lies on the first gravel terrace at a height of approximately 54 m OD. It slopes down gently, *c* 250 m, to the south and the River Ock.

2.4 Archaeological and historical background

2.4.1 The specific archaeological background to the evaluation has been the subject of a separate desk top study (OAU 1996), the results of which are summarised below.

Prehistoric

2.4.2 Mesolithic, Neolithic and Bronze Age activity has been found in small quantities beneath much of the town centre. The early Iron Age (750-350 BC) saw the establishment of permanent large-scale settlement at Abingdon, while the middle Iron Age settlement (350 – 0 BC) was both larger and more densely occupied. More than a dozen house-sites were excavated beneath Abbey House and its car park (Allen 1989, 1990, 1991), and Iron Age pits were found just south of the Vineyard either side of Abbey Close. Pottery and storage pits were found in East and West St Helen Streets (Wilson and Wallis 1999; Clayton 1972). Another Middle Iron Age settlement was found beneath the Abbey Day Centre and the west end of the Thames-side strip south-east of the sites (Wilson and Wallis 1991; Miles 1975).

2.4.3 In the late Iron Age (AD 0-43) the town centre settlement continued to thrive (Allen 1989, 1990, 1991), and was surrounded by two or three parallel defensive ditches each 6-12 m wide. The ditches have been excavated on the west of the town (Allen 1997) and on the north under the Sheltered Housing development and Waitrose (Chambers and Moore 1988; Allen 1993). The ditches were in use until at least the early 2nd century AD, after which the inner ditch (where sectioned) was deliberately filled in with gravel. The course of these ditches further east is uncertain, but the evidence strongly suggests that they run through the Thames View Industrial Park to the south-east of the site. The evaluation of 1996/97 revealed a north-south aligned enclosure ditch that appeared to date from the Iron Age. A late Iron Age coin and a number of pits have also been found around the development area.

Roman

2.4.4 Much of the defended area was densely occupied in the early Roman period (AD 43-

120), with an internal rectilinear layout and high status finds. There are at least three Roman masonry buildings known in Abingdon, one in East St Helen Street (Ackerman 1867), parts of one or more under the Railway Inn (John *Moore pers comm*) and a third under Abbey House and continuing into the Abbey Gardens (Allen 1989, 1990, 1991).

2.4.5 By the 2nd century AD the defensive ditches found under the Sheltered Housing and Waitrose had been filled in and the town expanded northwards over them (Allen 1993, 1994, 1995; Chambers and Moore 1988). Roman ditches, pits, ovens and burials have all been recovered (Allen 1989, 1996, 1997, 1998; Wilson 1984). During the excavation of trenches across the Abbey in 1922 Roman finds were recovered throughout the Abbey Gardens, suggesting that Roman occupation covered the whole of this area (Biddle 1968). Roman ditches were also found just south of the Abbey Gardens in Checker Walk (Thomas 1981).

2.4.6 A number of Roman north-south aligned defensive ditches were revealed in the 1996/97 evaluation, and Roman occupation is thought to have covered much of the eastern part of site.

Anglo-Saxon

2.4.7 Roman occupation was succeeded by early Saxon settlement without an apparent break. Sunken-floored buildings (SFBs) of 5th century date were found beneath Abbey House (Allen 1989, 1990, 1991), grass-tempered Saxon pottery at the Old Goal (Parrington 1975), in East St Helen Street (Parrington 1974) and in the High Street (Rodwell 1975, 33), while loomweights were found in Broad Street (Rodwell 1975, 33). Another Saxon settlement was found beneath the Abbey Day Centre south-east of the sites (Keevill 1992), and a single sherd of grass-tempered pottery was found within the Thames-side strip (Scott Wilson 1999).

2.4.8 The church of St Helen's is believed to have been a Saxon Minster, that is an early foundation at the centre of a large parish and the focus of a middle and late Saxon settlement. Anglo-Saxon structures and finds have been recovered from the Vineyard excavations, showing that the town centre was occupied in this period, and find spots have been recorded around the site.

Medieval

2.4.9 The line of the prehistoric ditches may be preserved in the medieval references to the 'town ditches' and in the post-medieval Shitebourne ditch. This single ditch may be all that remains of a system of multiple defences, perhaps covering the full width of the Vicarage Garden plot. The 1996/97 evaluation revealed substantial evidence of later re-use of the most easterly Roman defensive ditch during the medieval and post-medieval periods.

2.4.10 West St Helen Street is mentioned in documents as early as *c* 1250 AD, and a number of medieval pits have been revealed in and around the area.

2.4.11 The chapel of St Edmund and its associated buildings may occupy the western part of the site. A substantial medieval building dating to the late 12th or 13th century was was recorded within the central area of the site, represented by surviving walls, floors/cobbled surfaces, hearths and associated deposits. It is possible that these remains formed part of the chapel of St Edmunds. However, it is more likely that they were from the former vicarage of St Helens which, from documentary and excavated evidence, was demolished during the English Civil War. There is also documentary evidence for a burial ground within the chapel complex. There are uncorroborated reports of former residents of St. Edmunds Lane finding skeletons in their back gardens.

Post medieval

2.4.12 After the Dissolution of the Monasteries the Ock Street frontage was occupied by the Lamb Inn, which was held by the Ely family from 1553 onwards until 1720. The inn was a courtyard inn of considerable size. It was extended late in the 18th century, and continued to occupy the site until 1851.

2.4.13 South of the Lamb Inn both the Christ's Hospital map of Abingdon of 1844 and the first Ordnance Survey map of 1875 show the area west of the Vicarage garden as open space. This area may thus have little post-medieval disturbance and better preservation of earlier archaeological deposits.

2.4.14 The Christ's Hospital map also shows the site belonging to the Borough and other institutions, mostly inherited from Abingdon Abbey at the Dissolution of the Monasteries in AD 1538. It also shows a large ditch still existing, running along the back of the properties along the west side of West St Helen Street south of St Edmunds Lane, possibly the Shitebourne.

2.4.15 A small cemetery was located *c* 10 m to the south of the medieval building complex. A single layer of inhumation burials survived, lying less than 1 m below ground level, which cut through an accumulation of garden soils south of the medieval building. Eighteen graves were recorded and investigated, although there was potential for further burials to be present. The burials were subject to low resolution recording and were left *in situ*.

2.5 Excavation methodology

2.5.1 Three areas, beneath up-standing buildings, were previously inaccessible during the 1996/97 evaluation. These were evaluated (post-demolition) by machine trenching to determine their archaeological potential and inform any further mitigation measures that may be required in these areas. The areas (Fig. 1) comprised the former SEB building, to the south-east of the site fronting West St Helens Street (Trench 14); the former Neave House, to the west of the site fronting Winsmore Lane (Trenches 15 and 16); and the former Regal Cinema, to the north of the site fronting Ock Street (Trenches 17 and 18). In light of the evaluation results both the SEB and the Cinema site were subject to full area excavation.

2.5.2 An archaeological recording action was implemented in the previously defined area of the Civil War cemetery to the south of the site. The cemetery was subject to a controlled strip in order to define its extent and to record and extract the revealed burials.

2.5.3 An archaeological watching brief was maintained in the area towards the centre of the site and involved machine trenching for services, ground reduction for car parking and the excavation of an area of Japanese knot weed. The area had been identified as being archaeologically sensitive from the results of the 1997 evaluation. The evaluation had revealed the well preserved structural remains of a medieval building, possibly a vicarage or the remains of St Edmunds Chapel (thought to be sited nearby). Detailed excavation of this area was not required due to the use of piled foundations, which have a limited impact on surviving archaeological remains.

2.6 Removal of overburden and disturbed strata

2.6.1 All mechanical excavation was undertaken using a toothless ditching bucket to minimise disturbance to archaeologically sensitive strata. Non-archaeological deposits were mechanically stripped in spits no deeper than 0.5 m. All stripping was carried out under archaeological control and supervision using site staff experienced in working with machines and machine operators.

2.7 Excavation of archaeological deposits

2.7.1 All significant archaeological deposits and features were hand excavated. All archaeological features were planned and where excavated their sections drawn at scales of 1:20. All features were photographed using colour slide and black and white print film. Recording followed procedures laid down in the *OAU Fieldwork Manual* (ed D Wilkinson, 1992).

2.7.2 The sampling programme for environmental analysis was agreed with the OA environmental consultants and collected with the advice of the relevant specialist.

3 QUANTIFICATION OF THE ARCHIVE

3.1 Stratigraphic

RECORD TYPE	QUANTIFICATION
Context records	1529
Additional sheets	103
Matrices A1	5
Matrices A4	8
Plans A1	14
Plans A4	149
Sections A1	5
Sections A4	147
Sample registers	12
Level sheets	40
Small find registers	6
Bulk find sheets	29
Environmental transfer lists	1
Black and white films	44
Colour films	45
Watching brief records	3

3.2 Artefactual and ecofactual material

MATERIAL	QUANTIFICATION
Pottery	6462
Ceramic building material (CBM)	2121
Glass	292
Clay pipe	2208
Worked animal bone	5
Plaster	11
Stone	110
Slag	88
Shell	772
Flint	42
Leather	24 bags
Wood	5
Copper alloy	48
Fired clay	37
Human inhumations	26
Iron	333
Animal bone	9842

4 STRATIGRAPHIC SUMMARY

4.1 General

4.1.1 The archaeological remains from the development site comprised north-south defensive ditches, areas of intercutting pits, structures along the street frontages and a cemetery.

4.1.2 Although the archaeology was comprised of poorly defined intercutting pits and areas of garden soil there was relatively little cross-contamination of dating evidence. The Neave House site was heavily disturbed by the footprint of the former building and the Ock Street frontage of the Cinema site was truncated by cellars. The remaining areas were relatively undisturbed by later structures.

4.1.3 In general the features encountered could not be accurately phased from the stratigraphic record alone, but were generally well dated by their finds.

4.1.4 The sites were broadly phased into five periods using spot dates from the pottery assemblage and the stratigraphic record:

- Phase 1: Late Iron Age and Roman
- Phase 2: Saxon
- Phase 3: Medieval (1100-1500)
- Phase 4: Post-medieval (1500-1800)
- Phase 5: Modern (1800 onwards)

4.2 Former Southern Electricity Building Depot (SEB) site (Fig. 2)

General

4.2.1 Following the demolition of the former SEB depot, a single evaluation trench (Trench 14) was positioned west-east at a ninety degree angle to West St Helens Street (Fig. 1). The evaluation revealed a number of medieval pits and walls. A mitigation strategy was formulated to examine the entire area of impact (the pedestrian and cycle-way area and the office fronting West St Helens Street), an area of 525 sq m (Fig. 2).

Phase 1 Roman

4.2.2 The earliest features were represented by a few discrete pits and postholes. The features contained Roman pottery dating to the 1st - 2nd centuries AD. Residual Roman pottery was also retrieved from later medieval and post medieval contexts and suggested that further evidence of Roman activity may have been lost to truncation (Fig. 2).

Phase 3 medieval (1100-1500)

4.2.3 The excavation revealed a number of medieval pits across most of the site, and medieval stone built properties (6002, 6034 and 6004) fronting West St. Helens Street (Fig. 2). The structures comprised two cellars and may have dated from the

12th century, although they appeared to have been consolidated into a single building in the 14th or 15th century. To the rear of the tenements, plot divisions were seen in the form of stone walls and robber trenches. Associated garderobes and cess pits were revealed, from which preserved fabric was recovered (see environmental summary). A number of pits and a well (6681) were seen to the rear of the properties, cutting through an earlier garden soil. Some of the pits may have served as tanning pits due to the large amount of horn cores recovered. Other finds from the area included an extensive pottery assemblage, glass, decorated bone and a small quantity of metal objects, mostly iron nails.

Phase 4 post medieval (1500-1800)

4.2.4 A stone lined well (6008) was revealed to the rear of the tenements. The upper fills were dated to the 16th century but the well was not fully excavated; it is possible that it was contemporary with the tenements. The medieval structures continued to be used into the post medieval period, a 17th-18th-century brick stair structure divided the earlier buildings. Post medieval garden soils and pits were revealed to the rear of the building (Fig. 2).

Phase 5 modern (1800 onwards)

4.2.5 A modern wall and recent demolition work sealed the deposits.

4.3 Cemetery site (Fig. 3)

General

4.3.1 The cemetery site was discovered during the 1996/7 evaluation (Trenches 5 and 9); 18 inhumations were exposed and recorded but left *in situ*. The south, east and western limits of the cemetery had been established but the northern limit had not been identified. The cemetery was interpreted as dating from the mid-17th century. The excavation area was extended in 2002 so as to define the northern limits of the cemetery. This work revealed a further eight inhumations within the eastern and north-eastern parts of the cemetery (Fig. 3; see human remains report, Appendix 15).

Phase 3 medieval (1100-1500)

4.3.2 The cemetery appeared to be cut through a medieval garden soil which overlay the fills of a large Roman defensive ditch. A medieval stone well (3041) also truncated the garden soil and contained pottery dated to the 13th century.

Phase 4 post medieval (1500-1800)

4.3.3 The excavation revealed eight further burials within the cemetery, a combined total of 26 individuals. The majority of the graves were aligned west-east. The graves were not intercut and very little residual human bone was recovered. The graves appeared to respect each other, being evenly spaced within three neat rows. The dating evidence from the earlier evaluation suggested that the burials were from the mid 17th century, although 18th-century pottery was also recovered during the 2002

excavations.

4.4 Watching brief area (Fig. 4)

General

4.4.1 The Watching Brief area, situated in the centre of the site, comprised a service trench to the west and an excavation to mitigate the removal of invasive knotweed roots to the east. The service trench measured 30 m in length, was 1 m wide and between 2 m to 2.5 m deep, an associated manhole trench measured 3 m by 2 m and was 2 m deep (Fig. 4).

Service trench

4.4.2 Archaeological deposits were observed in both the service and manhole trenches; these included fills of a large defensive ditch, medieval pits (13th-14th century) and a 17th-century garden soil.

Knotweed area

4.4.3 The excavation revealed structural remains and a glazed tile floor surface (5069). The walls were over 700 mm thick and may have formed part the Vicarage of St Helens, or possibly the medieval chapel of St. Edmunds; 13th-century pottery was recovered from the tile floor. One of the walls (5045) was dated to the 16th century, an indication that the structure may have been repaired at a later date. A piece of monastic window arch, retrieved from the infilling of a medieval cellar to the south, may have originated from this structure.

4.4.4 A modern garden soil was revealed that was truncated by a stone drain and an L-shaped wall. A square stone structure was also observed that was filled with 18th century deposits. The structure may have formed an associated cesspit or soakaway.

4.5 Former Neave House site (Fig. 4)

General

4.5.1 Following the demolition of the former Neave house, two evaluation trenches (Trenches 15 and 16) were positioned in a cross shape through the centre of the site. The evaluation revealed a number of medieval pits, a ditch and a wall. Much of the site had been truncated by the former house and no further work was deemed necessary.

4.5.2 The archaeological features exposed were mainly situated to the north of the trench. To the south of the site heavy truncation from the construction and demolition of the Neave House had taken place (Fig. 4).

4.5.3 An undated west-east aligned ditch (8006) was revealed and was truncated by a north-south medieval ditch (8004). Medieval pits were also exposed, one of which (8036) contained a cessy material that may have resulted from tanning. The pits, in

general, contained a quantity of bone and pottery and may have represented refuse pits to the rear of properties. A large amount of smithing waste was also recovered, suggestive of nearby metal working.

4.5.4 A short length of a north-south aligned stone wall (8025) was exposed in the north-west corner of the site, it was undated but it was cut into a medieval pit (8026) and was overlain by recent demolition material.

4.6 Cinema site (Figs 5 and 6)

General

4.6.1 Following the demolition of the former cinema, two evaluation trenches (Trenches 17 and 18) were positioned in an L-shape, parallel with Ock Street and West St Helen's Street (Fig. 1). The evaluation revealed a number of medieval pits and walls. A mitigation strategy was formulated to examine the entire area of impact.

Phase 1 Late Iron Age -Roman

4.6.2 A NE-SW aligned ditch was located within the centre of the site (7804). The ditch was over 1 m deep and over 1.5 m wide. The lower fills were undated but the upper fill contained early Roman pottery. The ditch was truncated by a larger ditch (7799) that was over 1.5 m deep and over 4 m wide. The fills contained early Roman pottery. Ditch 7804 may have formed a late Iron Age defensive ditch, to the west of the town, and ditch 7799 probably represented a subsequent early Roman re-cut (Figs 5 and 6).

4.6.3 Early Roman pits were also revealed and a ditch, cut through the fills of 7799, contained pottery dated to the mid Roman period.

Phase 2 Saxon

4.6.4 Evidence for Saxon activity was revealed in the form of a linear north-south aligned boundary ditch (7076) that was located to the north of the site (Fig. 5).

Phase 3 medieval (1100-1500)

4.6.5 Medieval pits were located across the site and contained an abundant amount of pottery and bone (Fig. 5). To the south of the site a series of pits (7748 and 7827) revealed cessy deposits and a high percentage of leather waste, including cow udders. A nearby pit (7597) yielded a large quantity of horn cores (from cattle and goat) and cattle bone.

4.6.6 Evidence for a late medieval building was seen to the north of the site, probably the Lamb Inn. Towards the Ock Street frontage a rectangular structure (7070), possibly a floor of a cold cellar was investigated and medieval pottery was retrieved. To the middle of the site further structural evidence was revealed; short low walls (7530, 7533, 7562 and 7560) and a burnt cobbled yard area (7565).

4.6.7 To the rear of the building was a well preserved structure, comprising a square stone

building and a well laid cobbled yard surface (7583).

Phase 4 post-medieval (1500-1800)

4.6.8 Further evidence for the Lamb Inn was observed. A rectangular structure (7588) was observed to the south-east of the square building from which a large amount of bone and pottery was retrieved. The structure was interpreted as a waste block because it was full of organic and cessy material (possibly horse manure). The date range of the pottery suggested that it continued to be used into the 19th century. The clay pipe assemblage recovered from this area was indicative of a production centre, perhaps associated with the Inn.

Phase 5 modern (1800 onwards)

4.6.9 A 19th-century L-shaped wall (7535), incorporating a NE-SW aligned stone drainage channel, and a limestone yard surface were recorded the south of the site. These structures may have related to the final development of the Lamb Inn.

4.6.10 To the north, on the Ock Street frontage, three stone lined wells were revealed, from which timbers were retrieved. On the eastern edge of the site two further wells had been reused as cess pits.

4.6.11 A series of regularly spaced north-south aligned stone walls, possibly 18th century in date, were traced beyond the northern limit of the site, projecting beneath the footpath on the Ock Street frontage. Brick walls were observed between the stone walls that formed a cellar at the front of the former Regal Cinema.

5 FINDS SUMMARY

5.1.1 Summaries of the artefactual evidence by category are included below. The full assessment reports can be found in Appendices 1-14.

5.2 Prehistoric and Roman pottery (Appendix 1)

5.2.1 The prehistoric and Roman pottery assemblage comprised 867 sherds weighing over 12 kg. The earliest material comprised four sherds that were tentatively assigned to the early or middle Iron Age. The region at this time was characterised by shell/limestone-tempered and sand-tempered pottery, with the former tradition usually dominant in the early Iron Age (De Roche 1978). Both fabric types were present here. The site yielded a range of late Iron Age 'Belgic' E wares. Contexts (10 in total) containing these alone were dated broadly to the late Iron Age or early Roman period (up to the late 1st century AD); forms were insufficiently diagnostic to achieve a closer date, though much of the material may well pre-date the conquest. Grog-tempered wares (E80) were commonest, followed by sand-tempered wares (E30) and limestone-tempered wares (E50). These wares, along with shell-tempered wares (E40), were also found alongside Roman-period pottery. Forms from these post-conquest groups typically included short-necked or neckless jars (Young R21) and cordoned bowls/jars (as Cam 220).

5.2.2 Roman pottery was broadly divided into three phases; *c* 50% of the material was early Roman, *c* 15% of the material was mid Roman and *c* 15% of the material was late Roman (the remainder of the assemblage was unphased).

5.3 Post-Roman pottery (Appendix 2)

5.3.1 The medieval and post-medieval pottery assemblage comprised 6525 sherds with a total weight of 122 kg. The estimated vessel equivalent (EVE) by summation of surviving rim sherd circumference was 51.04 (50.34 of which could be distinguished by vessel form). The bulk of the assemblage was medieval or post-medieval in date, although there was a small quantity of early-middle Saxon sherds (19 by No. 360g by wgt). Earlier occupation of the site is also indicated by the amount of residual Roman sherds that occur throughout the medieval contexts – particularly high in the late 12th – 13th and late 14th-16th century contexts. The wholly Roman contexts are reported on in a separate assessment (see above). This assessment has concentrated, in the main, on the medieval and early post-medieval contexts for detailed analysis.

5.3.2 This assemblage matches that recently examined for the Abingdon British Gas/ Penlon sites (OA 2005) in containing unusually large and well-preserved sherds, including three near-complete vessels. However, there is a good deal more late post-medieval activity here than on the British Gas site and both the level of residual and intrusive material may pose some difficulty.

5.4 Ceramic building material (CBM) (Appendix 3)

5.4.1 The site produced a total of 2121 fragments of ceramic and stone building materials weighing 161,871g, which came from 220 contexts (28 boxes). In order to assess the material a sampling approach was adopted whereby 11 of the 28 boxes were spot-dated and assessed. The spot-dated material came from 89 contexts and comprised 1045 fragments (almost 50 per cent of the sherd assemblage) weighing 73,656g. Context totals (sherd count and weight) and comments on the range of building materials present were also recorded. Pottery dates were subsequently checked to assess the reliability of the building material dates and to provide closer dating for individual pieces of interest.

5.4.2 The assemblage consists predominantly of post-Roman ceramic building materials (CBM), mostly roofing tiles, along with a few scraps of Roman CBM and a small quantity of post-Roman stone building materials such as stone roofing tiles and slate. A few miscellaneous pieces of plaster or mortar and fired daub were also present. All these types are considered in more detail in Appendix 3. The Roman and medieval material is generally in a very fragmentary state, the post-medieval material is better preserved although no complete roofing tiles or other types of CBM were present. The post-medieval contexts produced the largest number of fragments. Contexts spot-dated to the 16th/17th century were the most abundant (28 contexts), followed by contexts spot-dated to the 13th-16th century (21 contexts) and the 15th-16th or 15th/16th century (17 contexts combined). Smaller numbers of contexts were dated to the 16th-18th century (5 contexts) and the 18th/19th century (5 contexts). In some cases the pottery spot-dates suggest an earlier, usually 13th/14th-century, date for contexts dated by tile to the 15th/16th century suggesting that some of the tile may be earlier in date than it appears. This discrepancy could be examined in more detail at a later stage.

5.5 Clay tobacco pipe (Appendix 4)

5.5.1 The excavations produced a total of 2,205 fragments of clay tobacco pipe from 51 different contexts. The overwhelming majority of the pipes recovered date from the late 17th century through to the very start of the 18th century. Some of the context groups contained odd pieces of earlier 17th century material but most of the pipes from each context appear to represent coherent groups that must have been deposited over a relatively short period of time.

5.5.2 Many of the fragments were milled or burnished, which will allow a good assessment of local manufacturing and finishing techniques to be made. Burnishing also increased the value of the pipe and so it will be possible to assess the quality and social status of the various groups.

5.5.3 There were at least nine different pipes with stamped marks and one with moulded marks amongst this material. Several of these marks appeared to be previously

unrecorded, including a pipe with an elaborately decorated stem incorporating two large ovals depicting a ship in full sail.

5.5.4 Several of the contexts produced pipe fragments that were discoloured with patches of fired clay adhering to their outer surfaces. The pieces seemed to date to around 1660-90 and are almost certainly fragments from a muffle kiln, used in the production of pipes. This material suggests that clay pipes were being manufactured either on or near the site itself, perhaps by John Thorneton, who is recorded working in the town prior to his death in 1684.

5.5.5 One of the large and well-dated groups containing possible kiln waste was a layer of demolition rubble (Context 7658). The deposit dated from around 1690 and may represent a significant event of the sites history, perhaps marking the end of pipemaking activity in the area or a remodelling of the coaching inn at this date.

5.5.6 The two largest groups, Contexts 7601 and 7602, containing 700 fragments, were both likely to have been deposited right at the start of the 18th century. They contained large numbers of pipe bowls including an interesting range of transitional styles, some of which were West Country forms. The deposits may well have derived from the coaching inn and represent both local wares being sold there as well as 'imported' pieces brought there by travellers. As such, they will provide an interesting group for study.

5.6 Glass (Appendix 5)

5.6.1 A large assemblage of glass, comprising over three hundred fragments representing a minimum number of two hundred and sixty vessels and windows, was recovered from the excavations. The vast majority of the glass is post-medieval in date, although there were several fragments of Roman material.

5.7 Metalwork (Appendix 6)

5.7.1 A total of 341 objects were recovered from the excavations at the Abingdon Cinema Site. The assemblage comprises 49 copper alloy objects, 291 iron objects and 1 lead object. The metalwork is in poor condition; the copper alloy objects are corroded and a few items are unstable; the ironwork is unstable and cracking (see conservation report, Appendix 6). The majority of the assemblage has been x-rayed with the exception of 7 bags of nails and the lead objects. With the exception of a single Roman coin the material is late medieval/ post medieval in date.

5.7.2 The 49 copper alloy objects include personal items (28), household objects (4), coins/ tokens (3) and miscellaneous unidentified fragments (14). The majority of the personal items are fine wire pins, a common find in late medieval/post medieval contexts and often found in association with lace tags and fasteners. The five hook and eye fasteners and one of the pins were recovered from skeleton 3024. The only other personal items are a buckle frame identical to an example recovered from Norfolk from a 17th century context (Margeson 1993, 28, fig 17, no.174), and a

small circular mount decorated with ring and dot design. The domestic items comprise two thimbles; one conical with uneven hand applied indentations and the other straight sided with machine applied indentations. There is also a foot from a cast metal vessel and a fragment from a sieve or strainer. The coins/tokens are modern except for a Roman coin dating to AD 364-378 recovered from context 6317.

5.7.3 The iron assemblage comprises 291 objects, 227 of these are nails (including 98 coffin nails from inhumations) and 37 are miscellaneous fragments of strip or sheet. The remaining 27 identifiable objects include buckle frames, knives, horsegear, lock furniture and structural objects. The majority of the objects are fragmentary and very corroded; there are very few diagnostic objects present in the assemblage.

5.8 Plaster (Appendix 7)

5.8.1 A total of 12 fragments of plaster were recovered from the site. None of the plaster is painted.

5.9 Leather (Appendix 8)

5.9.1 Twenty-four bags of leather were scanned with the majority containing several items. No count of the individual pieces of leather was attempted but at least half were seen to contain between 20-70 individual pieces. Leather was recovered from three pits (7823, 7831, 7744) located at the rear of the properties fronting Ock Street. The pit fills containing leather are all attributed to the medieval period (Phase 3). The leather examined can be seen as a single group of late medieval date, likely to have been deposited in the second half of the 14th century. The leather items recovered comprise primary waste, shoes and scrap. The primary waste appears to be chiefly discarded hide edges and bellyskin with teats, apparently of cattle hide.

5.9.2 Nine shoe components, all of turnshoe construction, were noted during the assessment, and further pieces may well be found when the cleaned material is examined. At least three shoes of different styles are represented. The shoe parts are well preserved and provide dating for the large amount of waste leather with which it is associated.

5.10 Slag (Appendix 9)

5.10.1 Just under 4 kg of material described as slag was examined by eye for this report. It was categorised on the basis of morphology with each slag type within each context being weighed; smithing hearth bottoms were individually weighed and measured to obtain statistical information. Phase 3 (medieval) deposits within the former SEB Depot and Neave House sites produced the most slag (just over 2.9 kg). The pit fill (8027) from Neave House contained four smithing hearth bottoms, a quantity of undiagnostic slag, and a small amount of vitrified hearth lining. The waste was indicative of a nearby smithy.

5.11 Wood (Appendix 10)

5.11.1 Three timbers were retained from a well structure. All were box-quartered timber, cut from the knotty top end of a log. The sawing evidence suggests a date after *c* AD 1200 and these pieces appear to be medieval or immediately post medieval in date.

5.12 Worked bone (Appendix 11)

5.12.1 A total of 4 worked bone objects were recovered from the site. They comprised a polished antler wedge, two decorative casket strips and a section of antler. All of the worked bone objects date to the medieval period.

5.13 Worked stone (Appendix 12)

5.13.1 Approximately 150 pieces of stone were retained during the excavations. Many of these are architectural fragments and a small number are other items of worked stone, including a Purbeck marble mortar, a small pedestal, a chalk sphere and a number of roof stone fragments. Many of these are small fragments but at least three retain the suspension hole and one is complete. All the roof stone fragments were made from limestone, the majority Oolitic.

5.14 Flint (Appendix 13)

5.14.1 A total of 17 struck flints and nine pieces (108 g) of burnt unworked flint were recovered. The assemblage was largely composed of unretouched debitage and contained few chronologically distinctive types. The thin distribution of the flintwork and its variable condition does not support extensive prehistoric activity in the area.

5.15 Fired clay (Appendix 14)

5.15.1 A total of 37 fragments of fired clay were recovered from the site. All of the fragments were featureless undiagnostic fragments.

6 ENVIRONMENTAL SUMMARY

6.1.1 Summaries of the ecofactual evidence are included below. Full assessment reports can be found in Appendices 15-19.

6.2 Human bone (Appendix 15)

6.2.1 The Regal Cinema site, Abingdon, Oxfordshire, was first excavated in 1995 in advance of major redevelopment of the area. In this phase of excavation, archaeological remains from several time periods were discovered, including major Iron Age ditch systems, medieval tenements and a small post-medieval cemetery. Complete skeletons and disarticulated human bone were found in contexts dating to all these periods. The majority of the skeletal assemblage derives from the post-medieval cemetery containing 26 individuals (Fig. 4). In the first phase of archaeological investigation, 18 of these skeletons were examined in situ but were not excavated. In addition to this cemetery group, two isolated skeletons on the site were also discovered and analysed: skeleton (236), placed within an Iron Age ditch, and skeleton (266), a casually interred female in a medieval pit. Several disarticulated bones were also found within contexts dating from the Iron Age to the 18th century.

6.2.2 A second phase of excavation was undertaken in 2002, when the cemetery population was re-exposed and excavated. During this phase, an additional eight skeletons (within four grave cuts) were discovered and excavated.

6.3 Animal bone (Appendix 16)

6.3.1 A total of 9161 fragments of bone and teeth were recovered from the excavation of which a total of 4447 fragments, 48.5% of the total hand collected animal bone assemblage, was fully analysed and recorded (see Appendix 16). A number of bones had fresh breaks, the re-fitting of which reduced the total fragment count to 3716, giving a weight of 59627 g.

6.3.2 A total of 1902 fragments of bone and teeth were identifiable to species, 51.2% of the total number of bones assessed. Both domestic and wild animals were recovered.

6.4 Charred Plant remains and charcoal (Appendix 17)

6.4.1 Samples were taken during excavation works for the recovery of charred plant remains and charcoal. The following samples were taken: 18 samples from the SEB site; 6 samples from the Neave House and 8 samples from the Former Regal Cinema site. The volume of deposit processed for each sample ranged from 4.5 to 40 litres. The samples were taken to investigate the range of crop plants present at the sites, crop processing activities and cultivation conditions or methods.

6.4.2 The majority of samples were taken from pit fills, although some ditch fills were sampled. In terms of charred remains both feature types produced a mixture of rich

and poor samples. Mineralized remains were recovered from the pit fills; either cess-pits or tanning pits could produce the appropriate conditions for mineralization to occur. One Roman sample produced abundant charred material while one medieval sample produced cereal remains suggestive of Roman activities. The Saxon sample assessed produced no charred material. Several medieval samples produced abundant remains.

6.5 Waterlogged remains (Appendix 18)

6.5.1 Ten samples were submitted for assessment of their potential for the analysis of waterlogged plant and insect remains. Samples were taken from five features of Roman date, three of 11th to 15th century and one feature of 18th century date. Generally deposits sampled were from lower fills of ditches or other features which appeared to cut the water table. Sub-samples of 1 litre were processed by bulk flotation using a modified siraf type machine. Flots were collected onto 250 um mesh sieves and poured into watertight containers. Wet flots were submitted for assessment.

6.5.2 The relative abundance of waterlogged and charred plant remains, insects or molluscs and species noted is recorded in Appendix 18. Plant species recorded are for seeds, nutlets etc unless otherwise stated.

Roman Samples

6.5.3 Waterlogged plant remains were frequent or abundant in four of the five Roman samples, and present in moderate quantities in sample 60 (context 7858). Samples 58, 54 and 56 (contexts 7652, 7830 and 7895) were dominated by species of dry land, ruderal habitats such as *Urtica dioica* (stinging nettle), *Stellaria media* (chickweed), *Sambucus nigra* (elder), *Conium maculatum* (hemlock) and *Hyoscyamus niger* (henbane). These last two species are common colonizers of nitrogen rich damp midden deposits. Sample 54 also contained a range of species more closely associated with arable habitats, particularly *Agrostemma githago* (corn cockle) and *Anthemis cotula* (stinking mayweed), as well as species of grassland habitats including *Stellaria graminea* (lesser stitchwort) and *Prunella vulgaris* (selfheal). Aquatic or damp ground species are rare and do not provide information about the character of the deposits themselves. The material present is presumably derived from ruderal species growing within the vicinity of the features or dumped material discarded in them. Rare fragments of insect remains were noted in the samples.

Medieval Samples

6.5.4 Of the four samples of 11th to 15th century date, sample 52 (context 7814) produced frequent well preserved waterlogged remains. Samples 71 and 72 (contexts 8044 and 8037) produced a similar range of material but in moderate quantities. Species noted in these samples were dominated by plants of arable or ruderal habitat including *Conium maculatum* and *Hyoscyamus niger* suggestive of damp, nitrogen rich habitats. Occasional charred cereal remains were also noted in these samples. No

insect remains were noted. Sample 52 (context 7810) contained frequent mineral concretions and only rare seeds of *Rubus* sp. No insects were noted in this sample and charred remains consisted of a single grain of Secale cereale (rye).

18th century Sample

6.5.5 Sample 51 (context 7602), taken from an 18th century or later feature contained both waterlogged and possibly mineralized material dominated by the remains of fruit. Seeds of *Ficus carica* (fig) were numerous while seeds of *Vitis vinifera* (grape), *Rubus* sp. (blackberry, raspberry etc) and *Malus* sp. (apple) were also present. Fragments of possible fruit skin were noted. This deposit also produced occasional insect pupare, fish bone and molluscs. Such a deposit is suggestive of dumped food waste or sewage.

6.6 Shell (Appendix 19)

6.6.1 A total of 6,752g of shell was recovered from the archaeological investigations at the site of the former Abingdon Cinema. The bulk of the shell is oyster but small quantities of clam (1g), landsnail (8g), mussel (23g), scallop (5g) and whelk (26g) were also recovered from a number of contexts.

7 STATEMENT OF POTENTIAL

7.1 General

7.1.1 The stratigraphic and significant artefactual and environmental assemblages have high potential to illuminate the development of the area from the prehistoric through to the post medieval period. Identifications of variations in activity and consumption patterns should be possible across the areas and properties involved.

7.2 Stratigraphic

7.2.1 A clear and complete record of the stratigraphic evidence has been recovered from the excavations. It offers good potential for further detailed analysis in order to refine the provisional understanding of dating and phasing.

7.2.2 To understand more about the cut features revealed during the excavation, comparisons can be made with evidence from local sites, specifically Abingdon Vineyard and British Gas/ Penlon site excavations (OA 2005).

7.3 Artefactual

Prehistoric and Roman pottery

7.3.1 The pottery assemblage is one of the largest of this date recovered from Abingdon, and is significant for that reason. Despite the apparent residuality, the pottery should help produce a reasonably well-dated sequence of ceramic supply to the site. The main periods of occupation - and hiatus - can be established with reference to comparative assemblages from Abingdon (De Roche 1978; Miles 1978; Timby 1999) and its environs, such as Lower Farm (Booth 1993), Barton Court Farm (Miles *et al* 1986) and Appleford (Booth and Simmonds, forthcoming). Decorated samian (Willis 1998) and amphorae in particular provide useful evidence for site status. Analysis of ware and form composition should also contribute to this (cf Booth 2004; Evans 2001). Questions regarding context formation may also be addressed, revealing social practices such as rubbish disposal and structured deposition, as suggested by the near-complete jar and close association of samian name-stamps. Questions of literacy in Roman-period Abingdon can briefly be addressed.

Post-Roman pottery

7.3.2 This assemblage of 6525 medieval sherds has some exceptional qualities that warrant further work. The sherds are, on the whole, unusually large and well-preserved with an extremely high rim-sherd survival. The range of vessel forms identified is typical of the medieval period but includes some unusual form variations and two outstanding examples of 13th century decorated jugs and one mid-17th century Bartmann jug. The amount of regional imports from the south-west pottery industries matches that coming from the more traditional north Oxford/Buckinghamshire suppliers in the mid 11th-13/14th centuries, and gives an interesting insight into the

movement of goods and marketing opportunities at this time, particularly when viewed in conjunction with the other Abingdon sites such as British Gas/ Penlon and the Vineyard. There is, however, more residual material evident on this site, particularly from the late medieval period onwards which may well be associated with its location near to the town's defensive ditches – this can be better examined in conjunction with the stratigraphic detail. The site's location at the heart of Abingdon offers a good opportunity to make a useful addition to the sum of knowledge of the archaeology in this small medieval town.

Ceramic building material (CBM)

7.3.3 Two or three small fragments of Roman roofing tiles are present on the site, but residual. These are unremarkable and require minimal further attention. The rest of the building materials, mainly ceramic roofing tiles, date from the 13th to the 19th century, with a strong emphasis on the early post-medieval period, particularly the 16th/17th century, although the medieval period (13th-16th century) is also well represented. The fragmentary nature of the assemblage makes it unlikely that further detailed analysis of the assemblage will yield meaningful results. It is recommended however that the remaining 17 boxes of building materials should be spot-dated and scanned, as the existing sample has been, to determine if anything significant has been missed and to complete this basic level of recording for the entire assemblage.

7.3.4 It is recommended, furthermore, that the range of tile fabrics should be described in more detail and that a selection of medieval tile fabrics be extracted to form the basis of a medieval roof tile reference collection for the area, or for Oxfordshire generally. The fragments of decorated medieval floor tile and the possible medieval marble inlay noted above may have originated from the medieval chapel or vicarage that stood near the site. The identification and context of the inlay should be researched further. Other categories of building materials could be dealt with in a summary report. A small number of pieces (perhaps three or four) may require illustration at the reporting stage.

Clay tobacco pipe

7.3.5 This excavation has produced a large and important assemblage of pipes. Most of the pipes dated from the 17th century and they have been recovered from large and consistent deposits in a part of the country where no previous work has been done. Imported pipes, previously unrecorded maker's marks and kiln waste were all present. There were also groups that can probably be related to an important coaching inn on the site and which may contain complete pipes. There is no doubt that this group should be subject to full recording, analysis and reporting.

Glass

7.3.6 The assemblage is a relatively large and informative one. Furthermore very little of the material is modern in date. The presence of Roman material, albeit in small quantities, is interesting. The fact that there are quite a number of 17th- and early

18th-century tablewares is also significant, and the sequence of wine bottles and other containers is relatively comprehensive.

Metalwork

7.3.7 The metalwork assemblage recovered from the Abingdon Cinema site has limited potential. The objects are in very poor condition, a large proportion of the assemblage comprises nails, pins or miscellaneous fragments and objects that are identifiable are not diagnostic. There are no tools or objects from Phase 3 that could be associated with leather working nor are there any objects that could be associated with the use of the site as an inn in phases 4 and 5. The assemblage is small and domestic in nature comprising a limited number of personal items, household objects, horsegear and structural objects commonly found on late medieval/post medieval urban sites.

Plaster

7.3.8 The material has limited potential and no further work is necessary.

Leather

7.3.9 This is the first group of leather to be found at Abingdon in recent years. If leather has been found previously it has not be published or made available to a wider audience. As it comes from well-stratified deposits and can be closely dated, it is of some interest both locally and regionally. Documentary research on the history of the leather working trades in Oxfordshire has been undertaken recently, and study of this concentrated group of leatherworking waste will add to the understanding of the tanning trade in Abingdon at the end of the medieval period.

7.3.10 The shoe finds are in good condition and are representative of the shoe styles worn by the local population at the end of the 14th century. They also provide dating evidence for the accompanying waste leather in contexts 7810 (pit 7744) and 7842 (pit 7823). The waste leather provides direct evidence for the tanning trade in Abingdon and should be seen alongside the other possible evidence for tanning recovered during these investigations. A pit filled with horn cores and animal bone found at this site (the former Regal Cinema site) and a quantity of horn cores recovered at the former SEB site may represent waste material from horn working, glue making or allied trades being undertaken in the locality. These trades along with the heavy leather trades, all linked with butchery, were often closely located on the outskirts of a town. Study of the leather would greatly benefit from any documentary research relating to this area of the town that may be undertaken as part of this project.

Slag

7.3.11 The material has limited potential and no further work is necessary.

Wood

7.3.12 Though the surfaces are eroded, each timber is an interesting piece in its own right. The sawing evidence suggests a 13th century or later date and these pieces appear to be medieval or immediately post medieval. Unless there is direct evidence that the worked joints are integral to the structure of the well in which they were found, the timbers must be from a much earlier structure than their burial context, perhaps from a dismantled or demolished timber framed structure nearby. Dendrochronology may be possible on these timbers. Some sapwood is present, but is badly decayed. The timbers have been cut from knotty wood, high up the trunk of the parent log and this will have distorted the ring pattern, so it is not likely that the timbers will date.

Worked bone

7.3.13 The decorated bone casket strips are of interest. Rectangular bone strips were pinned to wooden bases to form caskets. Examples have been found at Winchester.

Worked stone

7.3.14 The stone assemblage has the potential to inform about the style of building on the site and status of the site through the study of the architectural stonework, including the roof stones and through the additional worked stone such as the Purbeck marble mortar.

Flint

7.3.15 The material has limited potential and no further work is necessary.

Fired clay

7.3.16 The material has limited potential and no further work is necessary.

7.4 Environmental

Human bone

7.4.1 The bulk of the human bone assemblage from this site derives from the small cemetery group. In addition, two isolated complete skeletons and several disarticulated human bones were discovered elsewhere on the site. Despite excavation, reburial and re-excavation, the preservation of the skeletons remains very good, with the exception of crania which became very fragmented.

7.4.2 The earliest skeleton was an adult male, dated to the middle Iron Age. The skull of another adult individual was located at the bottom of an early Roman ditch accompanied by a complete late 1st century pot and a paste melon bead. The disposal of whole bodies and body parts (particularly skulls) within pits and ditches is a common Iron Age practice, and in the Upper Thames Valley continues well into the

Roman period (Phillpott 1991). These examples have great potential for further our knowledge of prehistoric and Romano-British burial practices in the region.

7.4.3 The second isolated skeleton was apparently placed, or thrown, face down into a large medieval pit. She was buried prone with legs extended. The remains appeared to be of a young adult, possibly a female. This manner of disposal of a body is atypical in the high medieval period, which is normally characterised by west-east orientated supine extended burials. As such the burial is of some significance.

7.4.4 The post-medieval cemetery of 26 individuals is of high significance. The majority of graves are aligned west-east, and appear to respect each other, being evenly spaced and forming neatly into three rows. From these features it is likely that this cemetery was in use for a very limited time. Slightly peripheral to this group, located to the east, were two graves aligned south-north. Whilst west-east remained the most common grave orientation, the north-south alignment is not unknown in the 17th century. Skeleton 3008 is unusual in being buried with the knees flexed. There are four graves that each contain two or three individuals. These grave groups are composed of either an adult with subadults, or two or three subadults buried together. The single grave cut and the close proximity of the bodies within each of these graves indicates that these individuals must have died soon after one another, and were buried in one event. Overall, the level of preservation and unusual burial rites ensure that this skeletal group has great potential for further analysis.

Animal bone

7.4.5 The animal bone assemblage from this site has the potential to reveal animal husbandry regimes, withers heights of the main domestic species, and the distribution of skinning and horn working activities. Analysis of the remaining bone will further add to our understanding of the use of animals at this site, and will possibly reveal more areas of industrial activity and provide a larger database from which to determine animal husbandry techniques. The analysis of the sieved material will possibly reveal the presence of small mammals and reveal which, if any, fish were contributing to the diet of the inhabitants of the site.

Charred plant remains

7.4.6 The samples included several which were particularly rich in charred plant remains and some which were rich in mineralised remains. The medieval plant economy of the town has not been well represented in the past. Several samples contained surprisingly abundant chaff and weed seeds, which are suggestive of unprocessed crops being brought into the settlement. They also provide the opportunity to examine the crop processing activities within the site as well as aspects of the arable regime and growing conditions of the crops.

7.4.7 The Roman period samples were obviously far fewer and as such have a more limited potential, although they add to information available from previous excavations in the area. The presence of germinated crops suggests an activity other than routine

crop processing may have been taking place, for example malting, and this is interesting to explore.

7.4.8 The range of crop species is fairly typical for the Roman and medieval periods. Several crops which were known for the first time in the medieval period, particularly *Triticum turgidum* and *Vicia sativa*, are represented in the samples. As the early history of these crops is still not entirely clear they provide the opportunity to increase the number of sites with positive identifications. Mineralised remains tend to be associated with cess pits and therefore dietary waste. As such mineralised remains provide the opportunity to examine food plants which are not normally represented on archaeological sites and should therefore be included in any analysis.

Waterlogged remains

7.4.9 Waterlogged plant remains tend to consist of the remains of species growing within the feature themselves (indicative of the character of the deposits, water clarity and so on), species growing within the immediate vicinity of the feature and any material dumped into the deposit as waste. While the Abingdon Cinema material does not appear to offer any insights in the character of the features themselves, they do provide the potential to examine the nature of the immediate environment as well as some aspects of diet not provided by the charred remains from the site. Detailed sorting of selected samples should extend the species list and provide detailed quantification of those species present as well as confirm the existing, provisional identifications. Insect remains were generally poor in the samples and insufficient material is available for detailed work. However the insect remains in sample 51 (7602) were slightly better preserved and the identification of any taxa present may provide further characterisation of the deposit.

7.4.10 Detailed sorting of samples 56, 54 and 56 will provide a more detailed species list which should characterise the immediate environment of the Roman features. The sorting of sample 49 is recommended to confirm the identifications of fruit remains and to extend the species list. Further analysis may confirm if the deposit is derived from sewage type material. The medieval material was more limited than the Roman remains although some indication of the immediate environment may be gained from further sorting of sample 53. The provisional identification of the other samples should be considered in any final report. Finally, sample 51 provides some idea as to the diet of the inhabitants of the site in the 18th century. It is recommended that this sample is sorted to confirm identifications and extend species list which can be compared to documentary evidence for fruit remains for this period. The insect remains were rare but well preserved and should be extracted for identification during sorting.

Shell

7.4.11 The material has limited potential and no further work is necessary.

8 RESEARCH AIMS

8.1 General aims

8.1.1 The overall aim of the programme was to investigate, characterise and record the archaeological evidence which would be destroyed during development, and to make available the results of the investigation through full publication.

Evaluation

8.1.2 To establish the presence/absence of archaeological remains within the three areas previously inaccessible for evaluation on the site to determine the extent, condition, nature, character, quality and date of any archaeological remains present.

8.1.3 To establish the ecofactual and environmental potential of archaeological deposits and features.

8.1.4 To establish the need for any further mitigation that may be required to be undertaken in the three evaluated areas prior to development.

8.1.5 To define any relevant research priorities if additional archaeological investigation proves necessary.

Recording Action

8.1.6 To further define and record the full extent of the known Civil War cemetery and to fully excavate, record and remove the burials from site for appropriate detailed specialist analysis.

Watching Brief

8.1.7 To preserve by record any archaeological remains that may be disturbed or damaged by the development within the area of the recorded medieval building.

8.1.8 To further identify and determine the character, function, form and longevity of the medieval, and/or earlier, occupation activity present on the site, and place it within its local, regional and national context.

8.1.9 To recover as complete a plan as possible of the medieval building or any other associated buildings/infrastructure in order to determine their nature and use.

Excavation

8.1.10 Identify the range and types of structures and activity present on the site with particular attention to the development and layout of the known structures and their relationship with the street frontage.

8.1.11 To establish phased evidence for the evolution, longevity and character of prehistoric and Roman activity and medieval/post medieval settlement represented.

8.1.12 Recover ceramic evidence to help develop pottery chronology and typology.

8.1.13 Seek to recover evidence for the economy of the site.

8.1.14 Identify local and non-local resources, eg pottery, for indications of exploitation of those resources.

8.1.15 Recover artefactual information, to clarify the nature of industrial and other activities, or domestic occupation.

8.1.16 Compare and contrast the evidence from the site with evidence for contemporary activity found locally and regionally.

8.1.17 Seek to recover environmental data to provide evidence for the utilisation of resources.

8.2 Specific aims

8.2.1 The development site had clear potential to provide important information about the development of Abingdon from the prehistoric period up to the present day.

Cinema Site

8.2.2 To determine more clearly the character and alignment of the outer defensive ditch in order to define whether it terminates or alters orientation.

8.2.3 To recover important information regarding the development and nature of settlement in Abingdon from the prehistoric through to the post-medieval period.

8.2.4 To more clearly define the character, phasing and evolution of the recorded post medieval structures to determine whether they relate to surviving evidence of the Lamb Inn, indicated by documentary evidence to have occupied the site from 1553 to 1851.

SEB Site

8.2.5 To recover important information about the medieval and post-medieval settlement of Abingdon.

8.2.6 To more clearly define the character of the recorded medieval structures to determine whether they may relate to early medieval tenements or represent the former remains of the medieval chapel of St Edmund's, presently assumed to possibly be situated at the western extent of the site.

8.2.7 To establish the evolution of the changing layout of the medieval street frontage in order to interpret its relationship with the medieval town boundary ditch and vicarage previously recorded on the site.

8.3 Revised aims

8.3.1 In the light of the provisional results of the excavation, the original research aims are

still valid. However, in some respect the questions to be considered can be more precisely defined.

Prehistoric

8.3.2 Evidence for a large Iron Age enclosure ditch was revealed in the 1996 evaluation. A similar ditch was also revealed during the excavation. The two ditch sections should be compared to determine whether they represent the same feature. The defensive ditches seen elsewhere in Abingdon should also be compared.

8.3.3 Although a crouched burial was seen during the 1996 works, there was a general absence of prehistoric features seen in the excavation. Was this an isolated anomaly or was prehistoric activity concentrated to the east of the site?

Roman

8.3.4 Within the Cinema site a large defensive ditch was dated to the early Roman period. It is possible that the ditch was regularly scoured out and may have originally dated from the Iron Age.

8.3.5 A subsequent ditch was dated to the 2nd century AD. The function of this ditch should be examined. It may have formed a defensive structure associated with the apparent early 2nd century reorganisation of the settlement in Abingdon.

8.3.6 The material assemblage recovered from the site should be contrasted to that recovered from the elsewhere in Abingdon, specifically the Vineyard site. It may be possible to determine whether activities/industries were area specific.

8.3.7 It may also be possible to determine the function of the pits revealed within the SEB and Cinema sites.

Saxon

8.3.8 Little evidence for Saxon activity was observed. A ditch within the Cinema site appeared to be of Saxon date. There was also a small background scatter of Saxon pottery. The pottery assemblage should be compared to that seen elsewhere in Abingdon. The Iron Age pottery from the 1996 evaluation should be re-assessed to rule out the possibility that it is Saxon in date, the pottery from both periods being very similar.

8.3.9 The understanding of Saxon settlement in Abingdon may be enhanced by studying the function of the ditch. It may represent a western boundary ditch and the possibility that there was a Saxon Minster on the site of St Helen's should be explored.

Medieval

8.3.10 A number of pits were revealed on the Cinema site, which may provide an indication of property boundaries between tenements. An analysis of the functions of the pits may provide spatial groupings. It may be possible to determine the function of the

area prior to the Lamb Inn.

8.3.11 A closer analysis of the late medieval structures fronting Ock Street may establish a medieval date for the former Lamb Inn.

8.3.12 It may be possible to determine what industry, if any, occurred at the properties fronting West St Helen's Street, by an analysis of the associated finds assemblage. A comparison of the findings should be made with other sites both regionally and nationally.

8.3.13 A detailed examination of the structural remains, seen in the centre of the site, should be made. It is likely that the remains form part of the vicarage of St Helen's although it is possible that they are the remains of the Chapel of St Edmund.

8.3.14 It may be possible to determine the effect St Edmund's and St Helen's had on the craft and industrial processes on site.

8.3.15 Further research into the documentary evidence of Abingdon will allow the archaeological evidence to be set into a historical context, and specifically, may also establish the location of St Edmund's Chapel.

Post medieval

8.3.16 By examining the material remains from the site of the Lamb Inn, it should be possible to determine the status of the tavern.

8.3.17 Further analysis of the human remains from the cemetery site may serve to determine the purpose of the cemetery. Was it a result of a particular event, such as the outbreak of disease, or small parish cemetery?

8.3.18 A detailed study of the Amyce Survey of 1552 may determine the status and function of the properties fronting West St Helen's Street.

9 METHOD STATEMENT

9.1 Stratigraphic

9.1.1 Matrices and digitised plans exist, but the nature of the excavation is such that phasing will largely be established through spatial analysis and detailed examination of finds assemblages. Descriptions of features will be generated and drawing briefs will be prepared.

9.2 Artefactual

9.2.1 In a category where no further analysis is recommended, the assessment report will be published, subject to editorial adjustments.

Prehistoric and Roman pottery

9.2.2 The assemblage should be fully recorded and reported. A number of pieces (*c* 15-20) should be selected and drawn in order to illustrate the chronological and typological range of the pottery. The graffiti should be further examined; a drawing of the letters should be sent to Mark Hassall for verification and publication in *Britannia*. A rubbing could also be made of the samian stamps for Brenda Dickinson to examine for dating.

Post-Roman pottery

9.2.3 The assemblage will be fully recorded and reported, with an appropriate number of illustrations made. Many of the medieval and post-medieval contexts produced large sherds in good condition which would benefit from detailed analysis of fabric, form and estimated vessel equivalents.

9.2.4 There should be a cross-fits investigation as some cross-fits have been noted. This may be useful in considering the possible recut ditch.

9.2.5 This large assemblage should be compared to the Vineyard assemblage excavated to the north-east of the Abingdon Cinema site. Evidence from both will help to develop the pottery chronology and typology for the Abingdon region.

9.2.6 If new fabrics are defined, these should be added to the Oxfordshire Medieval Fabric Type Series held by Oxford Archaeology.

9.2.7 Once analysed, the medieval and post-medieval pottery assemblage would benefit from reintegration with the other finds to develop a better understanding of the character and social patterning within this central area of medieval Abingdon.

Ceramic building material (CBM)

9.2.8 The tasks for full analysis of the CBM should include background research, spot dating of the remaining material, statistical analysis of data, selection of roof tile

samples for reference collection and description of fabrics. A report should be prepared including a catalogue of illustrated items.

Clay tobacco pipe

9.2.9 A detailed study and analysis of the pipe groups should be carried out. Detailed examination of each pipe fragment and compilation of a digital archive catalogue should be made. A context summary synthesising the pipe evidence for each context should be prepared. Illustrations and the production of a publication text should be made.

Glass

9.2.10 All the vessel glass (with the exception of the bottles) should be fully catalogued and discussed. The bottles and the window glass should be quantified (and this data presented in tabular format) and discussed. An integrated contextual report on the material should be produced to full publication standards.

Metalwork

9.2.11 No further work is required but the assessment report should be edited for publication.

Plaster

9.2.12 No further work is required but the assessment report should be edited for publication.

Leather

9.2.13 A basic record (as defined in RFG & FRG Guidelines 1993) of the entire assemblage is needed, to include measurement of complete soles and other relevant dimensions, and species identification where possible. A large proportion of the leather has several individual items contained within a single bag. The leather needs to be separated out into individual object types where necessary and allocated a unique identifying number by which they can be identified during recording, illustration and publication. This re-bagging and numbering can be undertaken during the recording process. The basic record should be entered onto an excel database to form part of the site archive. The contextual information can then be correlated and the assemblage quantified by functional category within each stratigraphic group and site phase. This information will inform those studying the stratigraphic sequence and will provide useful independent dating to compliment the ceramic and numismatic evidence. The leather assemblage should be summarised for inclusion in the publication of the site narrative. This will require a brief description of the primary waste leather, shoes and strap. The shoes will require a brief description of the construction and styles represented, with a diagram of the shoe styles found, as appropriate. An example of each shoe style will be selected for drawing and will be catalogued for publication. Additional information will be presented in tabular form

wherever possible. Sketches will be provided to guide the illustrator as to views and details required, conventions to be used etc.

Wood

9.2.14 Analysis is needed of the assemblage as it is currently recorded and a publication report produced. For conservation, it is recommended that the timbers are impregnated with p.e.g. polymers and freeze dried. The surfaces should be cleaned and finished, iron fixing painted with tannic acid and packaged appropriately for return. It is recommended that the items are illustrated for publication/archive before stabilisation treatment is completed.

Worked bone

9.2.15 No further work is required but the assessment report should be edited for publication and the two decorative strips illustrated.

Worked stone

9.2.16 The assemblage should be examined in full and all the worked pieces be recorded to publication standard. The use of stone for roofing and the types of other stone present should then be placed in their regional context and the distribution of roofing and other structural material on site be analysed for information about building types. It is also recommended that the architectural stone pieces are properly analysed.

Fired clay

9.2.17 No further work is required but the assessment report should be edited for publication.

9.3 Environmental

9.3.1 In a category where no further analysis is recommended, the assessment report will be published, subject to any necessary adjustments.

Human bone

9.3.2 The inhumations all need further analysis in order that they may help address certain of the revised research aims of the project (see Section 8). The inhumations are suitable for full osteological and palaeopathologcal analysis. The proposed analysis will follow the guidelines set out in IFA paper number 7 (Brickley and Mckinley 2004) and will entail the following:

- Skeletal inventory
- Dental inventory
- Age assessment
- Sex determination

- Metrical data and non-metric traits
- Dental and skeletal pathology

9.3.3 The location of the burials in the landscape and the general funerary ritual (body positioning and coffin burials) merit a full discussion and should form part of the final report with appropriate regional comparative examples.

Animal bone

9.3.4 The assemblage will be fully recorded and reported, including analysis and quantification of animal bone recovered from sieving. The animal bone will be discussed by phase.

Charred Plant remains

9.3.5 It is recommended that the Roman period samples which have produced charred remains are sorted and analysed fully.

9.3.6 Six medieval samples from the SEB site produced mineralised remains other than *Sambucus nigra* seeds. These should be sorted. The charcoal rich medieval samples should also be sorted, giving priority to samples rich in weed seeds and to those with both charred and mineralised remains.

9.3.7 The charcoal from the sites has the potential to provide information about fuel use within the town. While some of the wood may be structural it is unlikely that this can be disentangled from the refuse or firewood. The charcoal from some of the larger flots should be examined.

Waterlogged remains

9.3.8 The Roman, medieval and post-medieval samples (samples 53 and 51) will be sorted for waterlogged plant remains, and the material identified. A report will be produced based upon the results which will address the research aims set out in Section 8.

Shell

9.3.9 No further work is required but the assessment report should be edited for publication.

Illustrations of plans, sections and finds

9.3.10 A number of plans and sections will need to be produced in order to provide the necessary level of detail for the report. Plans and sections will be needed of the major stratigraphic sequences, and revised phase plans drawn up.

9.3.11 As the finds assemblage from the site is relatively small, only a small quantity of finds (specifically pottery, metalwork and worked stone) will need to be illustrated. The recommended number of objects to be illustrated is in accordance with normal conventions for assemblages of this size. Time will be needed for producing drawing briefs and for checking the illustrations as they are produced.

Preparation of published report

9.3.12 It is envisaged that the report will be published within the local County Journal (*Oxoniensia*) and will present an account of the Iron Age, Roman, medieval and post medieval archaeology in relation to previous work in the area and address the revised research aims detailed in Section 8. The publication costs have been included here. The publication outline is presented in Section 10.

General project tasks

9.3.13 Alex Smith will manage the project with support from Andrew Norton and internal monitoring by Alistair Barclay. Paul Backhouse will undertake drawing office management. IT support will be provided by Paul Miles. Dana Challinor will undertake environmental management. Leigh Allen and Nicola Scott will undertake finds and archive administration.

9.3.14 The reports will be assembled and checked against the illustrations. Individual contributors will check draft publication texts. Alex Smith or another appropriate Senior Project Manager will carry out substantive editing.

Archives

9.3.15 Oxford Archaeology's archiving standards will be adhered to at all times with regards to project documentation and materials used will be suitable for archiving (see Walker 1990). All post-excavation documentation will be filed, ordered and indexed as part of the research archive. This will be sent for microfiching and then submitted to the National Monuments Record. After completion of the project the archive will be stored at the OA finds depot at Standlake until an adequate storage facility is provided in the county of Oxfordshire.

9.3.16 The digital archive (all relevant databases, CAD plans, GIS, Illustrations, spreadsheets, Word-processing documents) will be prepared by OA staff with appropriate documentation and metadata.

Health and safety statement

9.3.17 All OA post-excavation work will be carried out under relevant Health and Safety legislation, including the Health and Safety at Work Act (1974). A copy of the OA Health and Safety Policy can be supplied. The nature of the work means that the requirements of the following legislation are particularly relevant:

- Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992 - offices and finds processing areas.
- Manual Handling Operations Regulations (1992) - transport of bulk finds and samples.
- *Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations (1992)* - use of computers for word-processing and database work.

- *COSSH (1988)* - finds conservation and environmental processing/analysis.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

Iron Age and Roman pottery

by Edward Biddulph

A total of 1520 sherds, weighing almost 28 kg, was recovered from the 1996 and 2002/03 fieldwork events. The assemblage was divided roughly equally between the two (Table A1.1). The material was rapidly scanned to determine ceramic dates and to assess the character of the pottery. No detailed examination of the pottery was undertaken. Fabrics were recorded using OA's standard recording system (Booth, nd). Pottery was usually assigned to general codes, though a note was made of the better identified fabrics. Forms were identified also using OA's system; reference was made additionally to Young's Oxfordshire corpus (Young 1977), Dragendorff's samian typology (cf Webster 1996) and, in one instance, Hawkes and Hull's *Camulodunum* series (1947). The pottery was quantified by sherd count and weight in grammes.

Table A1.1. Iron Age and Roman pottery.

Event	Sherd count	Weight (g)
ABCIN 96	539	13860
ABCIN 02	981	13733

Chronology and assemblage composition

The earliest material comprised three sherds that were tentatively assigned to the early or middle Iron Age. The region at this time was characterised by shell/limestone-tempered and sand-tempered pottery, with the former tradition usually dominant in the early Iron Age (De Roche 1978). Both fabric types were present here. The site yielded a range of late Iron Age 'Belgic' E wares. Contexts (11 in total) containing these alone were dated broadly to the late Iron Age or early Roman period (up to the late 1st century AD); forms were insufficiently diagnostic to achieve a closer date, though much of the material may well pre-date the conquest. Grog-tempered wares (E80) were commonest, followed by sand-tempered wares (E30) and limestone-tempered wares (E50). These wares, along with shell-tempered wares (E40), were also found alongside Roman-period pottery. Forms from these post-conquest groups typically included short-necked or neckless jars (Young R21) or cordoned bowls/jars (as *Cam* 220).

Table A1.2. Chronological distribution of the Iron Age and Roman pottery.

Phase	Sherd count	% count	Weight (g)	% weight
Early-middle Iron Age	3	<1%	72	<1%
Late Iron Age/early Roman	54	4%	1221	5%
Early Roman	674	44%	13926	52%
Early-mid Roman	128	11%	1658	7%
Mid Roman	182	13%	3522	13%
Mid-late Roman	38	2%	598	2%
Late Roman	229	14%	3805	13%
Roman	207	12%	2724	7%
Totals	1515	-	27526	-

As noted in Table A1.2, approximately 50% by weight of the assemblage examined here was assigned to the early Roman period (AD 43-130). Grey wares dominated. Medium sandy wares (R30) were most prolific, though both finer and coarser fabrics (R10 and R20, respectively) were well represented. Sources were local for the most part, though some fine sherds were reminiscent of North Wiltshire products. Very coarse fabrics, usually sand and grog-tempered and reserved for storage jars, included Savernake ware (R95). A black-surfaced fabric (R50) - sand-tempered with lesser quantities of grog - was also identified. Forms were again largely confined to Young R21 types. Sandy white wares (W20), available mainly as flagons, were again predominantly local, although the category may hide further Verulamium products (W21). Context 1064 yielded a fine white ware (W10) butt-beaker that may have arrived from Northern Gaul. Fine and sandy oxidised wares (O10 and O20) contributed a relatively small amount; Severn Valley ware (O40) was also represented. Butt-beakers were available in the fine fabric. A fine mica-coated oxidised fabric (F35) probably reached the site from kilns at Nuneham Courtney (Booth 1993). Oxfordshire white ware mortaria (M22) had been introduced probably during the early 2nd century AD. Known continental imports were confined to South Gaulish samian ware. Plain forms included Drag. 18 and Drag. 15/17 platters, and Drag. 27 cups. Decorated sherds from Drag. 29, 30 or 37 bowls were also recovered. Much of the early Roman pottery was confined to the 1st century AD. Early 2nd century material was largely absent.

Pottery assigned to the mid Roman period (AD 120/30 to 250) accounted for *c* 13% of the assemblage by weight. The date at which pottery supply resumed after the apparent early Roman hiatus is uncertain at this stage. Large groups, such as that from context 7052 suggest that pottery deposition resumed in earnest after *c* AD 150. The middle Roman assemblage was similarly dominated by grey wares. Bowls and dishes (for example Young R45 and R57), poppy-headed beakers (Young R34) and cooking-jar types (R27) joined the repertoire of forms. White wares (including Oxfordshire mortaria) and oxidised wares were present. Inevitably, South Gaulish samian was replaced by products from Central and East Gaul (S30 and S40); a suspected 1st century product from Lezoux (S31) was recovered from context 7052, though this must be residual. Two bases from Drag. 33 cups, both with name-stamps were recovered probably from the same ditch. Amphora (A) from southern Spain were deposited in this period. Late Roman pottery, dating from AD 250 to 410, also took a share of 13%. Significant changes to pottery supply included the introduction of reduced ware flanged bowls (Young R46), handmade black-burnished ware (B10), probably from Dorset, and Oxfordshire red colour-coated ware (F51). Bowls and 'cooking-pots' were available in B10, while F51 included bowls (Young C51 and 75) and a pedestal beaker. A beaker with applied clay decoration in Nene Valley ware (F52) from context 8 may have arrived before the mid 3rd century. A necked colour-coated bowl (Young C75) from context 6282 suggests that occupation continued after *c* AD 325.

The remaining pottery was poorly dated, spanning two or three broad periods. Overall condition was mixed. Mean sherd weight was relatively high at 18 g, and surfaces largely escaped significant abrasion (intriguingly, the pottery from the 2002 season was considerably more fragmented than that recovered in 1996, suggesting that the two assemblages were subject to different depositional histories). However, rims were somewhat scarce or derived from long-lived forms, making close dating difficult. Additionally, some of the pottery was clearly residual. Contexts produced groups weighing an average of 121 g. Contexts 936, 1104 and 7654 each yielded over 1 kg. A number of intrinsically interesting pieces were encountered. From context 1005, a pre-fired X-graffito had been scored on a beaker base. A body sherd in 6088, from an early Roman jar, had been lightly scored with lines resembling the letters I, I, N - possibly [...]EN or NE[...]. A jar base in context 876 was perforated. Finally, a near-complete jar was recovered from context 902.

Potential

The pottery assemblage is one of the largest recovered from Abingdon, and is significant for that reason. Despite the apparent residuality, the pottery should help produce a reasonably well-dated sequence of ceramic supply to the site. The main periods of occupation - and hiatus - can be established with reference to comparative assemblages from Abingdon (De Roche 1978; Miles 1978; Timby 1999; Biddulph 2003) and its environs, such as Lower Farm (Booth 1993), Barton Court Farm (Miles *et al* 1986) and Appleford (Booth and Simmonds, forthcoming). Decorated samian (Willis 1998) and amphorae in particular provide useful evidence for site status. Analysis of ware and form composition should also contribute to this (cf Booth 2004; Evans 2001). Questions regarding context formation may also be addressed, revealing social practices such as rubbish disposal and structured deposition, as suggested by the near-complete jar and close association of samian name-stamps. Questions of literacy in Roman-period Abingdon can briefly be addressed.

Further work

The assemblage should be fully recorded by sherd count, weight and estimated vessel equivalents (EVE). A number of pieces (*c* 15-20) should be selected and drawn in order to illustrate the chronological and typological range of the pottery. The graffiti should be further examined; a drawing of the letters should be sent to Mark Hassall for verification and publication in *Britannia*. A rubbing could also be made of the samian stamps for Brenda Dickinson to examine for dating.

APPENDIX 2

Post-Roman pottery

by Carole Wheeler

General Overview

The medieval and post-medieval pottery assemblage comprised 6525 sherds with a total weight of 122,000g. The estimated vessel equivalent (EVE) by summation of surviving rim sherd circumference was 51.04 (50.34 of which could be distinguished by vessel form). The bulk of the assemblage was medieval or post-medieval in date, although there was a small quantity of early-middle Saxon sherds (19 by No. 360g by wgt). Earlier occupation of the site is also indicated by the amount of residual Roman sherds that occur throughout the medieval contexts – particularly high in the L12th – 13th and L14th-16th century contexts. The wholly Roman contexts will be reported on in a separate assessment. This assessment has concentrated, in the main, on the medieval and early post-medieval contexts for detailed analysis.

This assemblage matches that recently examined for the Abingdon British Gas site (OA 2005) in containing unusually large and well-preserved sherds, including 3 near-complete vessels. However, there is a good deal more late post-medieval activity here than on the Gas site and both the level of residual and intrusive material may pose some difficulty but this cannot be assessed without reference to the stratigraphic matrix for the site (as yet unseen).

Analytical Methodology

The sherds from each context were recorded by number and weight for each fabric type and entered on an Access database. Featureless body sherds of the same fabric were recorded as one entry whilst featured sherds such as rims, bases, handles, spouts and decorated sherds were recorded individually. For rim sherds, the diameter and percentage surviving of the original complete circumference was recorded with a vessel type given where it could be defined. The rim sherd dimension figures for each fabric type were summed to obtain the Estimated Vessel Equivalent (EVE).

The terminology used to define the form types is that set out in the Medieval Pottery Research Group Guidelines (1998) and to the minimum standards laid out in the Minimum Standards for the Processing, Recording, Analysis and Publication of Post-Roman Ceramics (MPRG, 2001). All the statistical analysis was carried out using an Excel spreadsheet with additional calculations made using an electronic calculator. The statistical analyses were carried out in line with the guidelines set for pottery analysis by Orton (1993).

Fabric Recording

The pottery was recorded using the coding system and chronology of the Oxfordshire county type series (Mellor 1994). The following fabrics were identified:-

OXR – St Neot's ware-type 10th-11th C. 17 sherds, 75g. EVE = 0.25

OXB?- Late Saxon Oxford Ware 10-mid 11th C. 9 sherds, 102g.

OXZ – Stamford Ware, 850-1100 1 sherds, 23g

OXBB – Minety-type Ware – early 13th – *c* AD1540. 64 sherd, 2289g. EVE = 0.55

OXAC – Early Medieval West Oxfordshire Ware – 10th-mid 13th C. 188 sherds, 1828g.

EVE = 0.81

OXBF – Early Medieval South-West Oxfordshire ware – mid 11th to early 13th C. 38 sherds, 467g EVE = 0.05

OXY – Early Medieval Oxford Ware – mid 11th-13th C. 985 sherds, 14,339g. EVE = 9.33

OXAG – Ashampstead ware – mid 11th-13th C. 853 sherds, 13,777g. EVE = 5.34

WALL-type – Wallingford-type fabrics – III.18 – No dated contexts as yet. 118 sherds, 1521g. EVE = 0.59

OX162 – S.E.Oxfordshire Ware - ?12th-14th C – 54 sherds, 324g. EVE = 0.36

OXAW – Early Brill-Boarstall ware – late 12th^{h}-mid 14th C. 69 sherds, 2509g. EVE = 0.45

OXAM – Late Brill-Boarstall ware – 13th-15th C. 776 sherds, 14,777g. EVE = 7.42

OXAQ - Late Medieval East Wiltshire ware – late 12th – early 15th C. 522 sherds, 8231g. EVE = 4.36

OXBX – Late Brill-Boarstall ware – 13th – 15th C. 1 sherds, 12g.

OXBG/BN – Surrey Border Ware – 1500 – 1700. 233 sherds, 3674g. EVE = 1.71

OXCL – Cistercian-type ware 1475 – 1700 17 sherds, 205g EVE = 0.23

REW – Post-medieval Redwares – 16th C+. 783 sherds, 28,411g. EVE = 12.05

TNGLZ – Tinglazed earthenware 16th C +. 246 sherds, 4249g. EVE = 1.61

OXST – Rhenish Stonewares, 15th – 18th C. 136 sherds, 4242g. EVE = 3.29

OXST – Westerwald stoneware *c* 1590 – 1800. 18 sherds, 320g

OXRESWL – Staffordshire/Bristol slipwares – 17th-18th C. 32 sherds, 232g. EVE = 0.55

Post-Medieval wares including Creamwares – 101 sherds, 667g EVE = 0.55

In addition, the following new fabrics, first distinguished in the British Gas/ Penlon site assessment (OA 2005) appear:-

AB2 – quartz tempered. Abundant sub-angular glassy & iron-strained quartz. Occasional clay grains. Black in fracture. Probable date 11-13thC? 8 sherds, 52g.

AB3 - moderate white sub-rounded ill-sorted quartz, with limestone flakes and white flint. Coil-made. Part of same dispersed East Wilts/Savernake tradition. Late 12-just into 15th C? 200 sherds, 3138g. EVE = 0.55

AB5 - abundantly tempered with irregular limestone, sub-rounded glassy quartz with black & white flint. Handmade tradition. Date: 11/12thC ? 48 sherds, 846g. EVE = 0.52

AB6 - ill-sorted sub-rounded white water-washed quartz. Hackerly in fracture. Distinctive pulled-across grains on outer surface of sherd as though something has torn the surface of the clay. Fabric matrix is very like an early OXAG – 11/12thC ? 7 sherds, 41g.

AB7 - abundant sub-angular, ill-sorted quartz, sub-angular voids. Hard fired. Wheel thrown. Possible regional import?? 12 sherds, 136g.

AB8 - abundant sub-round water-washed white and iron-stained quartz. The decorated sherds have white slip beneath apple green glaze, typical of OXAG tradition – but the iron-stained grains make it likely to be a copy. 11-13thC? 1 sherds, 18g. EVE = 0.07

AB9 - reduced fabric, ill-sorted limestone and flint tempered. Possibly allied to the dispersed East Wilts/Savernake tradition? 5 sherds, 59g.

The majority of fabrics correspond to types commonly found in Oxfordshire. New fabrics identified as Abingdon types have been pre-fixed with 'AB' and follow those initially distinguished in the Abingdon British Gas/ Penlon site assessment report (OA 2005). If the Abingdon-type fabrics (AB3, 5,6,8 & 9) can be associated with the south-west dispersed

ceramic traditions of the East Wiltshire/Savernake Forest area (i.e.OXBF, OXAC, OXAQ) then these equal very closely in number and weight those originating from the north Oxford traditions of OXY, OXAW and OXAM. 29% of the total assemblage by number come from the south-west and 28% from the Oxford area.

It should be noted that these percentages a relatively low because nearly a quarter of the assemblage dates to the later post-medieval/modern period (21% by number, 32% by weight). These sherds have generally been grouped under basic types e.g. Redwares, rather than analysed in detail.

Chronology

The spot-dating of the pottery sherds has been based solely on the fabric and vessel form with no account taken of the stratigraphy (as yet unseen). The phasing, therefore, relies entirely on ceramic dating and will require fine-tuning once the full range of evidence is available. It should also be noted that the new Abingdon fabrics are very loosely dated by previously published (Parrington and Balkwill 1975; Haldon and Mellor 1977) and unpublished (Bown 2001) work, and by their association with known fabric traditions,. These need more careful consideration at the report stage (see comments in the British Gas/ Penlon site Spot Date report; OA 2005).

The sherds have been divided into a number of ceramic phases as follows:

Table A2.1. Ceramic Phasing: pottery occurrence per phase by number and weight of sherds and EVE

Phase	Date	No. of Sherds	Wgt. of Sherds (g.)	EVE
LS (Late Saxon)	10th – 11th C	3	31	0.25
1	11th - 12th C	69	1557	0.47
1a	M11th – 13th C	574	8999	3.95
2	L12th – 13th C	1426	22859	8.95
2a	L12th – E 15th C	171	2035	1.00
3	13th C	238	3619	1.22
4	13th – 14th C	873	16275	9.06
5	14th – 15th C	64	905	0.05
6	L14th – 16th C	272	4008	1.34
7	16th – 17th C	799	12755	3.71
8	17th – 18th C	655	10709	6.83
9	18th + C	1237	36279	14.21

NB 17 contexts (69 sherds, 496g) could not be confidently dated to a period.

Table A2.1 shows the amount of pottery deposited in each ceramic phase. If the medieval periods are grouped together the bulk of the pottery deposition falls within the period from M11th-13thC, dips 14th-16th and rises again 16th-17thC. The phasing needs more fine-tuning to deal with the overlaps, particularly where the fabric tradition is long-lived e.g. L12th-E15th, however, this should be possible with the benefit of stratigraphic matrix and complimentary information from other specialists at the report writing stage.

Level of deposit reliability

Table A2.2. Pottery occurrence per ceramic phase by fabric type, expressed as a percentage of the weight per phase – major fabrics only.

	PHASES											
	LS	1	1a	2	2a	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
fabric	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
oxr	74.2	0	0.2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.2	0	0
Ab5	-	34.7	1.1	1.3	0	0	0.2	0	0	0	0	0.1
oxbf	-		0.4	1.3	0	0	0	0	0	0.2	0	0
oxac	-	28.9	1.7	3.0	1.7	0.8	0.9	1.2	0.8	1.5	0.8	0
oxy	-	1.3	53.6	25.1	19.6	31.9	3.8	13.6	9.3	6.9	1.4	0.2
oxag	-	14.3	11.6	18.7	5.0	23.9	24.4	21.2	12.6	16.7	2.7	0.5
Ab3	-	1.3	1.5	9.2	19.7	3.4	1.2	0.4	0.8	0.6	0.3	0.2
oxaq	-	-	1.4	15.5	33.6	13.0	9.0	3.5	6.2	6.1	5.1	0.9
oxam	-	-	-	1.2	1.2	2.9	43.1	40.4	31.3	23.4	18.7	2.1
Oxbg/ bn	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.2	2.0	4.1	8.2	5.8	4.9
oxbb	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.1	0	11.8	0	0	0
rew	-	-	-	0.1	0	0	0	4.1	1.3	8.2	36.7	64.2
oxst	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.2	0	0	0.2	6.5	10.5
tnglz	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.6	11.5
	31	1557	8999	22859	2035	3619	16275	905	4008	12755	10709	36279

Table A2.2 shows the level of residuality to be low up to Phases 3/ 4. Phase 4 (13th-14thC) has two intrusive deposits in the Stoneware and OXBG/BN fabrics found, otherwise it appears consistent. However, phases 5-7 are still recording 11th-13th century fabrics and, in the case of OXAG, at quite a high level. Phase 6 (L14th-16thC) also has a heavy scattering of Roman sherds. It therefore seems that the level of residuality increases from the late medieval period onwards.

Vessel Types

Table A2.3. Vessel occurrence per phase expressed as a percentage of the EVE per phase.

	LS	1	1a	2	2a	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Form	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Jar		68.0	77.0	62.5	90.0	56.6	26.0	100	71.6	40.5	21.3	21.6
dish	100	32.0	15.0	13.7	5.0	14.8	7.8		7.5	22.5	42.3	26.6
Spouted pitcher				2.6	0	0	8.8	0	0	0	0	0
Jug			8.0	21.2	5.0	28.6	46.3	0	20.9	26.5	8.2	0.6
bottle							11.1	0	0	0	8.1	1.8
Drinking vessels											9.3	20.2
flatware										9.5	9.3	20.2
Colander											1.5	0
Chamber pot												9.0
Phase Total	**0.25**	**0.47**	**3.95**	**8.95**	**1.0**	**1.22**	**9.06**	**.05**	**1.34**	**3.66**	**6.57**	**13.82**

The vessel forms in this assemblage show the usual medieval predominance of jars, dishes and jugs. Additionally spouted pitchers were represented in both Brill and Ashampstead-type wares. There were two outstanding part-complete 13th century jugs present. The most notable of these was a large round dark green jug with a beautifully executed anthropomorphic design whereby two hands projected from just below the rim to hold the tubular spout (context 6684). Two eyes were fixed either side of the spout and a beard placed below the spout to complete the human face. The plaited strap handle could have symbolised hair. It is even possible to speculate that two eyebrows have been raised slightly above the jug rim. Applied decoration face masks were also attached either side of the neck just below the rim, and pellets of clay decorate the body. These highly decorated 13thC jugs have been associated with the myth of the 'green man' which symbolised the connection to the natural world that townspeople may have needed. A spouted pitcher (context 6320) came from the same Brill/Boarstall industry and sported 4 barley-twist loops below the rim.

From a later post-medieval context (7601) a complete Bellarmine jug dating to the early-mid 17thC was found complete, except for the handle. These handsome stoneware jugs were made in Cologne and Frechen from the 16th century. Typically the jugs were decorated with a bearded mask on the narrow neck and covered in a stippled iron-brown salt-glaze. This jug can be dated to the first half to mid 17thC both by the careful detailing of the features on the face mask and by the flat base typical of the 17thC. The heraldic badge shows the commonly used Amsterdam motif dated from 1625-50 and was probably imported into England empty to be filled here, usually with wine.

Additionally, other interesting vessel forms were found including a tripod pitcher, an unusual triangular-shaped rim (the vessel is still to be identified), an aquamanile, a curfew (fire-cover), lobed bowl, and jars with the seating for a lid. From the later contexts a bung-hole cistern and numerous small drinking vessels herald the move to more individual dining habits. None of these vessels have rim sherds diameters.

Fragmentation Analysis

Table A2.4. Mean sherd weight in grams per phase, major fabrics only.

Phase	Date C	oxy	oxac	Ab5	Oxag	oxaq	Ab3	oxbb	Oxam	Oxbg/ Bn
1	11-12	6.7	26.1	25.8	31.9	0	20.0	0	0	0
1a	M11-13	16.6	9.0	12.3	12.7	24.8	13.8	0	0	4.0
2	L12-13	13.8	15.7	11.5	18.3	17.2	17.9	45.3	9.1	4.0
2a	L12-E15	10.2	8.5	0	20.4	15.1	11.2	0	6.0	0
3	13th	16.7	14.5	0	49.0	11.4	26.0	0	11.7	0
4	13-14	10.3	3.0	12.3	17.7	17.1	17.4	9.0	25.9	11.0
5	14-15	24.6	11.0	0	12.8	4.6	0	0	19.3	0.1
6	L14-16	14.8	8.0	0	11.2	11.8	0	29.5	14.3	16.3
7	16-17	16.9	10.4	0	17.2	13.4	9.8	26.9	15.6	10.2
8	17-18	9.5	2.7	5.0	6.2	15.2	5.8	115.6	17.3	13.5
9	18 +	7.4	4.4	7.8	11.5	19.6	9.3	0	15.9	26.2

The data in Table A2.4 shows the mean sherd weight for each major fabric type per ceramic phase. The sherd size in the earlier periods is fairly consistently large, although there are fluctuations and this needs further investigation. Even the sherds from the residual wares (OXY,OXAC,OXAG) in the 6th and 7th phases remain quite large which may indicate relatively undisturbed earlier medieval deposits.

Comment on the assemblage as a whole

This large assemblage has a number of features that would warrant further analysis. Its location in the heart of the town and the well-preserved nature of the deposits offer an excellent opportunity to further our knowledge of medieval Abingdon, particularly when associated with the other central Abingdon sites of Abingdon British Gas/ Penlon site (OA 2005) and the Vineyard site. The assemblage produced an extremely high number of rim sherds, even when the later post-medieval ones are excluded, and a variety of vessel forms that give us clues to the changing social practices in a small medieval town. Movement of goods and marketing opportunities can also be traced through a closer examination of fabric and form from the dispersed ceramic industries to the south-west from where a good percentage of these vessels seem to derive. It would be interesting to try to determine whether these small local industries were making unusual forms of vessels as may be indicated at the British Gas/ Penlon sites. Against this, there is clearly a higher level of residuality than appears in the British Gas/ Penlon sites and this needs to be examined in conjunction with stratigraphic detail to determine its effect on the data. There is also more early post-medieval and post-medieval activity that is still to be fully explored.

Recommendations for future work on the medieval pottery

This assemblage of 6525 medieval sherds has some exceptional qualities that warrant further work. The sherds are, on the whole, unusually large and well-preserved with an extremely high rim-sherd survival. The range of vessel forms identified is typical of the medieval period but includes some unusual form variations and two outstanding examples of 13th century decorated jugs and one mid-17th century Bartmann jug. The amount of regional imports from the south-west pottery industries matches that coming from the more traditional north Oxford/Buckinghamshire suppliers in the mid 11th-13/14th centuries, and gives an interesting insight into the movement of goods and marketing opportunities at this time, particularly when viewed in conjunction with the other Abingdon sites such as British Gas/Penlon and the Vineyard. There is, however, more residual material evident on this site, particularly from the late medieval period onwards which may well be associated with its location near to the town's defensive ditches – this can be better examined in conjunction with the stratigraphic detail. The site's location at the heart of Abingdon offers a good opportunity to make a useful addition to the sum of knowledge of the archaeology in this small medieval town.

Future work to report writing stage

Full recording of remainder of assemblage

Adjustment of the dating of pottery groups from the evidence provided by the stratigraphic matrix, and any necessary adjustment of data tables

General analysis, research and discussion of the significance of the assemblage in the context of medieval Abingdon and more broadly within Oxfordshire and its regional connections

Discussion, in detail, of the vessel occurrence

Selection of sherds for illustration, catalogue and preparation of drawing briefs

Cross-fits investigation – some cross-fits have been noted. This may be useful in considering the possible recut ditch

Editing, proofing, illustration checking etc.

References

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APPENDIX 3

Ceramic Building material (CBM)

by John Cotter

Introduction and Methodology

The site produced a total of 2121 fragments of ceramic and stone building materials weighing 161,871g and which came from a total of 220 contexts. This currently fills 28 museum boxes. In order to assess the material a sampling approach was adopted whereby 11 of the 28 boxes were spot-dated and assessed. The spot-dated material came from 89 contexts and comprised 1045 fragments (almost 50 per cent of the sherd assemblage) weighing 73,656g. Material from each of the selected contexts was rapidly scanned and spot-dated. Context totals (sherd count and weight) and comments on the range of building materials present were also recorded (see attached spreadsheet). Because of the conservative nature of building materials, their often long life-spans, reuse and final condition, the spot-dates derived from them are often only very approximate and should be used with caution. Spot-dates derived from pottery and other artefacts are usually more reliable. Pottery dates were subsequently checked to assess the reliability of the building material dates and to provide closer dating for individual pieces of interest.

The Material

The assemblage consists predominantly of post-Roman ceramic building materials (CBM), mostly roofing tiles, along with a few scraps of Roman CBM and a small quantity of post-Roman stone building materials such as stone roofing tiles and slate. A few miscellaneous pieces of plaster or mortar and fired daub were also present. All these types are considered in more detail below. The Roman and medieval material is generally in a very fragmentary state, the post-medieval material is better preserved although no complete roofing tiles or other types of CBM were present. The post-medieval contexts produced the largest number of fragments. Contexts spot-dated to the 16th/17th century were the most abundant (28 contexts), followed by contexts spot-dated to the 13th-16th century (21 contexts) and the 15th-16th or 15th/16th century (17 contexts combined). Smaller numbers of contexts were dated to the 16th-18th century (5 contexts) and the 18th/19th century (5 contexts) and yet smaller numbers to compounds or slight variations of these dates. In some cases the pottery spot-dates suggest an earlier, usually 13th/14th-century, date for contexts dated by tile to the 15th/16th century suggesting that some of the tile may be earlier in date than it appears. This discrepancy could be examined in more detail at a later stage.

Roman Tile

One fairly definite, though smallish, piece from the flange of Roman roofing tile (*tegula*) in a red fabric was noted in context 6022. This must be residual as it was associated with medieval pottery. A second possible *tegula* scrap was noted in 6706, again residual. A scrap of possible curved roofing tile (*imbrex*) in a cream fabric was noted in context 6103.

Medieval and Post-Medieval Roofing Tile

These constitute the overwhelming bulk of the assemblage. The vast majority of roof tiles are in red-firing sandy fabrics typical of the post-medieval period. In some of the later (18th/19th century) contexts a few tile widths could be measured (usually around 170 mm) and some nearly complete tiles might possibly be reconstructable. Only circular nail holes were noted on the sampled tiles. Most of the tiles assumed to be of medieval date also have a red sandy fabric though these are generally coarser in texture and sometimes thicker and cruder than the

post-medieval tiles. In some cases the coarser tiles bore patches of clear lead glaze - a characteristic generally associated with medieval tiles (13th-16th century).

A smaller number of fairly distinctive medieval tile fabrics were noted and these were, in several cases, associated only with medieval pottery (13th-15th century) thus confirming their medieval date. These include the following tile fabrics - although the list is not exhaustive:

1. A relatively soft pale brown or fawn sandy fabric, sometimes glazed, with abundant small rounded calcareous inclusions which in some cases appear to be limestone (possibly oolitic), and in others possibly chalk (or decomposed limestone?). These calcareous inclusions are often better preserved on the rougher underside of the tile. In general the fabric is more like a pottery fabric. This fabric has also been noted from sites in Oxford. The tiles are relatively thin.

2. A coarse sandy or gritty red-firing fabric with coarse rounded quartz and flint gritting on the underside. Sometimes glazed. Tiles generally quite thick. Also noted from other Abingdon sites.

3. A fine sandy cream or orange-buff fabric with either a clear (orange-yellow) or a green copper-stained lead glaze. This is also quite like a pottery fabric. Buffer examples resemble medieval Brill/Boarstall ware (Bucks.) and could, potentially, come from this and perhaps other sources. Also noted from sites in Oxford.

4. A pinkish or reddish fabric sometimes with a fairly low sand content but with very coarse sub-rounded inclusions or pellets of white or cream 'marl' (clay) and reddish-brown clay - both of which can occur as long streaks indicating a poorly-mixed clay. Several over-fired wasters of this were noted in the assemblage indicating fairly local production. Some indication that this may be a late medieval fabric with continued production into the post-medieval period. Also noted from other Abingdon sites.

These tiles would be worth examining in more detail at the analysis stage and samples could be extracted to form the basis of a tile reference collection for the area.

Ridge Tiles

A few fragments noted, mostly edge fragments although one fragment came from a tile which might originally have had an applied ridge or crests (now detached). These are often glazed (clear or green) and occur in fabrics similar to the glazed medieval tiles described above.

Medieval Floor Tiles

Several small pieces or scraps of decorated medieval floor tile were recorded, all very worn (indicating long use) and apparently residual (in one case associated with 16th/17th century pottery, context 6223). These are in a red sandy fabric with designs inlaid in white slip under a clear lead glaze. On one or two pieces traces of geometric or floral decoration can be distinguished. On two pieces vestiges of stabbed keying can be seen on the underside. Measurable thicknesses included 20-22 mm. They probably date within the period 13th-15th century. Tiles such as these are normally associated with ecclesiastical buildings or buildings of some status. One or two scraps of plain glazed floor tiles were also noted.

Brick

A fairly small number of brick fragments were noted. These were generally small and scrappy with few

measurable dimensions. One or two pieces appear to be of 'Tudor' date. Most are of 16th/17th-century date. One 19th-century frogged example was noted.

Stone Building Materials

The stone building materials mainly comprise a small number of fragments from crude roofing tiles or shingles in shelly limestone with, in some cases, a single piercing for suspension. None is well preserved. They are probably of medieval and early post-medieval date. Other stone roofing materials include a few scraps of 18th/19th-century blue-grey roofing slate. A small fragment from a slab of fine-grained sandstone may be from a roof tile or a thin flagstone (context 6297). The most unusual stone item noted (context 6660) was a fairly small piece or slab of dark grey marble or possibly carboniferous limestone. This has been cut into a rectangular shape and has a polished face and saw-marked edges. It could be a piece of architectural inlay. Although it was initially thought to be possibly post-medieval in date, its association with several sherds of 12th-14th-century pottery suggests it must be medieval or possibly earlier. Superficially, it resembles Tournai marble from Flanders which was used for inlays and other architectural elements in a number of 12th-13th-century cathedrals and churches in southern England. It might possibly have originated from the medieval chapel or vicarage that stood near this site. This identification, however, can only be tentative at this stage.

Plaster

A single lump of white plaster, or just possibly mortar, with lath impressions on one side, came from context 5038. It was not associated with any other material.

Fired Daub or Burnt Brick?

Two joining pieces from the same smallish lump of this was noted in context 6057. It had very coarse flint pebble inclusions and may have come from an oven-lining etc. Not associated with other finds.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Two or three small fragments of Roman roofing tiles are present on the site, but residual. These are unremarkable and require minimal further attention. The rest of the building materials, mainly ceramic roofing tiles, date from the 13th to the 19th century, with a strong emphasis on the early post-medieval period, particularly the 16th/17th century, although the medieval period (13th-16th century) is also well represented. The fragmentary nature of the assemblage makes it unlikely that further detailed analysis of the assemblage will yield meaningful results. It is recommended however that the remaining 17 boxes of building materials should be spot-dated and scanned, as the existing sample has been, to determine if anything significant has been missed and to complete this basic level of recording for the entire assemblage.

It is recommended, furthermore, that the range of tile fabrics should be described in more detail and that a selection of medieval tile fabrics be extracted to form the basis of a medieval roof tile reference collection for the area, or for Oxfordshire generally. The fragments of decorated medieval floor tile and the possible medieval marble inlay noted above may have originated from the medieval chapel or vicarage that stood near the site. The identification and context of the inlay should be researched further. Other categories of building materials could be dealt with in a summary report. A small number of pieces (perhaps three or four) may require illustration at the reporting stage.

Recommendations for further work

Illustration

It is recommended that approx. 4 items should be selected for illustration (possibly including photographs).

Selection of items for illustration and preparation of drawing briefs:

Preparation & Analysis

Familiarisation with site data/liasing with project manager:

Background research: including possible visit to CBM reference collections:

Spot-dating of remaining 17 boxes of building materials, including data entry:

Statistical analysis of data:

Selection of roof tile samples for reference collection, description of fabrics, research into relevant contexts where necessary:

Report writing

Report including catalogue of illustrated items:

Sundry tasks

To include checking text, illustrations, correspondence, finds administration etc.

APPENDIX 4

Clay tobacco pipe

by Dr D A Higgins

This assessment considers the clay tobacco pipes recovered by Oxford Archaeology from excavations in the centre of Abingdon, Oxfordshire, which were carried out during 2002-2003 (Site Code ABCIN 02).

In their *Research Priorities for Post-Medieval Archaeology* the *Society for Post-Medieval Archaeology* have identified the systematic collection of pipes as an area of particular importance where more work is needed (Anon 1988, 6).

The on-line bibliography compiled by the *Medieval Pottery Research Group* lists 13 publications for Oxfordshire that include clay tobacco pipes, most of which are likely to be brief notes within larger excavation reports. The majority of these references relate to Oxford itself.

The *Bibliography of Clay Pipe Studies* lists ten published articles for the county (Atkin 1989), almost all of which relate Oxford.

In his list of Oxfordshire pipemakers, Oswald lists two who are known to have worked in Abingdon; G. H. Bryant, recorded from 1843-64, and John Thorneton, who died in 1684 (Oswald 1984, 261)

Although there are a number of publications relating to pipes from Oxfordshire, it is clear these are strongly biased towards reports on pipes from Oxford itself. There has been no systematic survey of the pipes from the county as a whole and there does not appear to have been any previous work on material from Abingdon. Given that Abingdon is a known pipe production centre, this assemblage offers an important opportunity to redress this balance.

Description of the Finds

The pipes from this site were rapidly assessed in February 2005. Each group has been tipped out and briefly examined to assess its overall date range as well as the latest date of the pipe fragments represented. A note was also made of any obvious marked or decorated pieces, although detailed examination may reveal one or two more. The fragment count is based on that given on each finds bag and so may be subject to slight revision when the pieces are individually examined and catalogued in detail. Notes on each group were made and a context assessment containing all this information prepared (Appendix 1).

The excavations produced a total of 2,205 fragments of clay tobacco pipe from 51 different contexts. About a half of these (21 contexts) were small groups that produced less than 10 fragments. There were 11 contexts that produced between 10 and 20 fragments and 14 larger groups with between 21 and 100 fragments. Finally, there were five very substantial groups with more than 100 fragments, the largest of which (Context 7602) produced 474 pieces. Contexts with 10 or more pieces should provide a reliable indication of date with the larger groups providing increasingly more potential for the detailed analysis and interpretation of the material. This assemblage offers good potential for study with 30 of the excavated groups containing 10 or more fragments of pipe.

Most of the context groups appear to contain good proportions of bowl, stem and mouthpiece fragments, suggesting that there has not been any significant collecting bias in the majority of cases. In some of the larger groups, however, there appears to be a bias towards bowl fragments. While the bowls are more diagnostic in terms of dating, any shortfall in the stem

fragments recovered can limit the range of analysis and interpretation that can be applied to these groups.

The overwhelming majority of the pipes recovered date from the late seventeenth century through to the very start of the eighteenth century. Some of the context groups contain odd pieces of earlier seventeenth century material but most of the pipes from each context appear to represent coherent groups that must have been deposited over a relatively short period of time. These groups will provide a reliable dating structure for the pipe bearing deposits with the end date for the pipes probably providing a good indication of the deposition date for each particular deposit.

Many of the fragments are milled or burnished, which will allow a good assessment of local manufacturing and finishing techniques to be made. Burnishing also increased the value of the pipe and so it will be possible to assess the quality and social status of the various groups.

There are at least nine different pipes with stamped marks and one with moulded marks amongst this material (Appendix 1). Several of these marks appear to be previously unrecorded, including a pipe with an elaborately decorated stem incorporating two large ovals depicting a ship in full sail from Context 7521.

Several of the contexts have produced pipe fragments that are discoloured and with patches of fired clay adhering to their outer surfaces (Contexts 7006, 7032, 7521, 7582, 7624, 7658 and 7600). These pieces seem to date to around 1660-90 and are almost certainly fragments from a muffle kiln, used in the production of pipes. Context 7582 in particular may be a dump of purely kiln waste. There is also a fired clay rod from Context 5057 that may well be a fragment of kiln furniture from within the muffle. This material suggests that clay pipes were being manufactured either on or near the site itself, perhaps by John Thorneton, who is recorded working in the town prior to his death in 1684.

One of the large and well-dated groups containing possible kiln waste is a layer of demolition rubble (Context 7658). This deposit dates from around 1690 and may represent a significant event of the sites history, perhaps marking the end of pipemaking activity in the area or a remodelling of the coaching inn at this date.

The two largest groups, Contexts 7601 and 7602, containing 700 fragments, are both likely to have been deposited right at the start of the eighteenth century. They contain large numbers of pipe bowls including an interesting range of transitional styles, some of which are West Country forms. These deposits may well have derived from the coaching inn and represent both local wares being sold there as well as 'imported' pieces brought there by travellers. As such, they will provide an interesting group for study.

Assessment of the Pipes

The excavated sites include significant elements dating from the Post-Medieval period. Pipe fragments offer one of the most accurate and reliable classes of artefact for dating deposits of this period. The pipes from this site will make a valuable contribution to the phasing, dating and interpretation of these contexts, particularly since the initial site phasing clearly allocates many pipe bearing deposits to the wrong period.

The majority of the excavated pipes come from consistent looking deposits dating from between 1660 and 1710, several of which also contain evidence of production waste. These groups not only offer the potential to define the bowl forms being used in a previously unstudied part of the county, but also to examine the forms that were actually being produced there.

Pipes also have two other significant attributes; their regional diversity allows them to be used to study trade and marketing contacts while differing qualities allow for an exploration

of social status. The excavated pipes from this site should allow for an examination of the quality of pipes being consumed as well as for an assessment of the catchment area from which services and supplies were being drawn. The preliminary assessment of these marks already shows that products from both local sources, such as Oxford, and from further afield, for example Wiltshire, were reaching the town during the seventeenth century. In particular, the large groups associated with the coaching inn offer the potential for looking at the interaction of travellers, trade and social status from a single large assemblage.

At least ten marked pipes have been recovered from the excavations, several of which are from previously unrecorded dies. These should be drawn and described in detail since they provide a particularly useful contribution from an area where little previous work has been done.

Several of the context groups are not only of a significant size but they also contain large and 'fresh' looking fragments of pipe. Many of the best groups have been recovered from pit deposits and these offer the potential for complete pipes to be reassembled. Complete pipes dating from before about 1800 are very rare nationally and none at all are known from Oxfordshire. The recovery of any complete pipes would be significant at both a regional and national level.

Recommendations for Study

This excavation has produced a large and important assemblage of pipes. Most of the pipes date from the seventeenth century and they have been recovered from large and consistent deposits in a part of the country where no previous work has been done. Imported pipes, previously unrecorded maker's marks and kiln waste are all present. There are also it groups that can probably be related to an important coaching inn on the site and which may contain complete pipes. There is no doubt that this group should be subject to full recording, analysis and reporting.

An archive catalogue of all the fragments should be prepared. This should, so far as is possible, identify and date each piece. It should catalogue the various attributes of each piece (milling, burnishing, rim finish, etc) and present the information in a digital form so that can be sorted in a variety of ways for reference or future research. It is proposed that the catalogue should be prepared on an Excel spreadsheet using a recording system based on the draft guidelines prepared at the University of Liverpool (Higgins & Davey 1994).

A context summary should be prepared. This should identify the number of pieces from each context and assess their overall date range. An assessment of the likely date of deposition should also be given if this is different from the overall date range so as to assist with phasing the excavated deposits from the site.

The bowls and stems in large and apparently tightly dated deposits with large fragments should be examined for joins and, if a number are found, an attempt should be made to reassemble complete pipes from these deposits.

The large pit groups associated with the coaching inn should be studied and described. These should not only reveal the range of local types that were being regularly consumed but also the imported pieces brought in by travellers and reflecting the trading connections of the town. The quality and finish of the pipes should also be assessed to characterise the social status of these groups

Any kiln deposits should be identified and studied in more detail. An attempt should be made to determine the number and range of mould types represented and the full range illustrated. The forms being produced in Abingdon should be described and discussed and compared with other evidence from the region.

Illustrations for publication at 1:1 should be prepared of a representative range of bowl forms from the site. Twice life size details of the previously unrecorded stamp types should also be drawn as a reference source for future researchers.

A publication report should be prepared. This should describe the work carried out and present a synthesis of the pipe evidence from this site. So far as is possible, it should describe the local pipe types represented and discuss the social status and consumption patterns evident from the excavated finds. Any evidence for trading connections with the site's hinterland should be presented and the pipes placed in their local and regional context.

Tasks for Preparing a Specialist Report

The works required to prepare a site archive and specialist report for publication are as follows:-

- detailed examination of each pipe fragment and compilation of a digital archive catalogue
- preparation of a context summary synthesising the pipe evidence for each context
- detailed study and analysis of the pipe groups
- selection and illustration of type series, marked and decorated fragments, etc, together with descriptive catalogue for publication
- production of a publication text describing the work carried out and a description and discussion of the pipes in relation to the site as well as in their local and national context

References

Anon, 1988, *Research Priorities for Post-Medieval Archaeology*, Society for Post-Medieval Archaeology, 9pp.

Atkin S, 1989, *Bibliography of Clay Pipe Studies*, Society for Clay Pipe Research, 63pp.

Higgins D A and Davey P J, 1994, *Draft guidelines for using the clay tobacco pipe record sheets*, unpublished draft prepared at the Department of Archaeology, University of Liverpool.

Oswald A, 1984, 'Clay Pipes' in T G Halsell, C E Halpin & M Mellor, 'Excavations in St Ebbes, Oxford, 1967-76', *Oxoniensia*, XLIX, 251-262 (153-266).

Table A4.1 Rapid Context Assessment

This table contains a rapid assessment of the pipes recovered from each context. The context number is given followed by the number of pipe fragments recovered; their overall date range; the latest obvious date of any of the fragments (the likely deposition date); a summary of any marks or decoration present and, finally, any comments on the group as a whole.

Cxt	Frags	Range	Latest	Marks	Dec	Comments
5035	6	C17-C19	c1850	IP	Dots	Includes later C18 moulded IP mark and a C19 seam decorated with dots.
5036	46	C17-C19	c1850	ED / BEA... / T...		Mainly C17th material but with a few later pieces present. Includes an Edward Beaston stem stamp of c1700 from Wiltshire.
5042	4	C17-C18	C18			
5048	18	C17-C19	c1850			Mainly C17 and C18.
5051	1	C17				
5057	48	C17-C18	early C18			Rather fragmented but majority of pieces suggest early C18 for final deposition. Group includes a fired clay rod, possibly kiln waste.
5062	2	C17	c1640			Includes an early bowl of c1620-40.
6572	1	C18	C18			
7001	17	C17-C18	C18			Two late C17 bowls – deposition could be around 1700 or early C18
7003	3	C17-C18	C18			
7006	22	C17-C18	C18			Could well end early C18. One stem possibly from a muffle (i.e., kiln debris)
7031	4	C17-C18	C18			
7032	30	C17-C18	C18			Could well end early C18. One late C17 spur possibly from a muffle (i.e., kiln debris)
7033	37	C17-C18	early C18			
7079	2	C17-C18	C18			
7108	1	1640-1660	1640-1660			
7521	94	C17-C18	c1700	ship ovals	dec stem	Large group of bowls all ranging from c1660-1700 in date, including a fine example of a local spur form with decorated stem. This has two ship ovals and a roll-stamped and milled stem. There are also 2 bowls and 2 stems of c1670-90 that look like kiln waste. Latest pieces probably no later than 1700.
7529	10	C17	late C17			
7536	16	C17-C19	c1850			
7554	1	C19	C19			
7577	29	C17	c1700	Rob Gadney	dec stem	Good group of 1660-1700 bowls associated with a Rob Gadney decorated stem.
7579	52	C17	c1700		Milled stem	All bowls range c1660-1700 with the latest form being a West Country spur type with milled stem. One or two pieces could possibly represent kiln debris.
7581	17	C17	c1700			All bowls c1660-1700.
7582	302	C17	c1690			Large and consistent group with all bowls looking like c1660-90 forms. Group is mainly spur types and includes a number of pieces that appear to be wasters, suggesting that this may be a kiln dump.
7583	3	1660-1700	1700			
7589	2	1700-1770	1770			
7590	44	late C17	c1700			
7596	14	C17	c1690			
7599	40	C17	c1700	SH		Latest bowls appear to date from around 1700. Group includes a thick stem with a large, crude SH stamp across it.
7600	156	1660-1700	c1700	wheel stamp	Milled stem	Large group, all dating from the late C17th. Group came in 5 bags that all looked very similar apart from one, that has three transitional bowl forms in it. May

Cxt	Frags	Range	Latest	Marks	Dec	Comments
						have come from a discreet and slightly later tip within this context group, but still likely to have been deposited around 1700. One wheel stamped stem and a milled repair. Group includes one or two possible kiln waste pieces. Large fragments present suggesting fresh deposit and offering potential to reassemble complete pipes.
7601	226	1680-1720	c1720	THO / MAS / HVNT		Large and very consistent looking group with a wide range of transitional bowl forms present, including a West Country heel bowl stamped with the mark of Thomas Hunt. Many large and fresh looking fragments present, offering the potential to reassemble complete pipes.
7602	474	1680-1710	1700			Large and very consistent looking group with a wide range of transitional bowl forms present, including West Country forms and a cracked and squatted bowl that is either a second or a waster. There is one RB stem stamp and at least two milled stems amongst the group, which has only been quickly sorted. Many large and fresh looking fragments present, offering the potential to reassemble complete pipes, but all the fragments are rather mottled and iron stained and would benefit from further cleaning before this is done. The large number of bowls suggests that stems have been under collected. All the forms appear to date from c1680-1710 but the absence of any purely C18th forms suggests deposition during the 1690s. This appears to be an excellent and tightly dated group.
7603	15	C17	c1690			
7608	11	1660-1690	c1690			
7610	3	1680-1700	c1700			
7613	22	1660-1700	c1690			
7616	1	1670-1690	1690			
7623	11	1660-1690	1690			
7624	67	1670-1700	1700			Consistent group; includes kiln wasters.
7626	10	1660-1700	1700			
7658	218	1660-1700	c1690		3 milled stems	Demolition layer containing a large and very consistent looking group with all of the bowls ranging from c1660-1700 and with the most likely date of deposition being c1690. The group includes a number of probable kiln wasters. There are at least 3 milled stems present in this group.
7659	9	1670-1700	1700			
7667	2	C17-C18	c1770			
7675	4	C17	c1690			
7696	2	C17-C18	C18			
7735	8	C17	c1700			
7751	11	C17	c1690			
7761	2	C17	C17			
7792	44	1660-1700	c1700	TB		Rather scrappy group but including an unusual heart-shaped bowl stamp of c1700.
7833	39	1680-1720	c1720	SH, IW		Consistent group with an interesting range of transitional bowl forms. The group includes a West Country heel form and an early C18 bowl with a heart-shaped IW stamp on the stem. There is also a stem with a large SH mark on it.
8032	4	C17	late C17			
Total	2205					

APPENDIX 5

Glass

by Dr Hugh Willmott

A large assemblage of glass, consisting over three hundred fragments and representing a minimum number of two hundred and sixty vessels and windows, was recovered from the excavations at Abingdon Cinema, west central area (summarised by context at the end of this assessment). Most is relatively stable and requires no further specialist treatment. The vast majority of the glass is post-medieval in date, although there are several fragments of Roman material.

The Assemblage

The earliest glass comes from several Roman vessels of the 1st to mid 2nd centuries AD. These include a pillar moulded bowl from [6157], prismatic bottles from [6171] and [6282] and a possible cup from [6411]. It is also possible that a tiny bead from [6412] is also Roman in date.

Interestingly there are no medieval vessels present in the assemblage, although there are two fragments of medieval window glass from [6218] and [6236]. However, there are a number of earlier post-medieval vessels. These include three mid-16th-century ribbed flasks from [6359] and [6411], and late 17th-century jars from [7033] and [7600]. Also in the assemblage are early 17th-century beakers from [7555] and [7792], and a flask from [7735]. There is a single 18th-century wine glass from [7553]. The remainder of the glass mainly consists of 18th- and early 19th-century phials, wine bottles and window glass.

Recommendations for Further Work

The assemblage is a relatively large an informative one. Furthermore very little of the material is modern in date. The presence of Roman material, albeit in small quantities, is interesting. The fact that there are quite a number of 17th- and early 18th-century tablewares is also significant, and the sequence of wine bottles and other containers is relatively comprehensive.

Given this, and the potential that the glass has in providing valuable information concerning the activities that took place on site, the following recommendations are made. First, that all the vessel glass (with the exception of the bottles) be fully catalogued and discussed. Second, that the bottles and the window glass be quantified (and this data presented in tabular format) and discussed. Finally an integrated contextual report on the material should be produced to full publication standards.

Requirements

The full cataloguing and reporting of the material will be required.

Table A5.1 Summary of the Glass

Context	Description	Other
5035	Modern window	18th Century
5035	Wine bottle body	18th Century
5035	Bottle	20th Century
5036	Wine bottle base and body	18th - 19th Century
5036	Window	19th - 20th Century
5036	Bottle	20th Century
5036	Wine bottle base, body and neck	Late 18th -19th Century
5036	Window	Late 18th -19th Century
5042	Window, wine bottle,	18th - 19th Century
5042	Bottle	Uncertain
5042	Window	17th - 18th Century
5042	Phial	18th - 19th Century
5044	Wine bottle	Late 18th-early 19th
5048	Wine bottle base, body and neck, window	18th Century
5057	Numerous wine bottle fragments	Early 18th Century
5067	Window	17th-18th Century
6157	Pillar moulded bowl	Late 1st Century AD
6171	Square bottle, blue/green	Late 1st-mid 2nd C AD
6204	Bottle, brown	19th-20th Century
6218	Window, with grozed edges	Medieval
6236	Window	Medieval
6282	Prismatic bottle	Late 1st-mid 2nd C AD
6323	Window	18th Century
6359	Small ribbed oval flask, shoulder and neck	Mid 16th Century
6411	Small bottle neck	Mid 16th Century
6411	Ribbed bottle neck	Mid 16th Century
6411	Possible cup	Late 1st-early 2nd C AD
6412	Glass bead	Uncertain
6412	Window	17th-18th Century
6475	Window	19th-20th Century
6617	Large square bottle	Modern
7001	Wine bottle	Early 17th Century
7003	Wine bottle neck	18th Century
7006	Wine bottle base, body and neck	18th-19th Century
7006	Window	18th-19th Century
7032	Wine bottle base, bottle and neck	19th Century
7032	Window	19th Century
7033	Jar rim	17th Century
7079	Wine bottle	18th-19th Century
7105	Window	18th century
7105	Window	16th-17th Century
7124	Beaker with white decoration	Modern
7251	Window, wine bottle neck and rim	
7251	Wine bottle	Mid 17th Century
7251	Wine bottle base, body and neck	18th-19th Century
7251	Blue bottle base	19th Century
7251	Wine bottle neck	Early 18th Century
7552	Wine bottle neck, rim and body	18th Century
7552	Cylinder window glass	19th century
7552	Clear bottle	19th century
7553	Wine bottle base	18th Century
7553	Wine glass stem and base	18th Century
7554	Wine bottle base, neck and rim x 2	18th Century

Context	Description	Other
7555	Wine bottle neck and rim	18th Century
7555	Bottle shoulder	18th Century
7555	Ribbed beaker	17th Century
7581	Bottle	18th Century?
7582	Squat wine bottle body	Late 17th-early 18th C
7589	Window	18th-19th Century
7590	Phial rim and shoulder	18th / Early 19th C
7590	Bottle	18th Century
7599	Wine bottle	18th Century
7599	Bottle	19th-20th Century
7599	Window	17th-18th Century
7599	Wine bottle base	Early 18th Century
7600	Wine bottle neck, base and body	17th Century
7600	Jar rims & shoulder	17th -early 18th C
7600	Wine bottle neck and bases	Early 18th Century
7600	Phial base	Early 18th Century
7600	Window	Early 18th Century
7601	Phial	Early 18th Century
7601	Wine bottle base, body, neck and rim	Early 18th Century
7601	Window glass	Early 18th Century
7602	Wine bottle base, body, neck and rim	Late 17th Century
7602	Phial	Late 17th Century
7608	Bottle	17th-18th Century
7616	Bottle base, very large wine bottle base	Early 18th Century
7626	Wine bottle neck, window	Early 18th Century
7658	Wine bottle	Late 17th-early 18th C
7658	Window, wine bottle, bottle x 3	18th Century
7735	Pouring flask	17th Century
7751	Wine bottle	17th-18th Century
7792	Beaker	17th Century?
7792	Small blue phial	Early 18th Century
7792	Wine bottle	Early 18th Century
7792	Window	Early 18th Century
7833	Wine bottle necks	Late 17th-early 18th C

APPENDIX 6

Metalwork

by Leigh Allen (Roman coin identified by Paul Booth)

Introduction

A total of 341 objects were recovered from the excavations at the Abingdon Cinema Site. The assemblage comprises 49 copper alloy objects, 291 iron objects and 1 lead object. The metalwork is in poor condition; the copper alloy objects are corroded and a few items are unstable; the ironwork is unstable and cracking (see conservation report below). The majority of the assemblage has been x-rayed with the exception of 7 bags of nails and the lead objects. With the exception of a single Roman coin the material is Late Medieval/ Post Medieval in date.

Methodology

The objects have been visually examined and have been categorised using a range of standard reference reports. Preliminary identifications and basic contextual information is recorded below by material type and function.

Copper alloy objects

The 49 copper alloy objects include personal items (28), household objects (4), coins/ tokens (3) and miscellaneous unidentified fragments (14). The majority of the personal items are fine wire pins a common find in Late Medieval/Post Medieval contexts and often found in association with lace tags and fasteners. The 5 hook and eye fasteners and one of the pins were recovered from skeleton 3024. The only other personal items are a buckle frame identical to an example recovered from Norfolk from a 17th century context (Margeson 1993, 28, Fig 17, No.174), and a small circular mount decorated with ring and dot design.

The domestic items comprise two thimbles; one conical with uneven hand applied indentations; and the other straight sided with machine applied indentations. There is also a foot from a cast metal vessel and a fragment from a sieve or strainer.

The coins/tokens are modern except for a Roman coin dating to 364-378 recovered from context 6317.

Buckles and mounts (2)

Object	*SF No.*	*Ctx No.*	*Phase*	*Length (mm)*	*Condition*	*Description*
Buckle frame	84	6359	3	43	Complete	Double oval buckle frame with ornate expanded pin rests in the form of rosettes and lobes at the junction of the frame and bar. Iron corrosion around the central bar is all that remains of the pin
Mount	-	6486	3	18	Incomplete	A circular mount with 2 possibly 3 small perforations through it one of which has the remains of a rivet still insitu. Around the outside edge there is a row of ring and dot designs.

Pins (20)

Object	*SF No.*	*Ctx.No*	*Phase*	*Length (mm)*	*Condition*	*Description*
Pin	25	829	4	21	Incomplete	Pin with a wire wound head tip missing (associated with skeleton 3029).
Pin	-	5042	5	24	Complete	Pin with a wire wound head
Pin?	36	6074	3	21	Incomplete	Possible fragment from a pin shank
Pin	39	6074	3	29	Complete	Pin with a wire wound head
Pin?	97	6393	3	69	Incomplete	Long tapering shank from a pin, head missing
Pin	34	3030	4	23	Complete	Pin with a wire wound head (white metal plating on the shank) associated with skeleton 3024
Pin	-	5057	5	29	Complete	Pin with a wire wound head (white metal coating on the shank)
Pin	-	5057	5	126	Incomplete	Pin with a wire wound head, tip missing
Pin	-	5057	5	19	Incomplete	Fragment from a pin shank, with white metal coating (probably tin)
Pin	55	6159	5	42	Complete	Pin with a wire wound head
Pin	57	6159	5	26	Complete	Pin with a wire wound head
Pin	54	6159	5	20	Incomplete	Pin with a wire wound head, tip missing
Pin	49	6159	5	29	Incomplete	Pin with a wire wound head, tip missing
Pin	72	6309	5	46	Complete	Pin with spherical wire wound head
Pin	71	6309	5	15	Incomplete	Pin with a wire wound head, tip missing
Pin	60	6309	5	25	Complete	Pin with a wire wound head
Pin	66	6309	5	24	Incomplete	Pin with a wire wound head, tip missing
Pin	64	6309	5	27	Incomplete	Tapering shank from a pin, tip missing
Pin	59	6309	5	28	Incomplete	Pin with a wire wound head
Pin	137	6597	5	30	Incomplete	Tapering shank from a pin, head missing

Lace tags (1)

Object	*SF No.*	*Ctx No.*	*Phase*	*Length (mm)*	*Condition*	*Description*
Lace tag	65	6309	5	21	Incomplete	Edges meet and then turn in on themselves

Hook and eye fasteners (5)

Object	*SF No.*	*Ctx No.*	*Phase*	*Length (mm)*	*Condition*	*Description*
Hooks	22	988	4	11	Complete	Two hooks from hook and eye fasteners (associated with skeleton 3024).
Hook	17	988	4	12	Complete	Hook from a hook and eye fastener
Eye	18	988	4	10	Complete	Eye from a hook and eye fastener (associated with skeleton 3024).
Hook and eye fastener	21	988	4	6	Incomplete	Fragment from a hook or eye fastener (associated with skeleton 3024)
Hook and eye fastener	20	988	4	7	Incomplete	Fragment from a hook or eye fastener (associated with skeleton 3024)

Domestic items (4)

Object	*SF No.*	*Ctx No.*	*Phase*	*Length (mm)*	*Condition*	*Description*
Thimble	38	6074	3	20	Complete	Straight sided thimble with machine applied indentations
Handle	102	6402	3	40	Incomplete	Circular section solid curving rod possibly a handle from a vessel
Vessel foot	134	6589	3	40	Incomplete	A solid trapezoidal object possibly the cast foot from a metal vessel
Thimble	140	6616	4	21	Complete	Conical thimble with hand applied indentations

Coins, jettons and tokens (3)

Object	*SF No.*	*Ctx No*	*Phase*	*Length (mm)*	*Condition*	*Description*
Modern Coin	149	7125	4	24	Complete	Modern Penny
Roman Coin	77	6317	3	18	Complete	GLORIA ROMANORUM Emperor and captive 364-378
Token	126	5061	5	19	Complete	Modern token with 'L&A' across each face

Miscellaneous fragments (12)

Object	*SF No.*	*Ctx No.*	*Phase*	*Length (mm)*	*Condition*	*Description*
Rod	142	6649	-	47	Incomplete	Corroded fragment from a rod with a sub rectangular section
Tube	-	7816	1	51	Incomplete	Hollow tube with a fragment of rectangular strip wrapped around one end
Misc	132	5068	3	8	Incomplete	Miscellaneous irregular fragments
Misc	35	6083	3	13	Incomplete	Irregularly shaped miscellaneous fragment
Sheet	52	6300	3	8	Incomplete	Three irregularly shaped fragments of sheet, one has a rivet through it
Sheet	-	6472	4	35	Incomplete	Irregularly shaped fragments of sheet (folded)
Sheet	136	6592	4	12	Incomplete	Corroded fragment of sheet
Misc	-	6157	5	9	Incomplete	Miscellaneous irregularly shaped fragment
Strip	58	6159	5	18	Incomplete	Corroded sub rectangular fragment of strip
Tube	47	6204	5	26	Incomplete	Hollow tube with a collar around one end
Strip	138	6597	5	17	Incomplete	Roughly rectangular strip
Strip	-	7079	5	53	Incomplete	Curved rectangular strip

Unidentified object (2)

Object	*SF No.*	*Ctx No.*	*Phase*	*Length (mm)*	*Condition*	*Description*
Object	80	6319	3	35	Incomplete	Circular section rod tapering very slightly along the length with 3 collars of varying widths at the upper end. Possible pin head or tuning peg or decorated lace tag?
Object	84	6356	3	21	Incomplete	Highly corroded object , not a coin as it appears to have some form of attachment on the back currently obscured by corrosion product (object requires cleaning)

Lead Objects

A single length of window came was recovered from context 7119 (phase 4) it is very twisted and distorted but has an 'H' shaped section (length 64 mm)

Iron objects

The iron assemblage comprises 291 objects, 227 of these are nails (including 98 coffin nails from inhumations) and 37 are miscellaneous fragments of strip or sheet. The remaining 27 identifiable objects include buckle frames, knives, horsegear, lock furniture and structural objects. The majority of the objects are fragmentary and very corroded; there are very few diagnostic objects present in the assemblage.

The buckle frames are of simple circular and 'D'-shape forms and could have been used as dress or harness accessories. The knives and blade fragments are very corroded, there are only two examples that have the tang surviving and in both cases they are whittle tang, the knife from context 4037 has an 'S'-shaped cutlers mark on it. There are 2 types of horseshoe represented; the first has a slightly wavy outline and rectangular nail holes, there is a nail still in situ which has a tapering shank and a rectangular head this type of shoe dates to the late

Medieval period. The second type has a plain outline and rectangular nail holes and was introduced in the 14th century but continued in use until the present day (Margeson 1993, 225). The lock furniture includes a rectangular lock plate casing and a very damaged and corroded shank from a key. The structural items include a hinge pivot, a hasp, a drop handle and a length of chain.

Object	*SF. No.*	*Ctx No.*	*Phase*	*Length (mm)*	*Condition*	*Description*
Blade	105	6412	5	105	Incomplete	Very corroded fragment from a knife blade with a slender triangular section
Blade	128	6426	3	128	Incomplete	A long slender strip with a triangular section, possibly from a blade
Blade fragment?	-	7577	5	56	Incomplete	Possibly a very corroded fragment from a knife
Blade fragment?	48	6258	3	48	Incomplete	A very corroded strip with a triangular section possibly a fragment from a blade
Buckle frame	-	6567	5	36	Incomplete	A very corroded fragment from a circular buckle frame a very short length of the central bar survives
Buckle frame	91	6330	5	37	Incomplete	A D-shaped buckle frame with the end of the pin wrapped around the bar
Chain	157	7660	3	660	Incomplete	A length of chain made up of 12 slender 'S'-shaped links measuring 55mm each
Handle	118	6519	5	92	Incomplete	A curved drop handle looped at the end, the other end is missing.
Handle	150	7125	4	74	Complete	An iron shank with a copper alloy moulded head with a domed top
Hasp	51	6303	3	164	Incomplete	A figure of eight shaped hasp
Hinge pivot	-	7596	3	45	Incomplete	A small hinge pivot with a rectangular section tang and a circular section pintel
Hooked plate	109	6412	5	58	Incomplete	A rectangular strip of iron with a loop/hook at one end
Horseshoe	-	6546	4	110	Incomplete	A very corroded fragment from the arm of a horseshoe. Plain outline and 3 rectangular nail holes
Horseshoe	110	6412	5	92	Incomplete	Fragment from the arm of a horseshoe with a pain outline and a single rectangular nail hole surviving
Horseshoe	100	6364	5	66	Incomplete	A fragment from the arm of a horseshoe with a very slightly wavy outline and 3 rectangular nail holes (one nail is still in situ.
Horseshoe nail	-	6540	3	33	Complete	A fiddle key nail from a horseshoe
Horseshoe nail	74	6317	3	17	Complete	A fiddle key nail from a horseshoe
Horseshoe nail	38	6182	3	38	Complete	A fiddle key nail from a horseshoe
Key?	53	6159	5	84	Incomplete	Shank with a circular section and the possible remains of a bit at the end
Knife	-	4036	4	87	Incomplete	A very damaged whittle tang knife, the tang and the blade are both incomplete. There is an 'S'-shaped cutlers mark on the blade
Knife	-	7600	5	17	Incomplete	A very corroded whittle tang knife
Lock plate casing	104	6412	5	90	Complete	Rectangular lock plate casing with circular perforations at the corner for attachment and a keyhole shaped aperture at the centre
Mount?	-	6586	3	47	Incomplete	Fragment of sheet with a curved edge (possibly originally from a circular object) a row of tiny copper alloy rivets run along the edge and at the centre there are 2 possibly 3 square headed rivets.
Object	62	6309	5	55	Incomplete	A rectangular shaft with a loop at the upper end
Object	-	7536	5	102	Incomplete	A 'Y'-shaped object with a long shank
Ring	129	5057	5	33	Complete	Plain iron ring
Sieve	127	5057	5	70	Incomplete	Irregularly shaped fragment of sheet with

						rows of small circular perforations through it.

Nails and miscellaneous fragments

The 98 nails from contexts 817-835 are coffin nails from inhumations

Context No.	*Phase*	*Object*	*No. of objects*
5057	5	misc	1
6074	3	misc	10
6426	3	misc	1
6534	5	misc	2
6567	5	misc	3
7602	2	misc	1
7792	5	misc	2
817		nail	17
822		nail	19
826		nail	4
829		nail	31
832		nail	24
835		nail	3
3017	4	nail	11
3018	4	nail	15
5042	5	nail	6
5057	5	nail	2
6074	3	nail	4
6074	3	nail	3
6137	3	nail	2
6144	3	nail	1
6148	5	nail	1
6152	3	nail	1
6165	3	nail	1
6184	3	nail	1
6204	5	nail	2
6221	3	nail	1
6278	3	nail	1
6296	5	nail	1
6309	5	nail	2
6317	3	nail	2
6318	3	nail	1
6319	3	nail	1
6327	3	nail	1
6330	5	nail	2
6336	3	nail	1
6359	3	nail	3
6364	5	nail	4
6409	3	nail	1
6412	5	nail	4
6418	3	nail	1
6419	3	nail	1
6444	3	nail	1
6458	3	nail	1
6471	4	nail	1
6472	4	nail	2
6474	4	nail	1
6484	3	nail	1
6488	3	nail	1
6495	3	nail	2
6540	3	nail	1
6567	5	nail	1
6617	4	nail	3
6639	3	nail	1
6645	3	nail	1
7006	5	nail	2
7079	5	nail	1
7105	5	nail	2
7108	5	nail	1
7115	5	nail	1
7551	3	nail	1

7577	5	nail	1
7579	5	nail	2
7582	5	nail	2
7589	5	nail	1
7599	4	nail	7
7600	5	nail	3
7602	2	nail	2
7658	5	nail	1
7659	4	nail	1
7664	5	nail	1
7751	5	nail	1
7792	5	nail	1
8009	3	nail	2
8019	3	nail	1
8060	-	nail	1
6074	3	rod	1
6309	5	rod	1
6412	5	rod	1
7006	5	rod	1
6364	5	sheet	1
6364	5	sheet	1
7033	5	sheet	2
7658	5	sheet	1
7658	5	sheet	1
6074	3	strip	1
6153	3	strip	1
6330	5	strip	1
6359	3	strip	1
7079	5	strip	1
8009	3	strip	1
7600	5	wire	1

Statement of Potential

The metalwork assemblage recovered from the Abingdon Cinema site has limited potential. The objects are in very poor condition, a large proportion of the assemblage comprises nails, pins or miscellaneous fragments and objects that are identifiable are not diagnostic. There are no tools or objects from phase 3 that could be associated with leather working nor are there any objects that could be associated with the use of the site as an inn in phases 4 and 5. The assemblage is small and domestic in nature comprising a limited number of personal items, household objects, horsegear and structural objects commonly found on Late Medieval/Post Medieval urban sites.

Recommendations for further work

It is recommended that a brief paragraph on the metalwork assemblage should be prepared for the publication report. No objects require illustration.

Bibliography

Margeson, S 1993, Norwich Households: The Medieval and Post-Medieval Finds from Norwich Survey Excavations 1971-1978. East Anglian Archaeology Report No. 58

Assessment of conservation requirements for archaeological metalwork from Abingdon Cinema (ABCIN 02)
by Esther Cameron

Quantities
There are 189 numbered bags, some containing groups of objects, of which two are of lead, 46 of copper alloy and 141 of iron. The ironwork includes nails, horseshoes, knife-blades, strips, door and other fittings, chain-links and slag. The copper alloy includes coins, buckles, thimbles, pins, dress-fittings and a needle.

Method of assessment
The objects were examined in the conservation laboratory and 180 were x-rayed (x-rays 1370–80). Seven bags of iron nails and two lead objects were not x-rayed.

Condition
The copper alloy is corroded, a few items are unstable, for example sf.94 which has bronze disease. The iron is unstable and most of it is cracking and falling apart.
The objects have not been cleaned.

Storage requirements
Packaging meets requirements for archival storage. Recommended levels of relative humidity for iron is less than 20%, for copper alloy and lead less than 35% (see Museums and Galleries Commission (1992) *Standards in the Museum Care of Archaeological Collections).*

Conservation requirements
Maintain present standard of packaging, including low RH.

Comments on technology
The iron lock-plate (sf.104) has traces of tinning.
The curved line of rivets on the iron sheet (context 6486) is probably of copper alloy or tin/lead alloy.
The iron knife (context 4036) has an 'S' cutler's mark on the blade.

Potential for further work
- ❖ Further x-raying and selective cleaning where necessary for publication/drawing.

APPENDIX 7

Plaster

by Rose Grant

A total of 12 fragments of plaster were recovered from the site. None of the plaster is painted. No further work needed.

Context No	Fragment Count	Weight (grams)
4049	1	43
6484	8	357
7582	3	128

APPENDIX 8

Leather

by Quita Mould

The following assessment is based on a scan of the material undertaken on 13/06/2005. The information gathered has been correlated with the available contextual information. An assessment (2-8) with timings and costing (9) for the necessary work is provided along with recommendations for conservation (7).

Methodology and condition of material

The leather was wet when examined. It was covered in the wet soil matrix from which it had been lifted and it will be necessary to wash the material before work can proceed. The material is currently packed wet in double, self-sealing polythene bags wrapped in black plastic to exclude light within four air-tight storage boxes.

Quantification, Provenance and Dating

Twenty-four bags of leather were scanned the majority contained several items. No count of the individual pieces of leather was attempted but at least half were seen to contain between 20-70 individual pieces. The types of object recovered are listed below.

Leather was recovered from three pits [7823, 7831, 7744] located at the rear of the properties fronting Ock Street. A large group of leather was recovered from three fills [7822, 7842, and 7839] of pit 7823 and from a single fill [7810] in pit 7744. A small amount came from fill [7829] of pit 7831.

The pit fills containing leather are all attributed to the medieval period (phase 3). Fill 7810 [pit 7744] contained 12th-16th century pottery, fills 7829 [pit 7831], 7822 and 7842 [pit 7823] contained 13th/14thcentury pottery. The leather examined was remarkably consistent, however, and can be seen as a single group of late medieval date, likely to have been deposited in the second half of the 14th century.

Range and variety

The variety of leather items recovered are listed below

- Primary waste
- Shoes
- Strap

Additional items of other materials

A wooden dowel or small furniture spindle (part of SF162) was found in fill [7822} of pit 7823.

A fragment of modern roofing felt (SF124) was found in garden soil [5036], attributed to phase 5.

The leather comprised principally of large pieces of primary waste, that is discarded unusable areas of hide, with a small amount of shoe leather and a single strap fragment. The primary waste appears to be chiefly discarded hide edges and bellyskin with teats, apparently of cattle

hide. Nine shoe components, all of turnshoe construction, were noted during the assessment, further pieces may well be found when the cleaned material is examined. At least three shoes of different styles are represented. The shoe parts are well preserved and provide dating for the large amount of waste leather with which it is associated.

Comparative material

This is the first group of leather to be found at Abingdon in recent years. If leather has been found previously it has not be published or made available to a wider audience. As it comes from well-stratified deposits and can be closely dated, it is of some interest both locally and regionally. Documentary research on the history of the leather working trades in Oxfordshire has been undertaken recently, and study of this concentrated group of leatherworking waste will add to the understanding of the tanning trade in Abingdon at the end of the medieval period. Contemporary leatherwork assemblages have been found in Oxford and Reading, with primary waste leather being a component of 14th and 15th century dumps of leatherwork along with debris from cobbler's workshops (Mould 2003, Mould 1997, 108-9) at Reading.

Potential for further research

The shoe finds are in good condition and are representative of the shoe styles worn by the local population at the end of the 14th century. They also provide dating evidence for the accompanying waste leather in contexts 7810 [pit 7744] and 7842 [pit 7823]. The waste leather provides direct evidence for the tanning trade in Abingdon and should be seen alongside the other possible evidence for tanning recovered during these investigations. A pit filled with horn cores and animal bone found at this site (the former Regal Cinema site) and a quantity of horn cores recovered at the former Southern Electricity Building Depot site may represent waste material from horn working, glue making or allied trades being undertaken in the locality. These trades along with the heavy leather trades, all linked with butchery, were often closely located on the outskirts of a town. Study of the leather would greatly benefit from any documentary research relating to this area of the town that may be undertaken as part of this project.

Conservation requirements

The leather cannot be stored wet indefinitely. Without conservation the leather will deteriorate and is potentially hazardous to health being liable to fungal and bacterial infection. Wet leather presents difficulties with short-term storage, transportation, study and illustration (English Heritage Guidelines 4, 6). The eventual repository of the leather should be consulted regarding their discard and retention policy for wet organic material. It is usual for this to follow that recommended in the SMA Guidelines and unlikely that they will accept wet leather.

The leather must be washed before it can be studied. Once this has been undertaken a number of options are possible:

The entire assemblage is conserved to allow safe and rapid study, illustration and storage

The datable material is conserved and the greater part of the assemblage discarded after study*

The leather is not conserved but studied wet and all discarded*

Option 1 is recommended as it would allow the safe and rapid study and illustration and long term storage with no health and safety implications. The assemblage would be available for subsequent re-examination, for reference and use as a teaching aid. It can be argued that this

direct evidence for tanning and associated dating evidence should be retained as a record for the town. Options 2 and 3 are less practical. The necessary work (recording study and illustration) will take more time, will have to be undertaken shortly following cleaning, and during the cooler months of the year because of health and safety considerations. *It may be possible to allow the material to dry out slowly under controlled conditions. Constant monitoring and optimum store conditions are required to ensure air-drying is successful: a conservator should be consulted regarding this method. Once air-dried the material could be stored and it would be possible to re-examine the material if necessary.

Work required

A basic record (as defined in RFG & FRG Guidelines 1993) of the entire assemblage is needed, to include measurement of complete soles and other relevant dimensions, and species identification where possible. A large proportion of the leather has several individual items contained within a single bag. The leather needs to be separated out into individual object types where necessary and allocated a unique identifying number by which they can be identified during recording, illustration and publication. This re-bagging and numbering can be undertaken during the recording process. The basic record should be entered onto an excel database to form part of the site archive. The contextual information can then be correlated and the assemblage quantified by functional category within each stratigraphic group and site phase. This information will inform those studying the stratigraphic sequence and will provide useful independent dating to compliment the ceramic and numismatic evidence. The leather assemblage should be summarised for inclusion in the publication of the site narrative. This will require a brief description of the primary waste leather, shoes and strap. The shoes will require a brief description of the construction and styles represented, with a diagram of the shoe styles found, as appropriate. An example of each shoe style will be selected for drawing and will be catalogued for publication. Additional information will be presented in tabular form wherever possible.

Sketches will be provided to guide the illustrator as to views and details required, conventions to be used etc. Alternatively, pencil drawings for digitising* can be provided by prior arrangement.

Costing of further work

Task 1: re-bag, renumber and compile basic record

Task 2: input onto database

Task 3: correlate with site data and quantification

Task 4: prepare summary for publication

Task 5: sketch leather for illustration, prepare diagrams

Task 6: check illustrations/edit text

References

English Heritage, 1995, *Guidelines for the care of waterlogged archaeological leather.* Scientific and Technical Publications Guideline 4.

Mould, Q, 1997, 'Leather' in Hawkes, J W and Fasham, P J, *Excavations on Reading Waterfront Sites, 1979-1988,* Wessex Archaeology Report 5, 108-141

Mould, Q, 2003, 'The leather from the Reading Oracle Project' typescript for OAU

Roman Finds Group and Finds Research Group AD 700-1700, 1993, *The Guidelines for the Preparation of Site Archives and Assessments for all finds other than fired clay vessels.*

APPENDIX 9

Slag

by Lynne Keys

Methodology and quantification

Just under 4 kg of material described as slag was examined by eye for this report. It was categorised on the basis of morphology with each slag type within each context being weighed; smithing hearth bottoms were individually weighed and measured to obtain statistical information. Details are given in the table below.

Table A9.1 Incidence of slag by context

context no.	identification	wt	len	br	dep
5051	undiagnostic	20			
6074	undiagnostic	83			
6131	smithing hearth bottom	607	100	90	60
6253	undiagnostic	332			
6359	iron	9			
6359	undiagnostic	17			
6359	vitrified hearth lining	18			
6392	undiagnostic	265			
6393	undiagnostic	27			
6411	undiagnostic	40			
6412	slagged coal	4			
6412	undiagnostic	77			
6554	slagged ceramic	15			
6554	undiagnostic	29			
6590	undiagnostic	5			
7543	ferruginous concretion	91			
7582	undiagnostic	608			
8027	smithing hearth bottom	248	90	85	25
8027	smithing hearth bottom	265	90	80	30
8027	smithing hearth bottom	312	95	70	35
8027	smithing hearth bottom	337	95	85	35
8027	undiagnostic	355			
8027	vitrified hearth lining	47			
	total wt. = 3811g				

Explanation of terms

Iron slags may be broken up during deposition, re-deposition or excavation and may have to be assigned to the undiagnostic category as a result; this was often the case with the slag examined. Other types of debris encountered may have been produced by a variety of high temperature activities - including domestic fires - and cannot be taken on their own to indicate ironworking was taking place. These included vitrified hearth lining and slagged coal.

The smithing hearth bottom is the most characteristic bulk slag of smithing. It was formed as a result of high temperature reactions between the iron, iron-scale and silica from either a clay furnace lining or the silica flux used by the smith. The predominantly fayalitic (iron

silicate) material produced by this reaction dripped down into the hearth base during smithing forming a slag which, if not cleared out, developed into the smithing hearth bottom. When removed from the hearth they were usually taken outside and deposited in the nearest pit or ditch. The proximity of cut features or dumps with amounts of smithing hearth bottoms to a building is often a good indication the structure may have been a smithy. Four smithing hearth bottoms were recovered from context 98027) and one from (6131).

Ferruginous concretions are made up of a re-deposition of iron hydroxides (rather like iron panning), enhanced by surrounding archaeological deposits, particularly if there is iron-rich waste present as a result of ironworking.

Discussion of the assemblage

The phase with most slag (just over 2.9kg) is Phase 3, the medieval. Both the former Southern Electricity Building Depot and Neave House sites produced the greatest amounts of slag for this phase.

The pit containing fill (8027) from Neave House is of immediate interest since it contains four smithing hearth bottoms, a quantity of undiagnostic slag, and a small amount of vitrified hearth lining. This feature suggests a smith had been working somewhere in the immediate vicinity. Pit fills from Southern Electricity Building contained slag, including one smithing hearth bottom, but the number of pits involved and their proximity to each other is not known.

Storage of the slag

Iron slag, being fayalitic (an iron silicate), does not deteriorate and needs no special storage. Any decision on disposal of the material should be based on the likelihood of further work (see above), but otherwise there seems no other reason to retain the material.

Recommendations for further work

No further work is necessary other than editing this report for publication.

APPENDIX 10

Wood

by Steven J Allen

This report aims to meet the requirements of MAP2, Phase 3, Assessment of Potential for Analysis, (English Heritage, 1991). The work carried out has been the cleaning and examination of the finds submitted. This report is an identification of the finds where possible and an assessment of their condition. An evaluation of the potential of each group of material for further investigation is included, with recommendations for long term stabilisation. No analysis of the assemblage or the artefacts have yet been undertaken and any conclusions at this stage are provisional.

Methodology

The objects were delivered to the Wet Wood Laboratory wet packed. Each timber had been double bagged in plastic bags secured with drafting tape and then enclosed in black polythene dustbin liners. Some drying had taken place in storage and as a result, the surfaces, especially where sapwood was present, were powdery and decayed.

Each timber was in turn removed from its packaging, washed under cold running water to remove adhering burial deposits and returned to its packaging after examination and species identification. Some rewrapping in layflat tubing was carried out to minimise further drying whilst in storage.

Condition

The wood was in a generally good state of preservation. Waterlogged anoxic conditions were maintained in all contexts in which the material survived up to the time of excavation. Some surface abrasion had taken place but this is considered to be due to the sandy subsoil of the burial environment which generally allows free movement of water within the water table. It may be noted in passing that any changes in the local water table resulting from the new development on this site will rapidly affect any currently waterlogged deposits beyond the immediate area of the excavation work.

Results

The three timbers are catalogued below, summarising the currently recorded information from the artefacts and their labels. No wood record sheets had been available and only phasing information from the site summary has been added. It is therefore a provisional statement for assessment purposes only. Species identifications follow Schweingruber (1982).

SF 151. Box-quartered timber, cut from knotty top end of log. One face and both edges sawn, remaining face hewn, with one waney corner, sapwood present. Each end terminates in a halved joint (?lap) to another (missing) timber. Shoulders of joint sawn, waste removed by hewing. Each lap or tenon is reduced in width towards its end and one is also reduced in thickness. Single fe nail through each lap/tenon to secure joint. Non-waney edge has six fe nails driven into it at irregular intervals along its length. 1.562m l, 220 w, 114 th. One lap/tenon is 213 l, reduced to 97, then 72 w, 56 reduced to 23 th. Other tenon/lap 246 l, reduced to 130 then 80 w, 38 th. *Quercus spp.* Context 7146, Phase 4.

SF152. Box-quartered timber, cut from knotty top end of log. Slight waney face/edge. One end cut square to axis of timber, other end cut back at angle. Non-waney face has two blind mortices let into it, one towards each end. Each mortice started by a pair of c40 dia spoon bit auger holes before removal of waste. Each mortice has a single through edge-to-edge auger

hole across its width to secure the (missing) tenon of a neighbouring timber. Remains of peg present in one hole. Ends of peg holes intersect the ends of a stopped rebate let into the morticed face and the non-waney edge. Two fe nails driven into non-waney edge just below rebate. 947 l, 142 w, 114 th. Mortice at squared end 125 l, 47 w, 97 deep, eroded peg hole 40 dia. Other mortice 130 l, 50 w, 95 deep, eroded peg hole 38 dia. Rebate 670 l, 25 w, 35 deep. *Quercus spp.* Context 7147, Phase 5.

SF153. Near box-quartered timber, cut from knotty top end of log. Each end terminates in a centrally placed bare edged tenon with single 25 dia. auger holes to house the peg locking the tenon into a mortice. Continuous rebate let into one face/edge. Single fe nail driven into face towards one end and fe concretion in corresponding position on same face towards other end. 695 l, 140 w, 107 th. First tenon 80 l, 90 w, 25 th. Second tenon 84 l, 92 w, 25 th. Rebate 30 w, 25 deep. *Quercus spp.* Context 7147, Phase 5

Dendrochronology may be possible on these timbers. Some sapwood is present, but is badly decayed. The timbers have been cut from knotty wood, high up the trunk of the parent log and this will have distorted the ring pattern, so it is not likely that the timbers will date.

Though the surfaces are eroded, each timber is an interesting piece in its own right. The sawing evidence suggests a date after c.1200 AD and these pieces appear to be medieval or immediately post medieval in date. Unless there is direct evidence that the worked joints are integral to the structure of the well in which they were found, the timbers must be from a much earlier structure than their burial context, perhaps from a dismantled or demolished timber framed structure nearby.

Recommendations

1. Analysis of assemblage as currently recorded and production of report to publication stage:

2. Conservation
Condition assessment, impregnation with p.e.g. polymers and freeze dry. Surface clean and finish, paint fe fixings with tannic acid, package appropriately for return.

It is recommended that the items are illustrated for publication/archive before stabilisation treatment is completed. If desired, the illustration may be undertaken by the YAT graphics officer from whom an estimate may be obtained (contact lcollett@yorkarchaeology.co.uk

Reference

Schweingruber, FW (1982) Microscopic Wood Anatomy Zurich

APPENDIX 11

Worked bone

by Rose Grant

A total of 4 worked bone objects were recovered from the site. They are as follows:

Object	Context No	Small Find No	Length	Weight	Description	Parallel
Polished Antler wedge	6392	93	77mm	32g	Fragment from a red deer antler cut longitudinally along the beam to form a wedge shape. The cancellous core is visible on both faces. The outside edges are polished and in one side there is a drilled hole with the beginnings of another one. The holes do not extend completely through the wedge.	
Decorative Casket Strip	6391	121	129mm	10g	Decorated Casket Strip from a section of large rib i.e. cow. The strip is decorated with triple ring and dot design with a larger double contoured circle surrounding open-work detail. There are two circular holes which cut through the ring and dot design and are possibly for attachment.	Biddle and Hinton 1990, 784,fig.227,No.2 429.
Decorative Casket Strip	6391	96	650mm	2g	Decorated Casket Strip from a section of rib. The strip is decorated with three triple ring and dot motifs.	As above
Section of Antler	6392	101	48mm	29g	Section of antler , possibly red deer, sawn at both ends.	

The decorated bone casket strips are of interest. Rectangular bone strips were pinned to wooden bases to form caskets. Examples have been found at Winchester.

All of the worked bone objects date to the medieval period .

Further Work

Catalogue entries
Preparation of drawing briefs for the two decorative strips (S.F. 96 and 121)
Brief publication report

Bibliography

Biddle M and Hinton D 1990, 'Decorative bone casket strips' in Biddle M 1990 , Object and Economy in Medieval Winchester 781-787

APPENDIX 12

Worked Stone

by Ruth Shaffrey

Summary and Quantification

Approximately 150 pieces of stone were retained during the excavations at Abingdon Cinema. Many of these are architectural fragments and a small number are other items of worked stone.

Methodology

The assemblage was scanned and the most prominent pieces were examined with the aid of a x10 magnification hand lens and recorded.

Description

A number of pieces of architectural stonework were identified. These were not recorded or catalogued due to time restrictions. The remainder of the assemblage included a Purbeck marble mortar, a small pedestal, a chalk sphere and a number of roof stone fragments. Many of these are small fragments but at least three retain the suspension hole and one is complete. All the roof stone fragments were made from limestone, the majority Oolitic.

Catalogue

Ctx	SFNO	Descrip	Notes	Size	Lithology	Illust
6309		Roof stone	Roof stone with nicely drilled cylindrical suspension hole 8mm diameter. Part of two original edges	Measures > 160 x >90 x 14 mm thick	Oolitic limestone	Poss
6336		Roof stones	Four fragments, not adjoining, two of which have cylindrical suspension holes 8 and 11 mm in diameter. Need fully recording	Measures	Fine grained oolitic slightly shelly limestone	No
6165		Roof stone	Complete rectangular roof stone but with suspension hole slightly offset to middle as if it was hung at a slight angle. Hole measures 9mm diameter	Measures 270 x 140 x 10 mm	Fine grained quartzitic limestone	Yes
6253		?pedestal or architectural fragment	Small column	Measures	Oolitic limestone	Yes
6638	141	Mortar fragment	Mortar Fragment. Edge, no base, one lug. Roughly tooled exterior	Measures	Purbeck marble	Poss
5041	125	Ball / sphere	chalk ball	Measures	Chalk	No

Statement of Potential

The stone assemblage has the potential to inform about the style of building on the site and status of the site through the study of the architectural stonework, including the roof stones and through the additional worked stone such as the Purbeck marble mortar.

Recommendations for future work

It is recommended that the assemblage be examined in full and all the worked pieces be recorded to publication standard. The use of stone for roofing and the types of other stone present should then be placed in their regional context and the distribution of roofing and other structural material on site be analysed for information about building types. It is also recommended that the architectural stone pieces are fully analysed.

Tasklist

Task
Full publication standard catalogue
Report writing including literature search for comparative material
Drawing briefs plus checking and editing report
Analysis of architectural stonework
TOTAL

Report content

Task	
Text	500 words
Tables	0
Illustrations	4 artefacts

APPENDIX 13

Flint

by Kate Cramp

Introduction

A total of 17 struck flints and nine pieces (108 g) of burnt unworked flint were recovered during excavation at the Abingdon Cinema site in Abingdon, Oxfordshire (Tables A13.1 and A13.2). The assemblage is largely composed of unretouched debitage and contains few chronologically distinctive types. The thin distribution of the flintwork and its variable condition does not support extensive prehistoric activity in the area.

Condition and raw material

The condition of the flintwork varies by context. Some pieces (e.g. the flake from 7077, the blade from 6660 and the bladelet from 811) are in fresh condition and are unlikely to have been significantly disturbed since deposition. Others, such as the side scraper (context 6488) are worn and rolled. The degree of cortication is similarly variable, but in most cases is either absent or incipient.

Both gravel flint and chalk flint sources appear to have been used for the production of the tools and debitage in the assemblage.

Technology and dating

The assemblage is dominated by unretouched flakes (nine pieces). Blades and bladelike flakes are present in smaller quantities (three pieces). Two tested nodules were also recovered; these came from context 6326 and 7056. The larger of the two, weighing 221 g, has a thick, fresh cortex and probably represents the use of surface chalk flint deposits. The smaller, at 22 g, has been formed from a river gravel cobble.

The retouched component is restricted to one side scraper (context 6488) and one retouched flake (context 7658), neither of which is closely datable. The latter has been inversely retouched along one edge; the scraper exhibits abrupt, stepped retouch to the right-hand edge.

In the absence of chronologically diagnostic types, dating the flintwork must necessarily be cautious. Technological considerations, such as the predominance of flakes over blades and a preference for hard-hammer percussion, might suggest a later prehistoric date for the majority; some of the blades may be earlier.

Recommendations

Given the small size of the assemblage, no further work is recommended at this stage beyond editing this report for publication.

Table A13.1: Flint by type

Category:	Context:																Total:
	811	5051	6106	6159	6309	6326	6351	6488	6617	6660	7056	7073	7077	7098	7117	7658	
Flake		1	1		1		1		1			1	1	2			9
Blade	1									1							2
Bladelike flake															1		1
Irregular waste				1													1
Partially worked nodule						1					1						2
Retouched flake																1	1
Side scraper								1									1
Total:	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	17
No. of burnt struck flints:			1							1				1	1		4
No. of broken struck flints:	1		1	1			1			1		1	1	1	1	1	10

Table A13.2: Burnt unworked flint

	Context:							Total:
	6159	6193	6309	6372	6495	6601	8051	
No. of burnt unworked flints:	1	1	1	1	2	1	2	9
Total weight of burnt unworked flints (g):	1	12	6	15	7	2	65	108

APPENDIX 14

Fired clay

by Rose Grant

A total of 37 fragments of fired clay were recovered from the site. All were featureless fragments and undiagnostic. No further work required.

Context No	Fragment Count	Weight (grams)
6331	1	29
6381	1	11
7047	4	43
7506	1	33
7708	3	17
7624 (small find 156)	1	15
8048	1	8
8051	25	362

APPENDIX 15

Human Bone

by Ceri Boston and Angela Boyle

This report presents the results of a rapid assessment of the potential for further analysis of the human skeletal remains from the Regal Cinema site, Abingdon, Oxfordshire. The site was first excavated in 1995 in advance of major redevelopment of the area. In this phase of excavation, archaeological remains from several time periods were discovered, including major Iron Age ditch systems, medieval tenements and a small post-medieval cemetery. Complete skeletons and disarticulated human bone were found in contexts dating to all these periods. The majority of the skeletal assemblage derives from the post-medieval cemetery containing 26 individuals. In the first phase of archaeological investigation, 18 of these skeletons were examined in situ but were not excavated. In addition to this cemetery group, two isolated skeletons on the site were also discovered: skeleton (236), placed within an Iron Age ditch, and skeleton (266), a casually interred female in a medieval pit. Several disarticulated bones were also found within contexts dating from the Iron Age to the 18th century.

A second phase of excavation was undertaken in 2002, when the cemetery population was re-exposed and excavated. Despite excavation, reburial and re-excavation, the preservation of the skeletons remains very good, with the exception of crania which became very fragmented. During this phase, an additional eight skeletons were discovered and excavated.

Methodology

Inhumations and unburnt disarticulated material were examined to determine preservation, completeness, age and sex where possible, as well as potential for further analysis in accordance to the guidelines for producing assessments for human bone (Mays *et al.* 2002). An approximate age estimate was based on dental attrition (Miles 1963). Subadults were aged by dental development (Moorrees *et al* 1963), by epiphyseal fusion (Bass 1987; Schwarz 2000) and by diaphyseal long bone length (Maresh in Hoppa 1992).

Results

The earliest skeleton (266) was an adult male, dated to the middle Iron Age. The skeleton was lying on his left side, with tightly flexed legs; arms across chest. Orientated south-north within the fill of late Iron Age oppidum ditch (Trench 6). No grave cut present.

A skull (901) was found in the base of an early Roman ditch (906) within Trench 5. The mandible was absent, but preservation good. It was an adult skull of undetermined gender; probably aged <40 years.

A young adult female skeleton (266) was found within a medieval pit in Trench 6. She was prone with legs extended, left arm bent beneath body, right arm flexed and bent back. Orientated north-south. No grave cut. Stature 1.67 m

The post-medieval cemetery assemblage (n = 26) was composed of 11 adults and 15 subadults, of which 5 were adolescent (aged 12-18 years). There is an absence of the very young (ie. infants) and the elderly in this assemblage. The common practice of burying infants under the eavesdrip of the church may account for the absence of infants in this burial assemblage. Fourteen adults could be sexed. There were eight males, one possible male, four females and one possible female.

It was possible to calculate the stature of 13 adults from the post-medieval assemblage. The mean stature for females (n = 5) was 1.59 m (5'2") and the mean stature for males (n = 8) was 1.70 m (5'6").

Potential

The earliest burial was of middle Iron Age date. The skull of another adult individual was located at the bottom of an early Roman ditch accompanied by a complete late 1st century pot and a paste melon bead. The disposal of whole bodies and body parts (particularly skulls) within pits and ditches is a common Iron Age practice, and in the Upper Thames Valley continues well into the Roman period (Phillpott 1991). These examples have great potential for further our knowledge of prehistoric and Romano-British burial practices in the region.

The second isolated skeleton was apparently placed, or thrown, face down into a large medieval pit. She was buried prone with legs extended. The remains appeared to be of a young adult, possibly a female. This manner of disposal of a body is atypical in the high medieval period, which is normally characterised by west-east orientated supine extended burials. As such the burial is of some significance.

The post-medieval cemetery of 26 individuals is of high significance. The majority of graves are aligned west-east, and appear to respect each other, being evenly spaced and forming neatly into three rows. From these features it is likely that this cemetery was in use for a very limited time. Slightly peripheral to this group, located to the east, are two graves aligned south-north. Whilst west-east remained the most common grave orientation, the north-south alignment is not unknown in the 17th century. Skeleton 3008 is unusual in being buried with the knees flexed. There are four graves that each contain two or three individuals. These grave groups are composed of either an adult with subadults, or two or three subadults buried together. The single grave cut and the close proximity of the bodies within each of these graves indicates that these individuals must have died soon after one another, and were buried in one event.

Recommendations

The inhumations all need further analysis in order that they may help address certain of the revised research aims of the project. The inhumations are suitable for full osteological and palaeopathologcal analysis. The proposed analysis will follow the guidelines set out in IFA paper number 7 (Brickley and Mckinley 2004) and will entail the following:

- Skeletal inventory
- Dental inventory
- Age assessment
- Sex determination
- Metrical data and non-metric traits
- Dental and skeletal pathology

The location of the burials in the landscape and the general funerary ritual (body positioning and coffin burials) merit a full discussion and should form part of the final report with appropriate regional comparative examples.

Task	Staff
Human remains - Analysis	C Boston
Human remains - Literature search and report writing	C Boston

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APPENDIX 16

Animal bone

by Emma-Jayne Evans

Introduction

This report encompasses the animal bones from the site at Abingdon Cinema, from which a total of 9,161 fragments of bone and teeth were excavated.

Methodology

Identification of the bone was undertaken at Oxford Archaeology with access to the reference collection and published guides. All the animal remains were counted and weighed, and where possible identified to species, element, side and zone (Serjeantson 1996). Also, fusion data, butchery marks, gnawing, burning and pathological changes were noted when present. Ribs and vertebrae were only recorded to species when they were substantially complete and could accurately be identified. Undiagnostic bones were recorded as small (small mammal size), medium (sheep size) or large (cattle size). The separation of sheep and goat bones was undertaken using the criteria of Boessneck (1969) and Prummel and Frisch (1986), in addition to the use of the reference material housed at OA. Where distinctions could not be made, the bone was recorded as sheep/goat (s/g).

The condition of the bone was graded using the criteria stipulated by Lyman (1996). Grade 0 being the best preserved bone and grade 5 indicating that the bone had suffered such structural and attritional damage as to make it unrecognisable.

The quantification of species was carried out using the total fragment count, in which the total number of fragments of bone and teeth was calculated, and this figure broken down to the total number of fragments identifiable to each species. Tooth eruption and wear stages were measured using a combination of Halstead (1985), Grant (1982), and Levine (1982), and fusion data was analysed according to Silver (1969). Measurements of adult, that is, fully fused bones were taken according to the methods of von den Driesch (1976), with asterisked (*) measurements indicating bones that were reconstructed or had slight abrasion of the surface.

Results

Quantity of material

A total of 4447 fragments, 48.5% of the total hand collected animal bone assemblage has been fully analysed and recorded for this assessment. A number of bones have fresh breaks, the re-fitting of which has reduced the total fragment count to 3716, giving a weight of 59627 g.

Species Representation

A total of 1902 fragments of bone and teeth were identifiable to species, 51.2% of the total number of bones assessed. Both domestic and wild animals were recovered, as shown in Tables A16.1 and A16.2 below.

Table A16.1. Number of domestic animal bones identifiable to species

Phase	Cattle	Sheep/goat	Sheep	Goat	Pig	Horse	Cat	Dog	Total
1	17	6	-	-	-	1	-	-	24
2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
3	430	190	29	4	74	18	9	2	756
4	35	68	12	-	32	1	-	-	148
5	412	288	69	4	25	31	17	16	862
Unphased	36	13	-	1	2	-	-	-	52
Total	*930*	*565*	*110*	*9*	*133*	*51*	*26*	*18*	*1842*

Table A16.2. Number of bird and wild mammal bones identifiable to species

Phase	Domestic fowl	Goose	Red deer	Fallow deer	Rabbit	Hare	Bird	Unidentified	Total
1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	73	73
2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
3	28	8	2	1	3	1	41	1060	1144
4	1	2	1	1	-	-	2	182	189
5	3	2	1	1	-	-	1	402	410
Unphased	1	4	-	-	-	-	6	46	57
Total	*33*	*16*	*4*	*3*	*3*	*1*	*50*	*1764*	*1874*

Condition

The bone has survived in reasonably good condition, with the majority scoring 2 using Lyman's grading system. The good condition of the bone has resulted in many butchery marks, gnawing marks and pathologies being noted, and measurements being taken on 16.1% of the bones, and tooth wear analysis being calculated on 59 mandibles. Articulations were noted between several groups of bone including a partial neonatal pig from phase 3 and a partial dog, cat and juvenile horse burial from phase 5. The butchery marks suggest that whilst much of the bone was processed for meat consumption, there are also distinct areas of horn working and skinning activities. The measurements can provide information on the size of the animals, and age at death information can be used to determine animal husbandry regimes.

Potential and recommendation

The animal bone assemblage from this site has the potential to reveal animal husbandry regimes, withers heights of the main domestic species, and the distribution of skinning and horn working activities. Analysis of the remaining bone will further add to our understanding of the use of animals at this site, and will possibly reveal more areas of industrial activity and provide a larger database from which to determine animal husbandry techniques. The analysis of the sieved material will possibly reveal the presence of small mammals and reveal which, if any, fish were contributing to the diet of the inhabitants of the site.

Reccomendations

Task
Analysis of remaining bone
Writing report

Further time may be required for the analysis of sieved remains, but this cannot be determined at this stage, as the samples have not been processed.

APPENDIX 17

Charred Plant remains

by Ruth Pelling

Introduction

Samples were taken during excavation works at The Former Southern Electricity Building Depot (SEB), Neave House and Former Regal Cinema site for the recovery of charred plant remains and charcoal. The following samples were taken: 18 samples from the SEB site (17 Phase 3, 11th – 15th century pits and one Phase 5 modern 18th century ditch); 6 samples from the Neave House site (5 phase 3 Medieval pits and ditch samples and 1 undated pit) and 8 samples from the Former Regal Cinema site (3 Roman ditch samples, 1 Saxon ditch and 4 phase 3 medieval, 11th-15th century pits or ditch samples). The volume of deposit processed for each sample ranged from 4.5 to 40 litres. Samples were processed by bulk water flotation using a modified Siraf type machine and the flots collected onto 250 μm mesh sieves. Flots were air dried slowly before being submitted for assessment. The samples were taken to investigate the range of crop plants present at the sites, crop processing activities and cultivation conditions or methods.

Methodology

Each flot was assessed by scanning under a binocular microscope at x10 magnification. Any seeds or chaff noted were provisionally identified and an estimate of abundance made (+ = 0-10 items; ++ = 11-20 items; +++ = 21-50 items; ++++ = 51-100 items; 100+ etc). Charcoal was quantified on a relative scale (+ = present; ++ = occasional; +++ = common; ++++ = abundant). Random fragments of charcoal were fractured and examined in transverse section at x10 and x20 magnification to provide and indication of the range of taxa present. Taxa were not recorded for individual samples.

Quantification

A total of 32 flots were assessed. Flots were variable in size ranging from small with little or no seeds to large with abundant grain and/or charcoal. They are discussed by site and phase.

Former Southern Electricity Building Depot (SEB site)

Phase 3 medieval (11th- 15th centuries)

Grain was present in varying quantities in all 17 samples assessed. Six samples contained in excess of 100 grain, of which three (samples 33, 34, 38) had in excess of 1000 grain. Chaff was generally rare, present in only seven samples and in small (less than 20) quantities. The samples in which chaff was present included the six with abundant grain. Weed seeds were noted in 13 samples, of which two had more the 20 weed seeds and 1 had more than 50. Occasional pulses and *Corylus avellana* (hazel) nut shell fragments were present in 12 samples. Charcoal was present in all samples, of which three produced abundant quantities including big pieces and four contained frequent amounts. Cereal species noted were dominated by free-threshing *Triticum* (bread/rivet wheat), with *Hordeum vulgare* (barley), *Secale cereale* (rye) and *Avena* sp. (oats) also present. These cereals are typical of the medieval period. Preservation of the grain was variable. Sample 40 contains well preserved chaff which includes rachis of *Triticum turgidum* (rivet wheat). *Quercus* (oak), Pomoideae (hawthorn, apple, pear etc) and *Prunus spinosa* (sloe) were noted amongst the charcoal.

In addition to the charred remains, mineralized seeds, in which the organic content has been replaced by calcium phosphate, were noted in 6 samples (samples 21, 22, 24, 29, 30, 33). Species noted included *Prunus* sp. (plum, sloe etc), *Ficus carica* (fig), *Fragaria vesca* (wild/alpine strawberry) and cf. *Malus/Pyrus* sp. (apple/pear). Two samples contained large numbers of seeds of *Sambucus nigra* (elder) which may also have been mineralized, although this species produces particularly robust seeds which sometimes survive medieval deposits.

Phase 5 modern (18th century onwards)

One sample was assessed from phase 5. Occasional grain, weeds and charcoal were noted. Cereal species included free-threshing *Triticum* sp. (bread/rivet wheat) and *Hordeum vuglare* (barley). No chaff was noted.

Neave House

Six samples were assessed. One sample of unknown phase contained moderate (21-50) amounts of cereal grain, and occasional chaff, weed seeds, pulses, *Corylus avellana* (hazel) nut shell. Moderate charcoal was noted. Five samples were dated to phase 3 (medieval, 11th – 15th century). Four dated samples produced abundant grain (>100) one of which (sample 70) also produced abundant chaff and pulses and in excess of 500 weed seeds. Chaff, weed seed and pulses/*Corylus avallena* fragments were present in the other samples but in smaller quantities. The fifth sample produced only rare grain, chaff and weeds. Charcoal was present but rare in four samples and abundant in sample 70. Cereal species noted included free-threshing *Triticum* sp., *Hordeum vulgare*, *Secale cereale* and *Avena* sp. Sample 70 included exceptionally well preserved chaff of *Triticum turgidum*. Pulses included *Vicia sativa* (fodder vetch) and *Vicia faba* (broad bean). Charcoal included *Quercus* and Pomoideae.

Former Regal Cinema Site

Phase 1 Roman

Three samples were assesse (samples 59, 61 nad 62). Grain, chaff and weeds were abundant (>100) in sample 59, while charcoal was frequent. Large numbers of uncharred seeds of Sambucus nigra (elder) were also noted. Occasioanl grain and chaff chare present in sample 61. Samplpe 62 produced a small flot with roots nad moss only. Several grains in sample 61 showed signs of having germinated. The cereals present in the Roman samples were dominated by *Triticum spelta* (spelt wheat) the principal cereal of the Roman period in southern Britain.

Phase 2 Saxon

One sample was assessed (sample 43). The flot was small and contained moss and weeds only.

Phase 3 medieval (11th-15th century)

Four samples were assessed (samples 41, 45, 47 and 55). Sample 47 contained abundant grain, weeds and pulses, with fairly frequent (51-100) chaff which included silica chaff. Sample 41 produced abundant grain with moderate quantities of chaff, weeds and pulses. The cereal species noted in these samples were free-threshing *Triticum* sp., *Hordeum vulgare* and *Secale cereale*. The *Triticum* chaff included rachis of *Triticum turgidum*. Pulses included *Vicia sativa*. Sample 45 produced moderate quantities of grain and weeds (21-50) with abundant chaff. The dominant cereal species in this sample was *Triticum spelta* which is more usually associated with Iron Age and Roman period deposits suggesting sample 45 (context 7019) is either wrongly dated or is contaminated by earlier deposits. The remaining

sample (55) produced no charred seeds or chaff. Rare to moderate amounts of charcoal were present in all four samples.

Provenance

The majority of samples from the Abindgon West Central development area were taken from pits, with some ditch samples. In terms of charred remains both feature types produced a mixture of rich and poor samples. The mineralized remains are all from pits. Either cess-pits or tanning pits could produce the appropriate conditions for mineralization to occur. One Roman sample produced abundant charred material while one medieval sample (sample 45 context 7019) produced cereal remains suggestive of Roman activities. The Saxon sample assess produced no charred material. Several medieval samples produced abundant remains.

Conservation

The flots are in a stable condition and can be archived. An additional ten samples have not yet been processed. It is recommended that the one Roman period sample (sample 57, context 7830) and the Saxon sample (sample 46, context 7098) are processed. The Medieval and undated samples do not need to be processed and can be stored as they are in the short term or discarded.

Potential for further work

The samples from the Abingdon West Central Development include several which are particularly rich in charred plant remains and some which are rich in mineralised remains. The medieval plant economy of the town has not been well represented in the past. Several samples contained surprisingly abundant chaff and weed seeds which suggest unprocessed crops were being brought into the settlement and which provide the opportunity to examine the crop processing activities within the site as well as aspects of the arable regime and growing conditions of the crops. The Roman period samples were obviously far fewer and as such have a more limited potential, although they add to information available from previous excavations in the area. The presence of germinated crops suggests an activity other than routine crop processing may have been taking place, for example malting, and this is interesting to explore. The range of crop species is broadly as would be expected for the Roman and medieval periods. Several crops which are known for the first time in the medieval period, particularly *Triticum turgidum* and *Vicia sativa*, are represented in the samples. As the early history of these crops is still not entirely clear they provide the opportunity to increase the number of sites with positive identifications. Mineralised remains tend to be associated with cess pits and therefore dietary waste. As such mineralised remains provide the opportunity to examine food plants which are not normally represented on archaeological sites and should therefore be included in any analysis.

It is recommended that the Roman period samples which have produced charred remains are sorted and analysed fully. This should include sample 45 (context 7019) if it is re-phased securely. The large flots (samples 59 and 45) are particularly rich in grain, chaff and rich and should therefore be split into fractions (eg of 1/8 or 1/16) before sorting. The unprocessed sample should also be sorted if found to contain abundant remains.

Six medieval samples from the SEB site produced mineralised remains other than *Sambucus nigra* seeds. These should be sorted (samples 21, 22, 24, 29, 30, 33). Of these 2 also contain charred remains (samples 24, 33). A further three samples have abundant charred remains only (samples 23, 34, 38). These nine samples should be sorted, giving priority to samples rich in weed seeds and to those with both charred and mineralised remains. Four medieval

samples from Neave House produced abundant remains and it is recommended all four are sorted. Priority should be given to sample 70, context 8019 which produced chaff, weeds and chaff. Two medieval samples from Regal cinema should also be sorted (samples 47 and 41). The large chaff and weed rich sample (sample 47, context 7548) should be split into fractions before sorting.

The charcoal from the sites has the potential to provide information about fuel use within the town. While some of the wood may be structural it is unlikely that this can be disentangled from the refuse or firewood. It is recommended that a maximum of 5 days is spent examining charcoal from some of the larger flots.

Table A17.1 Recommendations: Charred and Mineralised Plant Remains

Task	Staff
Sorting of three Roman samples (45, 5961)	Technician
Identification of material from Roman samples	Specialist
Sorting of medieval samples from SEB	Technician
Identification of medieval material from SEB	Specialist
Sorting of medieval samples from the Regal Cinema site	Technician
Identificiation of medieval materion from the Regal Cinema site	Specialist
Sorting of medieval samples from Neave House	Technician
Identification of medieval material from Neave House	Specialist
Charcoal analysis	Specialist
Production of a report	Specialist

Table A17.2 Incidence of cpr by context

Sample	Context	Feature	Site Purpose	ProcessType	Mesh size	FloatedVolume	Q-Grain	ID-Grain	Q-Chaff	ID-Chaff	Q-Weeds	Q-Other	ID-Other	Q-Charcoal	Notes
50	1033		Charred Remains	Flotation	0.25	20	500+	Trit nk, Hor	++	Trit nk	+++	+	Pulse	+	Grain rich, clinkered grain. Ants heads. Roots. 2 bags/
51	1638		Charred Remains	Flotation	0.25	40	500+	Trit nk, Ave	+	Trit nk	+++	+	Pulse, Prunus sp.	++	Freq roots. Grain clinkered
52	1158		Charred Remains	Flotation	0.25	40	++	Trit nk, Secale			+			+	molluscs
53	1126		Charred Remains	Flotation	0.25	40	500+	Trit nk, Secale, Ave, Hor	++	Trit nk	++			+	
57	1211		Charred Remains	Flotation	0.25	40	++	Trit, Hor			+	+	Crataegus	+	Small flot. Coal.

APPENDIX 18

Waterlogged remains

by Ruth Pelling

Introduction

During excavation at the Abingdon Cinema site samples were taken from waterlogged deposits for the recovery of waterlogged organic material. Ten samples were submitted for assessment of their potential for the analysis of waterlogged plant and insect remains. Samples were taken from five features of Roman date, three of 11th to 15th century and one feature of 18th century date. Generally deposits sampled were from lower fills of ditches or other cut features which appeared to cut the water table. Sub-samples of 1 litre were processed by bulk flotation using a modified siraf type machine. Flots were collected onto 250 um mesh sieves and poured into watertight containers. Wet flots were submitted for assessment.

Methods

Each flot submitted for assessment was washed through a stack of sieves from 500um to 2mm to split them into fractions of similar size. Each fraction was scanned under a binocular microscope at x10 to x20 magnification while still wet. Waterlogged plant material noted was provisionally identified and an approximation of relative abundance made. Total abundance was estimated on a four point scale (+ = present; ++ = moderate; +++ = frequent; ++++ = abundant). Any species identified were recorded as present, frequent or abundant. The presence of insect remains or molluscs was noted. Any charred plant remains noted were provisionally identified.

Results

The relative abundance of waterlogged and charred plant remains, insects or molluscs and species noted is recorded in Table A18.1. Plant species recorded are for seeds, nutlets etc unless otherwise stated.

Roman Samples

Waterlogged plant remains were frequent or abundant in four of the five Roman samples, and present in moderate quantities in sample 60 (context 7858). Samples 58, 54 and 56 (contexts 7652, 7830 and 7895) were dominated by species of dry land, ruderal habitats such as *Urtica dioica* (stinging nettle), *Stellaria media* (chickweed), *Sambucus nigra* (elder), *Conium maculatum* (hemlock) and *Hyoscyamus niger* (henbane). These last two species are common colonizers of nitrogen rich damp midden deposits. Sample 54 also contained a range of species more closely associated with arable habitats, particularly *Agrostemma githago* (corn cockle) and *Anthemis cotula* (stinking mayweed), as well as species of grassland habitats including *Stellaria graminea* (lesser stitchwort) and *Prunella vulgaris* (selfheal). Aquatic or damp ground species are rare and do not provide information about the character of the deposits themselves. The material present is presumably derived from ruderal species growing within the vicinity of the features or dumped material discarded in them. Rare fragments of insect remains were noted in the samples.

Sample 49 (context 7052) produced abundant waterlogged seeds dominated by remains *of fruit with rare ruderal species. The fruit remains include frequent seeds of Ficus* carica (fig) and *Vitis vinifera* (grape) as well as seeds of native species including *Prunus* sp. (plum, sloe

etc), *Rubus* sp. (blackberry, raspberry etc) and possible Ribes sp. (red/black current, gooseberry). Seeds of Malus sp. (apple) may represent a cultivated apple or native crab apple. This sample is clearly of different character to the other deposits and presumably represents dumped food debris. Such deposits provide the opportunity to explore aspects of the diet of the inhabitants of the site not normally recovered from charred material.

Medieval Samples

Of the four samples of 11th to 15th century date, sample 52 (context 7814) produced frequent well preserved waterlogged remains. Samples 71 and 72 (contexts 8044 and 8037) produced a similar range of material but in moderate quantities. Species noted in these samples were dominated by plants of arable or ruderal habitat including *Conium maculatum* and *Hyoscyamus niger* suggestive of damp, nitrogen rich habitats. Occasional charred cereal remains were also noted in these samples. No insect remains were noted. Sample 52 (context 7810) contained frequent mineral concretions and only rare seeds of *Rubus* sp. No insects were noted in this sample and charred remains consisted of a single grain of Secale cereale (rye).

18th century Sample

Sample 51 (context 7602), taken from an 18th century or later feature contained both waterlogged and possibly mineralized material dominated by the remains of fruit. Seeds of *Ficus carica* (fig) were numerous while seeds of *Vitis vinifera* (grape), *Rubus* sp. (blackberry, raspberry etc) and *Malus* sp. (apple) were also present. Fragments of possible fruit skin were noted. This deposit also produced occasional insect pupare, fish bone and molluscs. Such a deposit is suggestive of dumped food waste or sewage.

Recommendations

Waterlogged plant remains tend to consist of the remains of species growing within the feature themselves (indicative of the character of the deposits, water clarity and so on), species growing within the immediate vicinity of the feature and any material dumped into the deposit as waste. While the Abingdon Cinema material does not appear to offer any insights in the character of the features themselves, they do provide the potential to examine the nature of the immediate environment as well as some aspects of diet not provided by the charred remains from the site. Detailed sorting of selected samples should extend the species list and provide detailed quantification of those species present. As well as confirm the existing, provisional identifications. Insect remains were generally poor in the samples and insufficient material is available for detailed work. However the insect remains in sample 51 (7602) were slightly better preserved and the identification of any taxa present may provide further characterisation of the deposit.

Detailed sorting of samples 56, 54 and 56 will provide a more detailed species list which should characterize the immediate environment of the Roman features. The sorting of sample 49 is recommended to confirm the identifications of fruit remains and to extend the species list. Further analysis may confirm if the deposit is derived from sewage type material. The medieval material was more limited than the Roman remains although some indication of the immediate environment may be gained from further sorting of sample 53. The provisional identification of the other samples should be considered in any final report. Finally, sample 51 provides some idea as to the diet of the inhabitants of the site in the 18th century. It is recommended that this sample is sorted to confirm identifications and extend species list which can be compared to documentary evidence for fruit remains for this period. The insect remains were rare but well preserved and should be extracted for identification during sorting.

Task	Staff
Sorting Roman Samples for waterlogged plant remains	Technician
Sorting of Medieval and post-medieval samples (samples 53 and 51)	Technician
Analysis of insects	Specialist
Identification of waterlogged plant material	Specialist
Production of report	Specialist

Table A18.1: Waterlogged plant remains

Sample	**49**	**58**	**54**	**56**	**60**	**52**	**53**	**71**	**73**	**51**
Context	7052	7652	7830	7895	7858	7810	7814	8044	8037	7602
Phase	Roman	Roman	Roman	Roman	Roman	11-15th C	11-15th C	11-15th C	11-15th C	18th C
Waterlogged seeds	++++	++++	++++	+++	++	+	+++	++	++	+++
Charred seeds and chaff		+++			++	+	+	+	++	
Insects		+	+	+						+
Preservation	good	good	moderate	good	good	poor, mineral encrusted	good	good	good	mineralised?
Buttercup	-	+	+	-	-	-	-	+	-	-
Poppy	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-
	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-
Red Campion	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-
Corn Cockle	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Chickweed	+	-	-	+	-	-	+	+	+	-
Lesser Stichwort	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-
Orache	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Fat Hen	-	+	+	-	-	-	+	+	-	-
Silverweed	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Fool's Parsley	-	+	-	+	-	-	+	-	-	-
Hemlock	-	+	+	+	-	-	+	-	-	-
Knotgrass	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Black Bindweed	-	-	+	-	-	-	+	-	-	-
Docks	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Stinging Nettle	+	+	+	+++	+	-	++	-	+	-
Small Nettle	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	-	+	-	-	-	-	+	-	+	-
Henbane	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	-	+	-	+	-	-	+	+	++	-
Gipsywort	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Selfheal	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Woundwort	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-
Dead-nettle	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-
Hemp-nettle	-	+	-	+	-	-	+	-	-	-
Elder	-	+	-	+	++	-	-	-	+	-
	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-
Stinking Mayweed	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Thistle	-	-	+	+	-	-	-	-	-	-
Spiny Milk- or Sow-Thistle	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Common Spike-rush	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sedges	-	-	+	-	-	-	+	+	++	-
	-	+	+	+	-	-	+	-	-	-
Fig	+++	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+++
Grape	++	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+
Blackberry/Bramble, Raspberry etc	+	-	-	-	+	+	-	-	-	+
Plum, sloe etc	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Apple	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+
Red/Black Current, Gooseberry etc	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+

	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-
	-	+	-	+	+	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	+	+	-	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+
	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+
	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+
	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+
Bread/Rivet wheat grain	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	+	-
Spelt wheat grain	-	++	-	-	+	-	-	-	+	-
Spelt wheat glume base	-	+++	-	-	++	-	-	-	+	-
Emmer wheat glume base	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-
Spelt/Emmer wheat glume base	-	-	-	-	++	-	-	-	-	-
Rye grain	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	-	-	-
Barley grain	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-
	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	+	-

APPENDIX 19

Shell

by Leigh Allen

A total of 6,752g of shell was recovered from the archaeological investigations at the site of the former Abingdon Cinema. The bulk of the shell is Oyster but small quantities of clam (1g), landsnail (8g), mussel (23g), scallop (5g) and whelk (26g) were also recovered from a number of contexts.

Context	*No. frags*	*Weight (g)*	*Type*
3012	1	10	Oyster
3030	2	28	Oyster
4021	3	37	Oyster
4037	2	35	Oyster
5036	5	47	Oyster
5042	2	1	Clam
5042	1	11	Oyster
5042	54	2	Oyster
5043	1	14	Oyster
5044	2	26	Oyster
5051	1	15	Oyster
5057	2	36	Oyster
5064	1	9	Oyster
5064	1	4	Whelk
5067	2	29	Oyster
6025	1	14	Oyster
6039	1	44	Oyster
6074	28	236	Oyster
6075	1	8	Oyster
6076	1	14	Oyster
6078	1	15	Oyster
6124	1	7	Oyster
6131	1	21	Oyster
6137	1	3	Oyster
6144	1	1	Mussel
6144	1	18	Oyster
6148	4	29	Oyster
6152	5	53	Oyster
6153	3	73	Oyster
6157	1	1	Scallop
6159	6	46	Oyster
6161	4	3	Oyster
6161	1	2	Whelk
6164	2	14	Oyster
6164	6	11	Oyster
6164	1	11	Whelk
6165	3	19	Oyster
6165	1	8	whelk
6184	1	9	Oyster
6204	13	158	Oyster
6221	2	2	Mussel
6238	2	10	Oyster
6240	3	11	Oyster
6249	1	1	Land snail
6258	1	5	Oyster
6278	2	1	Mussel
6278	2	3	Mussel
6278	2	1	Oyster
6278	8	46	Oyster
6294	2	7	Oyster
6296	1	9	Oyster
6308	1	1	Land snail
6308	9	53	Oyster
6309	19	211	Oyster
6323	4	37	Oyster

6327	14	39	Oyster
6329	8	83	Oyster
6330	1	8	Oyster
6356	2	37	Oyster
6359	7	30	Oyster
6363	2	25	Oyster
6364	12	85	Oyster
6392	1	10	Oyster
6393	3	109	Oyster
6402	11	98	Oyster
6409	1	28	Oyster
6412	8	58	Oyster
6418	1	3	Oyster
6419	1	31	Oyster
6426	36	410	Oyster
6434	1	4	Oyster
6454	5	81	Oyster
6455	1	13	Oyster
6457	20	324	Oyster
6458	7	94	Oyster
6459	3	91	Oyster
6471	8	104	Oyster
6474	4	14	Oyster
6475	1	59	Oyster
6485	1	9	Oyster
6486	10	102	Oyster
6488	2	18	Oyster
6495	1	10	Oyster
6519	1	10	Oyster
6546	3	122	Oyster
6554	1	38	Oyster
6555	1	7	Oyster
6567	1	10	Oyster
6572	10	55	Oyster
6590	1	4	Oyster
6616	4	48	Oyster
6617	2	5	Oyster
6634	1	74	Oyster
6638	1	15	Oyster
6642	1	10	Oyster
6645	1	3	Oyster
6651	3	12	Oyster
6652	4	49	Oyster
6658	14	192	Oyster
6661	1	17	Oyster
6674	1	23	Oyster
6675	4	42	Oyster
6684	2	49	Oyster
6685	9	101	Oyster
6686	1	4	Oyster
6687	5	111	Oyster
6693	2	17	Oyster
6742	2	23	Oyster
7001	1	12	Oyster
7047	1	13	Oyster
7048	2	2	Oyster
7052	3	104	Oyster
7080	31	364	Oyster
7095	1	2	Scallop
7105	1	8	Oyster
7119	3	1	Oyster
7119	2	1	Oyster
7510	1	27	Oyster
7513	1	18	Oyster
7521	2	44	Oyster
7552	5	108	Oyster
7553	1	54	Oyster
7554	4	75	Oyster
7555	1	3	Oyster
7566	3	60	Oyster

7582	2	85	Oyster
7583	1	26	Oyster
7590	1	3	Oyster
7596	1	10	Oyster
7600	4	46	Oyster
7600	1	2	Land snail
7601	1	9	Oyster
7601	1	3	Land snail
7602	17	245	Oyster
7626	1	3	Oyster
7652	3	13	Oyster
7654	1	3	mussel
7654	4	72	Oyster
7658	12	96	Oyster
7675	2	21	Oyster
7708	3	19	Oyster
7712	10	13	Oyster
7713	1	9	Oyster
7743	6	99	Oyster
7747	5	30	Oyster
7792	1	22	Oyster
7800	1	6	Oyster
7810	1	2	Land snail
7810	1	22	Oyster
7810	1	46	Oyster
7822	1	7	Oyster
7829	2	13	Oyster
7842	7	114	Oyster
7860	1	1	Land snail
7860	2	2	Oyster
7863	1	1	Land snail
7898	3	65	Oyster
7900	1	36	Oyster
8005	1	1	Mussel
8007	4	2	Scallop
8024	2	1	Whelk
8032	1	16	Oyster
8056	2	42	Oyster
8060	3	1	Land snail
8060	2	1	Land snail
8060	1	4	mussel
8060	5	6	Mussel
8060	10	2	Mussel
8060	4	59	Oyster
8060	7	18	Oyster
8060	27	5	Oyster
8070	1	21	Oyster

Servergo:/eaupubs1_Athn1*ABW/CRPX*West Central Development, Abingdon*GS*08.07.05

WINSMORE LANE

Court

Depot

Trench 4

Neave House

Trench 16

Trench 15

Trench 1

Site Location

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Cemetery Site

Trench 5

Watching Brief Area

Trench 10

Trench 11

Trench 9

Trench 12

Trench 3

SEB Site

Trench 14

Regal Cinema Site

Trench 17

Trench 18

OCK STREET

Trench 13

Trench 2

ST EDMUND'S LANE

WEST SAINT HELEN'S STREET

Key

Site boundary

1997 Evaluation trenches 1-13

Excavation

Evaluation

0 20m

1:400

Figure 1: Site location

Figure 2: SEB Area principal archaeological features (all phases)

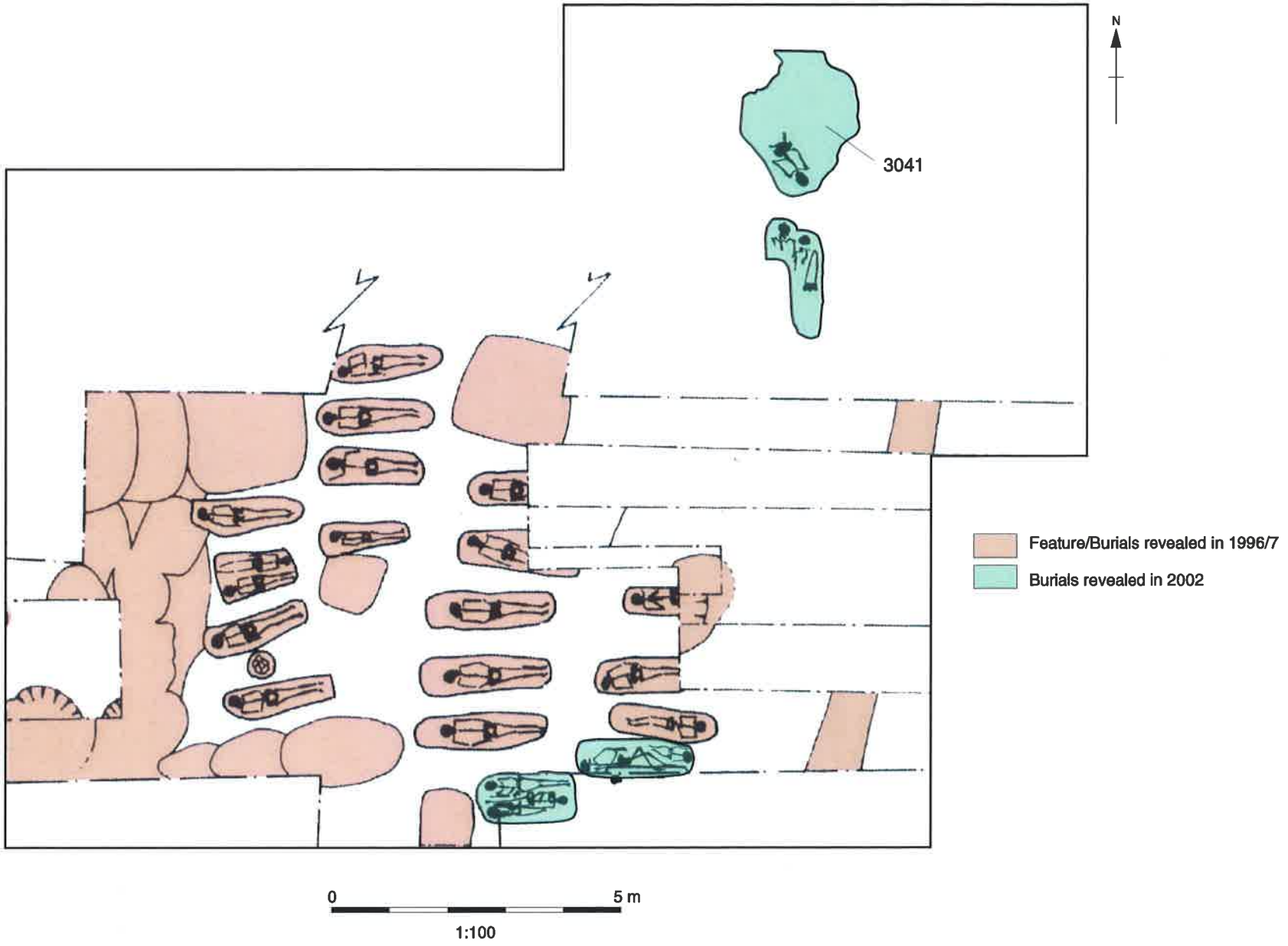

Figure 3: Cemetery site

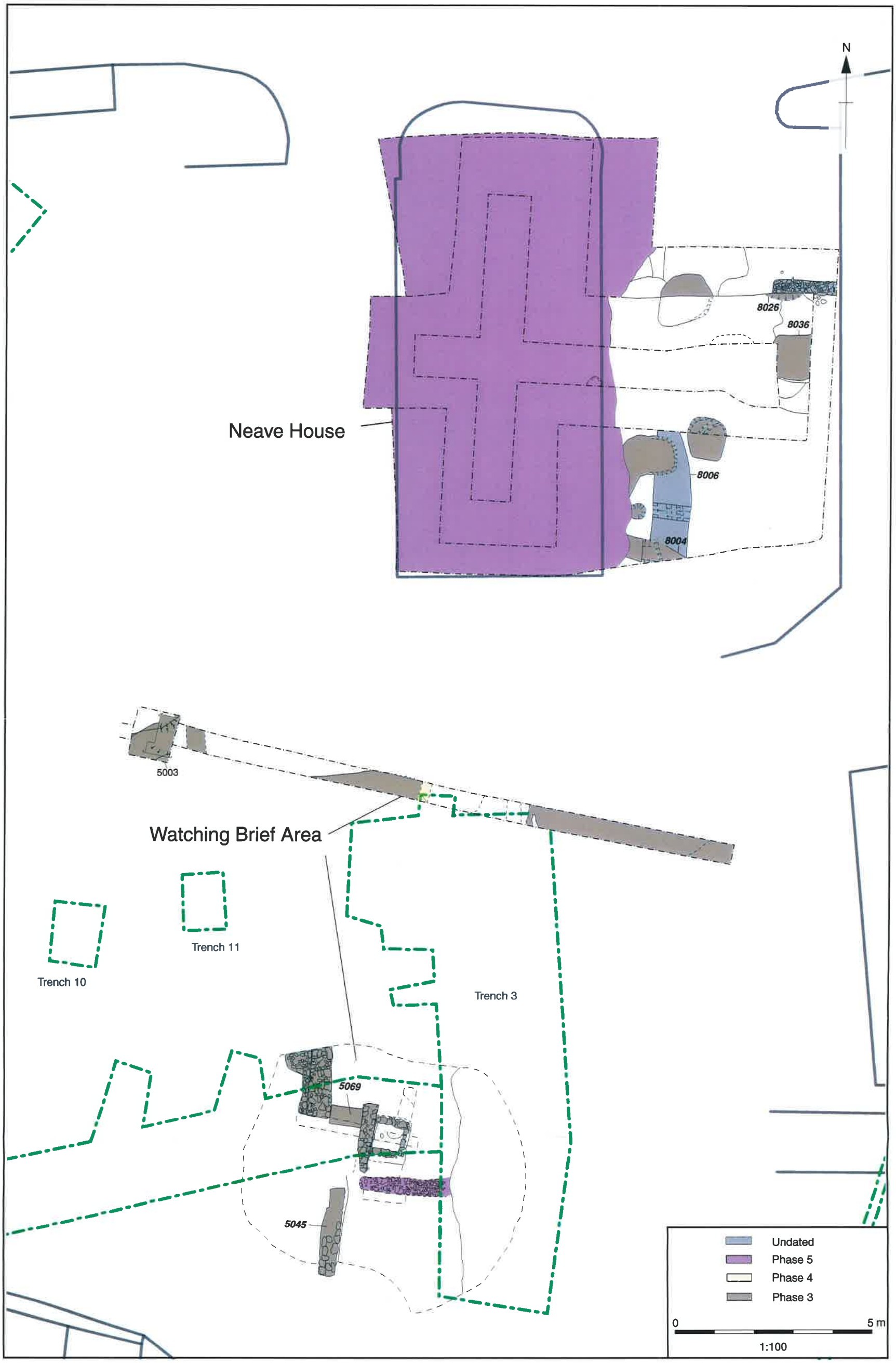

Figure 4: Watching brief areas and Neave House

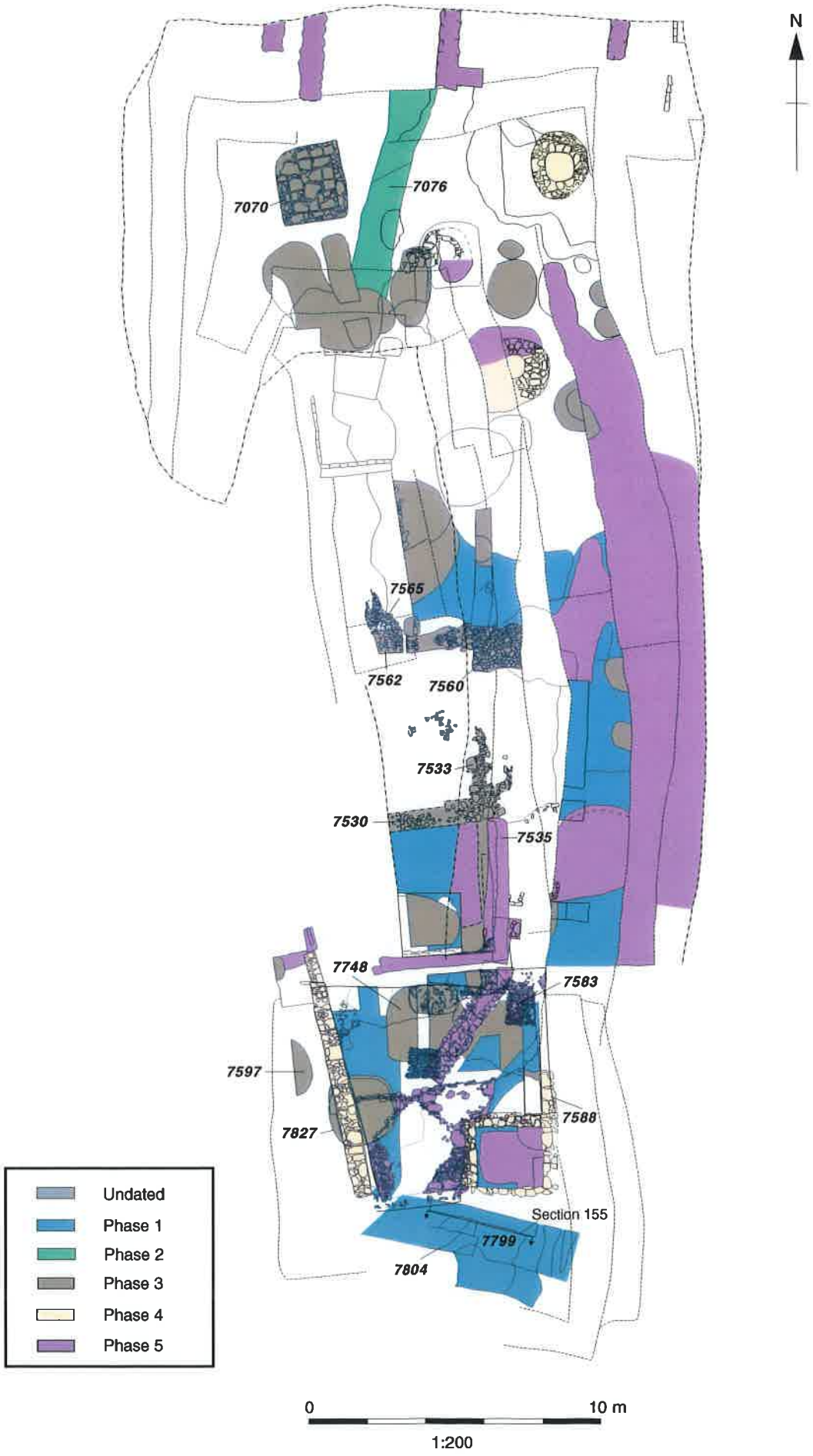

Figure 5: Cinema Site principal archaeological features (all phases)

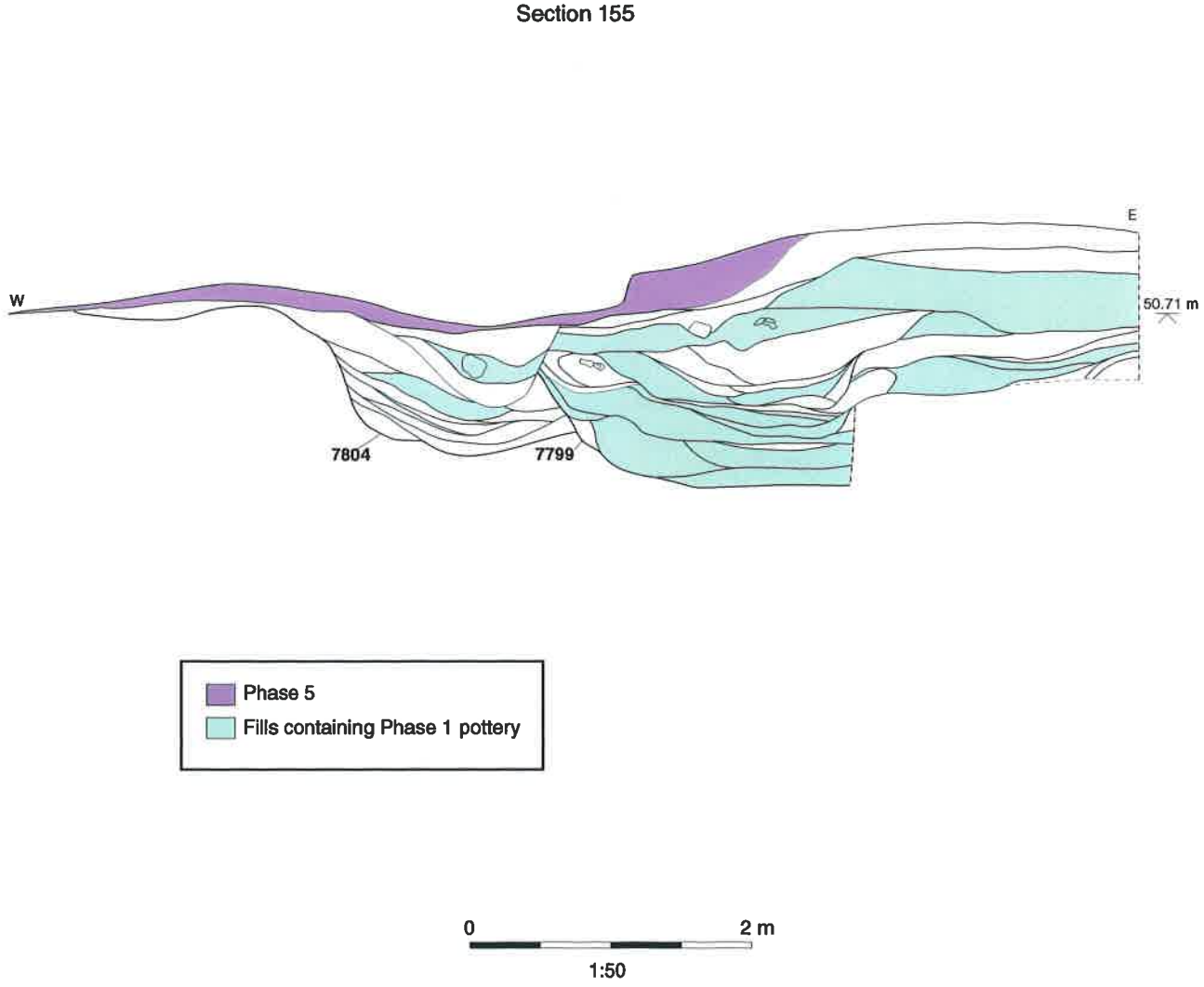

Figure 6: Section 155, ditches 7804 and 7799

Oxford Archaeology

Janus House
Osney Mead
Oxford OX2 0ES

t: (0044) 01865 263800
f: (0044) 01865 793496
e: info@oxfordarch.co.uk
w:www.oxfordarch.co.uk

Oxford Archaeology North

Storey Institute
Meeting House Lane
Lancaster LA1 1TF

t: (0044) 01524 541000
f: (0044) 01524 848606
e: lancinfo@oxfordarch.co.uk
w:www.oxfordarch.co.uk

Director: David Jennings, BA MIFA FSA

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Oxford Archaeological Unit
Janus House, Osney Mead, Oxford OX2 0ES