



Tinbergen Building, Oxford: Chemistry Teaching Lab Flues

Archaeological Watching Brief Report

June 2020

Client: Oxford University Fixed Assets Limited

Issue No: 1

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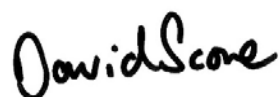
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Tinbergen Building, Oxford: Chemistry Teaching Lab Flues

Archaeological Watching Brief Report

Written by Adam Fellingham

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Summary

Oxford Archaeology was commissioned by Oxford University Fixed Assets Limited to undertake a watching brief of the proposed relocated Chemistry Teaching Lab Fume Extract Plant Room and Flues for the Tinbergen Building, Parks Road, Oxford.

The watching brief was undertaken over nine days during January and February 2020 and consisted of five test pits and an area of 15m by 14.45m to a depth of 0.30m below the ground level strip for a pile mat.

The site was located in an area that had the potential to contain significant archaeological deposits relating to the Royalist defences of Oxford during the Civil War. However, no archaeological deposits of significance were excavated during the watching brief.

Acknowledgements

Oxford Archaeology would like to thank Oxford University Fixed Assets Limited for commissioning this project. Thanks are also extended to David Radford who monitored the work on behalf of Oxford City Council.

The project was managed for Oxford Archaeology by Ben Ford, MCIFA. The fieldwork was directed by Emma Winter. Digitizing was carried out by Matt Bradley and Magdalena Wachnik. Thanks are also extended to the teams of OA staff that prepared the archive under the management of Nicola Scott.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Scope of work

- 1.1.1 Oxford Archaeology (OA) was commissioned by Oxford University Fixed Assets Limited to undertake a watching brief during the construction of the proposed relocated Chemistry Teaching Lab Fume Extract Plant Room and Flues for the Tinbergen Building, Parks Road, Oxford. Henceforth known as site.
- 1.1.2 The work was undertaken as a condition of Planning Permission (Planning Ref. 19/01636/FUL). Although the Local Planning Authority did not set a brief for the work, David Radford (Oxford City Archaeologist) was supplied with an advice note in July 2019 and subsequent discussions established the scope of the work required. This document outlines how OA implemented the specified requirements.
- 1.1.3 All work was undertaken in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Excavation* (2014) and local and national planning policies.

1.2 Location, topography and geology

- 1.2.1 The site is located on the northern edge of the University Sports Club playing field, on the current cricket practice nets, immediately to the south of the Tinbergen Building. The site is centered on NGR SP 5185 0687.
- 1.2.2 The underlying geology comprises of Northmoor Sand and Gravel (the Second Gravel Terrace, which overlies Oxford Clay (BGS 2020).

1.3 Archaeological and historical background

- 1.3.1 The archaeological and historical background of the site has been described in detail in the desk-based assessment produced by Oxford Archaeology in 2015 (OA 2015) and an addendum to the desk-based assessment was written in 2019 (OA 2019) and will not be reproduced here.

2 WATCHING BRIEF AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

2.1 Aims

2.1.1 The general aims of the watching brief were to mitigate against effects on any potential surviving archaeological deposits and/or features.

2.2 Specific aims and objectives

2.2.1 The specific aims and objectives of the watching brief were:

- i. To determine or confirm the general nature of any remains present.
- ii. To determine or confirm the approximate date or date range of any remains, by means of artefactual or other evidence.
- iii. To make available the results of the investigation.

2.3 Methodology

2.3.1 Archaeological mitigation took place as an intermittent watching brief between January and February 2020. The works consisted of two phases of test pits for the location of services and an area strip for a pile mat. Spoil was monitored in order to recover artefacts, but none were retrieved. Context numbers that were assigned during the watching brief were continuous across all test pits and area strip.

Test Pits

2.3.2 All test pits were marked out according to the locations and dimensions as shown on Figure 2 and set out in Appendix A. All test pits were hand excavated to various depth to locate the services within the site under archaeological supervision as required.

Pile mat

2.3.3 The area strip extended over an area of 15 x 14.45m and was excavated by a mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless bucket, under archaeological supervision as required. Machining continued in spits down to an overall depth of 0.30m or the first significant archaeological horizon, depending upon which was encountered first.

3 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Introduction and presentation of results

3.1.1 The results of the watching brief are presented below. No archaeological deposits of significance were excavated during the watching brief. The full details of all trenches with dimensions and depths of all deposits can be found in Appendix A.

3.2 General soils and ground conditions

3.2.1 Ground conditions throughout the watching brief were generally good, and the site remained relatively dry throughout.

3.2.2 The soil sequence was fairly uniform between the test pits and the area strip. The natural geology of sands and gravels was overlain by either a buried subsoil (0.35m thick) or modern deposits (0.20m to 0.35m thick). These were in turn overlain by a series of modern deposits consisting of tarram and hardcore (0.20m to 0.35m thick). This was overlain by topsoil (0.20m to 0.30m thick).

3.2.3 No archaeological deposits or features were present.

3.3 Significance

3.3.1 The watching brief was undertaken in an area that contained potentially significant archaeological deposits relating to the outer line of the Royalist defences of Oxford during the Civil War in the 17th century. However, no archaeological deposits of significance were excavated during the watching brief.

APPENDIX A TEST PIT AND CONTEXT INVENTORY

Test Pit and Area Dimensions				
Test Pit	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Orientation
1	2.50	1	1	NW-SE
2	2.50	1	1	NW-SE
3	2	1	1	NW-SE
4	2	1	1	NW-SE
5	3	1	1	NW-SE
6	2.50	1	1	NW-SE
Area	15	14.45	0.30	NW-SE

Contexts						
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
100	Layer	1	0.20-0.30	Topsoil	-	-
101	Layer	1	-	Natural	-	-
102	Layer	1	0.22	Tarram and hardcore	-	-
103	Cut	1	0.30	Service Trench	-	-
104	Fill	1	0.30	Fill of [103]	-	-
105	Cut	1	1	Flowerbed	-	-
106	Fill	1	1	Fill of [105]	-	-
107	Cut	1	0.30	Service trench	-	-
108	Fill	1	0.30	Fill of [107]	-	-
109	Layer	1	0.30	Tarram and hardcore	-	-
110	Layer	1	0.35	Buried subsoil	-	-
111	Layer	1	0.20	Tarram and hardcore	-	-
112	Layer	1	0.35	Tarram and hardcore	-	-
113	Cut	1	0.30	Service trench	-	-
114	Fill	1	0.30	Fill of [113]	-	-

APPENDIX B BIBLIOGRAPHY

BGS, 2020 Geology of Britain Viewer,
<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>, British Geological Survey Online

OA, 2015 Tinbergen Building, South Parks Road, Oxford, Desk-Based Assessment, Oxford Archaeology unpublished client report

OA, 2019 Tinbergen Building, South Parks Road, Oxford, Addendum to 2015 Desk-Based Assessment, Oxford Archaeology unpublished client report

APPENDIX C

SITE SUMMARY DETAILS / OASIS REPORT FORM

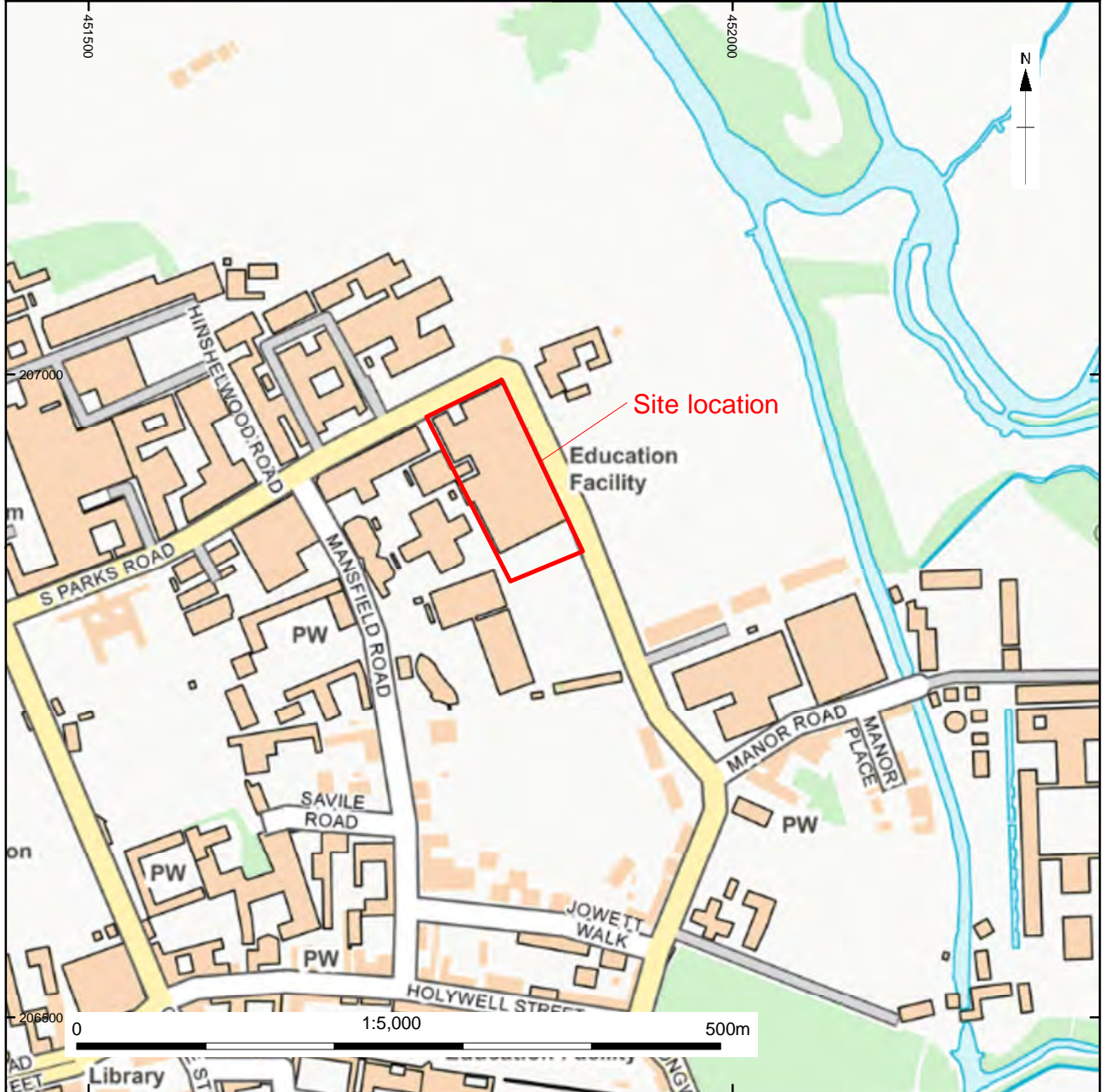
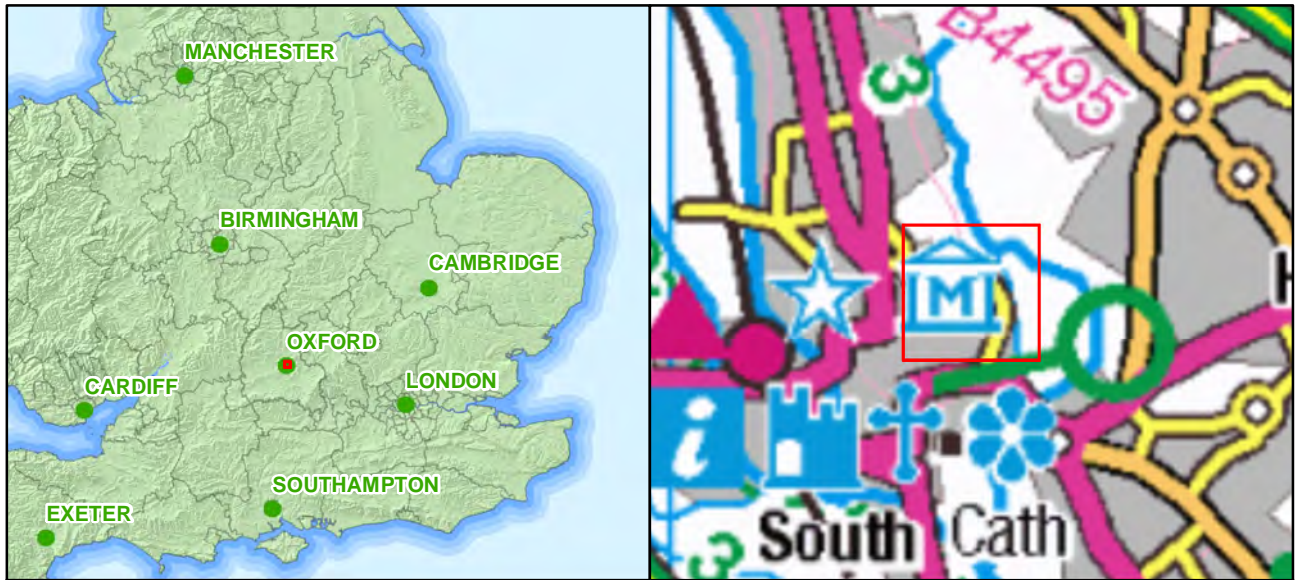
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Site code: OXTBB19
Grid Reference NGR SP 5185 0687
Type: Watching Brief
Date and duration: January to February 2020, 9 days

Location of archive: The archive is currently held at Oxford Archaeology, Janus House, Osney Mead, Oxford, OX2 0ES, and will be deposited with Oxfordshire County Museum Services in due course, under the following accession number: OXCMS:2019.151

Summary of Results: Oxford Archaeology was commissioned by Oxford University Fixed Assets Limited to undertake a watching brief of the proposed relocated Chemistry Teaching Lab Fume Extract Plant Room and Flues for the Tinbergen Building, Parks Road, Oxford.

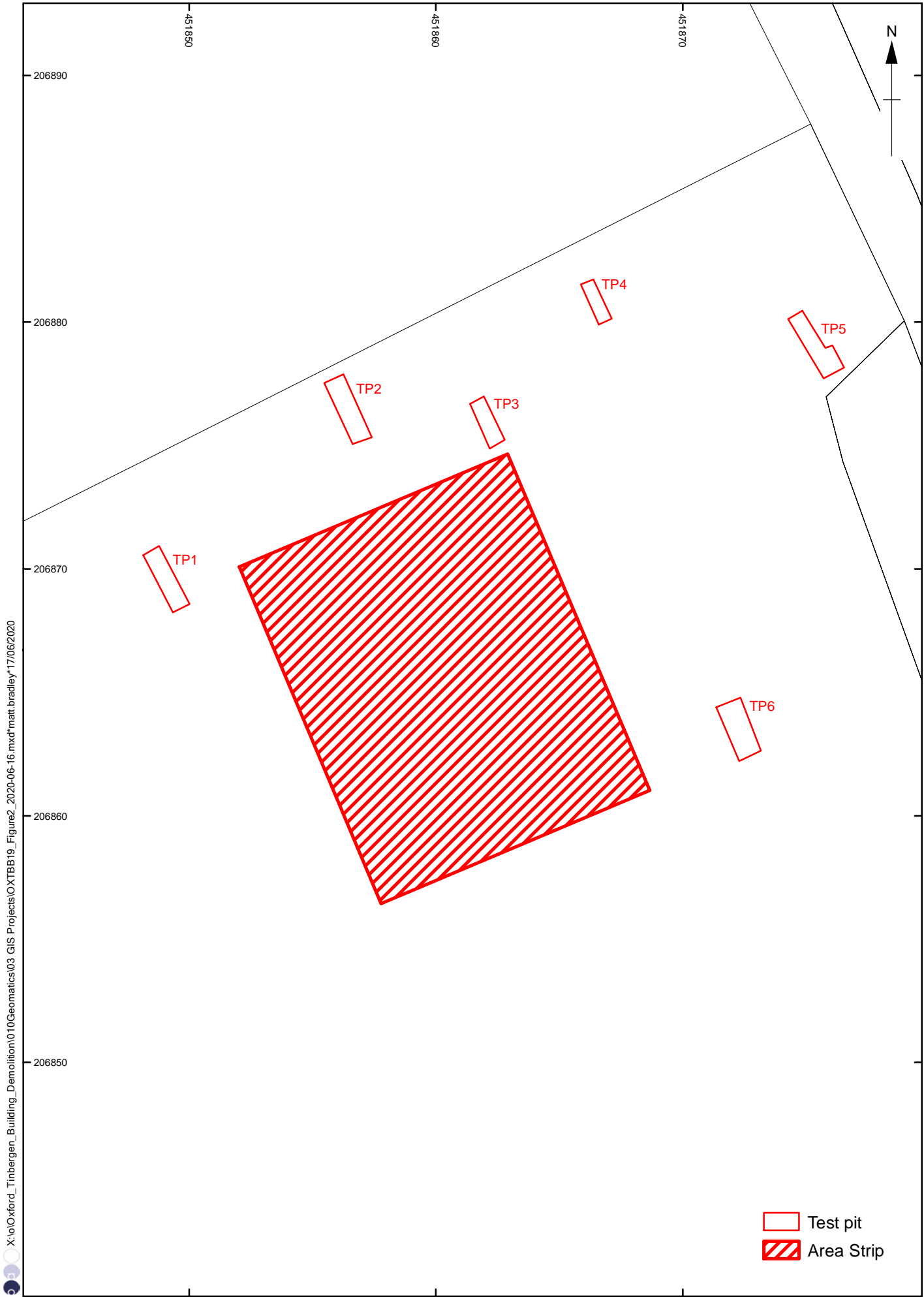
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The site was located in an area that contained potentially significant archaeological deposits relating to the Royalist defences of Oxford during the Civil War. However, no archaeological deposits of significance were excavated during the watching brief.



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Figure 1: Site location



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Figure 2: Test pit and area locations



Plate 1: Test Pit 2



Plate 2: Test Pit 3



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