

CAB International Archaeological Watching Brief

Summary

The Oxford Archaeological Unit carried out a watching brief of the construction of a new car park at CAB International, at SU 614 888, in September 1993, on behalf of Oxfordshire County Council. There was one possible archaeological feature and many finds from the ploughsoil.

Background

The new car park lies to the N of Grims Ditch, which is probably an Iron Age tribal boundary aligned E-W into the Chilterns. To the W, on either side of the Thames, are Bronze Age and Neolithic sites. Prehistoric material has been washed down Ice Hill to the E of the site (observations of the Wallingford Bypass 1985-92).

Results

One archaeological feature was recorded in a drainage trench. The observed stripping elsewhere for the car park was not deep enough to reveal the untruncated natural subsoil.

The feature (Fig. 1 SU 61190 88205) was 50 m to the N of the line of Grims Ditch. It was 1.2 m wide and 0.3 m deep but overlain by an old ploughsoil. The principal fill of the feature was a dark grey/black silt with frequent snail shells. The feature did not appear to be linear (this was investigated by small sondages and probing). A selection of flintwork and post-medieval pottery was recovered from inspecting the excavated spoil. Few finds were recovered from surface collection on the old ploughsoil overlying the feature.

Conclusions

The fill of the feature was very different to the fills of the prehistoric features under the bank of Grims Ditch. The feature may not be very old and was truncated by ploughing. The finds from the modern ploughsoil are similar to those recovered from the watching brief on the Wallingford Bypass from the ploughsoil washed down Ice Hill. The old ploughsoil contained few finds but including those of the late 19th century.

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Concentration of artefacts

