

Oxford City and County Archaeological Forum- Oxford City Report April 2012

Update on work from last year

Turl Bar Lift Pit, Turl Street

Further to the previous OCCAF summary for this small lift pit excavation the pottery report has been enhanced. The excavation investigated a sequence of pits associated with domestic dumping activity and an 18th century latrine pit. The pottery report highlights a number of rare pottery types and decorations including a small unglazed decorated sherd of Late Saxon-Medieval Oxford ware (OXY c 1075-1300), a sherd of unglazed Saintonge whiteware (OXCC c 1250-1400), a sherd of Coarse Cotswold-type ware (OXBR, 11th-12th century) and a sherd of highly decorated Brill copy of a 'Cistercian'-type ware cup (OXBX c 1450-1625). A note on the pottery will be published in South Midlands Archaeology.

Nos. 123-127 Walton Street and Nos. 32 and 32A Little Clarendon Street

Between October and November 2011 historic building recording was undertaken at Nos. 123-127 Walton Street and Nos. 32 and 32A Little Clarendon Street by the CgMs Limited. The buildings ranged in date from the mid 19th to mid 20th century and had a history of mixed retail and residential use.

Longwall Quadrangle, Magdalen College

Between August and September 2011 an evaluation, watching brief on geo-technical pits and geophysical survey were undertaken by Oxford Archaeology at Magdalen College. A trench within Longwall Quadrangle revealed six tightly spaced graves containing the articulated skeletons of men, women and children buried in a previously unknown inhumation cemetery. Recovered pottery indicated that the cemetery was in use from the mid to late 12th century possibly until the 15th century. The available archaeological, documentary and cartographic evidence suggests that this cemetery was associated with the 1st and 2nd sites of the Hospital of St John. Elsewhere the investigation revealed two large medieval pits and parts of two post-medieval stone-built basements associated with tenements fronting onto the High Street (formerly Bridge Street). South of the New Library a well-made medieval or early post-medieval stone surface was recorded, overlain with multiple resurfacing layers dating into the 17th century. The alignment of the surfaces corresponds to a post-medieval lane leading the entrance of Magdalen College known as 'Gravel Walk'.



Medieval burials in Longwall Quadrangle, Magdalen College

Brewery Gate Public House, St Thomas' Street

Between December 2011 and February 2012 historic building recording and a watching brief were undertaken by John Moore Heritage Services at the Brewery Gate public house prior to its conversion for residential use. The former pub, built in 1896, was notable for its tasting room, intact outbuildings and for its relationship with the nearby Lion Brewery. The watching brief noted only 19th century make-up layers.

19 St Andrew's Lane, Headington

In January John Moore Heritage Services carried out an archaeological evaluation at 19 St Andrew's Lane, Headington. The evaluation recorded a post-medieval or early modern well and a series of pits filled with dump deposits containing animal bone, late medieval and early post-medieval pottery and brick. In addition to this domestic refuse green staining around the sides of the pits indicated that they had once also contained significant quantities of cess. At least six postholes from an unidentified structure possibly post-dating the pits were also noted.

St Edward's School, Woodstock Road

In January John Moore Heritage Services carried out an archaeological evaluation on land within the grounds of St Edward's School, Woodstock Road. The work was undertaken because of the potential for prehistoric remains in this area. No significant archaeological features were encountered.

Nos. 6-7 High Street (former Ryman's Stationers)

In February three test pits were excavated in the basement of the Nos. 6-7 High Street by Oxford Archaeology. The pits revealed that urban stratigraphy survived below the current basement floor for approximately 700mm down to natural gravel and also cut into the gravel. Following discussions with the applicant the proposed ground reduction in this area will not now be implemented. The test pits revealed a number of medieval pits containing domestic and butchery waste, demolition material and a stone drain or wall foundation. The backfill of one feature contained a fired clay annular discoidal loomweight of likely early-middle Anglo-Saxon date (c 400-850).



Fired clay annular discoidal loomweight from 6-7 High Street

Oxford Golf Club, Hilltop Road

Between February and March a watching brief was conducted by John Moore Heritage Services during ground reduction in advance of the installation of three new

ponds at Oxford Golf Club. A number of features were recorded, of likely prehistoric or early Roman date, related to a possible nearby settlement with an iron working industrial zone. A large pit was excavated that contained hammerscale within its fill. Close by was another pit with flue and associated with postholes and stake holes. The burnt stones found in the flue indicate this pit also had a possible industrial iron working function. Other postholes were recorded across the general area of the new pond but formed no discernable shape or pattern which could be assigned with confidence to any individual structures.

Land adjacent to 43 Jericho Street, Jericho

In March John Moore Heritage Services carried out an archaeological evaluation on land adjacent to 43 Jericho Street. A single trench recorded a series of modern and early modern made ground deposits overlaying the fills of several cut features including a pit and a posthole. These features contained medieval, post-medieval and early modern pottery, clay pipe and other finds, and were probably 19th century in date.

No 37 Lonsdale Road

In March John Moore Heritage Services carried out an evaluation in the garden of the Rectory of St Michael and All Angels Church, Lonsdale Road. The evaluation was undertaken because of the potential for Roman and Saxon remains. No significant archaeological features were present.

Nos. 33-35 George St

In March Oxford Archaeology undertook a watching brief at 33-35 George Street during works to the basement. A partial profile of the city ditch was recorded. The removal of the some of the basement slab exposed natural gravel.