

CONTENTS

List of Illustrations	2
Glossary	3
Summary	4
1. INTRODUCTION	5
1.1 <i>Introduction</i>	5
1.2 <i>The Study Area</i>	5
1.3 <i>Archaeological and Historical Background</i>	5
1.4 <i>Archaeological Specification and Methods</i>	6
2. EVALUATION RESULTS	7
2.1 <i>General</i>	7
2.2 <i>Trench 1A&B</i>	7
2.3 <i>Trench 2</i>	8
3. ASSESSMENT OF RESULTS	9
3.1 <i>Date and Interpretation of Archaeological Deposits</i>	9
3.2 <i>Survival and Extent of Archaeological Deposits</i>	10
3.3 <i>Effectiveness of Evaluation Strategy</i>	10
4. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	11
5. BIBLIOGRAPHY	11
ILLUSTRATIONS	
APPENDIX 1	Trench descriptions
APPENDIX 2	The pottery

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

- Fig.1 Location Plan
- Fig.2 Location of Trenches
- Fig.3 Trench 1B: plan and section
- Fig.4 Trench 2: plan
- Fig.5 Trench 2: sections

GLOSSARY OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ARCHAEOLOGY

For the purposes of this project, archaeology is taken to mean the study of past human societies through their material remains, from prehistoric times to the modern era. No rigid upper date limit has been set, but AD 1900 is used as a general cut-off point.

CAT

Cotswold Archaeological Trust

MEDIEVAL

Taken here as the period from the Norman Invasion in AD 1066 to approximately AD 1550.

NATURAL

Defined in archaeological terms this refers to the undisturbed natural geology of a site, eg. Lower Lias clay, river terrace gravels etc.

NGR

National Grid Reference given from the Ordnance Survey Grid.

OD

Ordnance Datum; used to express a given height above mean sea level.

ROMANO-BRITISH

The period from the Roman invasion of AD 43 to a date generally agreed to be AD 410 by which time there was a fusion of indigenous late Iron Age traditions with Roman culture.

SUMMARY

Cotswold Archaeological Trust (CAT) was commissioned by Mr M. Wentworth to undertake an archaeological evaluation on land to the rear of Wentworth Supermarket, 27 High Street, Stanford-in-the-Vale, Oxfordshire.

The evaluation indicates that Roman and medieval deposits, comprising linear ditches and small pits, survive across the study area. The initial phase of activity is dated to the 2nd to 4th century. The majority of the remaining archaeological deposits are dated to the 4th century. One medieval rubbish pit, dating to the 12th to 13th century was also revealed.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 In January 1996 Cotswold Archaeological Trust (CAT) was commissioned by Mr M. Wentworth to undertake an archaeological evaluation on land to the rear of Wentworth Supermarket, 27 High Street, Stanford-in-the-Vale, Oxfordshire. The archaeological evaluation was required in accordance with Planning Policy Guidance Note 16 (PPG16) as a condition of planning permission being granted.

1.1.2 The work was carried out in accordance with the brief prepared by Mr H. Coddington, Deputy County Archaeological Officer, Oxfordshire County Council; and in compliance with the '*Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluations*' issued by the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA).

1.2 The Study Area

1.2.1 The site of the proposed development is located off High Street and Marlborough Lane, within Stanford-in-the-Vale, and is centred on NGR SU 34349321 (Fig.1). It comprises 0.25 hectares of redundant warehousing and glasshouses, and has also been utilised as a parking area.

1.2.2 The underlying geology of the area is silty-sand overlying Jurassic Corallian beds. The study area lies at approximately 71m OD

1.3 Archaeological and Historical Background

1.3.1 The study area lies within the core of the historic settlement of Stanford-in-the-Vale, which dates to at least AD 1086, when it is recorded in the Domesday Book.

1.3.2 Romano-British artefacts which suggest the presence of a settlement or farmstead, dating to the 2nd and 3rd centuries, was located in the vicinity have been identified to the south and east of the study area

1.4 *Archaeological Specification and Methods*

1.4.1 A project design, issued by Cotswold Archaeological Trust, to evaluate the archaeological potential of the study area, was approved by Mr. H. Coddington, Deputy County Archaeological Officer, Oxfordshire County Council.

1.4.2 The primary objective of the archaeological evaluation was to 'establish the presence/absence, extent, character, quality and date of any archaeological deposits' within the proposed development area.

1.4.3 The evaluation comprised the excavation of two trenches. Both trenches were excavated by mechanical excavator equipped with a toothless grading bucket. All machining was carried out under archaeological supervision to the top of the first significant archaeological deposits or the natural substrate, whichever was encountered first.

1.4.4 Where archaeological deposits were encountered they were sampled by hand to meet the aims as stated within the brief, and in accordance with the CAT *Field Recording Manual*.

1.4.5 All artefacts recovered were catalogued and analysed in accordance with the CAT *Finds Recording Manual*. Particular emphasis was given to potentially datable artefacts such as pottery. A full written, drawn and photographic record was kept of each trench.

1.4.6 The finds and site archive will, subject to agreement with the legal landowner, be deposited with the County Museums Service (Oxfordshire Museums) under accession number OXCMS:1996.14.

2. EVALUATION RESULTS

2.1 General

2.1.1 Descriptions of all features recorded within the evaluation trenches are contained within Appendix A. Brief descriptions of all significant features are presented within this section from the earliest deposits encountered to the latest.

2.1.2 The location of both trenches underwent slight revision to take into account vehicle access and standing glasshouses. The modified trench positions were located according to the plan shown as figure 2.

2.1.3 A modern yard surface, represented by tarmacadam and rough aggregate hardstanding, was encountered across the study area. The natural silty-sand substrate was revealed throughout the proposed development area between 70.74m OD and 70.97m OD.

2.2 Trench 1 (fig.3)

2.2.1 Trench 1 was orientated north-west to south-east and totalled 15m in length. Its location was modified due to site access and the presence of reinforced concrete, and as a result it was excavated in two separate parts, Trench 1A and Trench 1B.

2.2.2 No archaeological deposits were located within Trench 1A. A modern pipe trench [106] was revealed orientated approximately east-west.

2.2.3 Within Trench 1B, two ditches were recorded. The earliest identified was ditch [108], which cut natural substrate (105) at the south-eastern limit of the trench. The ditch was orientated approximately north-south and measured 0.45m in width and 0.55m in depth. It contained a single clay fill (109) from which two sherds of pottery, broadly dated as Roman, were retrieved.

2.2.4 Ditch [110] was orientated north-east to south-west and measured 0.4m in width and 0.15m in depth. No artefactual material was retrieved from clay fill (111). Due to the confines of the trench, the relationship between ditch [108] and [110] remains unresolved.

2.2.5 Both ditch [108] and [110] were sealed by a compacted cultivation soil (103), in turn overlain by modern tarmac hardstanding.

2.3 Trench 2 (Fig.4 & 5)

2.3.1 Trench 2 was 'L' shaped, its southern arm orientated north-west to south-east and its northern arm orientated north-east to south-west. The trench measured a total of 20m in length and contained the remains of two pits and three linear ditches.

2.3.2 The earliest feature revealed was ditch [208]. It was orientated north-east to south-west, and measured 2.9m in width and was fully excavated to a depth of 0.5m. It contained two distinct fills, primary fill (216) and secondary fill (209). Pottery retrieved from the fills was dated to the 2nd to 4th centuries. The ditch had been recut by ditch [210]. Ditch [210] measured 1.4m in width and 0.65m in depth and contained a homogenous silty-clay fill (211) from which a small assemblage of 4th century pottery was retrieved.

2.3.3 Ditch [212] was identified 4.5m from the northern limit of the trench. It was orientated approximately north-south, and measured 0.5m in width and 0.2m in depth. It contained a silty-clay fill (213) from which one sherd of pottery, broadly dated to the Roman period, was retrieved.

2.3.4 A square pit [206], measuring 1m in width and 0.2m in depth, was identified 0.3m east of ditch [212]. A small assemblage of 4th century pottery was retrieved from silty-clay fill (207). It was cut on its northern side by pit [204].

2.3.5 Subcircular pit [204] measured approximately 1m in diameter and was fully excavated to a depth of 0.2m. Seven sherds of unabraded late 12th/13th century cooking pot and a small assemblage of butchered animal bone were retrieved from silty-clay fill (205).

2.3.6 All the archaeological deposits identified were sealed by a compacted cultivation soil (202), which was in turn sealed by rough aggregate levelling deposit (201).

3. ASSESSMENT OF RESULTS

3.1 Date and Interpretation of Archaeological Deposits

3.1.1 The evaluation indicates that Roman and medieval deposits, comprising linear ditches and small pits, survive within the proposed development area. The archaeological deposits encountered are consistent with the suggested presence of a Romano-British settlement or farmstead to the south and/or east of the study area, where artefactual evidence dating to the 2nd and 3rd centuries has previously been recovered (Coddington 1995).

3.1.2 Within the study area, three phases of activity can be provisionally postulated. The initial phase is represented by ditch [208], and is dated to the 2nd to 4th centuries. The large width of ditch [208] suggests this feature may represent a significant land boundary.

3.1.3 The second phase of activity is dominated by activity dating to the 4th century. The recutting of [210] along the same alignment as [208] indicates that this established land boundary was still functional during the 4th century. Artefactual evidence from square pit [206], which contained exclusively 4th century pottery, further suggests that domestic occupation continued into the 4th century rather than ending during the 3rd century as had previously been indicated by the Romano-British artefacts to the south and east of the development area. The three narrow ditches, [108], [110] and [212], may provisionally be interpreted as stock enclosures associated with the settlement,

although other functions such as land boundaries or drainage cannot be ruled out.

3.1.4 The third phase is represented by medieval pit [204]. The unabraded nature of the medieval pottery and the presence of butchered bone within the pit suggests medieval occupation within close vicinity to the development area. As the study area lies less than 300m from the medieval core of Stanford-in-the-Vale, it is likely the domestic occupation was focused upon this settlement. However, the pit may also represent a domestic rubbish pit within the backlands of any medieval settlement fronting Marlborough Lane.

3.2 Survival and Extent of Archaeological Deposits

3.2.1 It is clear from the evaluation that archaeological deposits survive across 60% of the study area. The remains are more extensive within Trench 2 where no modern intrusions have disturbed the deposits. Within Trench 1B, archaeological deposits were revealed, but may have been damaged outside the bounds of the trench by the modern, reinforced concrete within the tarmacadam surface. No archaeological features were encountered within Trench 1A, on the western limit of the proposed development .

3.3 Effectiveness of Evaluation Strategy

3.3.1 The evaluation has shown that archaeological deposits of Romano-British and medieval origin survive across the study area. The full nature and extent of the archaeological resource can only become clear with further archaeological works. However, the fact that archaeological remains have been found in both evaluation trenches indicates that the methodology employed has been successful.

4. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Cotswold Archaeological Trust would like to thank Mr. H. Coddington, Deputy County Archaeologist, Oxfordshire County Council, and Dr. J. Timby for their assistance during the course of this project.

The fieldwork was carried out by Cliff Bateman, Jon Matthews and Nick Turner. The illustrations were drawn by Rick Morton.

5. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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OCC 1995 *Brief for Archaeological Field Evaluation: Land to the Rear of Wentworth Supermarket, Stanford-in-the-Vale, Oxon.*

APPENDIX 1

Trench Descriptions

Note: Stratigraphic descriptions are given from the earliest to the latest deposits. Cut features are designated by square brackets thus; [000], all other deposits/layers are in round brackets; (000). All stated depths are given from the present ground level. Heights are based on the bench mark located on the Old Village Hall. The level was taken to be 71.45m OD.

Trench 1A

Natural sandy clays (105) were encountered at a depth of 0.72m below present ground level.

Pipe trench [106]: Linear cut containing modern sewerage pipe, 0.5m in width and at least 0.5m in depth. Contains fill (107).

Subsoil (104): Orange-brown silty-clay, 0.11m in depth.

Topsoil/Cultivation Horizon (103): Mid grey-brown silty-clay, 0.31m in depth.

Levelling deposit (102): rubble and concrete levelling for (101), 0.22m in depth.

Modern tarmacadam (101): 0.08m in depth.

Trench 1B

Natural sandy-clays (105) were encountered at a depth of 0.73m below present ground level.

Ditch [108]: Linear cut 0.48m in width and 0.22m deep, steep sided with flat base. Contains mottled orange / grey-brown clay fill (109).

Ditch [110]: Linear cut 0.4m in width and 0.15m in depth. Contains mid grey-brown clay fill (111).

Subsoil (104); Orange-brown silty-clay, 0.11m in depth.

Topsoil/Cultivation Horizon (103): Mid grey-brown silty-clay, 0.31m in depth.

Levelling deposit (102): Rubble and concrete levelling (101), 0.22m in depth.

Modern tarmacadam (101): 0.08m in depth.

Trench 2

Natural sandy clays (214) were encountered at a depth of 0.75m below present ground level.

Ditch [208]: Linear cut 2.9m in width and 0.5m in depth, steep sided. Contains primary fill of weathered sandy-clay (216) and secondary fill (209) of grey-brown silty-clay.

Ditch [210]: Recut within ditch [208], 1.4m in width and 0.65m in depth, steep sided with rounded base. Contains fill (211), grey-brown silty-clay.

Ditch [212]: Linear cut 0.5m in width and 0.2m in depth, V shaped profile. Contains fill (213) orange-brown silty-clay.

Pit [206]: Square shaped pit, 1m in width, steep sided (northern edge vertical) with flat base. Contains fill (207) dark grey-brown silty-clay.

Pit [204]: Subcircular, 1m in diameter and 0.2m in depth, sides and base gently sloping, cuts pit [206]. Contains fill (205), orange-brown silty-clay.

Subsoil (203): Orange-brown silty-clay, 0.12m in depth.

Topsoil/Cultivation Horizon (202): Mid grey-brown silty-clay, 0.33m in depth.

Levelling deposit (102): rubble and concrete levelling, 0.30m in depth.

APPENDIX 2

Pottery Assessment by Jane Timby

Summary

A small group of just 34 sherds were recovered from six contexts dating to the later Roman and medieval periods. In terms of condition the sherds were fair, the pieces were slightly abraded and of average size, typical of secondary refuse material. The medieval sherds from (207) were in good, fresh condition. Although the *terminus post quem* for the contexts falls in the later Roman period, two or three sherds may be of slightly earlier Roman date (2nd century), suggesting occupation of at least 2nd-4th century duration in the immediate locality.

Catalogue

Trench 1

- (109) Two sherds. Date: Roman
x1 grey ware; x1 black sandy abraded ?BB1

Trench 2

- (205) Seven sherds. Date: medieval, Late 12th/13th century
x4 Cooking pot with limestone temper, everted thumbled rim; x3 sand and flint tempered cooking pot (Newbury fabric B).
- (207) Three sherds. Date: Roman, 4th century
x1 Oxfordshire white/red slipped oxidised ware, bowl p24; x2 late grey wares.
- (209) Twelve sherds. Date: Roman, 2nd to 4th century
x4 fine hard blue-grey ware, hooked-rim jar; x1 BB1; x4 oxidised ware; x1 samian; x1 micaceous black ware; x1 grey sandy ware.
- (211) Nine sherds. Date: Roman, 4th century
x1 rim from large grog-tempered storage jar; x1 burnt samian; x3 Dorset black burnished ware; x2 fine grey ware; x1 fine oxidised ware; x1 coarse shelly ware.
- (213) One sherd. Date: Roman
x1 grey ware

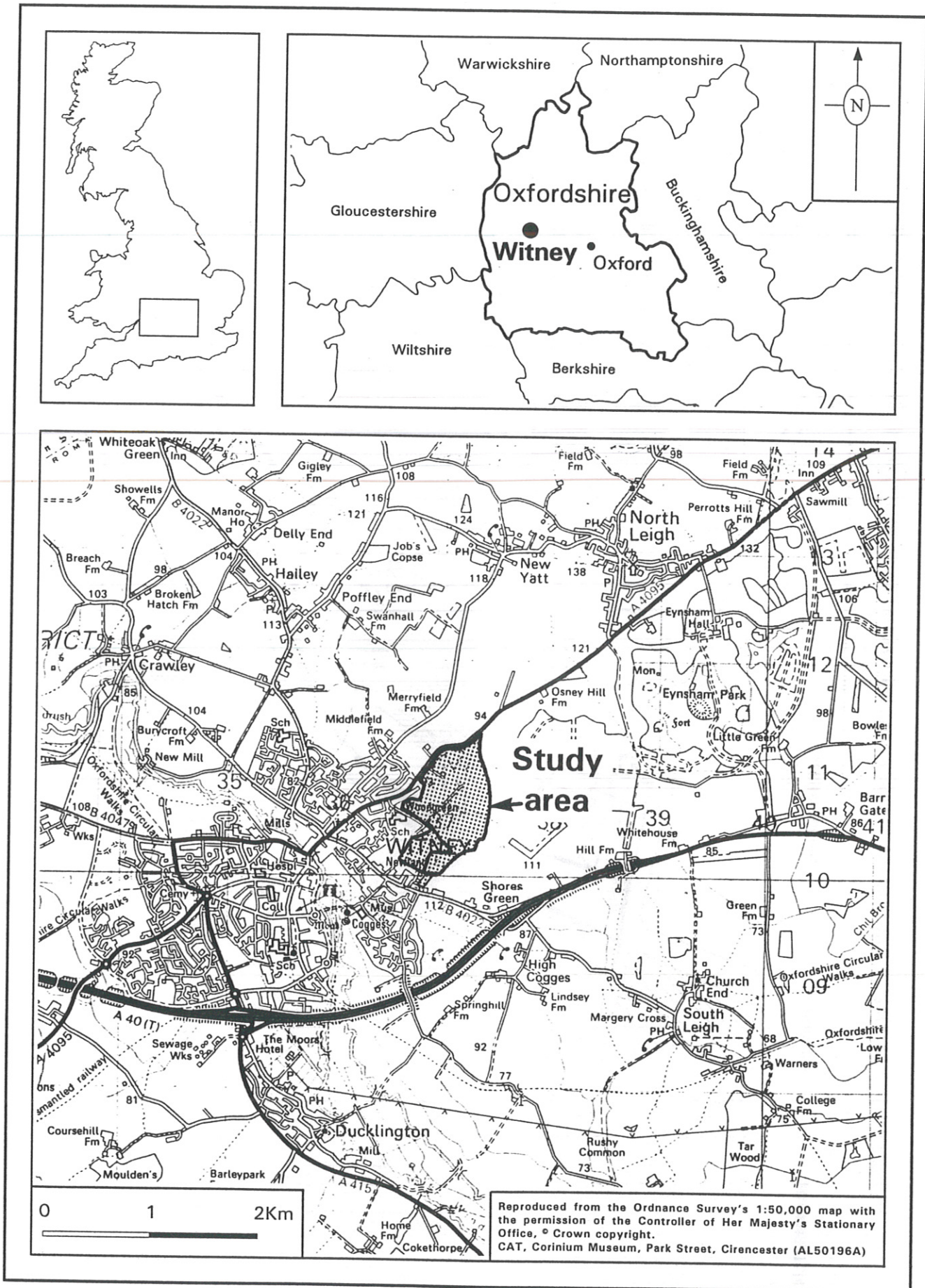


Fig. 1 Location plan



Fig. 2 Location of trenches in relation to geophysical, fieldwalking & aerial photographic survey results



Fig. 3 Proposed mitigation strategy