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Aldi Store, Banbury Road Chipping Norton, Oxfordshire

Archaeological Watching Brief



Oxford Museum Service Accession Number: OXCMS 2015.148

Planning Application reference: 13/1547/P/FP

Ref: 102681.01

August 2015



**Aldi Store, Banbury Road
Chipping Norton, Oxfordshire**

Archaeological Watching Brief

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August 2015

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Quality Assurance

Project Code	102681	Accession Code	OXCMS 2015.148	Client Ref.	
Planning Application Ref.	13/1547/P/FP	Ordnance Survey (OS) national grid reference (NGR)	431880 227585		

Version	Status*	Prepared by	Checked and Approved By	Approver's Signature	Date
v01	E	Michael Fleming Cai Mason	Phil Andrews	<i>P. Andrews</i>	25/08/2015
File:	X:\PROJECTS\102681_Reports\102681_Chipping Norton ALDI_WB_Report				
File:					
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* I = Internal Draft; E = External Draft; F = Final

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Aldi Store, Banbury Road Chipping Norton, Oxfordshire

Archaeological Watching Brief

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Figure 1: Site location plan

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Cover: General view of the watching brief area, looking south

Plate 1: Typical deposit sequence



Aldi Store, Banbury Road Chipping Norton, Oxfordshire

Archaeological Watching Brief

Summary

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Turley, on behalf of Aldi Ltd, to undertake a watching brief during groundworks associated with the construction of a new store on land at Banbury Road, Chipping Norton, Oxfordshire (Planning Application 13/1547/P/FP), centred on National Grid reference (NGR) 431880 227585. The archaeological work was undertaken on the 27th July 2015.

No archaeological features were identified during the watching brief, but a very small assemblage of residual Romano-British and medieval pottery was recovered from the topsoil. The presence of these finds could indicate activity of these periods in the vicinity of the Site, or they may be derived from the manuring of fields or perhaps soil that has been brought to the Site more recently.

A moderate quantity of late 19th–early/mid-20th-century glass bottles were also recovered, many of which were produced for local beverage companies. These finds are derived from an adjacent quarry's use as a refuse dump prior to the 1950s.



Aldi Store, Banbury Road Chipping Norton, Oxfordshire

Archaeological Watching Brief

Acknowledgements

Wessex Archaeology would like to thank Turley for commissioning the archaeological work on behalf of Aldi Ltd. We would also like to thank Alan Williams (Senior Planner, Turley), Neil Cook, Will Turner and Mike Davis (Avonside CM), and Hugh Coddington (County Archaeologist, Oxfordshire County Council), for their assistance throughout the project.

The watching brief was undertaken by Roy Krakowicz. This report was compiled by Michael Fleming and Cai Mason, the finds reported on by Lorraine Mephram, and the illustrations produced by Karen Nichols. The project was managed for Wessex Archaeology by Andy King.



Aldi Store, Banbury Road Chipping Norton, Oxfordshire

Archaeological Watching Brief

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project background

- 1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology (WA) was commissioned by Turley to undertake an Archaeological Watching Brief during groundworks associated with the construction of a new Aldi store, with associated access, parking and landscaping (planning application ref. 13/1547/P/FP), on land at Banbury Road, Chipping Norton, Oxfordshire, centred on National Grid reference (NGR) 431880 227585 (hereafter referred to as the Site) (**Figure 1**).

1.2 Site location, topography and geology

- 1.2.1 The Site comprises an irregular 0.5 hectare parcel of land, which is bounded by Banbury Road to the north-west, Cromwell Business Centre to the east, a works yard to the south, and the rear gardens of houses fronting Cotshill Gardens to the west. The western two-thirds of the site is a former works depot, parts of which have concrete and tarmac surfaces. The eastern edge of the Site is heavily overgrown with scrub and mature trees.
- 1.2.2 The Site is located on a gentle west-facing slope, overlooking the valley of a tributary to the River Evenlode. Ground levels range between 224.4m above Ordnance Datum (aOD) near the eastern edge of the Site and 221.3m aOD in the former works depot area.
- 1.2.3 The geology comprises of Jurassic ooidal limestone of the Chipping Norton Limestone Formation, with no recorded superficial deposits (British Geological Survey 2015).

2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Introduction

- 2.1.1 The archaeological and historical background to the Site is drawn from a previous desk-based assessment (WA 2014).

2.2 Prehistoric

- 2.2.1 The evidence for prehistoric activity in the surrounding area comprises findspots of Mesolithic and Neolithic flint and Early Neolithic and Bronze Age pottery, the closest of which was found 685m to the south.
- 2.2.2 There are also three extant or destroyed Bronze Age burial mounds within 1km of the Site. The nearest, which was described by William Stukeley (1743, 12) as a 'Druid Barrow' near 'Chapel-on-the-Heath', lay approximately 380m north-west of the Site. Various cropmarks and earthworks of possible prehistoric date have also been identified, though none are particularly close to the Site.



2.3 Romano-British

- 2.3.1 Concentrations of Romano-British pottery have been found 825m to the south of the Site, and a collection of Roman coins was found 645m to the south-west, but there is no evidence of Romano-British activity in the immediate vicinity of the Site.

2.4 Anglo-Saxon

- 2.4.1 The only archaeological evidence of Anglo-Saxon activity comprises an iron spearhead that was found approximately 720m south-south-east of the Site. However, Chipping Norton certainly existed by the Late Saxon period and it is recorded in the Domesday Survey as a large settlement (*Nortone*) with 53 households and three mills. 'Chipping Norton' means 'north farm/settlement with a market' (University of Nottingham 2014).

2.5 Medieval

- 2.5.1 A motte and bailey castle was constructed in Chipping Norton immediately after the Norman Conquest in AD 1066. The castle was re-built in the 12th century and landscaped in the 19th century, but some of the earthworks of the original castle are extant. During the medieval period Chipping Norton became a prosperous town, largely as a result of the local wool trade, and there are a number of surviving medieval buildings in the town centre.
- 2.5.2 During the medieval period the Site is likely to have been agricultural land.

2.6 Post-medieval and modern

- 2.6.1 The earliest detailed cartographic depiction of the area is the Chipping Norton Inclosure Map of 1770, which shows the Site lying within a large field owned by Mr John Saunderson.
- 2.6.2 In 1836 a workhouse and associated chapel, which were designed to accommodate up to 350 people, was constructed 100m to the south-west of the Site. By the 1950s this institution had been converted to a hospital and in the 1990s it was refurbished for use as private residential accommodation.
- 2.6.3 The earliest known development within the Site boundaries is a quarry, which is depicted on the 1st edition OS map of 1881. The quarry was in-filled before 1900, but by 1922 another quarry had been opened in the north-west corner of the Site. By 1955 this had also been in-filled and replaced with a range of buildings that are identified as a 'depot' on a 1978 OS map; these buildings were demolished after 2003.
- 2.6.4 Post-medieval and modern quarrying and development is likely to have truncated parts of the Site by up to 2m. The eastern edge is probably less disturbed and there is some potential for the survival of archaeological remains in this area.

3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 3.1.1 With due regard to the ClfA's standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief (ClfA 2014a), and the design brief for the Site issued by Oxfordshire County Council (Coddington 2015), the principle aim of the archaeological watching brief was to record the archaeological resource within the works area, using appropriate methods and practices, and in compliance with the Code of conduct and other relevant by-laws of ClfA.
- 3.1.2 The project objectives for this archaeological watching brief were to:

- *to determine the presence or absence of archaeological remains, and if remains are present, to ensure their preservation by record to the highest possible standard;*
- *to confirm the approximate date or date range of the remains, by means of artefactual or other evidence;*
- *to determine or confirm the approximate extent of any remains;*
- *to determine the condition and state of preservation of the remains;*
- *to determine the degree of complexity of the horizontal and/or vertical stratigraphy present; and*
- *to prepare a report on the results of the watching brief*

4 METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

- 4.1.1 All works were carried out in accordance with the methodology stated within the *Written Scheme of Investigation* (WA 2015) and the ClfA's *Standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief* (ClfA 2014a).

4.2 Watching brief

- 4.2.1 The fieldwork consisted of the monitoring of groundwork, including ground reduction, landscaping and service runs, in previously undisturbed soils along the eastern edge of the Site (**Figure 1**).
- 4.2.2 The watching brief was undertaken by an appropriately experienced WA field archaeologist.

4.3 Recording

- 4.3.1 Wessex Archaeology's *pro forma* recording system uses a unique numbering system for individual contexts. Archaeological deposits are hand-drawn at 1:10, 1:20 or an appropriate scale, and referenced to the Ordnance Survey National Grid..
- 4.3.2 A full photographic record was maintained using digital photography. The photographic record illustrated both the detail and the general context of the monitored areas as well as the Site as a whole. Digital images have been subject to a managed quality control and curation process which has embedded appropriate metadata within the image and ensures the long term accessibility of the image set.
- 4.3.3 The survey was carried out with a Leica Viva series GNSS unit, using the OS National GPS Network through an RTK network with a 3D accuracy of 30mm or below. All survey data was recorded using the OSGB36 British National Grid coordinate system.

5 ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESULTS

- 5.1.1 The stratigraphic sequence (**Plate 1**) comprised natural limestone bedrock (**102**), overlain by a 0.1m deep layer of mixed topsoil and fragmented bedrock (**101**), which was in turn sealed by a layer of mid greyish-brown silty clay topsoil (**100**) up to 0.2m thick.
- 5.1.2 No archaeological features were uncovered, but one struck flint, one sherd of Romano-British pottery, three sherds of medieval pottery and a moderate quantity of late 19th–early/mid-20th-century glass bottles were recovered from the topsoil; the latter finds are derived from an adjacent quarry's use as a landfill site prior to the 1950s.



6 FINDS

6.1 Introduction

- 6.1.1 Finds were recovered only from topsoil context **100**, and comprise a group of 16 complete or near complete glass bottles and jars, with a few other items.

6.2 Glass vessels

- 6.2.1 The bottles and jars are all of later 19th or early to mid-20th-century date. The earliest are likely to be five beverage bottles with Codd-type closures; one is complete, but the other four have had the necks broken, quite probably by children trying to extract the marble inside the neck closure. All five bottles carry proprietary marks, and two drinks manufacturers are represented: Hitchman & Co. Ltd of Chipping Norton (four examples) and Horne Brothers of Moreton in Marsh (one example). The four Hitchman bottles were each supplied by a different bottle manufacturer: Kilner Brothers of London, Barnett & Foster of London, Cannington Shaw & Co of St Helen's, and Powell of Bristol. Hitchman & Co. Ltd are listed in trade directories between 1895 and 1911 (William Simpkins Hitchman, brewer and maltster, is listed in 1852). Horne Brothers appear in Kelly's directory for 1914, but not in 1897.
- 6.2.2 There is one other beverage bottle, with a plain neck, which carries the mark of Hunt, Edmunds & Co Ltd of Banbury, who appear in the trade directories from 1882 to 1911 (in 1852 they are listed as Hunt & Edmunds, wine and spirit merchants).
- 6.2.3 Other bottles and jars contained foodstuffs. One contained Eiffel Tower Fruit juices (powdered drinks) made by G. Foster Clark & Co. of Maidstone – Eiffel Tower was registered as a trade mark in 1891. There are two bottles of Paterson's Camp Coffee & Chicory Essence (produced from 1876), and one of Bromley's Coffee Essence, made by the Bloomsbury Works in Leeds from around 1896. One long-necked octagonal bottle carries no marks, but the form is characteristic of sauce or condiment bottles, while a small, squat, slightly flared jar is typical of meat or fish paste. There is one jam jar (1lb size).
- 6.2.4 Pharmaceuticals are represented by a bottle of Owbridge's Lung Tonic (registered as a trade mark in 1888).

6.3 Other finds

- 6.3.1 Four sherds of pottery and one piece of worked flint were found in the same, topsoil context. These were clearly residual. One sherd of pottery is Romano-British (grog-tempered) while the other three are medieval (oolitic limestone-tempered, comparable to Minety types), and probably date to the 12th or 13th centuries. All the pottery sherds are abraded.
- 6.3.2 The piece of worked flint is a small scraper of probable Bronze Age date.

7 CONCLUSION

- 7.1.1 Despite the proximity to known areas of archaeological interest within 1km of the Site and a mixed, though very small assemblage of topsoil finds, no archaeological features or deposits of pre-modern date were present. However, the presence of both Romano-British and medieval pottery hints either at activity of these periods in the vicinity, the re-deposition of soil from elsewhere in or around Chipping Norton or, and perhaps most likely given the abraded nature of the sherds, the manuring of fields.

- 7.1.2 A moderate quantity of late 19th–early/mid-20th-century glass bottles, many of which were produced for local beverage companies, was recovered from topsoil deposits within the watching brief area. These finds are derived from the adjacent quarry's use as a refuse dump prior to the 1950s.

8 STORAGE AND CURATION

8.1 Museum

- 8.1.1 The complete project archive will be deposited for long-term storage with Oxfordshire Museum under accession code OXCMS 2015.148. Prior to deposition the archive will be temporarily stored at Wessex Archaeology's offices in Salisbury under its unique Site Code of 102681.

8.2 Archive

- 8.2.1 The complete site archive, which will include paper records, photographic records, graphics and digital data, will be prepared following the standard conditions for the acceptance of excavated archaeological material by Oxfordshire Museum Service, and in general follow the nationally recommended guidelines (SMA 1995; ClfA 2014b; Brown 2011; ADS 2013).

8.3 OASIS

- 8.3.1 An OASIS online record has been initiated for the work and key fields in regard of the Watching Brief have been entered under OASIS ID **wessexar1-201131**. All appropriate parts of the OASIS online form will be completed for submission which will include an uploaded .pdf version of the entire report (a paper copy will also be included with the archive).

8.4 Discard policy

- 8.4.1 Wessex Archaeology follows the guidelines set out in *Selection, Retention and Dispersal* (SMA 1993), which allows for the discard of selected artefact and ecofact categories which are not considered to warrant any future analysis. In this instance, given the small size of the finds assemblage, its date range (mostly modern, with a few residual prehistoric, Romano-British and medieval items), and provenance (topsoil finds), retention for long-term curation is not considered to be warranted. Discard of the finds will only take place, however, after consultation with the recipient Museum. The landowner's written consent will be sought to donate any retained finds to the Museum.

8.5 Copyright

- 8.5.1 The full copyright of the written/illustrative archive relating to the Site will be retained by Wessex Archaeology Ltd under the *Copyright, Designs and Patents* Act 1988 with all rights reserved. The Museum, however, will be granted an exclusive licence for the use of the archive for educational purposes, including academic research, providing that such use shall be non-profit making, and conforms to the *Copyright and Related Rights* regulations 2003.

8.6 Security copy

- 8.6.1 In line with current best practice (Brown 2011), on completion of the project a security copy of the written records will be prepared, in the form of a digital PDF/A file. PDF/A is an ISO-standardised version of the Portable Document Format (PDF) designed for the digital preservation of electronic documents through omission of features ill-suited to long-term archiving.

9 REFERENCES

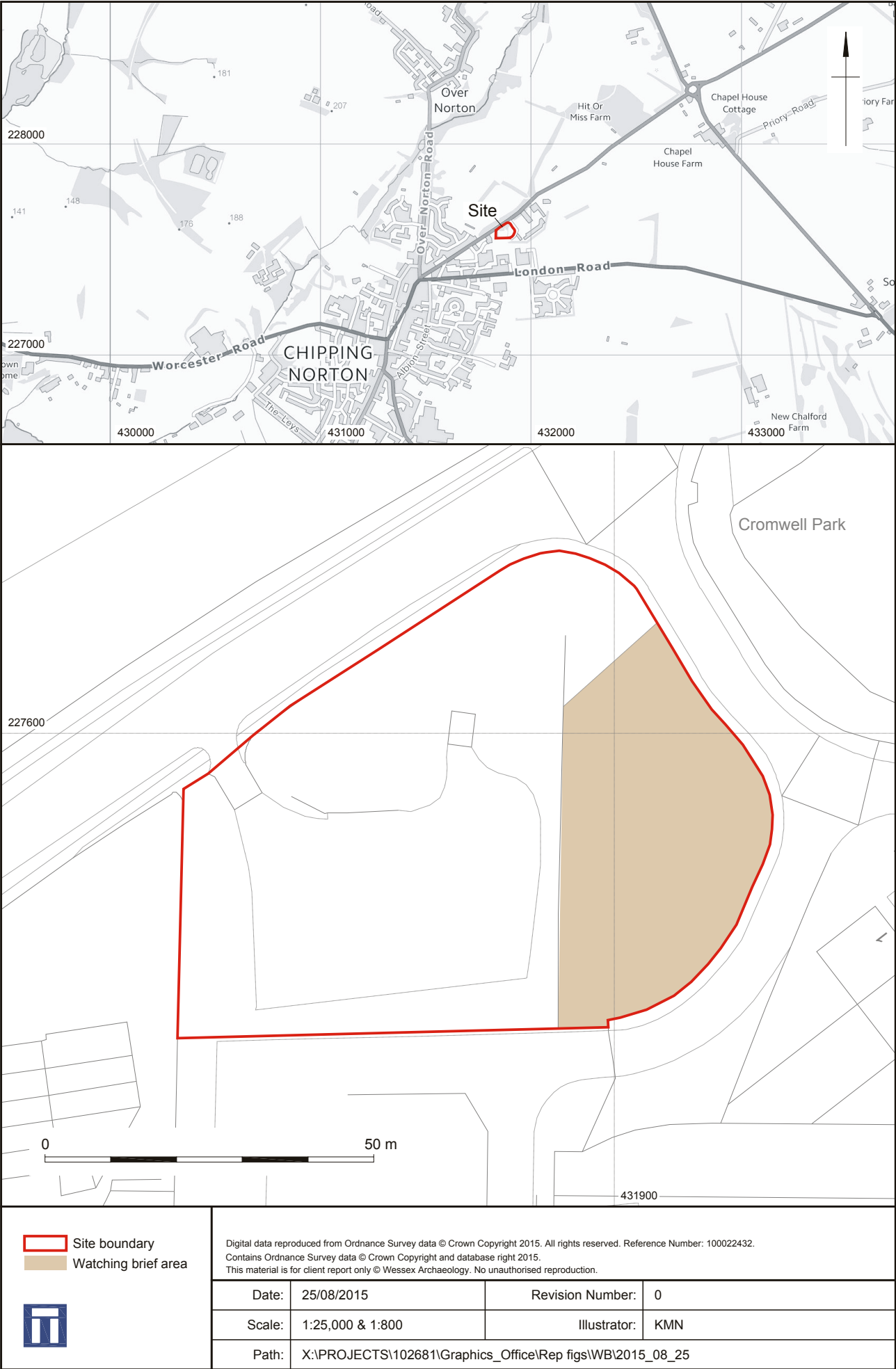
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10 APPENDICES

10.1 Appendix 1: Stratigraphy summary table

Site Stratigraphy				
Context	Description		Dimensions (m)	Depth below surface (m)
100	Topsoil	Mid greyish brown silt	Whole Site	0-0.20
101	Interface	Mid greyish-brown silt and fragmented limestone bedrock	Whole Site	0.20-0.30
102	Natural	Limestone bedrock	Whole Site	0.30+




Site location, showing area of watching brief

Figure 1



Plate 1: Typical deposit sequence

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