

T H A M E S V A L L E Y
ARCHAEOLOGICAL
S E R V I C E S

**Young's Garage, Oxford Street,
Woodstock, Oxfordshire**

Archaeological Evaluation

by Andrew Mundin and James Lewis

Site Code: YGW11/57

(SP 4472 1669)

**Young's Garage, Oxford Street,
Woodstock, Oxfordshire**

An Archaeological Evaluation

for Berkeley Homes (Oxford & Chiltern) Ltd

by AndrewMundinandJamesLewis
ThamesValleyArchaeologicalServices
Ltd

SiteCodeYGW11/57

October 2011

Summary

Site name: Young's Garage, Oxford Street, Woodstock, Oxfordshire

Grid reference: SP 4472 1669

Site activity: Archaeological Evaluation

Date and duration of project: 1st September – 12th October 2011

Project manager: Steve Ford

Site supervisor: Andrew Munding, James Lewis

Site code: YGW 11/57

Area of site: 0.65ha

Summary of results: No deposits of archaeological interest were observed during the fieldwork and in several locations, the archaeologically relevant levels had been truncated. A few sherds of medieval and post medieval pottery recovered from made ground were the only finds of archaeological interest. The site is considered to have no archaeological potential

Location and reference of archive: The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited with Oxfordshire County Museums Service in due course.

*This report may be copied for bona fide research or planning purposes without the explicit permission of the copyright holder. All TVAS unpublished fieldwork reports are available on our website:
www.tvas.co.uk/reports/reports.asp.*

Report edited/checked by:	Steve Ford✓ 18.10.11
	Steve Preston✓ 17.10.11

Young's Garage, Oxford Street, Woodstock, Oxfordshire An Archaeological Evaluation

by Andrew MUNDIN and James Lewis

Report 11/57

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried out at the site of the former Young's Garage, Oxford Street, Woodstock, Oxfordshire (SP 4472 1669) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Richard Eyre of Berkeley Homes (Oxford and Chiltern) Ltd, Abingdon Science Park, Barton Lane, Abingdon, OX14 3NB.

Planning permission (11/0153/P/FP) has been gained from West Oxfordshire District Council to demolish some of the existing outbuildings on the site, and the garage and showroom, refurbish other buildings and construct 31 new homes. The garage had incorporated the former Blenheim and Woodstock railway terminus building at the southern end of the site, which is to be retained, with only the 20th-century extension being demolished. The consent is subject to a condition (11) relating to archaeology, which requires a phased programme of archaeological work to incorporate field evaluation followed if necessary by further mitigation.

This is in accordance with the Department for Communities and Local Government's Planning Policy Statement, *Planning for the Historic Environment* (PPS5 2010), and the District Council's policies relating to archaeology. The field investigation was carried out to a specification agreed by Mr Hugh Coddington, Acting County Archaeologist for Oxfordshire County Archaeological Services and based on a brief prepared by him (Coddington 2011). Monitoring of remediation work prior to the evaluation was undertaken by Andrew MUNDIN on the 1st September 2011, with the evaluation undertaken by James Lewis, between the 28th September and 12th October 2011. The site code is YGW11/57. The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited with Oxfordshire County Museums Service in due course.

Location, topography and geology

The site is located in the historic core of Woodstock with Oxford Street (A44) to the west. To the north, east and south is residential housing with the large estate of Blenheim Palace and Park further to the south-west. The junction with Oxford Street and Hensington Road is to the north-west, with Hensington Road bounding the site to the north (Fig.2). The valley of the River Glyme runs down from north of the village, through Blenheim Park

to the River Evenlode to the south. The underlying geology is described as clay with limestone under Cornbrash formation (BGS 1982). The site lies at a height of *c.*98m above Ordnance Datum (aOD).

Archaeological background

The archaeological potential for the site has been highlighted in a brief for the project prepared by Hugh Coddington of Oxfordshire County Archaeological Service drawing on a desk-based assessment (OA 2006). In summary, the site lies within the historic core of the small market town of Woodstock, and within its Conservation Area. The Market Place is located *c.* 400m north-west of the site. The area is not noted for prehistoric remains or finds, but a Roman villa is located not far away. Blenheim Palace and Park is a World Heritage Site and Grade I Listed Park and Garden, which was originally established as a royal hunting lodge, probably from the 12th century (Ashdown *et al.* 1975). The town was made a Borough in the late 13th century and it is thought to have expanded to the environs of the site area by the 16th century. Burgage plots can be identified in parts of the town, and it is thought the houses fronting Oxford Street on its eastern side could also stand within burgage plots. This existing frontage seems to be of 18th century date, and the buildings are Grade II listed. It is thought that the 16th-century town grew from its original core around the current Market Place, located outside the park gateway on the north-eastern edge of Blenheim Park.

At the southern side of the site, the standing remains of the Blenheim and Woodstock railway Terminus building exists. This building served originally as a private branch line, from 1890, for the 8th Duke of Marlborough who lived at Blenheim Palace. It was decommissioned in 1954.

A watching brief at Punchbowl Cottage, abutting the northern boundary of the site (Fig. 3) did not locate any features or finds of archaeological interest (Taylor 2004).

Objectives and methodology

The purpose of the evaluation was to determine the presence/absence, extent, condition, character, quality and date of any archaeological deposits within the area of development.

The specific research aims of this project are:

- to determine if any archaeological deposits of any period are present.
- to determine if any Medieval occupation or craft/industrial activity is present on the site.
- to determine if there is any undocumented Saxon precursor to the settlement exists.

It was proposed that seven trenches each 18m long and at least 1.6m wide were to be excavated which targeted the footprints of the new housing. These were to be dug with a JCB-type mechanical excavator fitted with a 1.6m wide toothless ditching bucket. Any possible archaeological deposits were to be defined and excavated using hand tools. Investigation of features was to be carried out in such a way as not to compromise the integrity of any deposits that might warrant preservation *in situ* or that might better be investigated under the conditions of full excavation. All spoilheaps were monitored for finds.

Results

Remediation area

Prior to the field evaluation, an area of soil stripping for remediation work was viewed under archaeological supervision (Fig.3; Pl. 1). The area viewed (Fig. 3) was in the southern and south-eastern corner of the site, directly south of the former track and southern platform edge.

This work only identified disturbed and made ground deposits comprising a rooty, homogenous yellowish brownish-red clayey silt (50) which was removed to a depth no greater than 0.7m. In places this removal exposed the underlying orange-brown clayey silt subsoil soil, occasionally with areas of clay and limestone present. A Victorian cast-iron waterpipe ran the length of the area. Four sherds of pottery of Medieval and post-medieval dates were identified. Two post-medieval clay pipe stems were also found in this context. No pre-19th century features were identified in this area. Other remediation work on the site was of a similar nature and was not monitored.

Evaluation

All trenches measured between 9m to 19m long and were mostly 1.8m wide having been dug using a 360° tracked excavator. Trench 4 could not be placed as intended due to the presence of a large spoilheap, so it was divided into two. All other trenches were located as intended (Fig. 3). A complete list of trench details giving lengths, breadths, depths and a description of sections and geology is given in Appendix 1.

Trench 1 (Fig. 4; Pl. 2)

Trench 1 was aligned SW–NE and measured 18m long and between 0.75–1.25m deep. At the south-west terminus of the trench loose made ground and not natural geology was encountered and the excavation was

stopped at a depth of 1.25m. At approximately 8m from the south-west end natural geology comprising of Cornbrash Limestone was encountered below the made ground, extending the rest of the trench, at 0.75m deep.

Trench 2

This area had been reduced prior to the evaluation due to contaminated ground being removed from this part of the site. This trench was aligned SW–NE and measured 13m long, 2.2m wide and between 0.4–0.6m deep. The south-east side of the trench was heavily truncated by made ground which was presumably laid down during the construction of the railway station and track. No archaeological features were found in this trench. The made ground overlay the natural geology which consisted of Cornbrash Limestone.

Trench 3 (Pl.3)

This trench was aligned SW–NE and measured 19m long and 0.5m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.32m of made ground which overlay the natural geology of Cornbrash Limestone. No archaeological material was recovered from this trench.

Trench 4a (Fig. 4)

Trench 4a was aligned NW-SE and measured 9m long and 0.7m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.3m of made ground which overlay 0.3m of brown clayey subsoil with limestone pieces. Underneath this was natural geology consisting of Cornbrash Limestone. No archaeological material was recovered from this trench.

Trench 4b (Fig. 4)

Trench 4b was aligned NW-SE and measured 9m long and 0.6m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.3m of made ground which overlay 0.3m of brown clayey subsoil with limestone pieces. Underneath this was natural geology consisting of Cornbrash Limestone. No archaeological material was recovered from this trench.

Trench 5

Trench 5 was aligned W–E and measured 18.5m long and 0.22m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.2m depth of made ground which overlay the natural Cornbrash geology. No archaeological material was recovered from this trench.

Trench 6

Trench 6 was aligned NW-SE and measured 18.5m long and between 0.3–0.6m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.2m of made ground overlying the natural Cornbrash geology. No archaeological material was recovered from this trench.

Trench 7 (Pl.4)

Trench 7 was aligned NW-SE and measured 18m long and 0.8m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.2m of made ground which overlay the natural Cornbrash geology. This area had been reduced prior to the evaluation due to contaminated ground being removed from this part of the site. No archaeological material was recovered from this trench.

Finds

Pottery by Paul Blinkhorn

The pottery assemblage comprised three sherds with a total weight of 65g. It all occurred in the topsoil, context (50). It was recorded utilizing the coding system and chronology of the Oxfordshire County type-series (Mellor and Oakely 1984; Mellor 1994), as follows:

OXY: **Medieval Oxford ware**, AD1075 – 1350. 2 sherds, 52g.
OXRESWL: **Polychrome Slipware**, 17thC. 1 sherd, 13g.

Both ware types are common finds in the region. One of the sherds of OXY is a jug handle and somewhat abraded, the other is a plain bodysherd in fresh condition. The sherd of OXREWSL is from the base of a dish or shallow bowl, a typical vessel type in this ware.

Clay pipe

Two stems of nondescript tobacco pipe were recovered. One is 9mm wide and is broadly 18th century in date and the other is 7mm wide and broadly of 19th century date.

Glass bottle

A complete Codd-style bottle was recovered from the topsoil strip area. This bottle is 225mm in height. It is embossed with 'Blake and Co' based in Eynsham. The neck is intact and the glass marble is present, also with

the cork bung. Blake and Co operated a mineral water bottling factory in Eynsham from 1877 to the 1930s. The bottle was produced by 'Wilmer and Sons', who were active in Newport Pagnell at the same period.

Conclusion

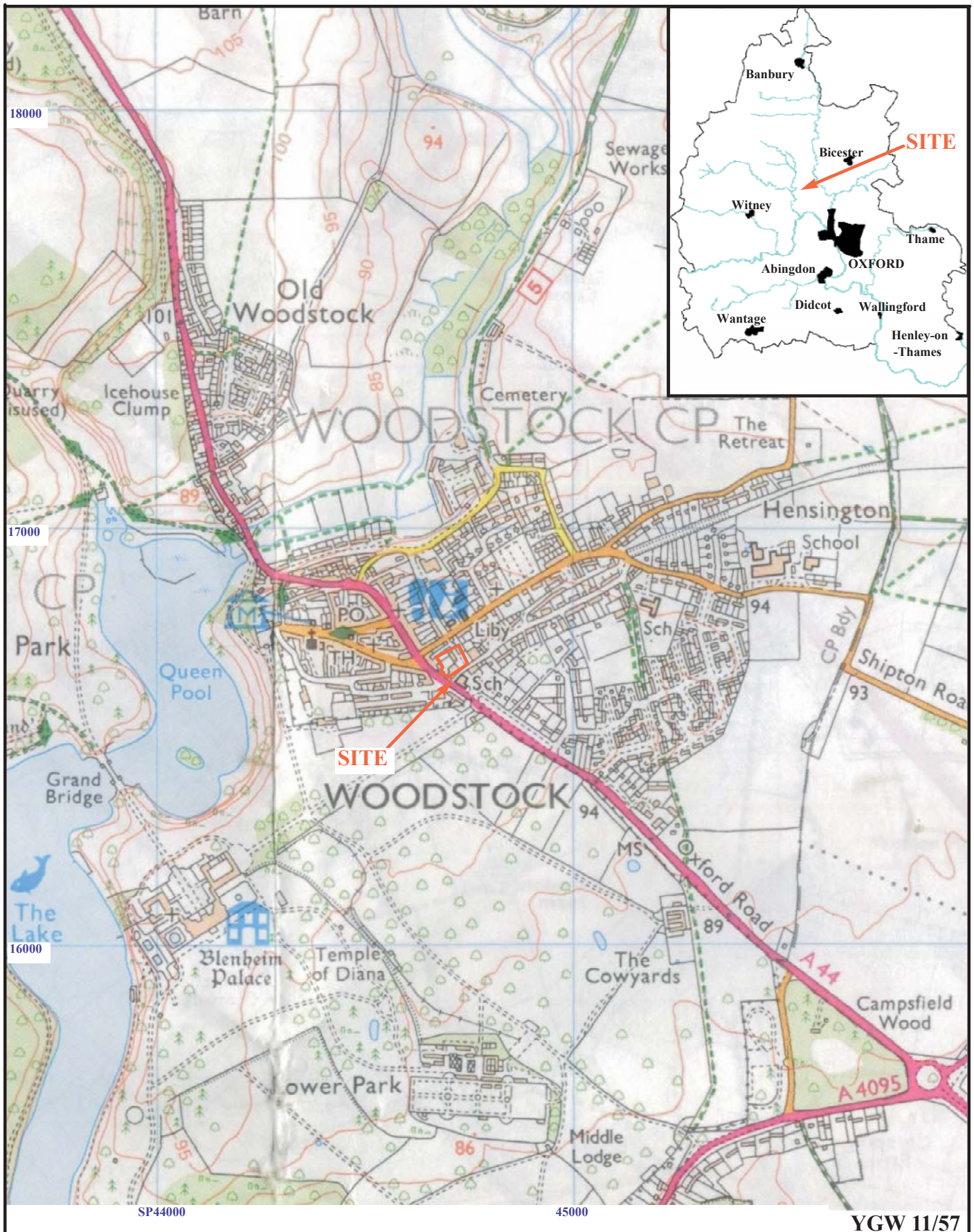
No deposits of archaeological interest were observed during the fieldwork and the natural geology had been truncated in several areas. A few sherds of medieval and post-medieval pottery and other finds recovered from made ground were the only finds of archaeological interest. The site is considered to have low archaeological potential

References

- Ashdown, J Rodwell, K and Turner, H 1975, 'Woodstock' in K Rodwell (ed), *Historic Towns in Oxfordshire*, Oxford Archaeology Unit Survey **3**, Oxford 191–8
- BGS, 1982, *British Geological Survey*, 1:50 000, Sheet 236 Solid and Drift Edition, Keyworth
- Mellor, M and Oakley, G, 1984, 'A summary of the key assemblages, a study of pottery, clay pipes, glass and other finds from fourteen pits, dating from the 16th to the 19th century', in T G Hassall, C E Halpin and M Mellor, 'Excavations in St Ebbe's, Oxford, 1967–1976: Part II: Post-medieval domestic tenements and the Post-Dissolution site of the Greyfriars', *Oxoniensia*, **49**, 181–211
- Mellor, M, 1994 Oxford Pottery: A Synthesis of middle and late Saxon, medieval and early post-medieval pottery in the Oxford Region *Oxoniensia* **59**, 17-217
- OA 2006, Oxford Street, Woodstock, Oxfordshire, Desk-based Assessment, Oxford Archaeology report 3295, Oxford
- PPS5, 2010, *Planning for the Historic Environment*, The Stationery Office, Norwich
- Taylor, A, 2004, 'Land to the rear of The Punchbowl Inn, 12 Oxford Street, Woodstock, Oxfordshire; an archaeological watching brief', Thames Valley Archaeological Services unpubl rep 04/40, Reading

APPENDIX 1: Trench details

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Length (m)</i>	<i>Breadth (m)</i>	<i>Depth (m)</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1	18	1.8	NE: 0.75 SW: 1.25	SW end- 0–1.25m+ made ground; 1.25m+ natural geology (cornbrash) NE end- 0–0.75m made ground; 0.75m+ natural geology (cornbrash). [Pl. 2]
2	13	2.2	0.4–0.6	0–0.6m made ground; 0.6m+ natural geology (cornbrash)
3	19	1.8	0.5	0–0.32m made ground; 0.32m+ natural geology (cornbrash) [Pl. 3]
4a	9	1.8	0.7	0–0.3m made ground; 0.03–0.6m brown clayey subsoil with limestone, 0.6m+ natural geology (cornbrash)
4b	9	1.8	0.6	0–0.1m made ground; 0.1–0.35m brown clayey subsoil with limestone, 0.35m+ natural geology cornbrash with forest marble.
5	18.5	1.8	0.22	0–0.2m made ground; 0.2m+ natural geology (cornbrash)
6	18.5	1.8	0.3–0.6	0–0.2m made ground; 0.2m+ natural geology (cornbrash)
7	18	1.86	0.8	0–0.75m made ground; 0.75m+ natural geology (cornbrash)



**Young's Garage, Oxford Street, Woodstock,
Oxfordshire, 2011
Archaeological Evaluation**

Figure 1. Location of site within Woodstock and Oxfordshire.

Reproduced from Ordnance Survey Explorer 180 at 1:12500
Ordnance Survey Licence 100025880



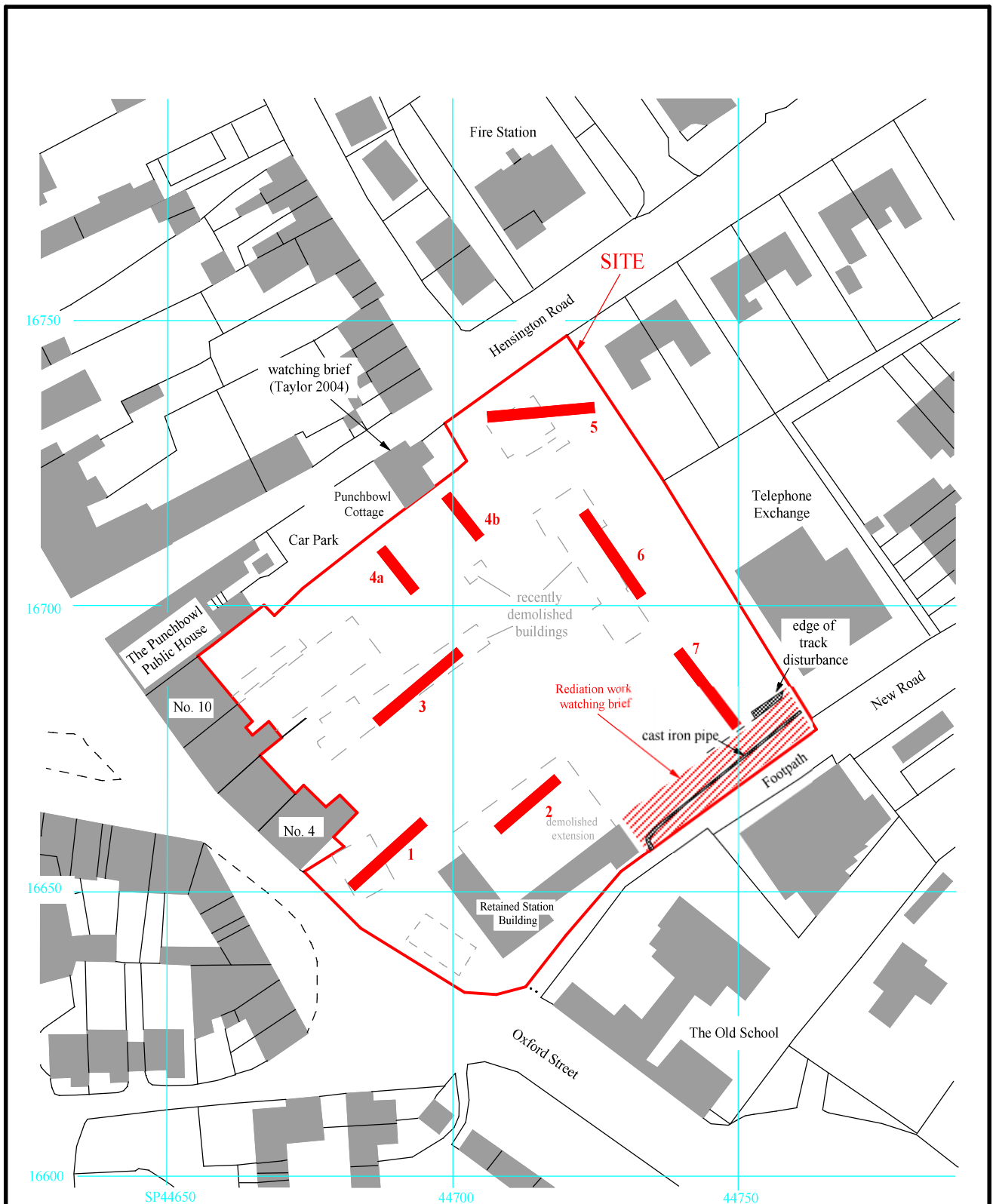
YGW 11/57



**Young's Garage, Oxford Street, Woodstock,
Oxfordshire, 2011
Archaeological Evaluation**
Figure 2. Detailed location of site off Oxford Street.

Reproduced from Ordnance Survey digital mapping under licence.
Crown copyright reserved. Scale: 1:1250





YGW11/57



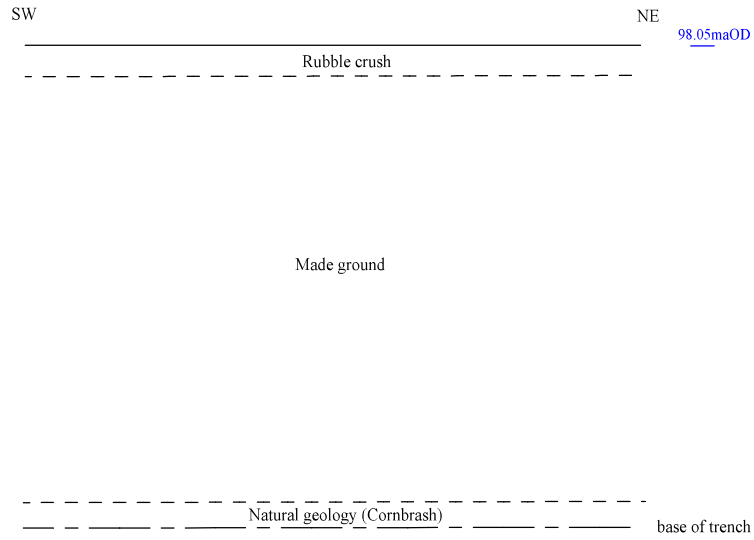
**Young's Garage, Oxford Street, Woodstock,
Oxfordshire, 2011
Archaeological Evaluation**

Figure 3. Location of trenches and area of watching brief (remediation work).

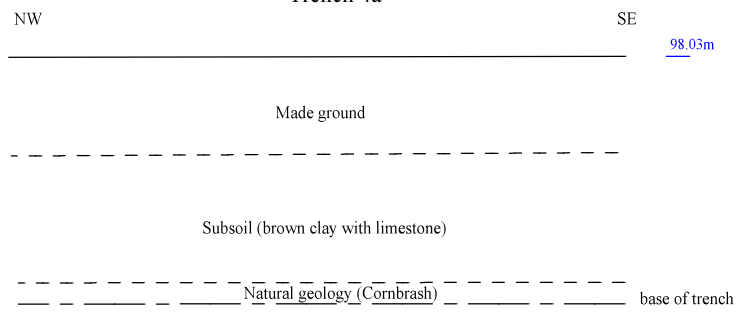


THAMES VALLEY
ARCHAEOLOGICAL
SERVICES

Trench 1



Trench 4a



YGW11/57

Young's Garage, Oxford Street, Woodstock,
Oxfordshire, 2011
Archaeological Evaluation

Figure 4. Representative sections.



THAMES VALLEY
ARCHAEOLOGICAL
SERVICES



Plate 1. Watching brief strip for topsoil screening looking south east with station building in background.



Plate 2. Trench 1, looking north east. Scales: 2m and 1m.

YGW 11/57

**Youngs Garage, Oxford Street, Woodstock,
Oxfordshire, 2011
Archaeological Evaluation
Plates 1 and 2.**

THAMES VALLEY
ARCHAEOLOGICAL
SERVICES



Plate 3. Trench 3, looking north east, Scales: 2m, 1m and 0.5m (vertical).



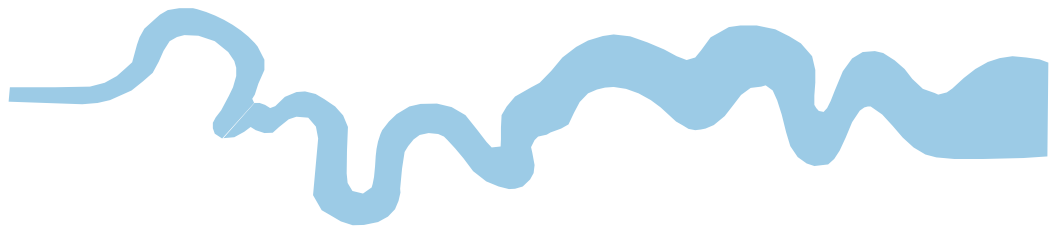
Plate 4. Trench 7, looking north Scales: 2m, 1m and 0.5m (vertical). YGW 11/56

**Youngs Garage, Oxford Street, Woodstock,
Oxfordshire, 2011**
Archaeological Evaluation
Plates 3 and 4.

TIME CHART

	Calendar Years
Modern _____	AD 1901
Victorian _____	AD 1837
Post Medieval _____	AD 1500
Medieval _____	AD 1066
Saxon _____	AD 410
Roman _____	AD 43
Iron Age _____	BC/AD 750 BC
Bronze Age: Late _____	1300 BC
Bronze Age: Middle _____	1700 BC
Bronze Age: Early _____	2100 BC
Neolithic: Late	3300 BC
Neolithic: Early	4300 BC
Mesolithic: Late	6000 BC
Mesolithic: Early	10000 BC
Palaeolithic: Upper	30000 BC
Palaeolithic: Middle	70000 BC
Palaeolithic: Lower	2,000,000 BC





**Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd,
47-49 De Beauvoir Road, Reading,
Berkshire, RG1 5NR**

**Tel: 0118 9260552
Fax: 0118 9260553
Email: tvas@tvas.co.uk
Web: www.tvas.co.uk**