

T H A M E S      V A L L E Y

ARCHAEOLOGICAL

S E R V I C E S

**Bury Knowle Park Depot, North Place,  
Old Headington, Oxford**

**Archaeological Evaluation**

**by Andy Taylor**

**Site Code: BKD12/135**

**(SP 5466 0753)**

# **Bury Knowle Park Depot, North Place, Old Headington, Oxford**

**An Archaeological Evaluation  
for Oxford City Council**

by Andy Taylor  
Thames Valley Archaeological Services  
Ltd

Site Code BKD 12/135

**October 2012**

## Summary

**Site name:** Bury Knowle Park Depot, North Place, Old Headington, Oxford

**Grid reference:** SP 5466 0753

**Site activity:** Evaluation

**Date and duration of project:** 3rd October 2012

**Project manager:** Steve Ford

**Site supervisor:** Andy Taylor

**Site code:** BKD 12/135

**Area of site:** c.0.16 hectares

**Summary of results:** No deposits or finds of an archaeological nature were observed

**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 due course.

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[www.tvas.co.uk/reports/reports.asp](http://www.tvas.co.uk/reports/reports.asp).*

|                           |   |
|---------------------------|---|
| Report edited/checked by: | Steve Ford✓ 05.10.12<br>Steve Preston✓ 04.10.12 |
|---------------------------|---|

# **Bury Knowle Park Depot, North Place, Old Headington, Oxford**

## **An Archaeological Evaluation**

by Andy Taylor

**Report 12/135**

### **Introduction**

This report documents the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried out at Bury Knowle Park Depot, North Place, Old Headington, Oxford (SP 5466 0753) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Tom Smailes, of Kemp and Kemp Property Consultants, Elms Court, Botley, Oxford, OX2 9LP on behalf of Oxford City Council.

Planning permission is to be sought from Oxford City Council for the construction of new housing on the site. As a result of the possibility of the presence of archaeological remains which might be affected by the proposed development, the results of archaeological field evaluation have been requested to accompany the application in order to inform the planning process and to enable an appropriate mitigation strategy to be devised if required.

This is in accordance with the Department for Communities and Local Government's *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF 2012), and the City Council's policies on archaeology. The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Mr David Radford, City Archaeologist with Oxford City Council. The fieldwork was undertaken by Andy Taylor and Aiji Castle on the 3rd October 2012 and the site code is BKD 12/135. 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**

Headington is to the north-east of central Oxford (Fig. 1). The site is located on the north side of North Place, Old Headington (Fig. 2) with Bury Knowle Park to the south and east and residential properties to the west and north. The site currently consists of a disused depot, with grass, overgrown shrubbery and patches of Tarmac present on a relatively gentle slope at a height of c.104m above Ordnance Datum.. The underlying geology comprised Beckley Sand Member (BGS 1994) which was observed across the site.



## **Archaeological background**

The archaeological potential for the site has been highlighted in a brief prepared by City Archaeologist David Radford (Radford 2012). In summary, the potential for the site stems from its location within the historic core of Headington, a settlement first recorded in AD 1004 and described as a substantial royal manor in Domesday Book (Williams and Martin 2002, 424). Headington also lies within a broad zone extending to the south and east of Oxford notable for its high density of Roman pottery kilns (OCC 2011) with several recorded at Churchill Hospital (Young 1975) as well as Roman occupation at Headington School (Cass 2007).

## **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.

Specific aims of the project were:

- to determine if archaeologically relevant levels have survived on the site;
- to determine if archaeological deposits of any period are present;
- to determine if any Roman occupation or industrial (pottery) sites are present;
- to determine if any medieval occupation sites are present.

Three trenches were to be dug (Fig. 3) each measuring 10m in length, which were targeted on areas most affected by the proposed development. These were dug using a small 360° type machine fitted with a toothless grading bucket. These were dug under constant archaeological supervision and all spoilheaps were monitored for finds.

## **Results**

The trenches measured between 9.50m and 1.50m in length and between 0.90m and 1.10m deep. A complete list of trenches giving lengths, breadths, depths and a description of sections and geology is given in Appendix 1.

### Trench 1 (Fig 4; Pl. 1)

Trench 1 was aligned approximately north-south and measured 9.50m in length and 1m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.28m of topsoil and modern rubbish overlying 0.67m of dark yellow brown sand, possibly a landscaping deposit, overlying natural sand geology. No archaeological features were observed and no archaeological finds recovered.

### Trench 2

This trench was aligned approximately east-west and measured 10.10m in length and 0.90m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.40m of topsoil and modern rubbish overlying 0.50m of dark yellow brown sand overlying natural sand geology.

### Trench 3 (Pl. 2)

This trench was aligned approximately north-south and measured 10.50m in length and 1.10m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.40m of topsoil and modern rubbish overlying 0.70m of dark yellow brown sand overlying natural sand geology.

## **Finds**

No finds of any archaeological interest were recovered during the evaluation.

## **Conclusion**

Despite the potential for the presence of archaeological deposits on the site none were encountered. The sandy deposit encountered above the natural geology may indicate a previous landscaping of the site, possibly associated with the adjacent park, but the depth of the trenches would suggest that had archaeological features been present, they would have been protected by this deposit and survived. On the basis of this evaluation the proposed development will have no archaeological impact.

## **References**

- BGS, 1994, *British Geological Survey*, 1:50000, Sheet 237, Solid and Drift Edition, Keyworth
- Cass, S, 2007, Early Roman Boundaries at Headington School, Oxford, Thames Valley Archaeological Services report 07/149b, Reading
- OCC, 2011, 'Roman Oxford', Oxford Archaeology Plan, resource assessment, (draft), Oxford City Council, Oxford
- PPS5, 2010, *Planning for the Historic Environment*, The Stationery Office, Norwich
- Radford, D, 2012, Bury Knowle Park Depot, Old Headington, Oxford, Brief for an Archaeological Field Evaluation, Oxford City Council, Oxford
- Young, C J, 1975, 'Excavations at the Churchill Hospital, 1973: interim report' *Oxoniensia* **39** (for 1974), 1-11
- Williams, A and Martin, G H, 2002, *Domesday Book, a complete translation*, London

## APPENDIX 1: Trench details

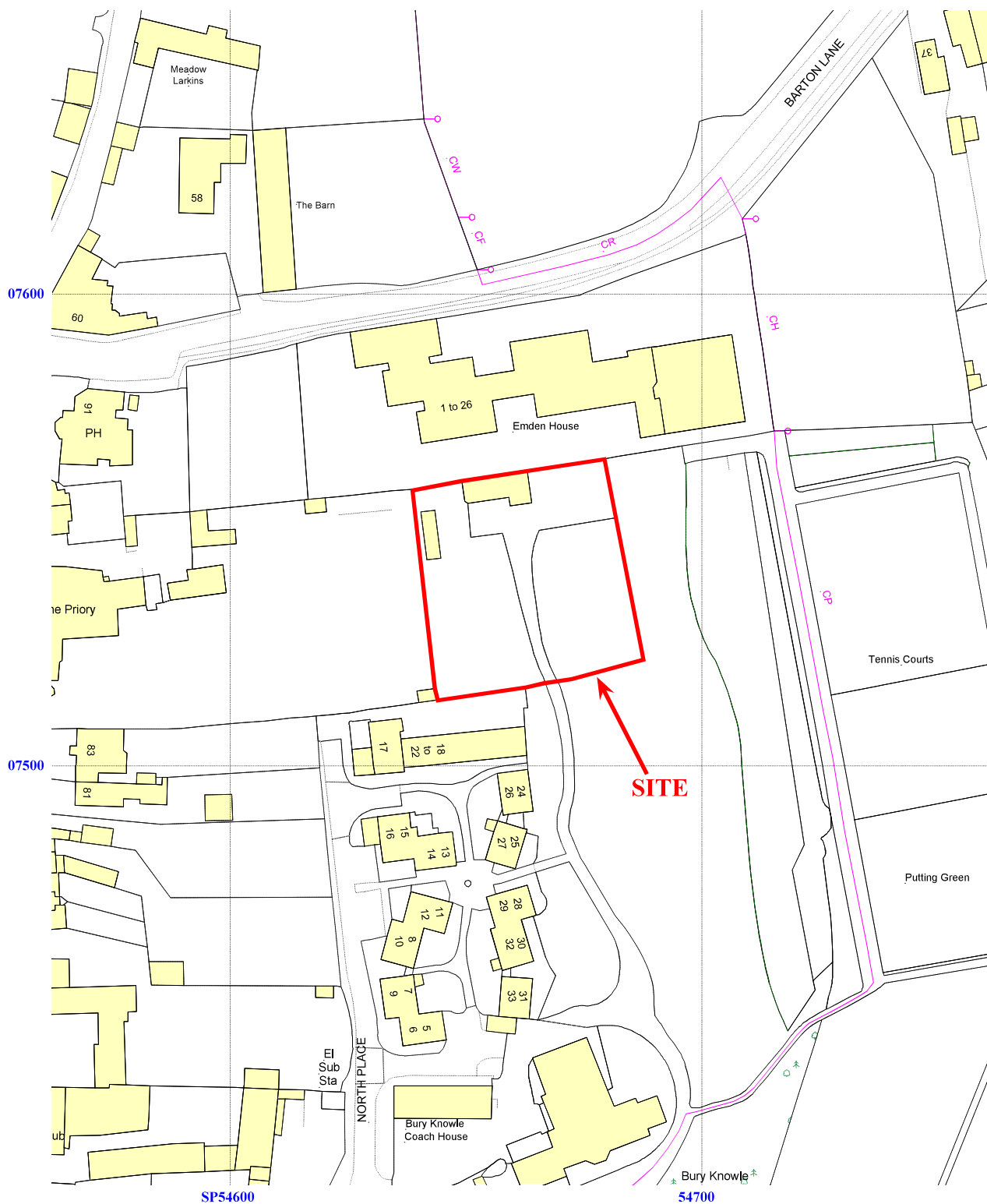
0m at S or W End

| <i>Trench</i> | <i>Length (m)</i> | <i>Breadth (m)</i> | <i>Depth (m)</i> | <i>Comment</i>  |
|---------------|-------------------|--------------------|------------------|---|
| 1             | 9.50              | 1.80               | 1.00             | 0.00m-0.28m topsoil and modern rubbish; 0.28m-0.95m dark yellow brown sand; 0.95m-1.00m+ sand natural geology. <b>[Pl. 1]</b> |
| 2             | 10.10             | 1.80               | 0.90             | 0.00m-0.40m topsoil and modern rubbish; 0.40m-0.90m dark yellow brown sand; 0.90m+ sand natural geology.                      |
| 3             | 10.50             | 1.80               | 1.10             | 0.00m-0.40m topsoil and modern rubbish; 0.40m-1.10m dark yellow brown sand; 1.10m+ sand natural geology. <b>[Pl. 2]</b>       |









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Figure 2. Detailed location of site off North Place.

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Figure 3: Trench Locations

0 50m



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Trench 1

104.34m AOD

Topsoil/Modern Rubbish

Dark Yellow Brown Sand

Base of trench

Sand (natural geology)

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Figure 4: Representative Section

0

1m

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Plate 1. Trench 1, looking south, Scales: 2m, 1m and 0.5m.



Plate 2. Trench 3, looking north, Scales: 2m, 1m and 0.5m.

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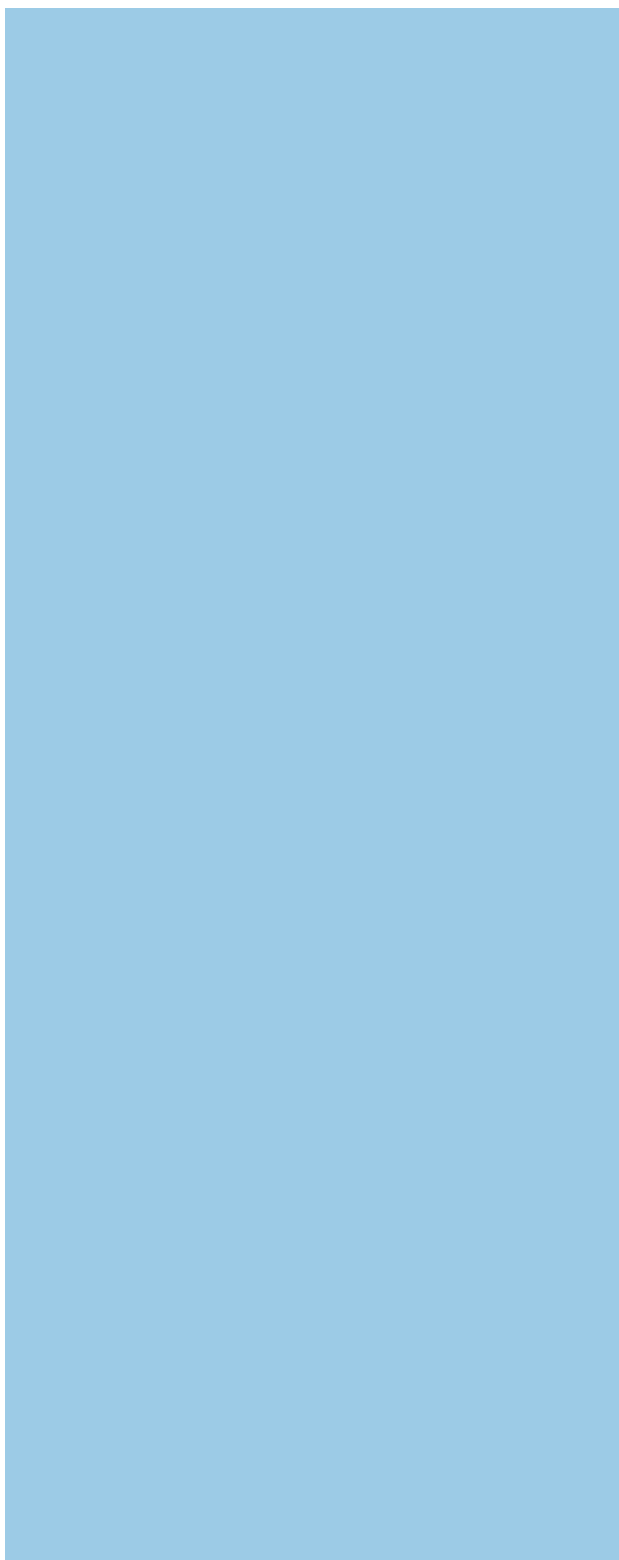
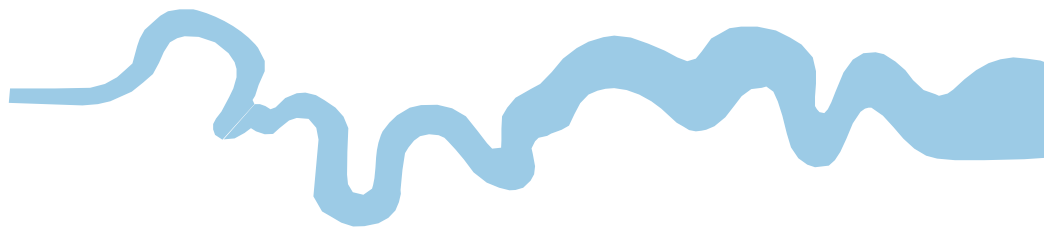
Plates 1 and 2.

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## 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<br>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    |
| ↓                          | ↓               |



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