

**OXFORD MOLECULAR PATHOLOGY
INSTITUTE (OMPI),
UNIVERSITY PARKS
OXFORD**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL STRIP, MAP AND
RECORD EXCAVATION**

For

DPDS LTD


CA PROJECT: 2970
CA REPORT: 09202

NOVEMBER 2009

OXFORD MOLECULAR PATHOLOGY INSTITUTE
(OMPI)
UNIVERSITY PARKS
OXFORD

ARCHAEOLOGICAL STRIP, MAP AND RECORD
EXCAVATION

CA PROJECT: 2970
CA REPORT: 09202

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date	23 November 2009
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date	30 November 2009
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signed	
date	30 November 2009
issue	01

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SUMMARY

Project Name: Oxford Molecular Pathology Institute (OMPI)
Location: University Parks, Oxford
NGR: SP 5173 0704
Type: Archaeological strip, map and record excavation
Date: 12 October - 6 November 2009
Location of Archive: To be deposited with Oxfordshire County Museum
Site Code: NMS09

An archaeological strip, map and record excavation was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology during development of the Oxford Molecular Pathology Institute (OMPI), University Parks, Oxford.

A single, east-west aligned gully dated to the Roman period was revealed cutting the natural gravels within development area. Despite visual scanning of the removed overburden, no artefacts pre-dating the modern period were recovered.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Between October and November 2009 Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out an archaeological strip, map and record excavation for DPDS Ltd at the site of the Oxford Molecular Pathology Institute (OMPI), University Parks, Oxford (centred on NGR: SP 5173 0704; Fig. 1). The archaeological strip, map and record excavation was undertaken to fulfil a condition attached to a planning consent for the demolition of the current Leslie Martin Building and the construction of the Oxford Molecular Pathology Institute and associated works (Planning Reference 09/00390/FUL).

1.2 The archaeological works were carried out in accordance with a brief prepared by David Radford, Oxford City Archaeologist, the archaeological advisor to Oxford City Council, and with a subsequent detailed Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) produced by CA (2009) and approved by Mr Radford. The fieldwork also followed the *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Excavation* issued by the Institute for Archaeologists (2008), the *Management of Archaeological Projects, 2nd edition* (English Heritage 1992) and the *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)* (English Heritage 2006). It was monitored by Mr Radford, including a site visit on the 12th October.

The site

1.3 The development site is approximately 0.1ha and was formerly occupied by the Leslie Martin Building (Building 333) prior to its demolition, and associated car parking, grassed areas and an electricity sub-station (Fig. 2). The site lies at approximately 62m AOD.

1.4 The underlying solid geology of the area is mapped as Second (Summertown-Radley) Terrace Deposits of the Quaternary Era (BGS 1982), and this was encountered across the site.

Archaeological background

1.5 The development area lies in an area of archaeological potential, with evidence from archaeological fieldwork, aerial photographs and geophysical surveys indicating a multi-period ritual and agricultural landscape dating from the Neolithic through to the

Roman period (MoLAS 2007). A Neolithic henge, recorded during excavation at St John's College in 2008, may have acted as a focal point for Neolithic and subsequent Bronze Age activity. Two early Bronze Age barrow ditches, along with early to middle Iron Age occupation were identified during archaeological excavation at the University Observatory in the 1980s and 1990s. Evidence of Roman occupation, including a timber building, inhumations and field boundaries have been recorded from throughout the University Science Area.

- 1.6 Immediately to the north of the current development, a number of undated pits were recorded during construction of the William Dun Laboratory in 1995.

Archaeological objectives

- 1.7 In the absence of any evidence regarding the presence or nature of any archaeological remains on the site, the objectives of the archaeological works were summarised as follows:

- record the nature of the main stratigraphic units encountered
- assess the overall presence, survival and potential of structural remains
- assess the overall presence, survival, condition and potential of artefactual and ecofactual remains

- 1.8 The specific aim of the work was to:

- record any evidence of past settlement, burial and ritual land use
- recover artefactual evidence to date any evidence of past settlement, burial and ritual activity that may be identified
- sample and analyse environmental remains to create a better understanding of past land use
- seek to relate any archaeological remains to those found in the previous investigations to the west of the site

Methodology

- 1.9 Following demolition of the Leslie Martin Building, the footprint of the new build was subject to a strip, map and record excavation. This comprised the observation by a competent archaeologist of all intrusive groundworks. Initially all non-archaeologically significant overburden was removed by mechanical excavator

equipped with a toothless ditching bucket under archaeological supervision throughout the site.

- 1.10 Due to the restricted nature of the development area, the archaeological works were undertaken in five parts. Areas one and two monitored the excavation of a trench, typically 2.5m in width, along the perimeter of the site for the insertion of sheet piling, areas three and four monitored ground reduction within the northern half of the site, with area five comprising the monitoring of ground reduction within the southern half. However, for the purposes of this report the site will be considered as a whole. Where archaeological deposits were encountered they were excavated by hand in accordance with CA Technical Manual 1: *Fieldwork Recording Manual* (2007).
- 1.11 Deposits were assessed for their palaeoenvironmental potential in accordance with CA Technical Manual 2: *The Taking and Processing of Environmental and Other Samples from Archaeological Sites* (2003) and no deposits were identified that required sampling. All artefacts recovered were processed in accordance with CA Technical Manual 3: *Treatment of Finds Immediately After Excavation* (1995).
- 1.12 The archive and artefacts from the evaluation are currently held by CA at their offices in Kemble. Subject to the agreement of the legal landowner the artefacts will be deposited with Oxfordshire County Museum along with the site archive. A summary of information from this project, set out within Appendix D, will be entered onto the OASIS online database of archaeological projects in Britain.

2. RESULTS (FIGS 2-6)

- 2.1 This section provides an overview of the results; detailed summaries of the recorded contexts and finds are to be found in Appendices A and B respectively. Details of the relative heights of the principal deposits and features expressed as metres Above Ordnance Datum (m AOD) appear in Appendix C
- 2.2 The natural gravel substrate was revealed throughout the footprint of the new build. It was cut by a single gully (506/508), running east-west, that was truncated by concrete foundation pads associated with the former Leslie Martin Building. A sherd of Roman pottery was recovered from its single fill 507. Overlying the natural substrate throughout the development area was re-deposited natural gravels

containing modern building debris, typically between 0.3m and 1.1m thick, through which the foundation pads for the now demolished Leslie Martin Building were cut and over which its building slab was constructed.

The Finds and Palaeoenvironmental Evidence

- 2.6 A small assemblage of artefacts comprising a sherd of Roman pottery, identifiable as Oxfordshire greyware; a fragment of animal bone, and two fragments of fired clay was recovered from gully fill 507.

3. DISCUSSION

- 3.1 Despite the archaeological potential of the development area only a single gully, of Roman date, was identified. The lack of further archaeological features suggests that the gully may be peripheral to the Roman occupation previously identified within the environs of the University Science Park. However, it is likely that the natural substrate was previously truncated during construction of the former Leslie Martin Building. Certainly no evidence of original land surfaces were identified during the current works suggesting that archaeological deposits may have been removed during ground reduction for the preceding development.

4. CA PROJECT TEAM

Fieldwork was undertaken by Kelly Saunders and Hazel O'Neill. The report was written by Kelly Saunders. The illustrations were prepared by Lorna Gray. The archive has been compiled by Kelly Saunders, and prepared for deposition by Victoria Taylor. The project was managed for CA by Cliff Bateman.

5. REFERENCES

BGS (British Geological Survey) 1982 *Geological Survey of Great Britain (Solid and Drift edition), Sheet 236: Witney, 1:50 000*

CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2009 *The New Molecular Sciences Building, University Park, Oxford: Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Strip, Map and Record Exercise*

MoLAS 2007 *Strategic Environment Assessment for the Science Area and Keble Triangle Masterplan Area*

APPENDIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

No.	Type	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Spot-date
100	Layer	Modern demolition rubble			0.4	Modern
101	Layer	Re-deposited natural substrate			>1.1	
200	Layer	As 100			0.42	Modern
201	Deposit	Concrete culvert			1.3	Modern
202	Layer	As 101				
203	Layer	Concrete building pad for Leslie Martin Building			0.18	Modern
204	Layer	Natural Substrate. Orange brown sandy gravel				
205	Deposit	Footings for 203			>1.27	Modern
301	Layer	As 203			0.18	Modern
302	Layer	As 101			0.3	
303	Layer	As 204				
400	Layer	As 203			0.18	Modern
401	Layer	As 101			0.3	
402	Layer	As 204				
501	Layer	As 203			0.18	Modern
502	Deposit	As 205				Modern
503	Layer	As 101			0.3	
504	Layer	As 204				
505	Deposit	Fill of 506. Orange brown silty clay, occasional gravel. Same as 507		0.52	0.13	RB
506	Cut	Gully, runs east-west, shallow with an even profile. Same as 508		0.52	0.13	RB
507	Deposit	Fill of 508. Orange brown silty clay, occasional gravel. Same as 505		0.59	0.15	RB
508	Cut	Gully, runs east-west, shallow with an even profile. Same as 506		0.59	0.15	RB

APPENDIX B: THE FINDS

Context	Artefact type	Description	Ct.	Wt.	Date
507	Roman pottery	Oxfordshire greyware	1	4	RB
	Animal Bone	Sheep-sized	1	21	
	Fired clay		2	2	

APPENDIX C: LEVELS OF PRINCIPAL DEPOSITS AND STRUCTURES

Levels are expressed as metres below current ground level and as metres Above Ordnance Datum (AOD), calculated using the benchmark provided by the on site surveyor (62,82m AOD).

	Trench 1
Current ground level	0.00m (61.5m)
Top of re-deposited natural	1.1m (60.4m)
Top of archaeological feature	1.4m (60.1m)

Upper figures are depth below modern ground level; lower figures in parentheses are metres AOD.

APPENDIX D: OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		
Project Name	New Molecular Sciences Building, University Parks, Oxford	
Short description (250 words maximum)	An archaeological strip, map and record excavation was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology during the development of the Oxford Molecular Pathology Institute, University Parks, Oxford. A single east-west gully dated to the Roman period was revealed within the excavation area. Despite visual scanning of the removed overburden no other artefacts pre-dating the modern period were recovered.	
Project dates	12 October - 6 November 2009	
Project type (e.g. desk-based, field evaluation etc)	Archaeological strip, map and record excavation	
Previous work (reference to organisation or SMR numbers etc)	None	
Future work	Unknown	
PROJECT LOCATION		
Site Location	Oxford Molecular Pathology Institute, University parks, Oxford	
Study area (M ² /ha)	0.1ha	
Site co-ordinates (8 Fig Grid Reference)	SP 5173 0704	
PROJECT CREATORS		
Name of organisation	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project Brief originator	David Radford, Oxford City Council	
Project Design (WSI) originator	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project Manager	Cliff Bateman	
Project Supervisor	Kelly Saunders, Hazel O'Neill	
PROJECT ARCHIVES		
	Intended final location of archive (museum/Accession no.)	Content (e.g. pottery, animal bone etc)
Physical	Oxfordshire County Museum	Pottery, animal bone
Paper	Oxfordshire County Museum	Pro forma recording sheets
Digital	Oxfordshire County Museum	Digital photographs
BIBLIOGRAPHY		
CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2009 <i>New Molecular Sciences Building, University Parks, Oxford: Archaeological Strip, Map and Record Exercise</i> , CA Report No 09202		

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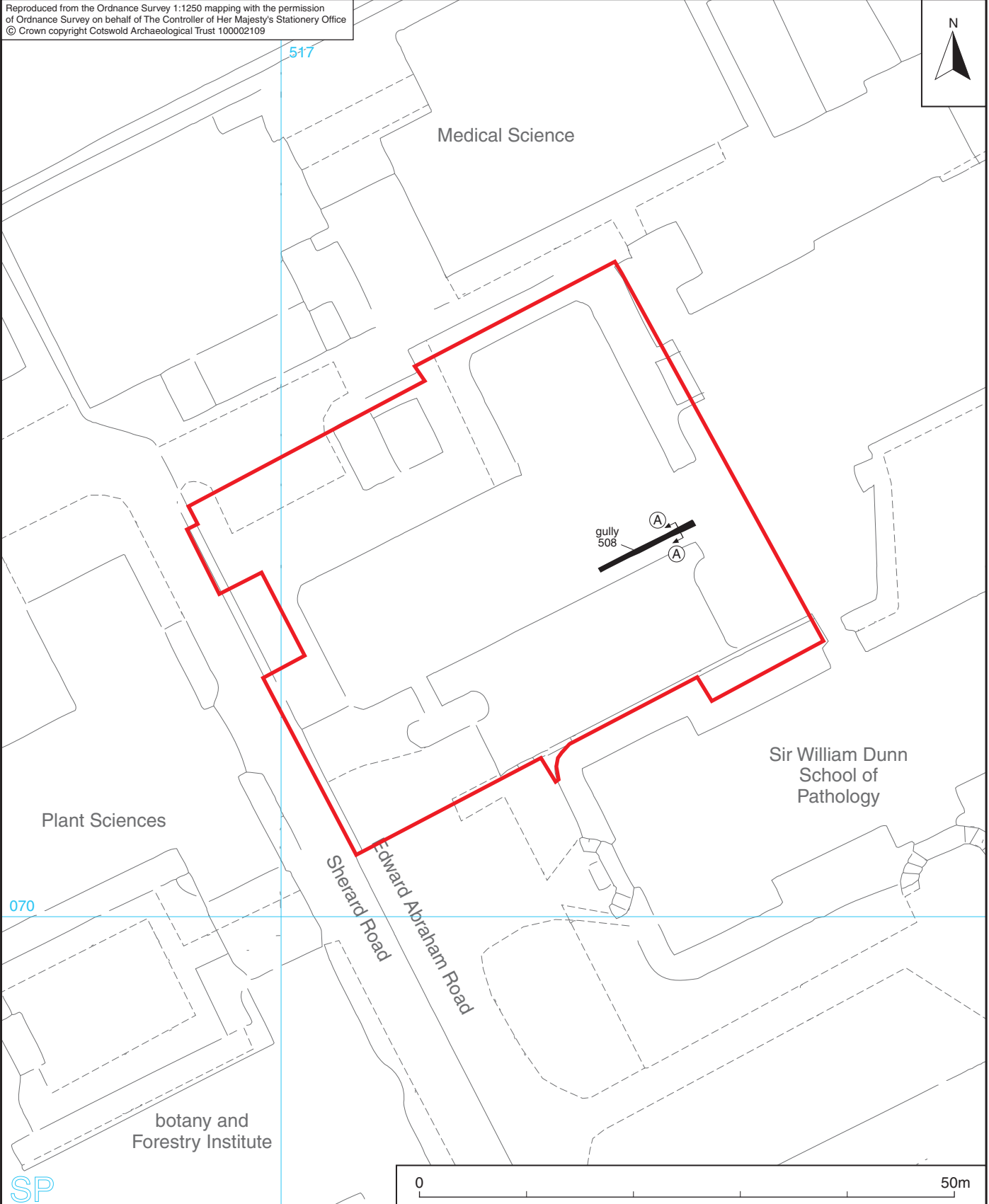


 **COTSWOLD ARCHAEOLOGY**

PROJECT TITLE
**New Molecular Sciences Building
 University Parks, Oxford**

FIGURE TITLE
Site location plan

DRAWN BY	SCALE	PROJECT NO.	FIGURE NO.
LG	1:25,000@A4	2970	1



- site
- archaeological feature

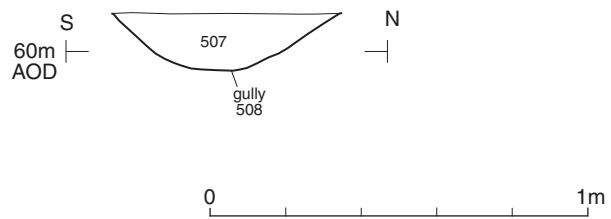


PROJECT TITLE
 New Molecular Sciences Building
 University Parks, Oxford

FIGURE TITLE
 The site, showing recorded
 archaeological feature

DRAWN BY	SCALE	PROJECT NO.	FIGURE NO.
LG	1:500@A4	2970	2

Section AA



COTSWOLD ARCHAEOLOGY

PROJECT TITLE

New Molecular Sciences Building
University Parks, Oxford

FIGURE TITLE

Gully 508; section AA

DRAWN BY

LG

SCALE

1:20@A4

PROJECT NO.


2970

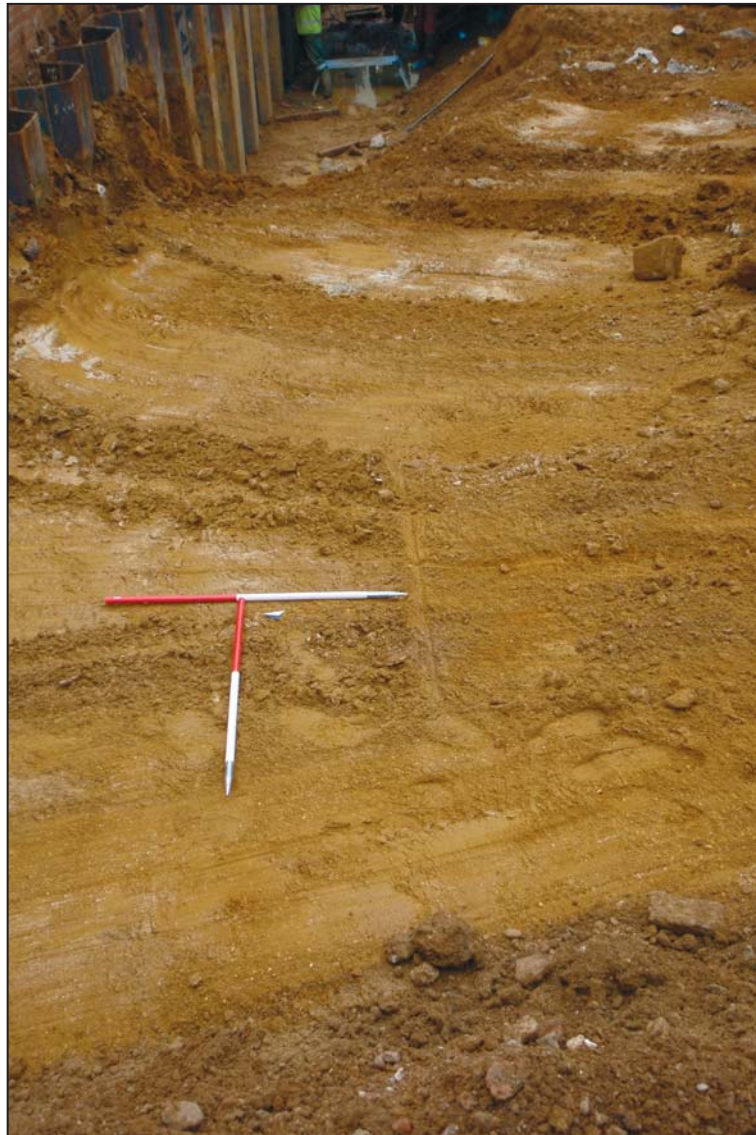
FIGURE NO.

3



4

<p>4 Gully 508, looking west</p>	 COTSWOLD ARCHAEOLOGY	
	<small>PROJECT TITLE</small> New Molecular Sciences Building University Parks, Oxford	
	<small>FIGURE TITLE</small> Photograph	
	<small>DRAWN BY</small> LG	<small>SCALE</small> n/a
		<small>FIGURE NO.</small> 4



5

5 Northern area of site, looking east



COTSWOLD ARCHAEOLOGY

PROJECT TITLE

**New Molecular Sciences Building
University Parks, Oxford**

FIGURE TITLE

Photograph

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PROJECT NO.

2970

FIGURE NO.

5



6

6 Southern area of site, showing pile caps



COTSWOLD ARCHAEOLOGY

PROJECT TITLE

**New Molecular Sciences Building
University Parks, Oxford**

FIGURE TITLE

Photograph

DRAWN BY

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SCALE

n/a

PROJECT NO.

2970

FIGURE NO.

6