



JOHN MOORE HERITAGE SERVICES

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL DESK-BASED ASSESSMENT
OF
LAND AT BARTON, OXFORD

SP 5450 0830 (centred)

On behalf of
Oxford City Council

December 2009

REPORT FOR Oxford City Council

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SITE VISIT 2nd December 2009

REPORT ISSUED 18th December 2009

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Non-technical Summary

This research has shown that while very few known archaeological sites are within 500m of the development site, this is more likely due to the limited development and study work conducted in the area rather than an absolute lack of archaeological remains.

The potential for archaeological remains within the development site is summarised thus:

In general the potential for prehistoric remains in the area is low, with two caveats the Neolithic and the Iron Age, which should be considered to have a higher potential.

It is considered that there is a low to moderate potential for Roman remains to be present within the site boundary.

Given the proximity of a known Saxon burial the potential for remains of this period must be considered high, however any such remains are likely to be confined to the east side of the site.

There is a high potential for medieval and post-medieval agricultural features.

It is recommended to conduct a geophysical survey of the area as an initial stage. A programme of targeted sample trenching should then follow this.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Origins of the report

Oxford City Council commissioned this archaeological desk-based assessment. It has been prepared at the request of the City Archaeologist of Oxford City Council with regards to the planned development of the area.

1.2 Planning Guidelines and Policies

This report has been prepared in accordance with a brief issued by the Oxford City Archaeologist. In format and contents this report conforms to the standards outlined in the Institute for Archaeologists' guidance paper for desk-based assessments (IfA September 2001).

1.2.1 Government Planning Policy Guidance

PPG16 (DOE 1990) provides Government guidance for the investigation, protection and preservation of archaeological remains affected by development. The document emphasises the importance of archaeology (Section A, Paragraph 6) and states that:

“Archaeological remains should be seen as a finite, and non-renewable resource, in many cases highly fragile and vulnerable to damage and destruction. Appropriate management is therefore essential to ensure that they survive in good condition. In particular, care must be taken to ensure that archaeological remains are not needlessly or thoughtlessly destroyed. They can contain irreplaceable information about our past and the potential for an increase in future knowledge. They are part of our sense of national identity and are valuable both for their own sake and for their role in education, leisure and tourism.”

PPG 16 additionally stresses the importance of addressing archaeological issues at an early stage in the planning process (Paragraph 12):

“The key to informed and reasonable planning decisions, as emphasized in paragraphs 19 and 20, is for consideration to be given early, before formal planning applications are made, to the question of whether archaeological remains exist on a site where development is planned and the implications for the development proposal.”

The advice given recommends early consultation between developers and the planning authority to determine “whether the site is known or likely to contain archaeological remains” (Paragraph 19). As an initial stage, such consultations may lead to the developer commissioning an archaeological assessment, defined in the following manner in PPG16 (Paragraph 20):

“Assessment normally involves desk-based evaluation of existing information: it can make effective use of records of previous discoveries, including any historic maps held by the County archive and local museums and record offices, or of geophysical survey techniques.”

If the desk-based assessment should indicate a high probability of the existence of important archaeological remains within the development area, then further stages of archaeological work are likely to be required. PPG16 states that in such cases (Paragraph 21):

“...it is reasonable for the planning authority to request the prospective developer to arrange for an archaeological field evaluation to be carried out before any decision on the planning application is taken. This sort of evaluation is quite distinct from full archaeological excavation. It is normally a rapid and inexpensive operation, involving ground survey and small-scale trial trenching, but it should be carried out by a professionally qualified archaeological organisation or archaeologist.”

Additional guidance is provided if the results of an evaluation indicate that significant archaeological deposits survive within a development area. PPG16 stresses the importance of preservation (Paragraphs 8 and 18):

“Where nationally important archaeological remains, whether scheduled or not, and their settings, are affected by proposed development there should be a presumption in favour of their physical preservation.”

And that:

“The desirability of preserving an ancient monument and its setting is a material consideration in determining planning applications whether that monument is scheduled or unscheduled.”

But acknowledges that (Paragraphs 24 and 25):

“the extent to which remains can or should be preserved will depend upon a number of factors, including the intrinsic importance of the remains. Where it is not feasible to preserve remains, an acceptable alternative may be to arrange prior excavation, during which the archaeological evidence is recorded.”

“Where planning authorities decide that the physical preservation in situ of archaeological remains is not justified in the circumstances of the case and that development resulting in the destruction of the archaeological remains should proceed, it would be entirely reasonable for the planning authority to satisfy itself before granting planning permission, that the developer has made appropriate and satisfactory provision for the excavation and recording of the remains. Such agreements should also provide for the subsequent publication of the results of the excavation.”

This level of work would involve the total excavation and recording of archaeological remains within the development area by a competent archaeological contractor prior to their destruction or damage.

1.2.2 Local Government Planning Policy Guidance

The Adopted Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016 states that

“Archaeological remains provide valuable evidence that contributes to the understanding of important elements in the development of Oxford – a Bronze Age barrow cemetery; a Roman pottery industry; an early Christian centre; an academic community; and the capital of Royalist England in the 17th century. Such remains are a finite and non-renewable resource that requires appropriate management to ensure they survive in good condition. Developers should consider the existence of archaeological remains on a site at an early stage, to allow sympathetic designs to be made.” (5.2.1)

As a consequence of such important prehistoric and historic remains, the Local Plan presents a methodology for protecting this finite resource; Policy HE2 defines the appropriate steps to integrate the archaeology into the planning process

“Where archaeological deposits that are potentially significant to the historic environment of Oxford are known or suspected to exist anywhere in Oxford but in particular the City Centre Archaeological Area, planning applications should incorporate sufficient information to define the character and extent of such deposits as far as reasonably practicable, including, where appropriate:

- a. the results of an evaluation by fieldwork; and
- b. an assessment of the effect of the proposals on the deposits or their setting.

If the existence and significance of deposits is confirmed, planning permission will only be granted where the proposal includes:

- c. provision to preserve the archaeological remains in situ, so far as reasonably practicable, by sensitive layout and design (particularly foundations, drainage and hard landscaping); and
- d. provision for the investigation and recording of any archaeological remains that cannot be preserved, including the publication of results, in accordance with a detailed scheme approved before the start of the development.”

1.3 Desk-Based Assessment Aims and Objectives

The primary aim of the desk-based assessment is to provide a professional appraisal of the archaeological potential of the site. This follows the Government guidance in PPG16 by presenting a synthetic account of the available archaeological and historic data and its significance at an early stage in the planning process. The report will provide the evidence necessary for informed and reasonable planning decisions concerning the need for further archaeological work. The information will allow for the development of an appropriate strategy to mitigate the effects of development on the archaeology, if this is warranted.

In accordance with PPG16, the report presents a desk-based evaluation of existing information. It additionally follows the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA) *Standard* definition of a desk-based assessment (IfA 2001). In brief, it seeks to identify and assess the known and potential archaeological resource within a specified area ('the site'), collating existing written and graphic information and taking full account of the likely character, extent, quantity and worth of that resource in a local, regional and national context. It also aims to define and comment on the likely impact of the proposed development scheme on the surviving archaeological resource.

The IfA *Standard* states that the purpose of a desk-based assessment is to inform appropriate responses, which may consist of one or more of the following:

- The formulation of a strategy for further investigation, whether or not intrusive, where the character and value of the resource is not sufficiently defined to permit a mitigation strategy or other response to be devised.
- The formulation of a strategy to ensure the recording, preservation or management of the resource
- The formulation of a project design for further archaeological investigation within a programme of research

In accordance with PPG16, the desk-based assessment forms the first stage in the planning process as regards archaeology as a material consideration. It is intended to contribute to the formulation of an informed and appropriate mitigation strategy.

1.4 Desk-Based Assessment Methodology

The format and contents of this section of the report are an adaptation of the standards outlined in the Institute for Archaeologists' guidance paper for desk-based assessments (IfA 2001).

The work has involved the consultation of the available documentary evidence, including records of previous discoveries and historic maps, and has been supplemented with a site walkover. The format of the report is adapted from an Institute for Archaeologists *Standard Guidance* paper (IfA 2001).

In summary, the work has involved:

- Identifying the client's objectives
- Identifying the cartographic and documentary sources available for consultation
- Assembling, consulting and examining those sources
- Identifying and collating the results of recent fieldwork

The principal sources consulted in assessing this site were:

- The Oxfordshire Historic Environment Record
- The Centre for Oxfordshire Studies in the Central Library, Oxford
- The Oxfordshire County Record Office
- The National Monuments Record

The Oxfordshire Historic Environment Record holds details of all known archaeological and historic sites in the vicinity of the site. The Centre for Oxfordshire Studies and the Oxfordshire County Record Office keep copies of historic maps, antiquarian sources and other documentary records. The National Monuments Record holds aerial photographs of the area.

The area lies outside of the area covered by the Oxford Urban Archaeological Database.

The assessment of the likely condition of any potential archaeological remains has relied upon a study of the available historic maps and archaeological reports, which provide evidence for the impact of previous land-use on the site. The archaeological gazetteer is limited to the archaeological and historic sites within 500m of the proposal site.

2 THE SITE

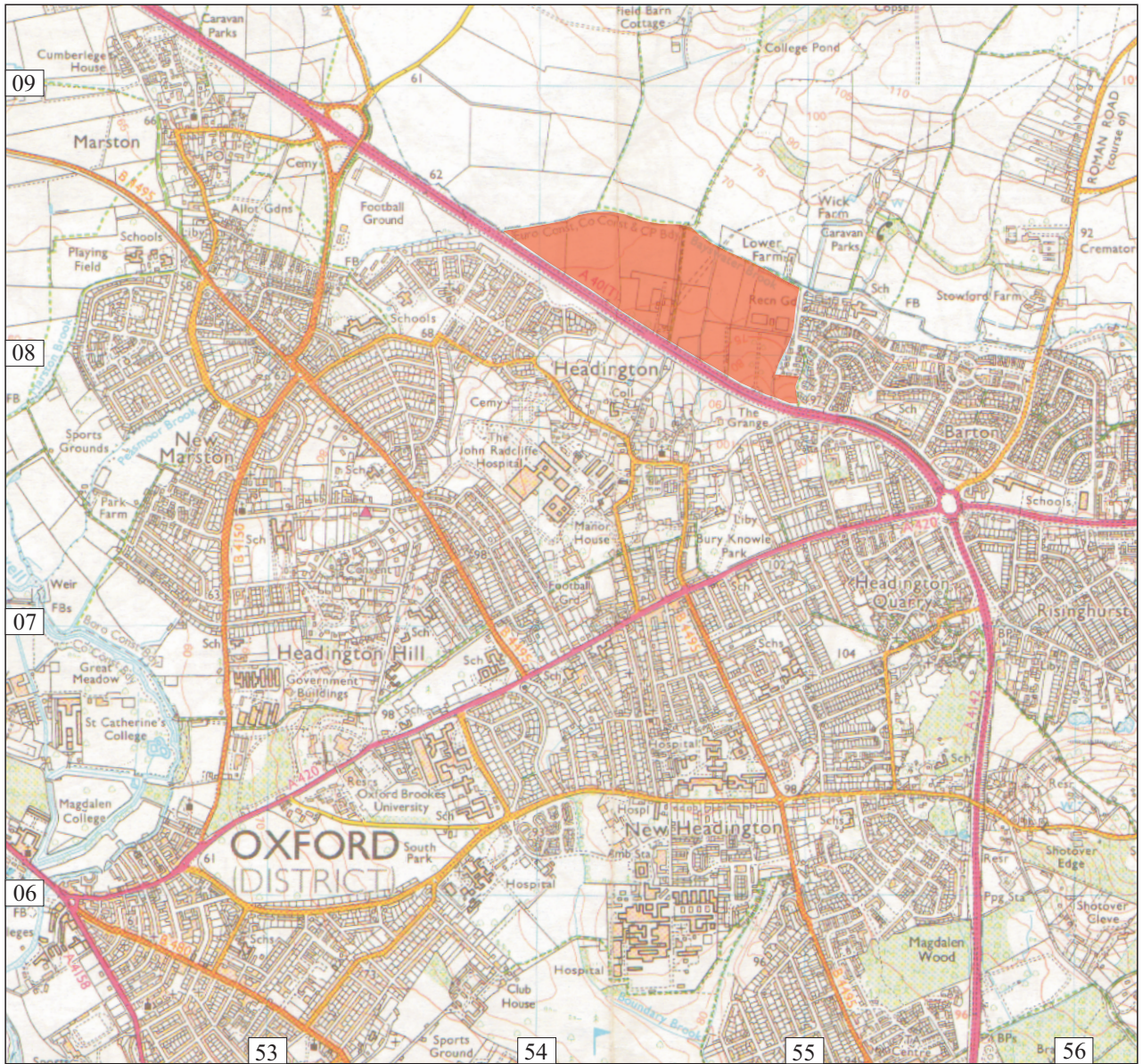
2.1 Location (Figure 1)

The site is situated on outskirts of the city of Oxford, centred on National Grid Reference SP 5450 0830 (centred). The site lies to the north of the A40(T) road, south of the Bayswater Brook and west of Barton, in an area of land roughly triangular in plan.

The geology of this site consists of a mixture of clay head deposits, an area of alluvium related to the Bayswater Brook and potentially small strips of River Terrace Gravels. There are areas of landfill in the eastern part of the site at the Barton Football Ground, and raised ground in the area of Barton Nature Park.

3 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

This archaeological desk-based assessment has been prepared to support a City Council Development Plan Document as part of the Local Development Framework. An Area Action Plan is being produced for the site.



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Figure 1.

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

4.1 Historical Background

Barton originally formed a hamlet within the Manor of Headington. The manor was part of the Saxon royal demesne and remained in the king's hands after the Conquest.

Headington is derived from a Saxon personal name *Hedena*. One theory states the original name is *Hedena's Dun* or Hedena's Hill. It is suggested that a village grew up with a nucleus of a Great Royal Manor, and may have perhaps been more important in Saxon and Norman times than at any later period (VCH 1957)

The Domesday Book of 1086 records that "*Rex tenet Hedintone*" or "*the King holds Headington*". A Church Tax is also referred to in the book (Morris 1978). Ethelred's charter to St. Frideswide's in 1004 was witnessed 'in villa regia quae vocatur Hedindona', (VCH 1957) that translates as "*in the royal residence which is called Headington*". There is a strong tradition that a royal residence of some kind existed there before the Conquest. There is mention of a nursery for the royal children; (VCH 1957) or perhaps it was a hunting lodge. Whatever its purpose, it seems to have fallen into disuse when Henry I made Woodstock the favourite royal residence in the county, and in his daughter's time the manor was alienated from the Crown.

The parish church of Headington, St. Andrews was first mentioned by name in a royal charter of Henry I in 1122. The earliest datable part of the present church is the chancel arch of 1160 (Sherwood and Pevsner 1974).

There were two medieval hamlets within the parish, Barton and Wick, both lying north-east of the main village. The earliest record of Barton is in 1246 when it is already called Old Barton, and in 1279 it had eleven peasant households. In the 15th and 16th centuries it was much frequented by masons and quarrymen (VCH 1957).

Barton was still a hamlet of the Parish in the 18th century. Headington Parish was seen to be rapidly expanding in the nineteenth century. The census return of 1801 gives the number of residence at 669. By 1841 this had increased to 1668 and by 1891 it stood at 3005.

4.2 Cartographic Evidence

The area is not depicted on Agas' map of 1578, Loggan's map of 1675, Taylor's map of 1750 or Hoggard's map of 1850.

The earliest map consulted that shows the area was that published by John Speed in 1610 although Headington is shown, Barton is not and the scale is such that no detail can be ascertained about the site. Jan Jansson's map of 1646 shows the extent of the forest of Shotover in the area; the boundary of which lies just to the north of the site.

Most other 17th and 18th century maps are either based on Speed's work or are of a similar scale. Barton is shown on John Harrison's map of 1787 and John Cary's map of 1805.

Davis' map of 1797 shows the area as open fields with only three large fields existing at this point. The Enclosure map of 1802 (Fig. 2) is the first map that shows the area in any real detail.



Figure 2. Detail from the Enclosure Map of 1802 (north is to the bottom right hand corner)

The basic layout of the fields in the area is in linear strips aligned roughly north from Headington. Some of these strips have internal subdivisions, increasing the number of

fields. The proposed development site cuts across 16 such fields. These strips are likely to be based on earlier medieval strip fields or burgage plots.

There is no Tithe map for this area held by the Oxfordshire County Record Office, the Oxfordshire Historic Environment Record or the Centre for Oxfordshire Studies.

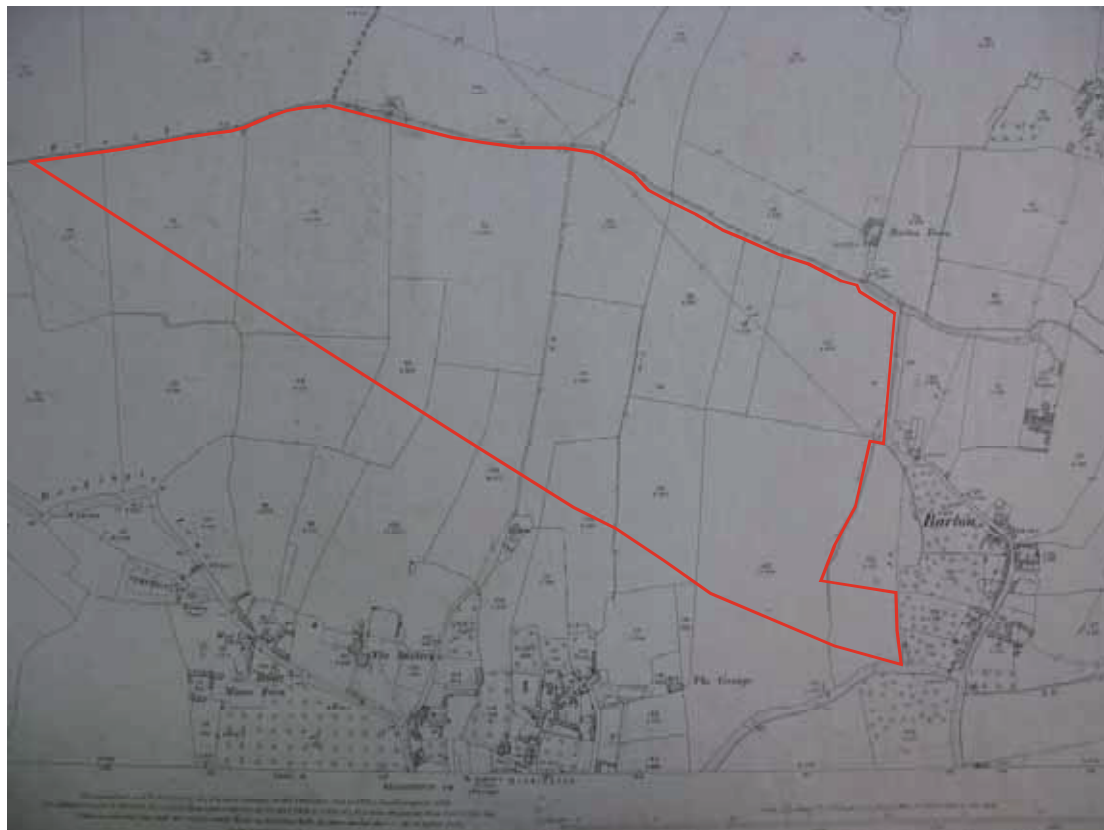


Figure 3. OS map of 1899 (originally 1:2,500 reproduction not to scale)

The 1st edition OS map (Fig. 3) of the area shows that little has changed within the boundary of the site, except for certain field boundaries. A few have been added while a few taken out. The development site cuts across 17 fields at this point.

The fields are numbered on both maps allowing for easy comparison between the two, this is summarised in Table 1.

Field No.	1802	1899	1802	1899
		71	79	81, 82 & 83
	72	76	87	114
	75	75 + part 74	89	68, 69, 70 & 116
	77	73	90	142 + part 122
	78	100 & 106	91	67
	79 & 80	72		

Table 1. Comparison of field numbers 1802 to 1899

The private road marked on the 1802 map running north from Headington is now marked as a foot path and continues to the Bayswater Brook, where it is met by a new foot path coming from Barton running in a roughly north-westerly alignment. There is no change on the OS map of 1921.

The OS map of 1937 (Fig. 4) shows the new northern by-pass road (A40) has been constructed along the southern border of the site. For the main part the internal field division are almost identical with only a few alterations.

The field marked as 79 on the 1899 map is now 438 and is wooded. The hedge between plots 73 and 100 seen on the 1899 map has been removed and the two joined as one, now marked 447.



Figure 4. OS Map of 1937 (originally 1:2,500 reproduction not to scale)

The OS map of 2001 shows that the field originally marked as 67 in 189 is now converted from arable land to a recreation ground. This facility includes a football pitch, games court and a bowling green with an associated pavilion.

To the south of this the field originally marked as 142 in 1899 has been given over to allotments. Field 122 is now wooded. Part of field 116 adjacent to the allotments now contains several buildings. This is reached by a path from the allotments. These buildings are not visible on modern satellite imagery of the area.

The whole of field 106 within the site boundary and the southern portion of field 72 have been built on for an electricity sub-station; the eastern boundary of which encroaches slightly into field 115.

4.3 Known Archaeological Sites (Figure 5)

A study of all known archaeological sites in the Oxfordshire HER within 500m has been carried out; these have been listed by chronological period.

Prehistoric

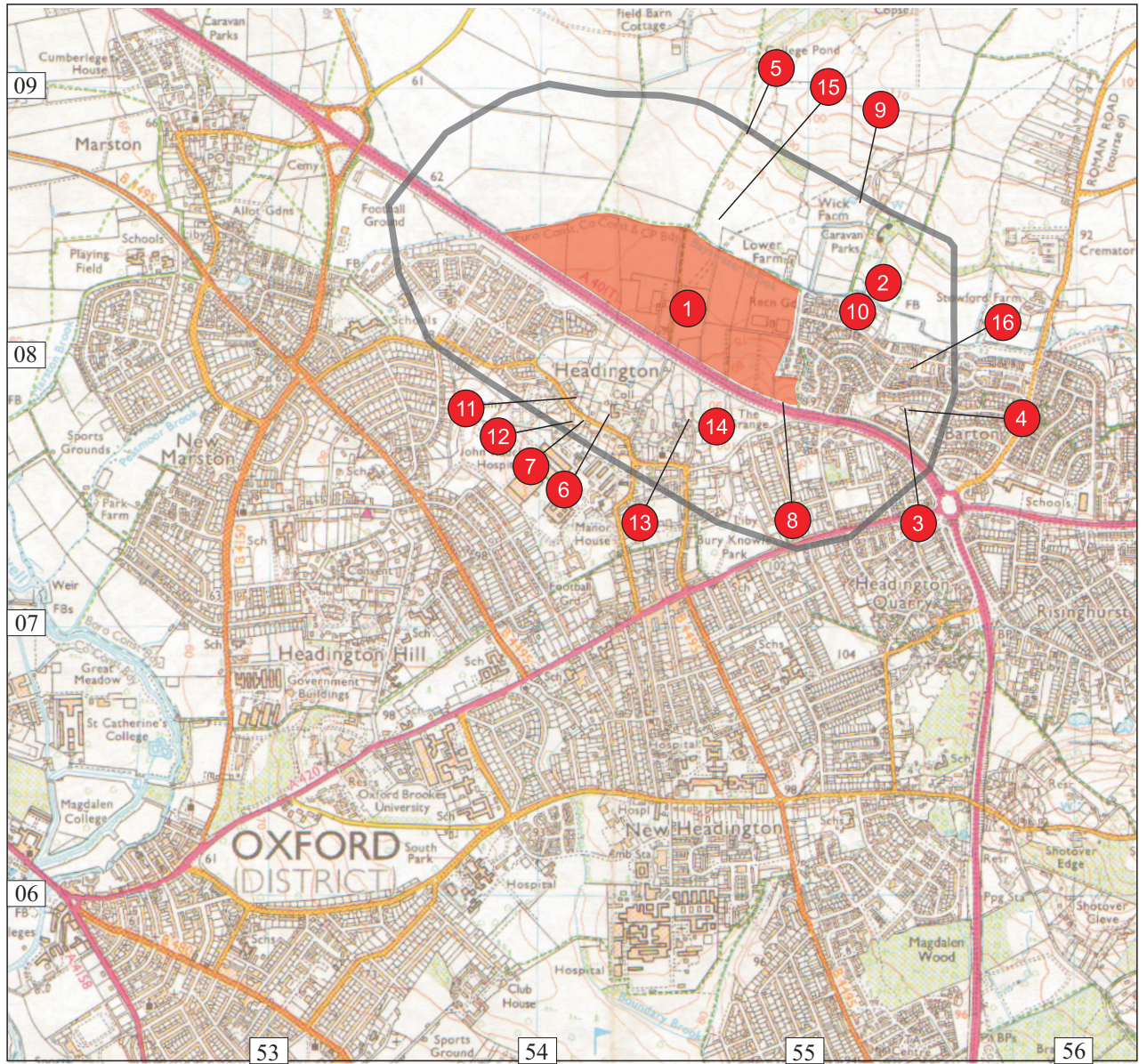
1. Neolithic Polished Axe (SP 5455 0818). Now in the Ashmolean Museum (New Cat. C.1921, 217) SMR 3627, NMR 338377. Another axe was found 1km to the south of the site in Headington (NMR 338417)
2. Bronze Age Pit (SP 5530 0827). Discovered during excavations for a proposed Headington By-pass in 1993. NMR 1053695
3. Enclosure (SP 5539 0779). Iron Age univalate enclosure with substantial gateway associated with early to middle Iron Age pottery. Internal features include storage pits. SMR 16972.
4. Pits (SP 5429 0780). Pits that produced fragments from an early Iron Age carinated vessel were located in an evaluation trench at Ruskin College, Headington in 2008 (Oxford Archaeology, 2008, 13). The report notes that, "it is not clear if these represent a 'one off' deposit or form part of an associated settlement. Ongoing excavations by OA at Adrley Quarry 19km to the north of Ruskin College have recently recorded an almost identical feature/assemblage occurrence within a landscape apparently barren of associated settlement" (OA, 2008, 13).

Roman

5. Burials (SP 5539 0779). Early Roman flexed burial within reused Iron Age enclosure. SMR 16972, NMR 1434948.
6. Pottery Scatter (SP 5479 0884). Comprising Romano-British pottery, tile and stonework. The hedge appears to respect the site as if originally there had been some earthwork when the boundary was created. SMR 4528
7. Pottery Scatter (SP 5429 0780). Coarse pottery, probably indicating a kiln producing Sandford ware, was reported by Mr S M Goodchild from foundation trenches at the Rockery. SMR 3669, NMR 1005375. An evaluation in 2008 at the site recorded two large pits containing Roman pottery and charred cereal grains. The Roman pottery assemblage from the site is notable with the dominance of mortarium sherds, these being characteristic of material derived from production waste (OA, 2008).
8. Pottery Scatter (SP 5421 0778). Comprising Romano-British pottery. NMR 338380.

Medieval

9. Saxon inhumation within a sunken-feature building with associated pottery (SP 5490 0784). SMR 3802



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Site with search radius



Figure 5. Known Archaeological Sites

10. Wick deserted medieval village (SP 5520 0858). Site has remains of the farm and poor quality earthworks dated c. 1350-1450. SMR 1104

11. Ridge and furrow (SP 5522 0818). Buried plough soil associated with 11th –13th century pottery. SMR 16981, NMR 1405035

12. Quarry Pit (SP 5414 0784). Quarry pit containing medieval pottery. NMR 1434950.

13. Settlement (SP 5415 0771). Evaluation in 1993 revealed evidence for medieval settlement in the area. NMR 1053290. The undated stone scatter just to the west (SP 541 077, NMR 655894) may well be part of this settlement

Post-medieval

14. Wall and cut features (SP 5456 0772). A wall, ditch, posthole and pit with associated 16th - 19th century pottery were found during archaeological evaluation in 2006. SMR 26291

Undated

15. Cropmark. Dr. C. Jones of Newcastle University identified a ditch and building outlines on aerial photographs (SP 5465 0765). He believed this to be the site of the early medieval Royal Palace. Copies of these photographs not deposited with the Oxfordshire HER. SMR 26212.

16. Enclosure (SP 5466 0848) An undated rectangular enclosure was located during work in 1993 in advance of a proposed Heading By-pass road. NMR 1053694.

Negative Archaeological Events

17. Evaluation (SP 5545 0792) conducted in 2006 recorded no archaeological remains reporting the area showed considerable modern disturbance (OA 2006). SMR EOX2223

4.4 Listed Buildings and Gardens

Listed buildings and gardens were not covered during the research as none lie within the boundaries of the proposed development site.

Although it should be noted that St. Andrew's Church, a grade II listed building with elements that date to the 12th century (SMR 6347), lies 300m to the south of the site. In its vicinity are several buildings and structures dating from the 16th to 19th centuries (SMR 1013, 3621, 3624, 3628 and NMR 338378, 1331683).

4.5 Documentary Evidence

Aerial photographs held by the County HER (Geonex L 22: 4691 103-104 and L 23: 4691 169-170) appear to show the remnants of ridge and furrow agriculture in the

field to the north of the present electrical sub-station and also in a field to the east of the site, southeast of Wick Farm.

The presence of the ridge and furrow is confirmed by the earliest photos of the area SP54/07/1 and SP5407/2 (1935) US/7PH/GP/LOC35 5008 and 509 (1943). These show that the ridge and furrow was widespread not just within the site, but in the fields surrounding it.

Some of the ridge and furrow in the area appears not to respect the field boundaries at the time of photographing as seen in photograph RAF/106G/UK/1721 4199 (1946). This would indicate that this type of farming had gone out of practice long before the boundaries were put in place, and its survival as standing earthwork would show that the land was not under the plough. The fact that the 1943 – 1946 photographs do not show the area as being farmed is significant. Wartime measures were in place to utilise all available areas of land to grow food, and may mean the land was too wet or infertile to use. If this were the case it could mean that historic farming of the area was also limited.

A linear feature seen on Geonex L 22: 4691 103-104 and L 23: 4691 169-170 that was roughly parallel to the Bayswater Brook and initially thought to represent the headland of the ridge and furrow is also present on earlier photographs such as US/7PH/GP/LOC35 5008 (1943). One, RAF/CPE/UK/1936 2495 (1947), shows it very clearly to be a later ditch that cuts across the ridge and furrow near its northern end (Fig. 6).

Photographs US/7PH/GP/LOC35 5008 and 509 (1943) appear to show two circular features. One is located under what is now the recreation ground (diameter c. 25m) and the other (diameter c. 18m) under what is now the electricity sub-station (Fig. 6). A different circular feature (diameter c. 15m) in the area of the recreation ground is visible on RAF/CPE/UK/1936 2496 (1947)

A possible circular feature (diameter c. 60m) and a rectangular feature (Fig. 6) were noted to the west of the proposed development area (OS/90017 490, 1990) These features did not appear visible on earlier photographs of the area and are rather indistinct on this one. The dry summer of 1990 and the masking effect of the ridge and furrow could explain this.

There would appear to be a concentration of crop-marks that could potentially be of archaeological significance in the fields to the north of the site as seen on photographs NMR 15456/27, NMR15492/08 and NMR15492/09 (1996). These features could be related to the enclosure (15) recorded in 1993. This may indicate that contemporary activity was limited to the north of Bayswater Brook.

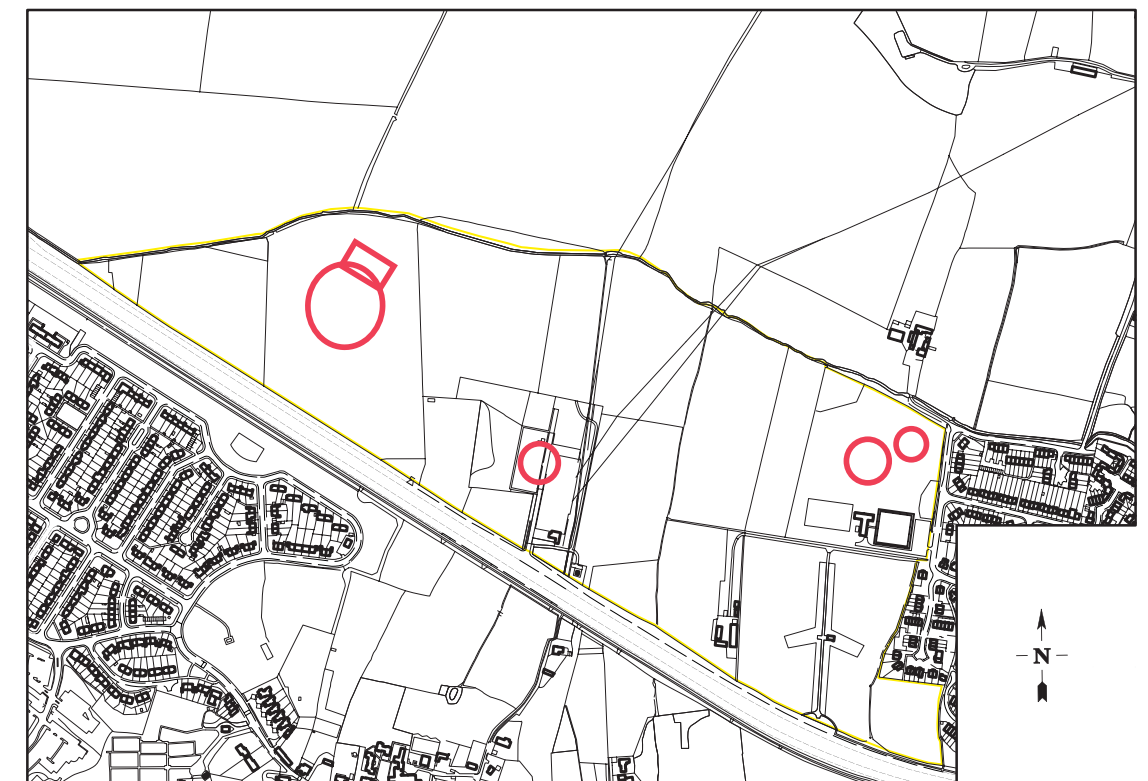
Photograph RAF/CPE/UK/2334 5317 (1947) shows that the strip field to the west of the recreation ground is under allotments as is the field to the west of the present allotments. This would equate to fields 68 and 116 on the OS map of 1899. By 1954 the allotments had spread further west of the recreation ground into the field marked as 69 on the OS map of 1899 (RAF/82/1006 0305). These allotments were short lived and by 1961 they had disappeared from field 68 and 69 (FSL/6125 3165).



Photograph OS/90017 490 (1990)



Features interpreted and show in red



Plot of all features noted from aerial photographs

Figure 6. Aerial Photographs showing possible enclosures

5 DISCUSSION

An isolated find of a Neolithic axe (1) came from within the site boundary. While it is possible that this could have been a one off loss it is more likely to represent some form of Neolithic activity in the area. Such axes are often found as carefully placed ritual depositions within pits and often associated with settlement and enclosure sites (Whittle 1985).

The potential for archaeological remains from the Neolithic in the area was highlighted in a Desk-Based Assessment conducted in 1997 prior to work on Electricity Sub-Station (NMR 1220695).

Bronze Age activity (2) appears to be limited to the east of the study area, however it may well follow the line of the Bayswater Brook.

A substantial Iron Age enclosure (3) lies just to the east of the site. It is situated on an area of high ground over looking the Bayswater Brook below it. Although the site would certainly sit with its resource catchment area of the enclosure it is possible that an associated field system were to the south and east to take advantage of the relatively flatter land.

Some Iron Age enclosures form part of ditch-system enclosures and can spread for of a kilometre across the landscape, as seen at Rotherley, Worthy Down, Hants, Casterley Camps, Wilts, and Mingies Ditch (Cunliffe 2005). It is therefore possible that contemporary activity may extend into the site boundary.

The circular feature seen on aerial photographs OS/90017 490 and 491 (Fig. 6) could represent an enclosure of either Neolithic or Iron Age date. The rectangular one while it is unlikely to be contemporary could be later. No trace of either was evident during the site visit. The other circular features seen on photographs US/7PH/GP/LOC35 5008 and 509 (1943) are also likely to be indicative of prehistoric activity in the area.

The site lies on the edge of a dispersed landscape of Roman pottery manufacturing and settlement sites. These sites formed part of an extensive nationally important Roman pottery industry that was orientated on the Dorchester to Alchester Road (located 1km to the east).

The early Roman burials (4) appear to respect the area of the earlier Iron Age enclosure (3) and may well mark a period of Romanisation of the populace while still clinging to ancestral lands and monuments (JMHS 2005). Roman activity seems to shift to the east to the line of the Dorchester to Alchester Roman road that lies less *c.* 800 m to the east of the investigation site. Flanking the road is an area of extensive Romano-British occupation (SMR 3664, 3666, 3667, 16190 and 16206).

Roman pottery (6) was recovered during construction work in the 1970's and there is anecdotal evidence for Roman pottery finds during the construction of Bowen House in the 1960's. A later evaluation in 2008 recorded two large pits containing Roman pottery and charred cereal grains. The Roman pottery assemblage from this location is notable with the dominance of mortarium sherds, these being characteristic of material derived from production waste (OA 2008). The pottery further south (7) is likely to represent another area of this production site.

The Roman pottery scatter (5) to the north of the proposed development site is likely to be associated with a known villa complex just to the northeast of it (SMR 3626). Llewellyn Jewitt excavated the villa in 1849. He found it to be constructed with massive walls of solid masonry, but much robbed in later periods.

There is a speculative route of a Roman road or track-way that runs north from the Ruskin campus site (6) through the proposed development site, and towards the villa at Wick (VCH, 1939, 266a and 267). This route may well continue on past the villa joining another road on the line of the current B4027 (Cheetham 1995).

On the southern border of the site, a single Anglo Saxon inhumation (8) was discovered in 1931. This unaccompanied burial was allegedly found at the base of a sunken-featured building, which contained Anglo Saxon pottery. The area of this find is at a high point in the area, the proposed development site lies on significantly lower ground. This was quite noticeable during the site visit.

The cropmark (14) identified by Dr. C. Jones of Newcastle University as the site of the early medieval Royal Palace does not appear on aerial photographs held by the Oxfordshire HER or the NMR. Several theories place the Palace at various points in the area of Old Headington, but close to the present church of St. Andrew (SMR 3623).

A Saxon burial was also found 800m to the southwest at Stephen Road (NMR 1396839). It is possible that these burials form part of an extended cemetery. There positions appear to follow the high ground overlooking the lower land of Old Headington and perhaps the Palace.

The undated enclosure (15) just to the north of the proposed development site, may indicate that earlier settlement is located just outside of the area, although it is possible this represents a field boundary. If the enclosure does represent a settlement then the proximity of this enclosure to the Bayswater Brook is likely to indicate limited associated activity to the south of it, which perhaps would only be agricultural in nature.

To the north of the site are the remains of the medieval hamlet of Wick (9), mentioned in record in the 13th century; it would appear to be deserted by the middle of the 15th century.

During the medieval period the site lay within or close to the boundary of the medieval forest of Shotover. The boundary is recorded in 1298 running along the Bayswater Brook. Despite its legal status as forest much of the area is likely to have been largely located within open fields.

Ridge and furrow agriculture is noted in the area from aerial photographs. Excavation at the former Barton School site confirmed the presence with plough soils (10) noted to contain 11th-14th century pottery in one trench and 13th-16th in another (JMHS 2002b). The furrows associated with the plough were up to 0.16m deep. The area appears to have been utilised for agricultural purposes from then until the present day.

Satellite imagery and aerial photographs shows there is remnant ridge and furrow in several of the fields, especially in the west of the site. Although it is present towards the east it is less prominent. Interestingly the ridge and furrow appears to stop a

considerable distance to the south of the Bayswater Brook. This possibly indicates that the ground closer to the Brook was marshy and may correlate to the alluvial strip noted on the geology maps (BGS 237, 1994).

These findings were confirmed during the site visit, the traces of ridge and furrow more prominent in the west of the site. Although the ridge and furrow stops well to the south of the Bayswater Brook, the area between is not flat, but has irregular undulations that may indicate some form of activity other than drainage. The field to the north of the Electricity Sub-Station showed a low mound devoid of grass and may indicate modern dumping in the area.

The allotments to the west of the present recreation ground and allotments as seen on the aerial photographs between 1947 and 1961 are likely to have had little impact on archaeological remains in the area. Modern satellite imagery shows the faint traces of ridge and furrow still present in the areas affected. The same may well be true for the modern allotments and Barton Village Nature Park.

An electricity sub-station was constructed in the later half of the 20th century. There are associated over-head power lines running from the sub-station to the northeast. These are held up by poles, which have been positioned in or close to the field hedges. The area outside the sub-stations footprint would have been subjected to minimal disturbance from its construction.

Two mounds have been noted in the vicinity of the Electricity Sub-Station and questions concerning their antiquity have arisen. These mounds do not appear on historic aerial photographs of the area and are likely to be the result of construction of the Sub-Station.

The mound to the west of the Electricity Sub-Station is in the region of 2m high and is planted with elder trees. The area between it and the Electricity Sub-Station does not display any remnant of ridge and furrow. This is likely due to plant operations in the area during the initial construction of the Station.

The Barton Phase1 Ground Condition Report (Peter Brett Associates 2009) confirms that the area of the recreation ground has been built up in recent years. This work should not have affected any archaeological remains within the area of the recreation ground. There may have been some impact by the construction of the pavilion.

The depth of impact for any redevelopment in this area should be considered. It is possible that buried archaeological remains could exist at a considerable depth.

6 CONCLUSIONS

There are relatively few known archaeological sites in the area. This may at first give the impression that the area will have limited potential for containing archaeological remains. The lack of known sites is more likely due to the limited development and research work conducted in the area rather than an absolute lack.

Ridge and furrow agriculture is known in the area and is likely to have been practiced across the entire site. The furrows associated with this practice would have destroyed any ephemeral earlier archaeological features in the area.

In general the potential for prehistoric remains in the area is low, with two caveats the Neolithic and the Iron Age. The possible circular feature seen on aerial photographs could be of this date.

Although there is only a solitary Neolithic axe found on the site the potential for contemporary archaeological remains of this date must be considered low to moderate, due to the association of similar finds with known sites.

The potential for Iron Age activity must be considered low to moderate, due to the proximity of known sites of this date. Such activity in the area may take the form of field systems, but there remains a possibility for extended settlement.

It is considered that there is a low to moderate potential for Roman remains to be present within the site. Settlement would appear to be to the north and the south of the site. It is probable that the area was used for agricultural purposes at this time and any remains of this period are likely to be field ditches. However there is a possibility of a track-way running through the area and the exact area of the local pottery production is as yet undefined.

Given the proximity of the Saxon burial (8) to the site the potential for remains of this period must be considered high, however any such remains are likely to be confined to the east side of the site largely in the area now used for allotments and the Barton Village Nature Park.

There is a high potential for medieval and post-medieval ridge and furrow, drainage ditches and “grubbed-out” field boundaries to be present in the site area.

It would seem prudent to conduct a geophysical survey of the area as an initial stage. This would either confirm or deny the presence of any settlement or enclosures in the area. Any features showing could be targeted with sample trenching supplemented by some randomly spaced for 2% coverage of the site’s area. Sample trenching could be conducted without the initial geophysical survey, however the minimum sample rate should be 5% coverage of the site’s area.

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7.2 Historic Maps

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David Loggan's Map 1675 in *Oxonia Illustrata*

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OS Map 1:2,500 1921 Oxfordshire

OS Map 1:2,500 1937 Oxfordshire
OS map 1:25,000 2001 Explorer 180
BGS 1:50,000 Sheet 237 Thame (1994)

7.3 Aerial Photographs Consulted

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SP5407/2 (1935)	RAF/541/479 4028 (1950)
US/7PH/GP/LOC35 5008 (1943)	OS/52T10 34 (1952)
US/7PH/GP/LOC35 5009 (1943)	OS/52T10 35 (1952)
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RAF/106G/UK/1413 3404 (1946)	OS/52T7 28 (1952)
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Geonex L 22: 4691 103-104
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7.4 Online Resources

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Oxfordshire County HER Heritage gateway link:

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