Watford Health Campus

Archaeological Evaluation and Monitoring Report

February 2016

Client: Volker Fitzpatrick Ltd

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Watford Health Campus

Archaeological Evaluation & Monitoring

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Summary

Between 30th June and 1st July 2015 and 9th to the 10th February 2016, Oxford Archaeology East carried out an archaeological evaluation and monitoring at Watford Health Campus, Wiggenhall Road, Watford, Hertfordshire (TQ 10878 95475). Two phases of archaeological evaluation along the proposed route of an access road and adjacent infrastructure and a subsequent phase of monitoring of ground works in areas not covered by the archaeological trenching was conducted.

The first evaluation phase consisted of 4 x 50m trenches in Area A, on Sports Pitches, to the east of Wiggenhall Road. These trenches revealed truncated natural chalk and alluvium deposits directly overlain by made ground comprised of modern dumping events and a large modern rubbish pit. These modern deposits contained modern pottery sherds, brick, glass and metal. No archaeological remains were encountered due to the truncation of the natural land surface and levelling of the ground associated with the creation of the sports ground.

The second phase of evaluation consisted of 2 x 15m trenches in Area C, on waste land, which was the site of a former power station, to the west of Wiggenhall Road. These trenches revealed deep set concrete footings of buildings associated with the power station and areas of dumping associated with waste materials from the former power station and later industrial units, which fronted onto the south side of Cardiff Road. No archaeological or natural remains were encountered due to either the truncation of, or make up of the site, during the construction and later demolition of the power station.

The archaeological monitoring visits, in area D, were carried out on two occasions and as with the evaluation, the site had been subject to truncation or modern build up, no archaeological remains were observed.

The evaluation and monitoring at Watford Health Campus has demonstrated that no archaeological deposits or artefacts of significance are present on this site.
1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Location and scope of work
1.1.1 Two phases of archaeological evaluation along the proposed route of an access road and adjacent infrastructure and a subsequent phase of monitoring of ground works in area D, not covered by the archaeological trenching, was conducted at Watford Health Campus, Wiggenhall Road, Watford, Hertfordshire (Fig. 1).

1.1.2 This archaeological evaluation and monitoring was undertaken in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation issued by AECOM Ltd for Watford Borough Council and approved by Hertfordshire County Council Historic Environment Unit (HCCHAU; Planning Application: Watford Borough Council 13/00971/FULM) (AECOM 2014).

1.1.3 The work was designed to assist in defining the character and extent of any archaeological remains within the proposed redevelopment area, in accordance with the guidelines set out in National Planning Policy Framework (Department for Communities and Local Government March 2012). The results will enable decisions to be made by HCCHAU, on behalf of the Local Planning Authority, with regard to the treatment of any archaeological remains found.

1.1.4 The site archive is currently held by OA East and will be deposited with the appropriate county stores in due course.

1.2 Geology and topography
1.2.1 The site lies immediately to the north of The River Colne in an urban setting within the Borough of Watford. The first phase of evaluation consisted of 4 x 50m trenches on sport pitches to the east of Wiggenhall Road approximately 53m above ordnance datum. The second phase of evaluation consisted of 2 x 15m trenches to the west of Wiggenhall Road on a disused industrial estate. The archaeological monitoring of ground works was conducted in areas along the proposed access road not covered by the evaluation trenching.

1.2.2 The underlying geology of the proposed development site comprises Seaford Chalk Formation And Newhaven Chalk Formation (undifferentiated) - Chalk bedrock overlain by superficial deposits consisting of Alluvium - clay, silt, sand and gravel.

(http://www.bgs.ac.uk/discoveringGeology/geologyOfBritain/viewer.html).

1.3 Archaeological and historical background
1.3.1 An archaeological desk-based assessment was carried out by AECOM Ltd for the Watford Health Campus Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) in September 2013 (AECOM 2013) which details the archaeological potential of the site and should be referred to for full background. The following is a brief summary:

1.3.2 A total of 88 sites were recorded within 500m of the Watford Health Campus. These included 11 listed buildings and 77 non-designated sites. The geotechnical monitoring of the site indicated both areas of widespread truncation and areas where possible palaeochannel deposits or alluvial deposits survived. A Bronze Age hearth was listed within the study area, to the south of the River Colne on Eastbury Road. Stray finds were also described from the prehistoric to early medieval period but most likely out of their original context. Structural evidence dating to the later medieval period were found on the High Street to the north east of the site. The EIA concluded there is potential for previously unrecorded heritage assets within the route, primarily of Bronze Age date, although other periods could not be discounted. Therefore intrusive trial trenching was
recommended along the proposed access route on the playing fields and archaeological monitoring within the industrialised areas.

1.3.3 Previous work undertaken for the project include archaeological evaluation by trenching along the proposed route of the access road by AOC Archaeology in 2006 (Clarke 2007). Made ground overlying alluvium was encountered in the area of the sports pitches to the east of Wiggenhall road suggesting archaeological remains were likely to be preserved in this area. Archaeological monitoring of geotechnical test pits within the development area was also carried out by OA East in 2013 (Stocks-Morgan & Webster 2013). This identified the survival of possible palaeo-deposits in the near vicinity of the River Colne and a buried garden soil horizon beneath part of the industrial estate to the west of Wiggenhall Road. No further areas of archaeological concern were identified.

1.4 Acknowledgements

1.4.1 The authors would like to thank Volker Fitzpatrick Ltd who commissioned the work, Aileen Connor of OA East who managed the project and Andy Instone who monitored the works on behalf of Hertfordshire County Council. Malgorzata Kwiatkowska and the authors undertook the excavation of the evaluation trenches, a site monitoring visit were carried Michael Webster. Site survey was carried out by James Taplin of Volker Fitzpatrick Ltd. Also thanks to Anthill Ltd and Lattenbury's who provided the plant.
2 AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

2.1 Aims

2.1.1 The objective of this evaluation and monitoring was to determine as far as reasonably possible the presence/absence, location, nature, extent, date, quality, condition and significance of any surviving archaeological deposits within the development area.

2.2 Methodology

2.2.1 The Archaeological Written Scheme of Investigation required:

- evaluation trenching of 5% of the area of impact in the sports ground to the east of Wiggenhall Road;
- evaluation trenching of 2% of the area of impact in the former industrial estate to the west of Wiggenhall Road and the railway line;
- monitoring of ground works in area D not covered by the evaluation trenching

2.2.2 Machine excavation was carried out under constant archaeological supervision with a wheeled 360 backhoe excavator using a toothless ditching bucket.

2.2.3 Survey data was produced by the principal contractor Volker Fitzpatrick Ltd.

2.2.4 Spoil, exposed surfaces and features were scanned with a metal detector. All metal-detected and hand-collected finds were retained for inspection, other than those which were obviously modern.

2.2.5 All archaeological features and deposits were recorded using OA East's pro-forma sheets. Trench locations, plans and sections were recorded at appropriate scales and colour and monochrome photographs were taken of all relevant features and deposits.

2.2.6 No features or layers were encountered that had potential for environmental sampling.

2.2.7 The site conditions were good with fair weather during the summer of 2015, during the later evaluation and monitoring the conditions were very wet underfoot with sunny and cold weather.
3 RESULTS

3.1 Introduction
3.1.1 Descriptions of the ground conditions encountered, features identified and artefacts recovered are given in this section, full descriptions with dimensions are given in appendix A. The site layout, showing position of trenching and monitoring areas A-D, are given in Figure 2. Detailed plans of Trenches 11 to 14 (Area A) and 15 and 16 (Area C) are shown on Figures 3 and 4, respectively., with sections presented as Figure 5.

3.1.2 The results of the archaeological works along the proposed access road route are presented by Area:

**Area A** comprised the evaluation trenching in the sports ground to the east of Wiggenhall Road; (Plates 1-4)

**Area C** comprised evaluation trenching in the former industrial estate to the west of Wiggenhall Road and the railway line; (Plates 5 and 6)

**Area D** comprised monitoring of ground works in areas not covered by the evaluation trenching (Plate 7).

3.2 Evaluation on Sports Ground East of Wiggenhall Road, Area A

3.2.1 The site was over lain by a brown sandy silt topsoil (200) with occasional gravel inclusions up to 0.2m thick. The trench numbering system carried on in sequence from the trenches observed during the earlier Test Pit evaluation in 2013.

3.2.2 The natural chalk (207) was encountered in the eastern part of Trench 12 and trenches 13 & 14 at a depth of 0.75m below ground level. The natural alluvium (201) was encountered in Trench 11 and the western end of Trench 12 at a depth of 0.75m below ground level. A thin vestige of alluvium, 0.1m thick, was also encountered at the western end of Trench 13 at a depth of 0.75m. The alluvium comprised orange brown silty sand with frequent gravel inclusions.

3.2.3 In Trench 11 the alluvium was overlain by a layer (0.55m thick) of made ground (204) comprised of black, grey and brown sandy silt with flint gravel inclusions and frequent refuse including Victorian/modern pottery fragments, glass, bricks and metal. The made ground and alluvium was cut at the western end of Trench 11 by pit 203. This pit was not excavated but the fill (202) was observed to be composed of dark brownish grey silty sand with Victorian/modern pottery fragments, glass and metal.

3.2.4 The natural deposits were found to be truncated in Trenches 12, 13 & 14 by modern truncation resulting in an overlying build up layers of made ground, 206, 208 & 210, respectively, which were up to 0.55m thick and of similar physical characteristics to that described for made ground 204 in Trench 11.

3.3 Evaluation on Former Industrial Estate West of Wiggenhall Road, Area C

3.3.1 The site was covered in a concrete slab and tarmacadam, which had to be broken out prior to the trenches being excavated.

3.3.2 No natural was exposed in any of the trenches, which were excavated up to a depth of 1.3m, all make up material was modern in date, the trenches are described below. this
area of the site had been either heavily truncated or built up during industrial use and any below ground remains would not be affected by the new development.

3.3.3 In trench 15, a series of concrete footings were exposed 220 to 224 also two live electric cables were present which prevented further deep excavation. The concrete footings and service cables were sealed by the modern tarmacadam 217 and stone hoggin layer 218. Two sondages excavated by machine, at the east and towards the west end of the trench, exposed modern backfill deposits 219, (Fig. 4) the sondages were excavated to a depth of 1.3m where water was encountered.

3.3.4 In trench 16, the tarmacadam and hoggin 225, was removed exposing a concrete slab and modern rubble deposits. These deposits were removed and consisted of 226, 227, 228 and 229. The lower of the deposits consisted of a very loose and dark grey burnt material possibly waste from the former power station and was exposed at a depth of over 1.3m.

3.4 Archaeological Monitoring in Area D

3.4.1 Archaeological monitoring of the western end of this area was carried out on 9th to 10th February 2016.

3.4.2 Area D was located towards the western end of the corridor, the ground work here involves partial building up of ground level and some cutting. The deepest cut of some 3m depth occurs at the far west end of the site where a high bank was observed being cut back and reduced in height to facilitate the level of the new road. (Plate 7). The cut revealed a late 19th century soil sealed by up to three metres of modern overburden. The area to the east of this involves ground-level being maintained or built up by as much as 2m to form the foundation for the road. The road construction would therefore appear to cut through or seal only modern dumps associated with a modern bank.

3.5 Finds Summary

3.5.1 Area A trenches 11, 12, 13 and 14, produced a small assemblage of 18 sherds weighing 1.214kg. The assemblage is domestic in nature, and all of the sherds are from glazed vessels of late 18th-20th century date. The sherds are all relatively unabraded and represent both kitchen and table wares. The levels of pottery across the site are low to moderate and it is most likely to have been deposited as rubbish when this area of the site was truncated and levelled during the Victorian or later period.

3.5.2 No finds were recovered from the trenches in Area C, and monitoring of Area D produced only very modern building debris.

3.6 Environmental Summary

3.6.1 No archaeological deposits were identified with potential for environmental sampling.
4 Discussion and Conclusions

4.1 Area A, Trenches 11-14
4.1.1 The four evaluation trenches were void of any archaeological remains. A top soil had sealed a series of modern make-up layers, which sealed the natural and were encountered at a depth of 0.55-0.75m. These layers were laid down during the truncation of this part of the site in the modern period, almost certainly to form a level surface for sports pitches. A single pit cut into the made ground was obviously modern in date and not excavated.

4.2 Area C, Trenches 15 and 16
4.2.1 The two evaluation trenches were void of archaeological remains, a modern tarmac surface, used for current car parking, sealed a series of concrete footings and modern dumping deposits associated with former industrial site. The lack of natural encountered in the trenches suggest this area of the site had been heavily truncated during its early 20th century industrial usage and subsequent demolition.

4.3 Areas D
4.3.1 Partial monitoring of Area D has shown that the area of greatest cut at the west end of the area where a bank comprising modern dumped materials will be cut back. Further to the east ground will gradually be built-up to a maximum of 2m, it is therefore unlikely that the road corridor will reveal or impact on any archaeological remains in Area D.

4.4 Significance
4.4.1 The trenching and monitoring work in the corridor of the new road had revealed no archaeological remains, the site had been subjected to recent disturbance that had destroyed or sealed any earlier archaeological remains.

4.5 Recommendations
4.5.1 Recommendations for any future work based upon this report will be made by the County Archaeology Office.
### APPENDIX A. TRENCH DESCRIPTIONS AND CONTEXT INVENTORY

#### Trench 11

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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of topsoil overlying made ground cut by one modern rubbish pit. Natural geology comprised of gravel alluvium.</td>
<td>E-W</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>50</td>
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#### Contexts

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<td>200</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>201</td>
<td>Layer</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Natural alluvium</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>202</td>
<td>Fill</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Rubbish pit</td>
<td>Ceramics, Glass, metal</td>
<td>Modern</td>
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<tr>
<td>203</td>
<td>Cut</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>&gt;0.55</td>
<td>Rubbish pit</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Modern</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>204</td>
<td>Layer</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.55</td>
<td>Made Ground</td>
<td>Ceramics, glass, metal</td>
<td>Modern</td>
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#### Trench 12

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<td>Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of topsoil overlying made ground. Natural chalk encountered at the eastern end of trench.</td>
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<td>1.8</td>
<td>50</td>
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<td>Modern</td>
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<tr>
<td>205</td>
<td>Cut</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>&gt;0.55</td>
<td>Truncation</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Modern</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>206</td>
<td>Fill</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>&gt;0.55</td>
<td>Made Ground</td>
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<tr>
<td>207</td>
<td>Layer</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Natural chalk</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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### Trench 13

**General description**

Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of topsoil overlying made ground underlain by natural chalk with a thin layer of gravel alluvium at western end of trench.

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<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>208</td>
<td>Fill</td>
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<td>Made Ground</td>
<td>Ceramics, Glass, metal</td>
<td>Modern</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Truncation</td>
<td>-</td>
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### Trench 14

**General description**

Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of topsoil overlying made ground cut by one modern rubbish pit. Natural geology comprised of gravel alluvium.

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<tr>
<td>211</td>
<td>Cut</td>
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<td>0.55</td>
<td>Truncation</td>
<td>-</td>
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### Trench 15

**General description**

Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists modern tarmacadam surface and stone hoggin layer overlying modern concrete footings of buildings. The presence of live services restricted the trench being excavated to 15m and also its depth by flooding. Natural geology was not exposed in the trench.

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<td>Tarmacadum Car park Surface</td>
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<td>Stone Hoggin layer below 217</td>
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<td>219</td>
<td>Layer</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.9+</td>
<td>Modern rubble backfill</td>
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<td>Modern</td>
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<td>222</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Concrete footing</td>
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<td>223</td>
<td>Wall</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td>Concrete footing</td>
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<tr>
<td>224</td>
<td>Building</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1+</td>
<td>Concrete cellar building</td>
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<td>Modern</td>
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**Trench 16**

**General description**
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of tarmacadum surface and hoggin layer sealing modern dumping deposits of modern date, the lowest layer burning materials from the former power station. Natural was not encountered in the trench.

**Orientation**

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<tr>
<td>Width (m)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Length (m)</td>
<td>13.5</td>
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**Contexts**

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<th>Depth (m)</th>
<th>comment</th>
<th>finds</th>
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<tr>
<td>225</td>
<td>Layer</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.28</td>
<td>Tarmacadum Car park Surface and hoggin layer</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Modern</td>
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<td>226</td>
<td>Layer</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.58</td>
<td>Dump material</td>
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<td>Modern</td>
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<tr>
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<td>0.34</td>
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<tr>
<td>228</td>
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<td>0.18+</td>
<td>Dump material</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>229</td>
<td>Layer</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.20+</td>
<td>Dump Material</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Modern</td>
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**APPENDIX B. FINDS REPORTS**

**B.1 Pottery**

*By Carole Fletcher*

**Introduction and methodology**

B.1.1 The archaeological works produced a small assemblage of 18 sherds weighing 1.214kg. The assemblage is domestic in nature, and all of the sherds are from glazed vessels of late 18th-20th century date. The sherds are all relatively unabraded and represent both kitchen and table wares. The levels of pottery across the site are low to moderate and it is most likely to have been deposited as rubbish from a Victorian or later building.

B.1.2 In trench 11, pit 203 contained a rim sherd from a stoneware jar that may originally have contained jam or marmalade, alongside a banded blue and white slip decorated storage
jar or large jug of a type described as Cornishware and still seen in modern
country style kitchen settings.

B.1.3 Context 204 produced the largest group of sherds, from a wide variety of vessels
including a near complete blue-glazed English stoneware bottle or vase, alongside
sherds from two large refined white ware plates/bowls or serving vessels with
underglaze brown transfer-printed decoration and a Cornish-type ware bowl sherd.

B.1.4 Context 206 in trench 12 produced the spout from a brown glazed (Rockingham-type)
slip decorated teapot of a Brown Betty-type, and a sherd from a Yellow ware mixing
bowl with moulded external decoration and an internal white slip. This type of mixing
bowl has been manufactured by Mason Cash since the beginning of the 20th century
and is still in production today (http://www.masoncash.co.uk/products/mixing-
bowls/cane-mixing-bowls.html).

B.1.5 Trench 13, context 208, produced late 18th-19th century pearlware vessels, including a
blue and white transfer-printed pattern plate rim (willow-type pattern) and a ginger jar
with a lustre glaze decorated rim. Also recovered was the base from an earthenware
teapot, impressed around the edge S JOHNSON[...] ENGLAND and across the centre
FIREPROOF. This may be a vessel produced by Samuel Johnson Ltd, Hill Pottery
(1887-1915) and Britannia Pottery (1916-1931) Burslem, Staffordshire. The company
produced earthenwares throughout this period (Godden 1991, pp356-357).

B.1.6 Three sherds of pottery were recovered from trench 14, context 210, and included a
moulded body sherd from a refined white earthenware bowl or Victorian majolica-type
jardinière, glazed externally in shades of brown and internally in blue-green. Also found
was a body sherd from a 19th century refined white earthenware jar or vase with
sponged and painted decoration.

B.1.7 **Pottery Catalogue**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Context</th>
<th>Cut</th>
<th>Fabric</th>
<th>Basic Form</th>
<th>Sherd Count</th>
<th>Weight (kg)</th>
<th>Pottery Date Range</th>
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<tr>
<td>202</td>
<td>203</td>
<td>English stoneware</td>
<td>Jar rim sherd</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.025</td>
<td>Mid 19th-early 20th century</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>English stoneware</td>
<td>Ginger-type, lid seated jar rim sherd</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.025</td>
<td>Mid 19th-early 20th century</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5 Refined white earthenware</td>
<td>6 Jar body sherd</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.113</td>
<td>20th century</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Coloured-glazed refined white ware</td>
<td>Ginger-type jar rim sherd</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.029</td>
<td>19th century</td>
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<tr>
<td>204</td>
<td></td>
<td>English stoneware</td>
<td>Near complete bottle or vase</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.442</td>
<td>19th-20th century</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Refined white earthenware</td>
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<td>0.022</td>
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<td>Context</td>
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<td>Fabric</td>
<td>Basic Form</td>
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<td>Refined white earthenware</td>
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<td>Refined red earthenware</td>
<td>Teapot spout</td>
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<td>Yellow ware (slipped)</td>
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<td>Pearlware</td>
<td>Ginger-type jar rim sherd</td>
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<td>Late 18th-19th century</td>
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<td>Jar or vase</td>
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| Total   |     |                                 |                     | 18          | 1.214       |                    |

*Table 1: Pottery*
APPENDIX C. BIBLIOGRAPHY


AECOM Ltd 2014  Archaeological Written Scheme of Investigation for Watford Health Campus – Highway Infrastructure Works. AECOM Ltd, dated 1st April 2014 (unpublished)


**APPENDIX D. OASIS REPORT FORM**

All fields are required unless they are not applicable.

### Project Details

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### Type of Project/Techniques Used

**Prompt** Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPS 5

**Development Type** Road Scheme

**Please select all techniques used:**

- [ ] Aerial Photography - interpretation
- [ ] Aerial Photography - new
- [ ] Annotated Sketch
- [ ] Augering
- [ ] Dendrochronological Survey
- [X] Documentary Search
- [ ] Environmental Sampling
- [ ] Fieldwalking
- [ ] Geophysical Survey
- [ ] Grab-Sampling
- [ ] Gravity-Core
- [ ] Laser Scanning
- [ ] Measured Survey
- [ ] Metal Detectors
- [ ] Phosphate Survey
- [ ] Photogrammetric Survey
- [ ] Photographic Survey
- [ ] Rectified Photography
- [ ] Remote Operated Vehicle Survey
- [ ] Sample Trenches
- [ ] Survey/Recording Of Fabric/Structure
- [ ] Targeted Trenches
- [ ] Test Pits
- [ ] Topographic Survey
- [ ] Vibro-core
- [ ] Visual Inspection (Initial Site Visit)

### Monument Types/Significant Finds & Their Periods

List feature types using the [NMR Monument Type Thesaurus](#) and significant finds using the [MDA Object type Thesaurus](#) together with their respective periods. If no features/finds were found, please state "none".

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### Project Location

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© Oxford Archaeology East  Page 19 of 21  Report Number 1803
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<td>Project Manager</td>
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**Digital Media**

- Database
- GIS
- Geophysics
- Images
- Illustrations
- Moving Image
- Spreadsheets
- Survey
- Text
- Virtual Reality

**Paper Media**

- Aerial Photos
- Context Sheet
- Correspondence
- Diary
- Drawing
- Manuscript
- Map
- Matrices
- Microfilm
- Misc.
- Research/Notes
- Photos
- Plans
- Report
- Sections
- Survey
This phase of work, Areas A, C and D, was in response to a planning application different to that of work carried out in Area B.
Figure 1: Site location showing archaeological trenches
Figure 2: Areas A, C and D
Figure 3: Site layout plan of Evaluation Trenches 11-14 in Area A

Key
- Limit of excavation
- Section
- Cut number
- Archaeological feature

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Figure 4: Selected Sections
Figure 5: Detail plans of Trenches 15 and 16 in Area C
Plate 5: Trench 15, from west

Plate 6: Trench 16, from south-west
Plate 7: Area D showing removal of modern bank