





N BEG22
→ TR 91
TRENCH 5/10/17









WEEK 7 PROGRESS REPORT

Please find below a summary of the Begbroke trenches progress to 27/01/2023 (the seventh week of the programme, excluding the Christmas holiday).

To date 298 were costed for, of which 21 are not accessible. Of 277 trenches available to dig in total, 105 have been completely finished and another 45 are in progress, leaving 127 not yet started. We are planning to retain the 2nd machine for another week or two to help make rapid progress in the areas with sparse archaeology to the north of the science park.

Work in this week was focussed in two areas: The north-western field, next to the A44, and the eastern fields adjacent to the railway:

The north-western field was mostly completed this week with some sampling and backfilling to finish on Monday 30th Jan. The majority of trenches in this field produced no archaeology. An extra trench (299) was agreed with OCAS and the client, to investigate a possible roundhouse visible of the geophysical survey plot which had not been detected in the nearest trench. The trench revealed a series of gullies and other features in the location shown on the survey plot. One curving gully is interpreted as a roundhouse wall foundation or eavesdrop gully. This group of features produced hand-made pottery which is probably of Iron Age date.

In the eastern fields, next to the railway, work continued on the second very dense concentration of settlement, which is producing probable Iron Age and Roman pottery.

Team size averaged about 12 this week, higher than planned but justified by the large number of features to dig. As agreed with the client the team was increased by one geoarchaeologist to cover logging of geotechnical holes by Hydrock, which started this week. The geotechnical holes will provide a timely view of the floodplain deposit sequence, especially along the proposed road bridge over the railway. OA are planning trenches in the floodplain areas when the ground is dry enough and the geotechnical work will provide valuable data for planning those as well as ground-truthing the previously completed EM survey by Magnitude.

The trenches are mostly about 1m deep and will flood if not backfilled promptly. They therefore have to be backfilled in a rolling programme and the machine excavation cannot get too far ahead of survey and hand excavation.

The geophysical survey continues to be a reliable guide to the presence of significant archaeology.

Trench signing off

Vicky Green (OCAS) visited on Thursday 26th and inspected open trenches in both of the areas currently being worked on, as described above and shown on the attached trench progress plan. Due to a need to backfill the trenches promptly for logistical reasons and to prevent flooding, VG has continued to sign off empty trenches remotely on the basis of photographic evidence, where needed to maintain progress. A next visit is provisionally planned for 02/02/23.

Stuart Foreman

Oxford Archaeology

23/01/2023

The following photographs are of a selection of features and trenches worked on this week to the north of Sandy Lane, including features in Trench 299 which contained a probable Iron Age roundhouse.

























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WEEK 8 PROGRESS REPORT

Please find below a summary of the Begbroke trenches progress to 03/02/2023 (the eighth week of the programme, excluding the Christmas holiday). The trench progress plans attached to this report was updated on 07/02/23. To date 298 trenches were costed for, of which 21 are not accessible. Of 277 trenches available to dig in total, 153 have been completely finished and another 57 are in progress, leaving 67 not yet started. We are planning to retain the 2nd machine for another week or two to help make rapid progress in the areas with sparse archaeology to the north of the science park. We are aiming to complete in 3 more weeks beyond this one. This is looking tight given the amount of archaeology in the trenches. The magnetometer survey continues to be a very reliable guide to the presence / absence of significant archaeology.

Work in this week was focussed in three areas: The fields NE of the Science Park, and the eastern fields adjacent to the railway, and the fields SE of the Science Park, as shown on the attached trench progress plans. The newly opened trenches the NE of the Science Park revealed a series of ditches, gullies and clusters of postholes in the location of the trackway junction in the vicinity of Trench 265, including a probable roundhouse in Trench 265. These have not been excavated yet but are expected to be broadly contemporary with the Roman settlement.

Four trenches investigated a large rectangular enclosure on the magnetometer plot to SE of the Science Park (Trenches 124-127). Artefacts from the ditches were very sparse in the sections excavated to date and no internal features were found inside the enclosure. As it appears to be at the end of a track or driveway leading from the Roman farmstead it is potentially a livestock enclosure. The large curvilinear feature investigated in Trench 107 has been shown to be a natural springline feature.

In the eastern fields, next to the railway, work continued on the second very dense concentration of settlement, which is producing Iron Age and Roman pottery. The most intense area of predominantly Roman activity, including the majority of artefacts are located in a group of trenches in the NE corner of the settlement in the vicinity of Trench 77.

Team size averaged about 12 this week, higher than planned but justified by the large number of features to dig. As agreed with the client the team was increased by one geoarchaeologist to cover logging of geotechnical holes by Hydrock, which started last week. This monitoring is mainly focussed on observing the hand dug test pits preceding each hole. The trenches are mostly about 1m deep and will flood if not backfilled promptly. They therefore have to be backfilled in a rolling programme and the machine excavation cannot get too far ahead of survey and hand excavation. The two trenches not yet opened in the SE fields north of Sandy Lane (Trenches 65 and 71) are on the edge of the floodplain and will flood so need to be excavated one at a time and kept dry by pumping. Archaeology is expected in both.

Trench signing off

Vicky Green (OCAS) visited on Thursday 2nd October and inspected open trenches in the areas currently being worked on, as described above and shown on the attached trench progress plan. A next visit is provisionally planned for 2pm 09/02/23.

Stuart Foreman,

Oxford Archaeology

07/02/2023

The following photographs are of a selection of features and trenches worked on this week to the north of Sandy Lane. The trench progress plans are at the end.









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TR 151
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