

Drawing on relevant primary and secondary data and sources relating to archaeology, develop a publication and dissemination strategy for a case study (47%, 3500 words or equivalent)

Introduction

At the start of many a career in archaeology, publication could not be further from the minds of most archaeologists. For many, it may remain so, but it is of importance to all archaeological projects in varying degrees. Creating an appropriate publication and dissemination strategy for an archaeological project is essential in covering all bases and presenting data in a coherent and honest manner. The project for which a publication and dissemination strategy will be created is that of the excavations at Park Street, Cambridge (the site of a 1960s car park demolished prior to archaeological excavation) as undertaken by Headland Archaeology in 2022. The project benefits from a wealth of pre-existing secondary data, both on-site and in the immediate surrounding area. These informed the project in initial stages of its design and before excavation. Previously, at the Project Design stage, a set of Aims and Research Objectives (ROs) was created to contextualise the project within this data and provide direction for future publication, research, and dissemination. Examining these Aims and Objectives will serve to provide an understanding of publication potential, whereas examining the audience of different project outputs will further our understanding of dissemination as it pertains to publication and beyond.

Revising Research Aims and Objectives

The initial Aims (see table one) of the Park Street project, which were created in keeping with the Objectives and Agenda of The East of England research framework (Medlycott 2011), were

created before the 2022 excavation took place. Prior to this, two previous works had been undertaken at the site: a watching brief (Robinson 2014) and an evaluation and desk-based assessment (Newman and Brook 2018). Other relevant works adjacent to the site have served to inform many of the ROs (Alexander *et al.* 2004; Whittaker 2002; Rees 2016). The project Aims and their respective ROs were created to account for material from different time periods on site, not just the most archaeologically intense. Aims One to Four were created to prepare evenly for predicted different levels of archaeological intensity in different time periods according to prior research. Aim Five was created with the hope of accounting for environmental material which may be difficult to efficiently assign to a specific time period. It was anticipated that the Park Street site would produce environmental materials of different kinds and of many different time periods due to the often "well-sealed" conditions of urban sites and the levels of preservation they produce (Campbell 2015, 5). The Park Street project has the potential to contribute to many different research topics and the extent to which will be discussed here.

Aim One - to further our understanding of the Park Street site before the Romano-British period

It was not anticipated that there would be a wealth of information for the pre-Roman period recovered from this site. A small amount of charred hazelnut shell was recovered, typical of foraging during the prehistoric period in Britain, Western Europe and beyond. Occasional charred pulses and burnt seeds of wild carrot were also present in small amounts, which may represent the exploitation of wild foods on site during this period. While minimal, these results should not be discounted. While their potential to contribute to significant publication is low

(particularly as the gathering of hazelnuts, for example, is typically examined for its intensification [López-Dóriga 2013, 39]), their presence onsite may be of note to future publication, as we will discuss. The project does not contribute to our understanding of the Iron Age/Roman transition and much of the Roman activity was mid to late Roman. In its Late Iron Age and Roman Research Agenda, the East of England framework notes that our understanding of this transition can be furthered. Detailed and sectioned (by period) prehistoric ROs were not given in the initial Project Design as extensive evidence for activity during these periods was not anticipated, thus these Objectives do not need to be revised.

Aim Two - to further our understanding of Romano-British life at the Park Street site

This Aim was created to account for the period anticipated to be the most archaeologically intense. ROs (see table one) were created using themes outlined in the East of England Framework Research Agenda (Medlycott 2011). The relevant periods and research questions were noted in brackets of each RO. Objectives Three and Five proved the most relevant to site findings and will provide basis for further research. The findings pertaining to these Objectives are of varying regional and national significance, though it should be noted that findings for other Objectives (such as RO2) within this Aim may be of note similarly to findings for Aim One.

Findings of regional significance during this period pertain to themes of settlement type as outlined in RO5. Further investigation of this theme will assist characterisation of the settlement of Cambridge over time. The Park Street site itself is typical of Roman extramural settlement, existing outside of the boundaries of the Roman settlement (see figure one). In

particular, the unexpected discovery of a Roman road surface dating to the second century AD is of note for its relation to the nearby *Via Devana*. This discovery certainly warrants further investigation as this period was of major development in the area (Smith and Fulford 2019, 120). The presence of a small number of Roman buildings on site could provide insight into settlement type, with specialist analysis of waterlogged timbers holding the potential to provide further insight into the likes of dating (through dendrochronological dating) and tree selection. Such findings may also feed into the Objectives of Aim Four, which aims to reconstruct the physical environment that existed around the Park Street site.

The findings pertaining to RO3 are of wider national and regional significance. The regional relevance here is the implications of the findings upon further research. Findings pertaining to funerary practices may also provide insight into extramural settlements due to the Roman practice of burying the dead outside of the boundaries of a settlement (Lee 2014). The extent of multiple Roman cemeteries (Alexander *et al.* 2003; Whittaker 2002) in the immediate area of the Park Street site has been further clarified through this project. The presence of second century material allows further research to be specified. Further analysis of the small number of inhumations and cremations on site dating to this period will provide insight into the nature of funerary practices and of the cemetery itself. For example, urned cremations from the Park Street site were block-lifted and excavated in a laboratory setting and were carefully recorded and assessed. The nearby (less than one kilometre away) Castle Hill site is notable for its ritual significance during the second century AD (Ten Harkel 2006, 59), with ritual deposits of a mortuary (both human and non—human) nature (Alexander and Pullinger 1999). Elucidating

this theme as much as possible within a regional context will undoubtedly allow for its replication elsewhere and on a wider scale.

Aim Three - to further our understanding of Urban Medieval life at the Park Street site

From the evidence gathered from this excavation, there was little activity at the site after occupation during the Roman period. Six ROs were created to account for the entirety of the Medieval period. This was partly done as there is some work to be done accurately pinpoint the centre of Medieval Cambridge. A number (if few) of prior excavations in the immediate area of the site have found evidence of low levels of Medieval activity (Cessford 2016; Hall and Dickens 2005). Furthermore, at the project outset, it was anticipated that evidence for the King's Ditch, an early twelfth century boundary ditch, would be found. No conclusive evidence for this was found, with major ditches being Roman in date. This may indicate why minimal Medieval data was recovered from site and further publication potential is low. The shifting of urban activity towards King's College was anticipated in the regional framework, accounting for the lack of evidence for occupation during the period at the Park Street site. RO six and ten respectively relate to the lack of urban activity on the site during this period, serving to highlight the importance of Aim Four in constructing a site narrative. As a result, there is no requirement to revise this Aim to account for more detailed research into the Medieval period on site.

Aim Four - to further our understanding and to build a chronology for environmental conditions and changes on site over time

This Aim was created to account for the environmental data that would result from the

excavation, of which there was a higher level than initially anticipated. Unlike artefacts, ecofacts are not as easily dated or their dating requires advanced specialist analysis (such as examination of waterlogged wood). As a result, using such materials to understand environmental change on site over time is the best use of this data, yet may also provide insight into specific time periods. It is notable that different environmental materials were preserved through carbonisation, mineralisation, and waterlogging on site. Examining the variation between methods of preservation on site holds the potential, alongside aforementioned specialist environmental testing such as radiocarbon dating, to contribute to our professional understanding of such conditions. Examining such environmental findings can also provide insight into how conditions may have affected or have been affected by the lives of humans over time. For example, analysis of the terrestrial and freshwater molluscs recovered from the site may provide insight into the changing use of the local environment over time and at the Park Street site.

Defining an audience

In order to have as effective a publication and dissemination strategy as possible, the audience of a project output must be defined from its outset. In its guidance to Project Managers in commercial archaeology, Historic England (2015, 22) defines three types of audience of the sector: professional, academic, and public. To best understand how to cater to each audience, each will be discussed in turn here and to varying degrees, indicating the relevance of findings to each audience. It should be noted that audiences are often not as defined in real life as they are here and can often overlap, particularly in the professional and academic spheres. The Park

Street project holds the potential to appeal to and inform all three audience types. The research and publication discussed above holds different appeal to these different audiences, though the city centre location of the site (and perhaps the presence of archaeology in modern pop culture) will undoubtedly appeal to a public audience. The strategy for this publication and dissemination will be broken down into different outputs ("tangible or measurable results, products or deliverables produced by a project or activity" [CiFA 2024]) to allow for each audience to be accounted for.

The professional audience

A professional audience here pertains to those who work within the industry of commercial archaeology. Publication that assists and informs further archaeological works will be of high interest to this audience. As has been discussed, the Project Design (taking place before excavation has begun) used secondary data from prior publications to focus on-site works and assessment. Both excavation and post-excavation members of staff worked to compile an initial assessment report of the Park Street site, though this will not undergo formal publication. This report is a presentation of primary data generated by the site, presenting findings through mostly quantitative means. Quantifying findings in such a manner allows the extent of features and periods present to be understood. For commercial projects, an initial assessment report and eventual analysis report are typically made available online in the form of a grey literature report. As a site monograph will be created for the project, such reports will not be available for longer than is usual for copyright reasons.

The creation of a Park Street monograph will take place after assessment and analysis for the

site has been completed. Before this takes place, a brief summary of the site will appear in a journal article by the Council for British Archaeology East. The creation of a monograph is a lengthy process as many individuals will contribute to its creation. The work will use pre-existing (both commercial and academic) works to create a site narrative that is broken down by themes and time periods. Due to the predominance of Roman findings, it is likely that this period will be the focus of the monograph, though other periods will not be excluded. Because of this, the monograph will be of particular use to specialists working in groups such as the Study Group for Roman Pottery, particularly as a monograph includes both detailed pottery descriptions and illustrations. It is anticipated that Park Street holds the potential to further commercial understanding of Roman Cambridge and thus inform many future commercial works, particularly as the city centre continues to redevelop and grow. Ensuring that monographs are increasingly devoid of a paywall in coming years would allow future archaeologists to access the findings of the Park Street site.

The academic audience

The publications resulting from the Park Street project will also be created for an academic audience. Such an audience can be defined separately from that of the professional audience by its dedicated role in ongoing and completed research, which is typically conducted on a chosen theme or region. Such specific research will benefit from analysing themes from a variety of notable sites such as Park Street. Such themes will be discussed in depth in the Park Street monograph. As aforementioned, the site will prove relevant to multiple areas of ongoing research for individuals in this audience, notably into the investigation into Roman cemeteries in the area. Timberlake and Webb (2016, 2) note that there were three Roman cemeteries in

the area, including that of Park Street. It is unsurprising that many of these cemeteries date to the second and third century AD, making them contemporaneous with Roman activity from the Park Street site. It should be noted that the site warrants further research into the nature of archaeozoological remains, particularly of animal sacrifice from this period at the nearby Castle Hill shrine site (Ten Harkel 2006, 8). While the monograph will discuss such themes at the Park Street site, the likes of journal articles and conference proceedings may be of more benefit to the academic audience. The site may factor into ongoing research presented through such means, drawing attention from academics working in the region, on the subject of Roman Britain, or both.

Such attention will also assist the integration of Park Street into wider academic research in a way that also assist commercial works (published or otherwise). In Britain, such published works (alongside others that have not been formally published) are incorporated into regional research frameworks, allowing secondary data to be easily accessed by whomever seeks it. These frameworks are readily available in an online form and are free to access (Research Frameworks 2025). Meta-analyses, though they often examine material by theme focussed by a specific region for the sake of brevity, are key in creating an accurate and holistic archaeological narrative for an assigned geographical area. One such attempt was that of King (2005), who sought to scientifically categorise and compare zooarchaeological findings from twenty-one Romano-Celtic temples in the south of England. Members of an academic audience could undertake a similar meta-analysis to examine themes that have arisen from the Park Street project. This could advance (or even help to conclude) existing research, such as ascertaining

the extent of the Roman cemeteries in the immediate area of the site. On a larger scale, the site could help to further research on a regional basis. The Park Street project could easily factor into a variety of research projects, not just those researching the Roman period. It holds the potential to further understanding of the nature of environmental preservation due to the variety of types seen on site. The preservation of a variety of environmental materials (peat, leather, wood, and plant macrofossils) is also of note. The rise of Big Data projects in recent years is becoming a valuable if rare tool to both the academic and professional archaeologist.

Such projects are the most effective way to incorporate all archaeological findings into the narrative of an area and typically do so on a thematic basis. The incorporation of the Park Street project into such a project would benefit many archaeologists working in a variety of areas. As all periods, regardless of archaeological intensity, will be discussed in the Park Street monograph, data from the publication will allow underrepresented periods (see above for mentions of prehistoric data from the site) to be used in Big Data projects. At present, it is difficult to ascertain if the project may factor into any such project, particularly as archaeological Big Data projects are still relatively underfunded. A more thematically specific (yet just as ambitious) project than the English Landscapes and Identities project (Gosden *et al.* 2021) would be the most appropriate, such as the Rural Settlement of Roman Britain (Allen *et al.* 2018) project. Park Street could be incorporated into a project pertaining to cataloguing Roman cemeteries across Britain, such as the resources used in the Rural Settlement of Roman Britain project. Like this project, Park Street would benefit from integration into a project using an interactive map to illustrate such trends.

In examining the findings that relate to Aim Four of the project design, it is noteworthy that much of the environmental data found on the Park Street site cannot be assigned to a specific time period. Further analysis and research into such findings from the site would serve to increase our professional understanding of it, benefitting both a commercial and an academic audience. Many techniques perfected by academics, such as the use of radiocarbon dating, may be used or better understood through such analysis. Such techniques are used by a commercial audience but is costly, making many individuals in the audience carefully consider whether the analysis is warranted. In particular, the Park Street site demonstrated a variety of materials preserved through carbonisation, mineralisation, and waterlogging, respectively.

Understanding how these vary across one site could be of particular interest to academic who may use such data to undertake or advance research projects. Again, specific archaeological societies may benefit from such research. It is possible that the examination of such materials could interest a variety of environmental specialists, resulting in multiple publications for the likes of the Journal of the Association for Environmental Archaeology.

The public audience

There was much local public interest during excavations at the Park Street site. Unlike the professional and academic audiences, it can be difficult to predict which periods or themes may interest members the public. It should be noted that how a member of the public may view a certain time period can differ vastly from that of the archaeologist and is often emotive. For example, many commercial archaeologists often regard post-Medieval archaeology as “rubbish;” to many members of the public, such finds are much more identifiable and relatable.

One such member of the public visiting viewing galleries of the Park Street site was fascinated with fragments of marmalade jars dating to the nineteenth century AD, recalling her grandparents finding such a fragment and showing it to her as a child.

It is clear that a holistic and informed view of site findings serves to inform the archaeologist, who can cater a project output to a member (or members) of the public audience. As the site benefits from a wealth of secondary data, outreach has taken place at different points of the project lifespan. During excavation, efforts were made to engage the public by displaying finds of various time periods (the majority from the Roman period though a number were from the Medieval and Post-Medieval periods) on a section of site hoardings in a “mini-museum” (see photo one). Outreach to members of the public who would not normally engage with archaeology has also been attempted. A report by Frearson (2018) for the Council of British Archaeology indicates that more than half (fifty-two percent) of the UK community archaeology audience was over the age of sixty-one. Furthermore, ninety-three percent of the audience also identified as White British. Project outreach for Park Street has already taken the form of visits to primary and secondary schools in the area of the site, with discussions being able to be worked into the syllabus of a primary or secondary school. These findings were presented by an archaeologist from the site who brought along finds that children could handle. We hope that this proved an exciting and effective means of learning for all children and young adults involved.

The use of many non-traditional methods of engagement to disseminate site findings to a public audience is also planned. The organisation recently used the form of podcasts to

disseminate the findings of the Swindon Southern Connector Road scheme, with episodes on different facets of excavation and post-excavation. Park Street would certainly benefit from this, particularly due to high level of local interest and the presence of the city of Cambridge in the national and international psyches. Park Street would also benefit from more informal publication of its findings for all ages. This can be seen in the likes of the A14 project, which produced a glossy coffee table book detailing fifty objects found in the project (Hawker-Yates 2024). Similar efforts may serve to inform works of fiction, allowing for younger members of the public audience to understand site findings. The A14 project also produced the Road Trip to the Past (MOLA Headland Infrastructure 2024) resource, a marvellous insight into how modern technology allows for jargon-free and highly interactive learning for all. This could be undertaken for the Park Street site, with such a resource holding the potential to appeal to a member of the public of all ages.

Conclusion

If one is to believe that archaeology belongs to us all, it should be made available to all through the most appropriate means possible. However, these means must be realistic. The findings of the Park Street site appeal to different audiences for different reasons; all are valid. For the archaeologist (commercial or academic), the findings contribute to constructing a bigger picture of Cambridge and the East of England. For the member of the public, they are often to intrigued to interact with the history that they have walked over for (potentially) their whole lives. Formal publication, while incredibly important, is not the apex of archaeological information. It is important to build a robust knowledge base for different themes and typologies, but these

findings must be disseminated to the general public if this audience is to benefit from them. For all we know, the next generation of archaeologists may be among them.

Word count: 3787

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Figures

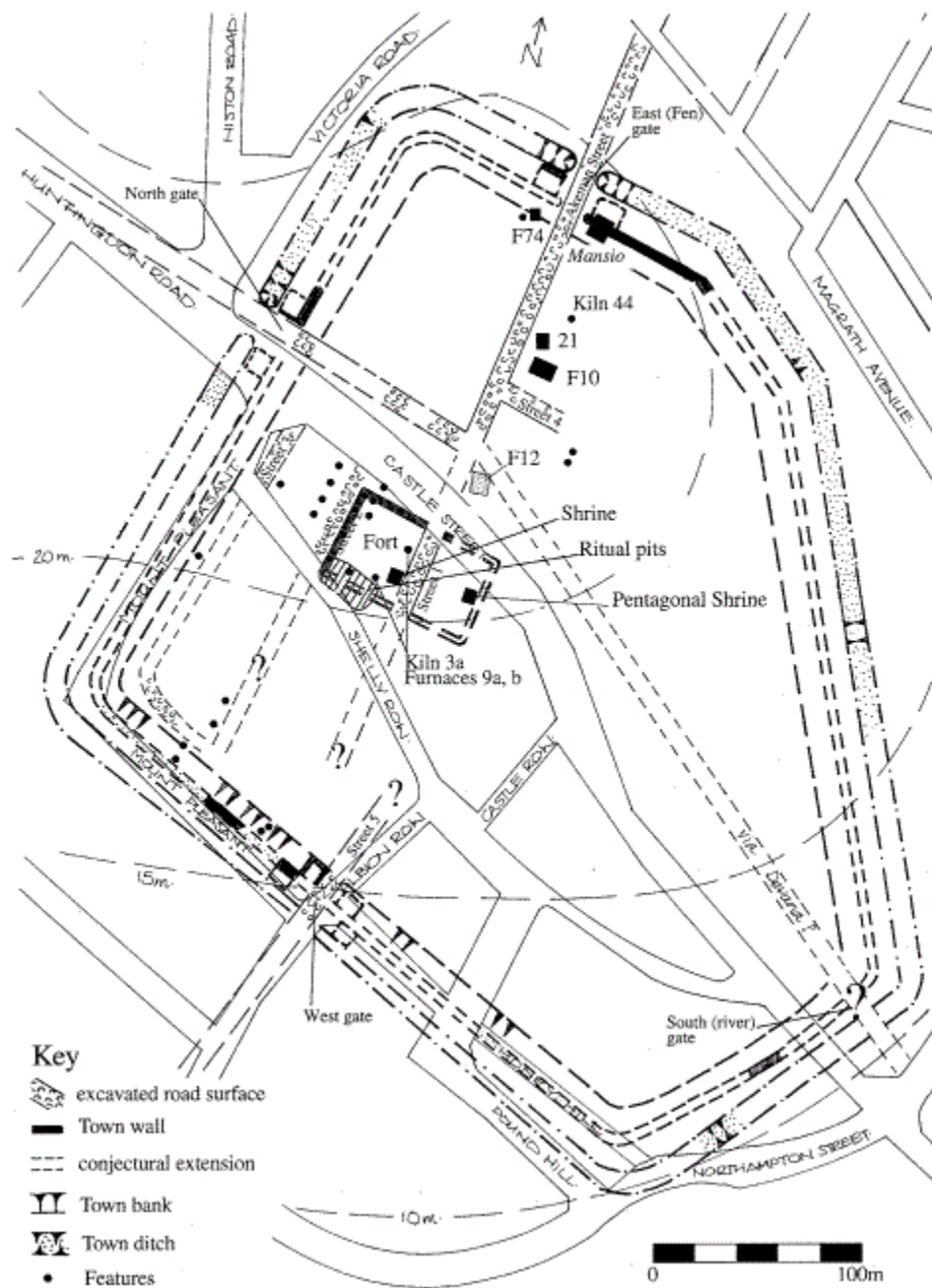


Figure one. A map of Roman Cambridge from Taylor (2000). The Park Street site would have been just under half a kilometre beyond the southwest-northeastern wall of the Roman settlement.

Photos



Photo one. Site finds are placed at the Park Street display for passersby to observe. Image: Field (2022) in *Cambridge News*.

Tables

	Research aim
Research objective	Aim one - <i>to further our understanding of the Park Street site before the Romano-British period</i>
1	Is there evidence for pre-Roman occupation on site other than residual lithics?

	Aim two - <i>to further our understanding of Romano-British life at the Park Street site</i>
2	How can we further our understanding of pottery production in the area during the third century AD?
3	How can we further our understanding of burial practices in the area? Can we begin to contextualise potential burials in relation to a possible wider cemetery during the Romano-British period?
4	To what extent did Park Street locals practice so-called 'Roman' eating habits?
5	What can site findings tell us about the type of settlement at the Park Street site during the Roman period?
	Aim three - <i>to further our understanding of Urban Medieval life at the Park Street site</i>
6	To what extent is it possible to demonstrate evidence of urban decline or development during and after the fifth century AD?
7	What can the findings of the Park Street project tell us about the urban lifestyle on site?
8	To what extent can the site be understood in relation to its hinterland and beyond?
9	How can site findings contribute to the evidence for the industries present on site during the Medieval period?

10	Is there evidence to indicate that on-site activity changed after the town shifted its centre to be that of the university in the sixteenth century?
11	To what extent was the site affected by the inclusion of Cambridge in the Danelaw between the ninth and eleventh centuries AD?
	Aim four - <i>to further our understanding and to build a chronology for environmental conditions and changes to site over time</i>
12	To what extent can waterlogged materials found on site provide insight into the use of waterways?
13	How can we further our understanding of the impact of climate change on the site?
14	How can we understand the exploitation of animals at Park Street?
15	How can we better our understanding of markers of environmental and landscape change (i.e. malacological evidence) through examining evidence from the site?
16	What does evidence from the site suggest about how production and consumption of different foodstuffs changed throughout time in the area?

Table one. Research Aims and Objectives as outlined by Moore (2024). The Research Objectives highlighted are those that warrant further research.