Magdalen College School
Oxford

Archaeological Evaluation Report

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Magdalen College School, Oxford

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION REPORT

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SUMMARY

In October 2006, Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out a field evaluation at Magdalen College School, Oxford (SP 5221 0580). The work was carried out on behalf of Magdalen College School, in advance of a proposed redevelopment of the Dining Hall.

Iron Age pottery was recovered from two post holes although no other pre-historic features were present within the trenches. A number of medieval features were revealed during the evaluation which have been interpreted as evidence for 13th century quarrying, although artefactual evidence was sparse and the date of these features was uncertain. Additionally, an east-west aligned ditch, containing 13th century pottery was recorded and may mark the northern extent of this activity. In addition to the medieval features, the evaluation revealed a north-south aligned ditch possibly associated with a star pointed outwork, which formed part of the south-eastern limit of Oxford's Civil War defences. A number of post-medieval pits were recorded to the east of this ditch and may represent features associated with the use of the defences.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Location and scope of work

1.1.1 It is proposed to redevelop the Dining Hall at Magdalen College School, Oxford (Planning Application No. 06/01530/FUL). The School is situated just off the Plain, bounded by Cowley Place to the west and Iffley Road to the east. Christ Church Sports Ground is located immediately to the south. The proposed redevelopment lies in the south-west of the school grounds (NGR SP 5221 0580), and occupies an area of 0.15 ha. The majority of the site is currently utilised as a car park, with the existing Dining Hall and utility buildings to the south-west (Figs 1 and 2).

1.2 Geology and topography

1.2.1 The site lies on the edge of the River Cherwell alluvial flood plain, overlying terrace gravel and sand, beneath which lies Oxford Clay. The site is located at *c* 59 m above OD, *c* 300 m to the east of the course of the River Cherwell. The site lies just outside the historic core of Oxford Town, within the parish of Cowley.

1.3 Archaeological and historical background

1.3.1 The site has been subject to previous archaeological work. An excavation was carried out in advance of the new science block in 1958, on the southern edge of the Civil War Bastion (Case 1958, 136-7) and a desk-based assessment (DBA) and watching brief were carried out in advance of a new three storey extension (OAU 1997 and OA 2001). The following comprises a summary of the DBA.

1.3.2 The site is located *c* 200 m to the south of the Plain roundabout, the site where St Clement's Church originally stood; St Clement's was consecrated in 1122.

1.3.3 The construction of the science block in 1958 produced evidence of Roman and Saxon activity from soil used to build the Civil War Bastion (Case 1958, 136-7). Early medieval ditches and a pit, sealed by a 14th-century soil were also revealed. The remains of the Civil War Bastion survived as a small mound, evidence for an associated large ditch was also seen. A similar ditch was seen during the construction of the Quicentenary Building in 1990. Land to the north of the present proposal area was subject to an intensive watching brief at Nos. 1-3 Cowley Place during alterations and extensions by Magdelen College. John Moore Heritage Services (JMHS) reported on late 11th-century finds, suggestive of some form of settlement here at the time of the Norman Conquest (JMHS 2001).

1.3.4 In 2000 a watching brief revealed 18th/19th-century pottery and features associated with the construction of the school buildings (OA 2001). A watching brief by Oxford Archaeology in January 2002 at the Jacqueline du Près Music Building revealed an undated ditch (OA 2002). Between December 2003 and February 2004 Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out an archaeological investigation at St Hilda's College; medieval ditches and associated postholes were revealed (Norton and Thomason 2005). The features may have formed a boundary delineating the eastern limits of the Parish of St Clements.

1.3.5 A number of post medieval features were also revealed. They included 16th-century pits, a 17th-century boundary wall, surfaces, an ornamental well and an 18th-century limestone cellar. Later deposits were associated with the construction and inhabitation of the 18th-century Cowley House.

1.3.6 Historically the site appears to have been located within the open fields of Cowley parish, away from the main focus of settlement. In the 17th century the construction of the Civil War defences led to the remodelling of the medieval village of St Clements and the road pattern to the south of Magdalen Bridge. There was widespread demolition of the buildings around the Plain and the construction of a bulwark designed to defend the bridge. A massive three-pointed star outwork was located at the northern limits of Magdalen School *c* 130 m to the north (OAU 1997).

1.3.7 As the parish population expanded during the late post medieval period, the church of St Clement's became too small to serve the populous. The church was demolished in 1828 and was replaced by a new church on Hacklingcroft Meadow on the Marston Road. The church was flanked by the London Road and the new London Toll Road created in the late 1700s and formed the island that has become the Plain; Iffley Road is shown for the first time on Faden's map of 1789. This led to the development site forming an isolated area on the NW fringe of the parish. The development of the site by Magdalen College School began in 1928.

2 EVALUATION AIMS

2.1.1 To establish the presence/absence of archaeological remains within the proposed site and to determine the extent, condition, nature, character, quality and date of any archaeological remains present.

2.1.2 To establish the ecofactual and environmental potential of archaeological deposits and features.

2.1.3 To make available the results of the investigation in the form of a report that will form the basis of any proposals for appropriate further archaeological action at the site.

2.1.4 To define any relevant research priorities if additional archaeological investigation proves necessary.

3 EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

3.1 Scope of fieldwork

3.1.1 The evaluation consisted of two trenches each measuring 15 m long x 1.8 m wide. Due to the presence of existing services, Trench 1 was split into two sections; Trench 1 (NW) which measured 10 m x 1.8 m and Trench 1 (SE) which measured 5 m x 1.8 m. The overburden was removed (under close archaeological supervision) by a JCB mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching/grading bucket.

3.2 Fieldwork methods and recording

3.2.1 The trenches were cleaned by hand and the revealed features were sampled to determine their extent and nature, and to retrieve finds. All archaeological features were planned and, where excavated, their sections drawn at scales of 1:20. All features were photographed using colour slide and black-and white-print film. Recording followed procedures laid down in the *OAU Fieldwork Manual* (ed. D Wilkinson, 1992).

3.3 Finds

3.3.1 Finds were recovered by hand during the course of the excavation and bagged by context.

3.4 Palaeo-environmental evidence

3.4.1 No deposits suitable for environmental sampling were encountered during the evaluation.

4 RESULTS: GENERAL

4.1 Soils and ground conditions

4.1.1 The site is located on the River Cherwell alluvial flood plain, overlying terrace gravel and sand. The deposits encountered were generally derived from the weathering of alluvial soils or were dumped deposits comprised of gravel and silt.

4.2 Distribution of archaeological deposits

4.2.1 The northern part of Trench 1 was largely dominated by a possible section of a Civil War defence ditch. A possible cultivation soil and small pits were revealed in the southern part of the trench.

4.2.2 A possible boundary ditch and quarry pits were revealed in Trench 2, a cultivation soil was also revealed.

5 RESULTS

5.1 Description of deposits

General

5.1.1 Trench 1 was aligned NW-SE and was situated to the east of the existing Dining Hall (Fig. 3). The trench was split into two segments in order to avoid live services. These two segments are referred to below as Trench 1 (NW) and Trench 1 (SE), although the numbering of the deposits was consistent for both segments.

Trench 1 (NW)

5.1.2 Natural gravel (100) was encountered within a sondage at the south eastern end of the trench at *c* 57.43 m OD. The gravel was overlain by a reddish brown clay silt deposit (128 - not illustrated), similar in composition to the fills of the possible medieval features to the east (see below), and may also represent the fills of a medieval feature. However, health and safety considerations negated access to this part of the trench and this deposit was only seen within the sondage, and could not be fully characterised. As such this interpretation is necessarily tentative.

5.1.3 Deposit 128 was cut by a vertically sided, square cut feature (126), the full extent and character of which was not established within the confines of the sondage. Also cutting deposit 128, and the underlying gravel, was the eastern edge of a NNE-SSW aligned linear feature (104). The fills comprised re-deposited sand and gravel and mixed humic and sandy deposits (105 - 108), which contained fragments of 17th-century roof tile, bricks, pottery and clay pipe. A residual fragment of Roman tegula flange was also recovered.

5.1.4 At the north-western end of the trench, the fills of 104 were cut by a NE-SW aligned service trench (109), the fills of which (110) were exclusively re-deposited ditch fills.

The lack of hogging or modern finds within this trench may suggest that it is 19th/early 20th century in origin. At a depth of 57.48 m OD, the service trench was cut through natural gravel, and the western extent of the fills of ditch 104 were just discernible in plan before the sondage flooded. This would suggest that at approximately 57.5 m OD, ditch 104 was 4.5 m wide.

Trench 1 (SE)

5.1.5 Natural sand and gravel was encountered at 58.4 m OD in the south eastern segment of Trench 1. This was truncated by an east-west aligned feature (111) which appeared to be linear in plan. The profile was also indicative of a shallow linear feature (Fig. 3 -Section 101), although the full profile was not established and the southern extent of the fill (112) lay beyond the edge of the trench. The southern extent of a feature (113) with a similar fill (114) was recorded in plan to the north of feature 111, although this was not fully characterised.

5.1.6 Both of these features were truncated by four pits of indeterminate function (including 115, 117 and 119), one of which (115) was excavated and produced clay pipe, roof tile and brick fragments dating from the 16th - 18th century (in addition to some residual 13th-century pottery). The fills of these features comprised a distinctive pale brownish grey sandy material (116, 118 and 120), the origin of which was uncertain.

5.1.7 A single post-hole (121) cut through one of these fills (118), the fill of which (122) was similar in composition to the overlying deposit (101 - see below), suggesting that it was 19th century in date.

Trench 1 (NW and SE)

5.1.8 The deposit overlying the fills of these features, and the natural sand and gravel through which they were cut, comprised a mid-dark grey clay silt with 15% charcoal and occasional fragments of ceramic building material and 19th-century pottery (101 - not illustrated). It is likely that this represents a buried garden soil reflecting the use of this area as gardens and/or allotments prior to the development of the site by the school in 1928.

5.1.9 This deposit was also apparent at the south-eastern end of Trench 1 (NW), although it was overlain by a deposit of brick rubble (124) to the north-west of the trench. It is possible that deposit 124 represents an attempt to consolidate a 'soft spot' created by the fills of ditch 104.

5.1.10 The buried soil and deposit 124 were overlain by type I hardcore and the modern car park surface (102 and 103).

Trench 2

5.1.11 Trench 2 measured 15 m x 1.8 m, was aligned NE-SW and was situated to the west of the existing tennis courts (Fig. 4). Natural gravel (200) was encountered at 58.72 m OD and was cut by two possible post holes (209 and 211) in the eastern end of the

trench. The postholes were filled with clay silts (210 and 212), which contained Iron Age pottery.

5.1.12 The gravel was also cut by an east-west aligned feature (207), the northern edge of which appeared linear in plan and profile. The ditch was shallow sided and filled with a reddish brown silty clay (208) that contained 13th-century pottery.

5.1.13 To the south of the ditch were three pits (203, 205 and 222) that were filled by a homogenous mid reddish brown clay silt with 10-20% gravel inclusions; 16th -18th century brick fragments and a residual single sherd of early-middle Saxon pottery were recovered from deposit 206.

5.1.14 The deposits were overlain by a possible cultivation soil (215), formed by the re-working of the upper fills of these features. Deposit 215 overlay a number of irregular spreads of similar material in the top of the gravel, and the Iron Age postholes.

5.1.15 Cutting through deposit 215 and the fill (221) of one of the pits (220) was a square cut pit (203), with a similar pale sandy fill (204) to the post medieval pits recorded in Trench 1 (SE). This contained finds of a similar date (16th - 18th century brick, clay pipe fragments and pottery) and was almost certainly contemporary with the features in Trench 1 (SE). The edges of this feature were vertical, except where they cut through the fills of the earlier feature where they displayed some irregularity. This may either be as a result of the looser fills of the earlier feature collapsing during the initial excavation of pit 203, or it may imply that the pit was excavated to specifically target the undisturbed natural sandy gravel through which the majority of the feature was cut. If this was the case it would imply that these may have been quarry pits - this is discussed in further detail below (Section 6)

5.1.16 Deposit 215 was overlain by a mid-dark grey clay silt (202) with 10% charcoal and ceramic building material throughout. This was similar in composition to deposit 102 in Trench 1, and probably represents the same buried garden soil. Two post holes with a similar dark grey clay silt fill were recorded in plan to the north of pit 203 but were not excavated as modern finds were observed within the fills. Additionally, a NW-SE aligned pipe trench truncated deposit 215 and pit fill 206 and contained mid-dark grey clay silt - almost certainly a re-deposition of deposit 202. Some artefactual evidence initially thought to originate from pit fill 206 may actually have come from the fill of this pipe trench.

5.1.17 The interface between deposit 202 and the overlying type 1 hardcore was very irregular in Trench 2. To the east of the trench, a thin layer of made ground (201) directly overlay the buried soil (and was subsequently overlain by the tarmac - 200). Whereas, to the west of the trench up to 0.3 m of type 1 hardcore was present beneath the tarmac and appeared to lie within square cut intrusions into the buried soil (202), and underlying deposit 215. The reason for these irregularities was uncertain but may reflect different phases of car park construction, particularly as Trench 2 lay at the periphery of the existing car park. It may also be associated with the demolition of

buildings which previously occupied the site and are shown on the 1958 ordnance survey map.

5.2 Finds

General

5.2.1 Summaries of the finds assemblages are produced below. For full descriptions of the pottery, CBM, clay pipe and flint see Appendices 2-5.

Pottery

5.2.2 The pottery assemblage comprised 40 medieval and post-medieval sherds with a total weight of 759 g, in addition, four sherds (114g) of Iron Age pottery were present, along with a single sherd (4g) of redeposited early/middle Saxon (AD450 – 850) material.

5.2.3 The fabric of the latter is a mixture of sparse chaff and quartz, which is typical of pottery of the period from the region. The Iron Age assemblage was all stratified, and included a rimsherd with fingernail impressions, which is likely to date to the middle Iron Age (*c* 5th – 2nd century BC). There is also a pierced sherd which appears likely to be from the same vessel.

5.2.4 Otherwise, the assemblage was all medieval or later, with the range of fabrics typical of medieval sites in the city of Oxford. It suggests that there was constant activity at the site from the 13th century onwards, and possibly as early as the immediate post-conquest period.

Clay pipe

5.2.5 The excavation produced a total of 21 fragments of clay tobacco pipes. The assemblage was recovered from dumped deposits within pits, a section of a Civil War defence ditch and a service trench.

5.2.6 Of the total 21 fragments of clay tobacco pipes 16 were stem fragments. The majority of the stem bores measured between 2.3 and 2.8 mm in diameter, indicative of a 17th or 18th century date. The five bowl fragments were whole or partially whole, only one could not be dated. One of the bowls was a type 18G dating from 1660-80, though its spur was missing. The other datable bowls were heeled and either type 8G or 9G, both types dating from 1680-1710.

Glass by Ian Scott

5.2.7 There are 6 sherds of glass, comprising one probable vessel fragment, three sherds form wine bottles and two sherds of window glass.

5.2.8 The small sherd of vessel glass is pale blue/green and decorated with slight cast ribs and possible gold paint (service trench fill - 110). The sherd is not weathered. The sherds of wine bottle are thick and all three sherds are weathered with iridescent surfaces. Two sherds are from context 116, and the third from context 206 (both pit

fills). There were also two sherds of weathered window glass from pit fill 204. These are green in colour, but the surfaces of both sherds are now weathered and stained. The glass is quite thin and flat. The larger sherd has one straight edge and possible grozed edge at right angles to this. Both edges show evidence for leading.

5.2.9 The glass is not closely dateable, but is broadly post-medieval.

Ceramic building material

5.2.10 A total of 11 fragments of CBM weighing 443g were recovered from the fills of the possible Civil War defence ditch and pit fills. Overall the CBM assemblage is in a very poor condition and is very fragmentary. This severely limits the amount of information that can be deduced from these pieces. However, the assemblage is post-medieval rather than modern so a broad 16th- to 18th-century date range is suggested. The assemblage comprises seven worn fragments of post-medieval brick (some very small), three fragments of post-medieval roof tile and one fragment of apparently Roman tegula (flat roof tile).

The Flint

5.2.11 A total of four pieces of worked flint were recovered during the evaluation. Due to the small assemblage size, the worked flint cannot be accurately dated in terms of typology or technology. As such, the value of the assemblage lies in its representivity of some prehistoric activity in the area. Heavy cortication is present on three of the flakes (which are also broken) and all have suffered post-depositional damage, characteristics that are consistent with their recovery from post-medieval pits.

Stone object by John Cotter

5.2.12 A stone object (weight 47g) was recovered from context 208. Although small and virtually shapeless the stone is identifiable as grey Niedermendig lava. This almost certainly identifies it as an extremely worn fragment of quern stone. It probably dates either to the Roman or the medieval period. No further work on this is required.

Metalwork by Leigh Allen

5.2.13 Two incomplete and highly corroded iron nails were recovered from the fill of a 13th-century ditch (112) and a post-medieval pit (219). A copper-alloy shoe buckle was recovered from the fill of a 17th-century pit. The buckle has an oval ornate frame with a central bar; the frame is decorated with 10 circular settings that have traces of clear glass in them. Around the central bar is a folded metal sheet recessed for an iron pin (the pin is highly corroded) the ends of the sheet are perforated for a rivet to attach the buckle to a strap. It is most probably a shoe buckle of post medieval date.

5.3 Environmental remains

Animal bones (Appendix 6)

5.3.1 A total of 17 re-fitted animal bones were recovered the fills of cut features. Two bones displayed traces of burning and gnawing respectively. The assemblage included cattle and sheep/goat bones which are commonly found in medieval and post-medieval contexts. The presence of dogs is evidenced by gnaw marks on a cattle pelvis.

6 DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATION

6.1 Reliability of field investigation

6.1.1 Whilst the coverage of the site area was limited, a reasonable interpretation of the range and preservation of surviving archaeological deposits can be presented. The stratigraphic and artefactual evidence recovered from both trenches suggested 4 broad phases of activity on the site as outlined below. However, it is acknowledged that the reliability of the small artefactual assemblage from a number of the features and deposits is open to question, so the suggested interpretative phasing should be considered with caution

- Phase I: Pre-conquest (Iron Age, Roman and mid-Saxon)
- Phase II: 13th - 16th century
- Phase III: 17th - 18th century
- Phase IV: 19th century onwards

6.2 Interpretation

Phase I: Pre-Conquest (Iron Age, Roman and mid-late Saxon)

6.2.1 The two post holes in the north of Trench 2 both produced middle Iron Age pottery although no further evidence as to their function was revealed within the trench.

6.2.2 Although the single sherd of early-mid Saxon pottery and fragment of Roman tegula were residual, they indicate both Roman and 5th-9th century activity in the area. Similar dating evidence was recovered from the soil forming an earthwork in the northern part of the site (Case 1958, 136-7).

Phase II: 13th-16th century

6.2.3 It is possible that potential linear features recorded in Trench 1 (SE) and Trench 2 (111 and 207) represent a continuous east-west aligned ditch. Whilst the southern edge of this feature was not established, its alignment is perpendicular to those recorded during the St Hilda's excavation to the west (Norton and Thomason, 2005), and it may form part of the field system suggested by these features. The 13th century pottery recovered from the fills (112 and 208 respectively) also correlates to the artefactual evidence recovered from the St Hilda's excavation.

6.2.4 The relationship between this ditch and the pit sequence in Trench 2 was unclear, as was the function of the pits. The lack of artefactual material and the composition of the pit fills suggests that these features represent quarrying. It is also possible that the southern extent of deposit 112 (e.g. the fill of ditch 111), was actually the fill of pits lying to the south of the ditch. Ditch 207/111 may represents the northern limit of the pitting.

6.2.5 Numerous excavations in Oxford have shown that the gravel of the second terrace is often overlain by a glacial loess subsoil. Whilst this deposit was not encountered *in-situ* during the evaluation, the fills of the potentially medieval pits and ditch(es) were not dissimilar in colour and composition (despite being more clay rich and with a significantly greater level of gravel inclusions), this may imply that these fills have originated from the re-deposition of the loess soil. It is possible that deposit 215 represents a ploughsoil which overlies the fills of the pits and ditch(es). Alternatively it may represent the re-worked loess soils through which the features were cut, and by which they were subsequently filled through a process of gradual silting.

Phase III: 17th-18th century

6.2.6 Ditch 104 could represent part of the star outwork shown on De Gomme's plan of 1644, possibly the eastern NE-SW aligned ditch. However, overlying De Gomme onto the modern street plan (Fig. 5) places the ditch 70 m to the SW of the outwork. As can be seen in Fig. 5, De Gomme's plan is far from accurate; if De Gomme's western sections of the River Cherwell, Magdalen Bridge and St Clement's Church are placed over the modern street plan, St Clement's Street and Cowley Road lie 100 m to the south of their actual location. Alternatively if we place De Gomme's St Clement's Street and Cowley Road over the modern plan the evaluation trenches would lie to the west of the River Cherwell. Recent excavations at the Pitt Rivers Museum (OA 2005) revealed a similar section of Civil War ditch, although here there was only a 10 m - 20 m variation from where De Gomme had plotted the ditch.

6.2.7 The alignment and position of the ditch, revealed at Magdalen College School, in relation to the river suggests that it may represent the NE-SW return of the westernmost side of the western bastion (Fig. 5), which would imply that it may return to the NW where it runs under the existing Dining Hall. This would also suggest that the section of ditch revealed during excavations on the site of the science block (Case, 1958) represents the ENE-WSW section of the defensive circuit, behind the central bastion. This would be consistent with the location of St Clement's church (the site of which is now the roundabout on The Plain) shown to lie within the star bastion on De Gomme's plan.

6.2.8 It is possible that the ditch revealed in Trench 1 formed part of a secondary phase of defences or that it was a large boundary ditch, possibly a later phase of the medieval boundary ditches revealed at St Hilda's College to the north (Norton and Thomason 2005). However the size of the ditch and the nature of the fills suggest that it was

more likely defensive and rapidly backfilled, exhibiting traits of the Civil War defence ditches seen elsewhere in Oxford.

6.2.9 The function of the 17th-18th century pits seen in Trench 1 (SE) and Trench 2 is unclear, although the distinctive pale, sandy fill suggests that they were contemporary. These were tentatively interpreted as quarry pits, however, if the interpretation of ditch 104 is correct it implies that these features lie within the westernmost bastion and it is possible that they are associated with the use of the Civil War defences. This may suggest a more martial function for these features, although no evidence for this was recovered, other than their proximity to the ditch and the similarity of the dating evidence.

Phase IV: 19th century onwards

6.2.10 The buried soil (102 and 202) encountered within the trenches may reflect the use of the area as allotments as indicated by Lattey *et al* in 1936 who record that *"30 years ago the site of the bastion was allotment gardens where the owners 'frequently found bullets'"* (Lattey *et al*, 1936, p190). The pits may relate to more recent activity.

6.3 General overview

6.3.1 If the interpretation of deposit 215 as a medieval ploughsoil is correct, it would imply that little truncation occurred during the construction of the Civil War outwork, with the exception of the excavation of the ditch(es). The survival of the possible 19th-century cultivation soil would also suggest that a minimal amount of truncation has occurred during the development of the site in the early 20th century.

APPENDIX 1 ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONTEXT INVENTORY

Ctxt No	Type	Length (m)	Depth (m)	Colour	Composition	Inclusions	Comment	Finds	Date
Trench 1									
100	layer			pale yellow brown	sandy gravel		natural sand and gravel		
101	deposit		0.08	mid-dark grey	clayey silt	15% charcoal	buried soil	not retained	19thC?
102	deposit		0.30				type 1 hardcore for tarmac surface		modern
103	deposit		0.08				tarmac		modern
104	cut	2.00 +	1.70 +				civil war defensive ditch		17thC
105	fill		0.22 +	mixed	predominantly sandy gravel		ditch fill: re-deposited sand and gravel		
106	fill		0.20 +	mid-dark grey with orange brown mottling	sandy silt		ditch fill	pottery	mid 11thC pottery is presumably residual
107	fill		0.15 +	mid-dark grey sandy silt with orange brown mottling	sandy silt	5% gravel fragments	ditch fill		
108	fill		1.00	mixed mid-dark grey and mid-pale brown	sandy silt	25% gravel fragments	ditch fill	pottery, bone, cbm, clay pipe	17thC
109	cut	1.80 +	1.50 +				service trench		?19th/20thC
110	fill		1.50 +				fill of service trench: mixed re-deposition of fills 106-108	pottery, bone, clay pipe	19th
111	cut	2.00 +	0.35				possible e-w aligned linear		13thC
Ctxt No	Type	Length (m)	Thick. Depth (m)	Colour	Composition	Inclusions	Comment	Finds	Date
112	fill		0.35	mid reddish brown	clayey silt	5-10% gravel fragments	fill of possible e-w aligned linear 111	pottery, bone, fe	13thC
113	cut	1.00+	0.60 +				southern edge of feature revealed		

Ctxt No	Type	Length (m)	Depth (m)	Colour	Composition	Inclusions	Comment	Finds	Date
							along northern edge of trench 1 (se) and in profile where cut by 115		
114	fill		0.60 +	mid-dark reddish brown	clayey silt	10% gravel fragments	fill of feature 113: similar in composition to 112 and possibly contemporary		
115	cut	1.15 +	0.80				post-med pit of indeterminate function		17thC
116	fill		0.65	pale brownish grey	silty sand	2-3% charcoal; 1% gravel fragments	fill of post-medieval pit - uncertain origin	pottery, bone, cbm, clay pipe	17thC (residual 13thC pottery)
117	cut	1.50	not excavated				unexcavated post-med pit		
118	fill			pale brownish grey	silty sand	2-3% charcoal; 1% gravel fragments			
119	cut	1.25 +	not excavated				unexcavated post-med pit		
120	fill			pale brownish grey	silty sand	2-3% charcoal; 1% gravel fragments			
121	cut	0.20	not excavated				post hole		modern
122	fill		not excavated	mid-dark grey	clay silt	5% charcoal; 2-3% gravel	post hole fill, similar in composition to buried soil 101		?modern
123	finds ref.						number allocated to finds recovered during machining of trench 1 (nw) - probably from deposit 108	pottery, bone, clay pipe	19thC
124	deposit		0.15		brick rubble in sandy mortar matrix		?19th/20thC made ground, possibly consolidating 'soft spot' created by underlying ditch fills		?19th/20thC
Ctxt No	Type	Length (m)	Thick. Depth	Colour	Composition	Inclusions	Comment	Finds	Date

Ctxt No	Type	Length (m)	Depth (m)	Colour	Composition	Inclusions	Comment	Finds	Date
			(m)						
125	fill		0.30	mixed	mixed		primary fill of pit 115. mixed re-deposition of fills of features through which 115 is cut		
126	cut	1.10 +	1.25 +				possible pit seen in sondage at se end of trench 1 (nw)		
127	fill		1.25 +	mid-dark grey	clay silt	10% charcoal; 10% gravel fragments	fill of possible pit 126		
128	deposit		1.20	mid brown	clay silt	15% gravel fragments	deposit overlying gravel in sondage at se end of trench 1 (nw). cut by poss. pit 126 and ditch 104 - possible medieval feature - similar in composition to fills of med. features to east		
Trench 2									
200	deposit		0.05				tarmac		modern
201	deposit		0.30 (max)				type 1 hardcore for tarmac surface - interface with underlying deposits is irregular		modern
202	deposit		0.30	mid-dark grey	clayey silt	15% charcoal	buried soil	not retained	19thC?
203	cut	1.50	0.90				post-med pit of uncertain function		17thC
204	fill		0.90	pale brownish grey	silty sand	2-3% charcoal; 1% gravel fragments	fill of post-medieval pit - uncertain origin	pottery. bone. cu alloy object. clay pipe	17thC
205	cut	2.20	0.85 +				?med pit - possible quarrying		uncertain
206	fill		0.85 +	mid reddish brown	clay silt	15-20% gravel fragments	fill of possible med. pit - some post-med finds recovered are probably intrusive	Pot/CBMclay pipe	19thC pottery
207	cut	2.00 +	0.40				possible e-w aligned ditch		13thC
208	fill		0.40	mid reddish brown	clay silt	15-20% gravel fragm	fill of possible e-w aligned ditch	pottery	13thC

Ctxt No	Type	Length (m)	Depth (m)	Colour	Composition	Inclusions	Comment	Finds	Date
						ents			
209	cut	0.30	0.10				post hole		1A
210	fill		0.10	mid reddish brown	clay silt	15% gravel fragments	post hole fill	pottery	1A
Ctxt No	Type	Length (m)	Depth (m)	Colour	Composition	Inclusions	Comment	Finds	Date
211	cut	0.50	0.18				possible post hole - considerably more irregular than 210		1A
212	fill		0.18	mid reddish brown	clay silt	10% gravel fragments	fill of possible post hole	pottery, bone	1A
213	?cut	1.50	0.18				possibly bioturbation or irregular quarrying 'scoop'		
214	fill		0.18	mid reddish brown	clay silt	10-15% gravel fragments	fill of 213		
215	deposit		avg. 0.20	mid reddish brown	clay silt	10-20% gravel fragments	homogenous upper fills of 'intercutting' features in trench 2, consistency in colour and composition makes individual features indistinguishable suggesting subsequent re-working or single deposition		
216	layer			light brownish yellow	sandy gravel		natural sand and gravel		
217	cut	0.70	0.55				modern feature - possibly service trench for fe pipe. may be origin of intrusive material from deposit 206		modern
218	fill		0.55	mid grey brown	clay silt	15% gravel fragments	fill of modern feature	pottery	modern
219	fill						pit fill	pottery, fe, bone, ebm, clay pipe	?18th/19thC
220	cut						pit		19thC

APPENDIX 2 POTTERY

By Paul Blinkhorn

The pottery assemblage comprised 40 sherds with a total weight of 759 g. It was recorded utilizing the coding system and chronology of the Oxfordshire County type-series (Mellor 1984; 1994), as follows:

OXBF: North-East Wiltshire Ware, AD1050 – 1400. 1 sherd, 4 g.
OXY: Medieval Oxford ware, AD1075 – 1350. 3 sherds, 20 g.
OXAM: Brill/Boarstall ware, AD1200 – 1600. 13 sherds, 110 g.
OXST: Frechen Stoneware, AD1550 – 1700. 2 sherds, 27 g.
OXDR: Red Earthenwares, 1550+. 5 sherds, 224 g.
OXCE: Tin-glazed Earthenware, 1613 – 1800. 1 sherd, 11 g.
OXRESWL: Polychrome Slipware, 17th C. 2 sherds, 45 g.
WHEW: mass-produced white earthenwares, mid 19th - 20th C. 8 sherds, 191 g.

In addition, four sherds (114g) of Iron Age pottery were present, along with a single sherd (4g) of redeposited early/middle Saxon (AD450 – 850) material. The fabric of the latter is a mixture of sparse chaff and quartz, which is typical of pottery of the period from the region. The Iron Age assemblage was all stratified, and included a rimsherd with fingernail impressions, which is likely to date to the middle Iron Age (*c* 5th – 2nd century BC). There is also a pierced sherd which appears likely to be from the same vessel.
Otherwise, the assemblage was all medieval or later, with the range of fabrics typical of medieval sites in the city of Oxford. It suggests that there was constant activity at the site from the 13th century onwards, and possibly as early as the immediate post-conquest period. The pottery occurrence by number and weight of sherds per context by fabric type is shown in Table A2.1. Each date should be regarded as a *terminus post quem*.

Table A2.1: Pottery occurrence by number and weight (in g) of sherds per context by fabric type

	IA		E/MS		OXBF		OXY		OXAM		OXST		OXDR		OXCE		OXREWSL		WHEW		
Cntxt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	Date
106					1	13															M11th C
108							1	3	2	22	1	23			1	11	1	9			17thC
110									3	14	1	4	1	5					4	21	19thC
112							1	2	4	16											13thC
116							1	15	1	32											13thC
123									2	24			1	164					1	77	19thC
204																	1	36			17thC
206			1	4															1	1	19thC
208									1	2											13thC
210	3	107																			IA
212	1	7																			IA
218																			1	5	19thC
219													3	55					1	87	19thC
Total	4	114	1	4	1	13	3	20	13	110	2	27	5	224	1	11	2	45	8	191	

APPENDIX 3 CERAMIC BUILDING MATERIAL

By John Cotter

Introduction and Methodology

A total of 11 fragments of CBM weighing 443g were recovered. Every piece was examined and spot-dated during the present assessment stage. For each context the fragment count and weight were recorded on an Excel spreadsheet, followed by the estimated date. Comments on condition, fabric, surviving dimensions etc. were also recorded where appropriate.

Date and Nature of the Assemblage

Overall the CBM assemblage is in a very poor condition and is very fragmentary. This severely limits the amount of information that can be deduced from such scraps. However, the assemblage is post-medieval rather than modern so a broad 16th- to 18th-century date range is suggested. The assemblage comprises seven worn fragments of post-medieval brick (some very small), three fragments of post-medieval roof tile and one fragment of apparently Roman tegula (flat roof tile). The brick fragments are mostly in a similar orange fabric with coarse red iron oxide and marl inclusions; they may therefore be of similar date and source. The roof tile fragments are orange and sandy but probably from more than one source. They are relatively thick (up to 16 mm) and may date to the earlier part of the post-medieval period (16th-17th century) rather than later. The bricks might also be of this date.

The Roman tile (context 108) appears to be a fragment from the flange of a tegula in a pasty pink-buff fabric with occasional grits. The internal face of the flange is heavily worn. The external face and underside is gritted with quartz and limestone grits. Isolated pieces of Roman tile and pottery are occasionally found in Oxford. They were probably brought here in post-Roman times as hardcore from outlying Roman settlements.

Table A3.1 Incidence of CBM

Context	Spot-date	Sherds	Weight	Comments
106	16-18C?	1	31	Edge frag roof tile 15mm thick. Pale orange fine sandy. Prob post-med
108	16-18C?	4	84	2 joining scraps sandy orange brick. 1x roof tile edge 16mm thick, fine orange sandy surfaces/margins with defined light grey core - poss 16-17C? 1x prob Roman tegula flange, v worn, in pink-buff pasty fabric with occas grits and ext limestone gritting on flange, v worn (ident. Cynthia Poole)
116	16-18C?	2	51	Worn frag of brick, coarse marl inclusions and streaks. Frag sandy orange roof tile - also marl-streaked - poss early post-med?
204	16-18C?	3	77	2x dark orange sandy scraps brick. 1x larger edge frag of brick pale orange sandy with coarse red iron oxide inclusions, some marl. All worn
206	16-18C?	1	200	Worn edge frag brick. Orange with coarse red iron oxide inclusions
TOTAL		11	443	

APPENDIX 4 CLAY PIPE

By Andrew Norton

Introduction

The excavation produced a total of 21 fragments of clay tobacco pipes. The assemblage was recovered from dumped deposits within pits, a section of a Civil War defence ditch and a service trench.

Methodology

All fragments were examined for evidence of markings, decoration and name stamps. Unmarked bowls have been dated by reference to Oswald's general typology (Oswald 1975). No attempt has been made to consider the bowl shape in terms of regional variations. Plain stems have been counted and the diameter of their stem bores measured.

Results

The results of the assessment are tabulated below by context (Table A4.1).
Of the total 21 fragments of clay tobacco pipes 16 were stem fragments. The majority of the stem bores measured between 2.3 mm and 2.8 mm in diameter, indicative of a 17th or 18th century date. The five bowl fragments were whole or partially whole, only one could not be dated. One of the bowls was a type 18G dating from 1660-80, though its spur was missing. The other datable bowls were heeled and either type 8G or 9G, both types dating from 1680-1710.

Although the date ranges given are for London types it can be assumed that examples from Oxford will have been made at a similar time.

Table A4.1 Incidence of clay pipe stems and diagnostic fragments by context

context	stem count	avge Stem bore (mm)	bowl/bowl fragment count	date	comments
108	2	2.71	2	1660-80	Bowl fragment and probable type 18G (stem bore 2.13), though spur is missing
110	1	2.8		? 17th C	
116	2	2.3		? 18th C	
123	1	1.75	1	1680-1710	Type 9G (stem bore 2.15 mm)
204	8	2.23	2	1680-1710	Type 8G (stem bore 2.37 mm) and ? Type 8G (fragmentary)
206	2	2.81		? 17th C	

APPENDIX 5 FLINT

By Rebecca Devaney

A total of four pieces of worked flint were recovered during the evaluation. Due to the small assemblage size, the worked flint cannot be accurately dated in terms of typology or technology. As such, the value of the assemblage lies in its representivity of some prehistoric activity in the area. Heavy cortication is present on three of the flakes (which are also broken) and all have suffered post-depositional damage, characteristics that are consistent with their recovery from post-medieval pits.

Table A5.1 Summary of flint by context

Flint Category	Context		Total
	204	**206**	
Flake	1	2	**3**
Blade-like flake	1		**1**
Total	**2**	**2**	**4**

APPENDIX 6 ANIMAL BONES

By Lena Strid

A total of 17 re-fitted animal bones were recovered from this site (see Tables A6.1 and A6.2). Most bones were in a good condition: 76.5% being grade 1 and 23.5% being grade 2. Two bones displayed traces of burning and gnawing respectively.
The presence of cattle and sheep/goat in the assemblage is not unusual, regardless of time period. The presence of dogs is evidenced by gnaw marks on a cattle pelvis.

Judging by the epiphyseal fusion and bone structure, all bones derived from adult or sub-adult animals.

Butchering marks were found on two cattle bones. A skull displayed a diagonal chopmark at the maxilla. Chopmarks were also found distally on a femur, indicating dismemberment of the knee joint.

Pathologies were found on a cattle skull, which displayed woven bone growth, indicative of infection, at the tooth row.

Table A6.1 Bone assemblage

	Cattle	Sheep/goat	Medium mammal	Large mammal	Indeterminate
Skull	1	1		1	
Mandible				1	
Humerus				1	
Pelvis	1				
Femur	1				
Tibia	1				
Calcaneus	1				
Longbone			2	1	
Indeterminate				1	4
TOTAL	5	1	2	5	4
Weight (g)					

Table A6.2 Incidence of refitted bones

Context	Species	No. of bones (refitted)	Sum of weight (g)
112	Medium mammal	2	12
116	Cattle	1	156
	Sheep/goat	1	
	Large mammal	1	
123	Cattle	1	75
204	Large mammal	1	21
	Indeterminate	4	
208	Large mammal	1	6
212	Large mammal	1	3
219	Cattle	3	344
	Large mammal	1	

APPENDIX 7 BIBLIOGRAPHY AND REFERENCES

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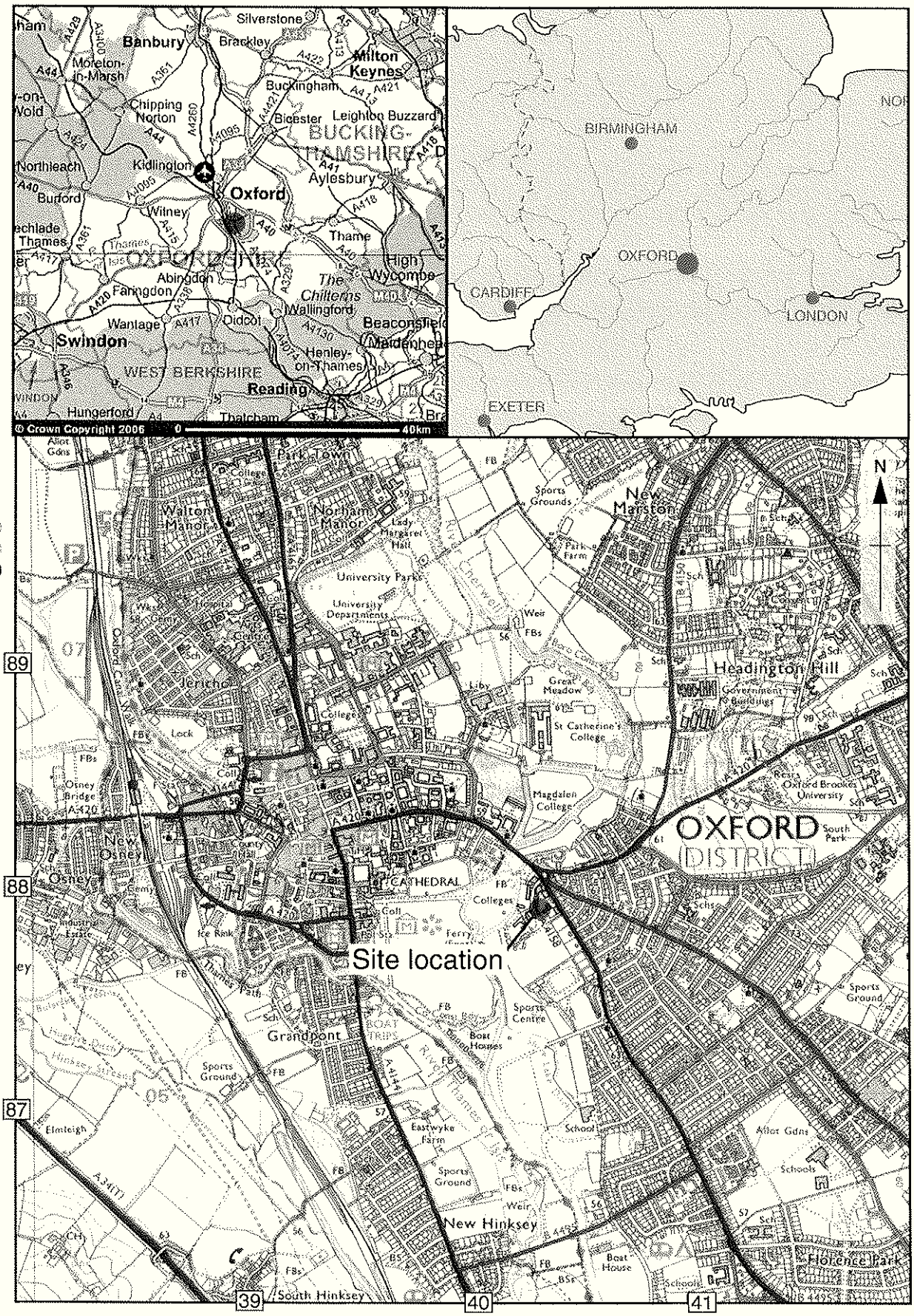
APPENDIX 8 SUMMARY OF SITE DETAILS

Site name: Magdalen College School, Oxford
Site code: OXMCS06
Grid reference: SP 5221 0580
Type of evaluation: Trenched
Date and duration of project: 24th – 26th October 2006
Area of site: 2 x 15m x 1.8m trenches
Summary of results: Iron Age postholes, medieval ?quarrying/field systems and a ditch associated with the Civil War defences.
Location of archive: The archive is currently held at OA, Janus House, Osney Mead, Oxford, OX2 0ES, and will be deposited with Oxfordshire County Museums Service in due course.



Scale 1:25,000

Figure 1: Site location

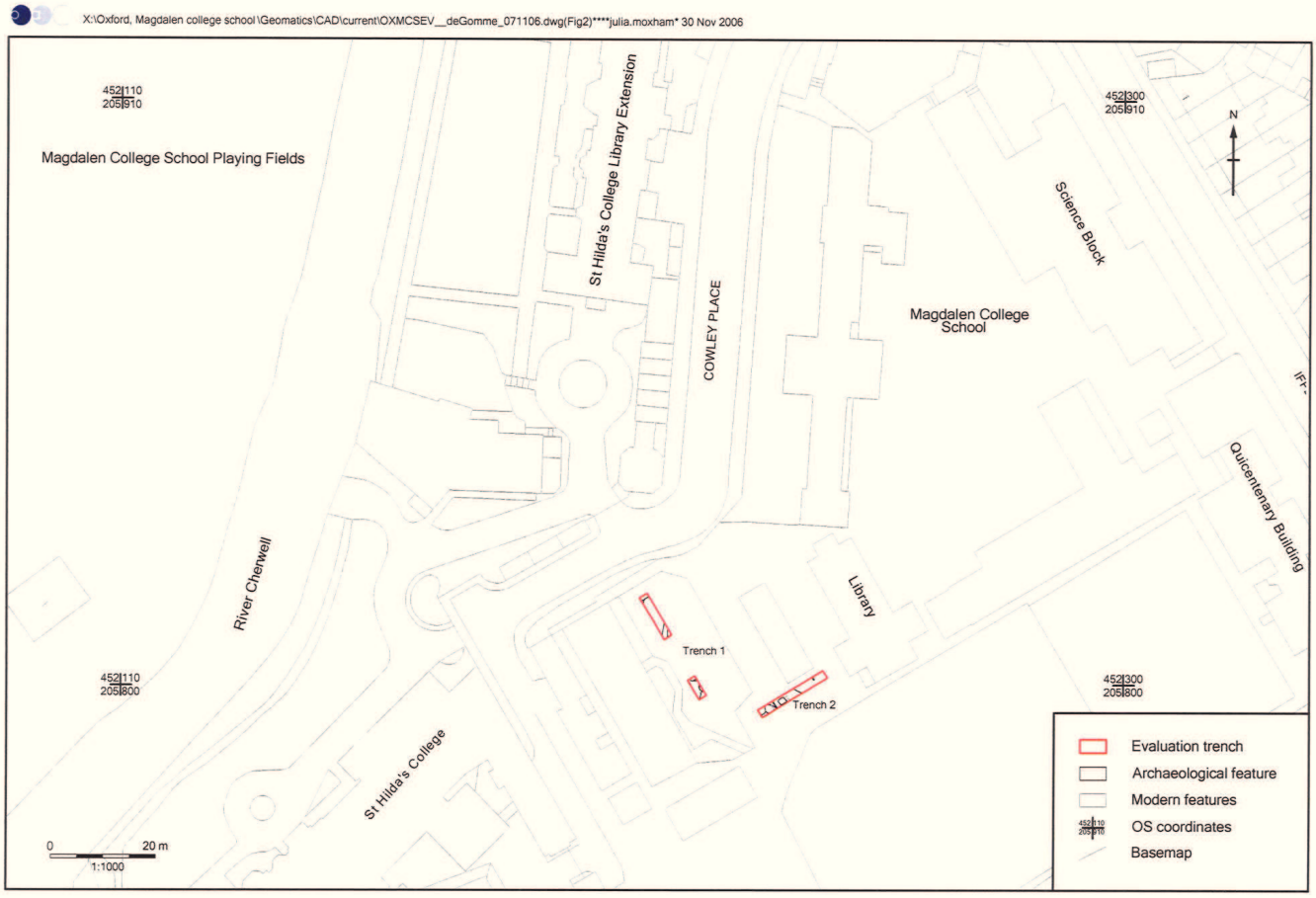


Figure 2: Trench location plan

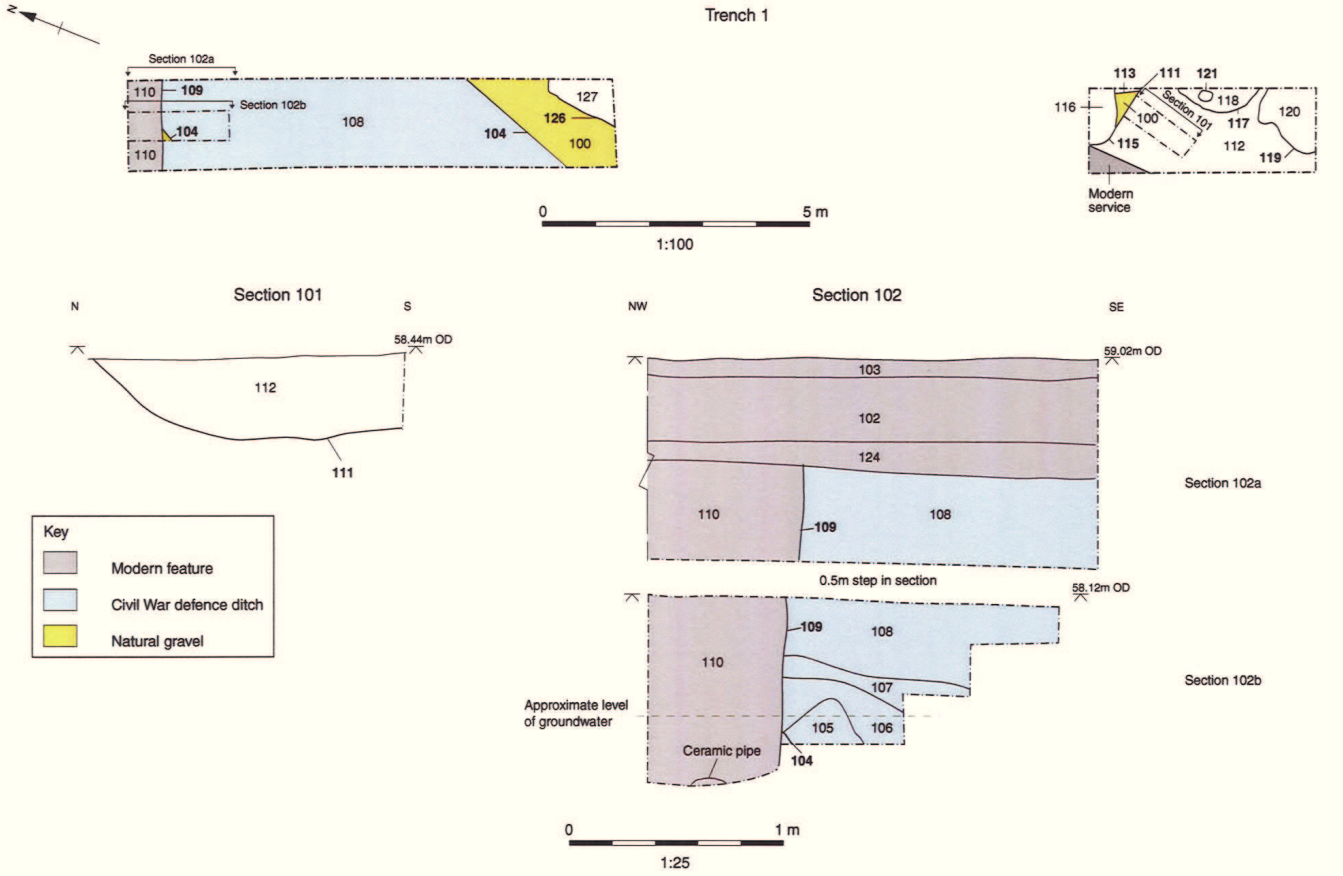
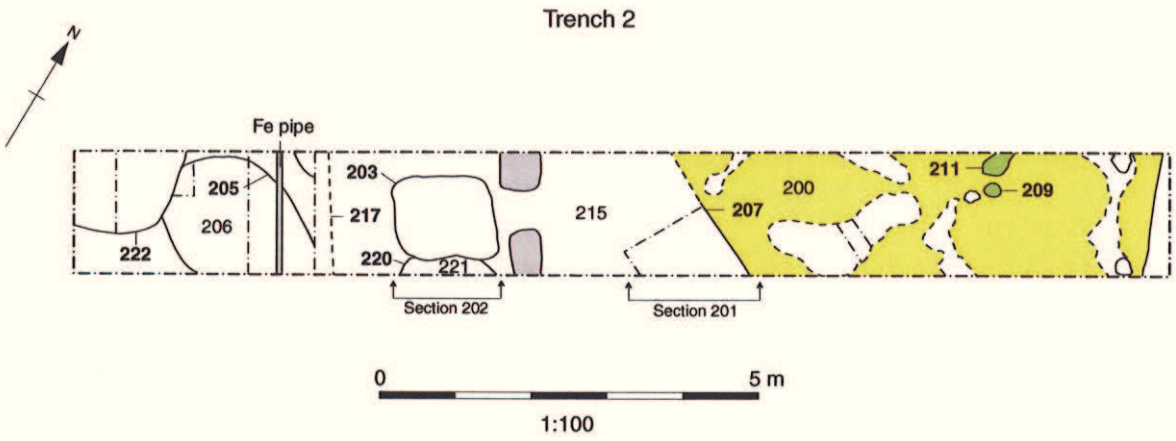
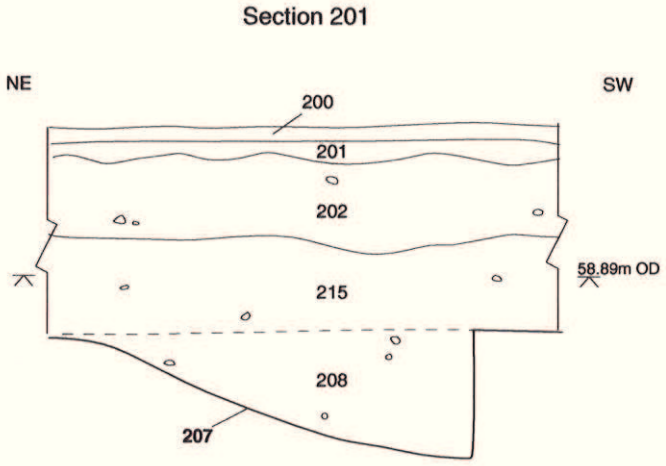
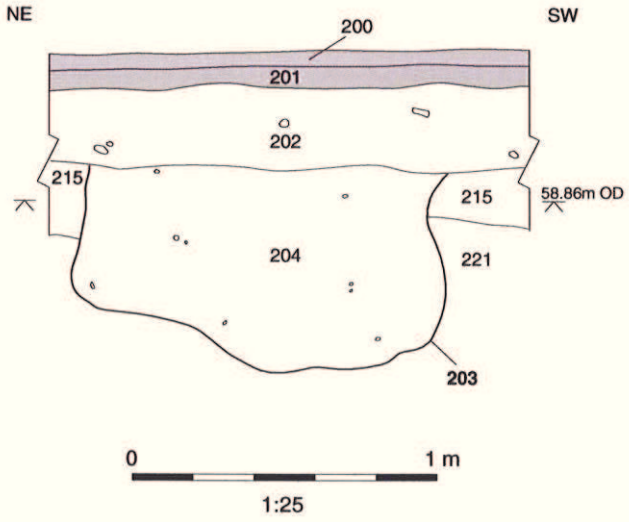


Figure 3: Trench 1 plan and sections







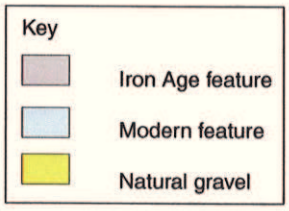


Figure 4: Trench 2 plan and sections

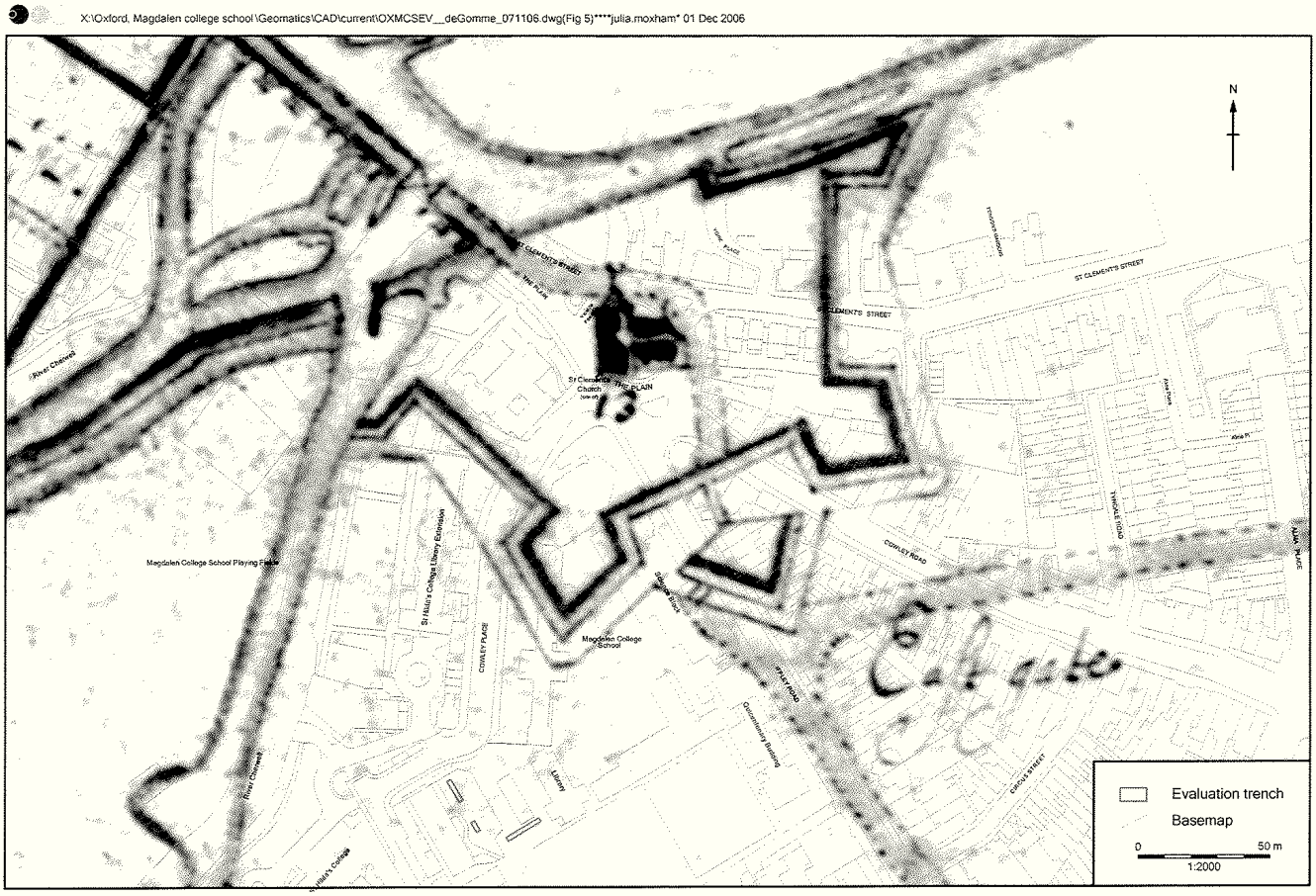


Figure 5: De Gomme's 1644 plan of defences overlain by current Oxford street map

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