

# Ashmolean Museum Beaumont Street Oxford



## Archaeological Evaluation Report



September 2006

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## Ashmolean Museum Beaumont Street, Oxford

NGR SP 5114 0656

### *ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION REPORT*

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## SUMMARY

*During late July and early August 2006 Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out a field evaluation at the Ashmolean Museum on the corner of Beaumont Street and St. Giles, Oxford. Mace Ltd commissioned the work on behalf of Oxford University Estate's Directorate.*

*Natural Loessic deposits were extensively removed by later activity but where present were encountered at 62.87m OD. Residual, locally produced pottery, dated to the 11th and 12th Century, was recovered from later features and perhaps attests to activity on the site from that date. In situ evidence from this period was difficult to find given the limited nature of the sondages at these depths and the density of the later pits. The earliest in-situ activity, dated to the 13th and 14th Century, was represented by densely distributed intercutting pits associated with tenements established along the western side of St. Giles.*

*Activity associated with the pits ceased by the 14 - 15th Century and a ubiquitous humic soil horizon some 0.30m thick overlay the pit fills. The formation process that created this horizon is not known. A number of post-holes cut this horizon - they formed no particular pattern but show that a timber structure of some description occupies this area after the 15th Century, and may represent structures shown on Loggans map of 1675.*

*A layer of broken building material (containing medieval ceramic tiles) heralded a new phase of activity. It extended over the whole excavated area and was either associated with demolition of nearby structures or represented preparation for construction. Subsequently a building was constructed, represented by a 'dog-legged' limestone wall/foundation surviving to at least 3 courses high and extending beyond the trench to the east and west. The location and form of this structure matches a building shown on Faddens map of 1789. This structure then forms the basis for later rebuilding works with its' part demolished remains forming a useful foundation for a new build. The new structure is made of 19th Century brick and has an associated salt-glaze ceramic service-pipe leading to a small square structure located internally to the brick foundations, and an iron pipe (probably for water supply). This possibly represents a small outbuilding with an internal lavatory or basin.*

*This structure is demolished and levelled. Immediately to its north a very large cut measuring up to 7m across and augered to 3.5m deep possibly attests to an area occupied by a cellar that was so comprehensively demolished no structural elements remain.*

## 1 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Location and scope of work

- 1.1.1 In July and August 2006 OA carried out a field evaluation at the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford (Fig.1). The work was commissioned by Mace Ltd (on behalf of Oxford University Estate's Directorate) in respect of a planning application for an extension to the rear of the museum that includes basements and a roof (Planning Application No. 03/01697/FUL).
- 1.1.2 A project brief was set by Brian Durham of Oxford City Council (OCC 2004) on behalf of the Local Planning Authority, in accordance with PPG16. OA prepared a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) detailing how it would meet the requirements of the brief (OA 2006). The development site is situated at NGR SP 5114 0656 and is 0.2 hectares in area.
- 1.1.3 The archaeological work comprised an evaluation trench that ran approximately N-S through the Chinese galleries.

### 1.2 Topography and geology

- 1.2.1 The area of proposed development is bounded by Museum Lane to the north, the Sackler Library to the west, St Giles to the East and by the frontage/original buildings of the Ashmolean Museum to the south (which will remain intact throughout the works).
- 1.2.2 The development site is located at NGR SP 5114 0656, on the western side of the principal north-south route of St. Giles, some 240m from the site of the former medieval North Gate.
- 1.2.3 The underlying geology is Quaternary River Gravels of the 2nd (Summertown-Radley) Terrace Deposits (British Geological Survey sheet 236). The terrace forms a north-south ridge of higher ground between the River Isis c 1 km to the west and the River Cherwell c 1.5 km to the east.
- 1.2.4 Currently a consistent floor level of 64.75mOD exists within the area that the trench was excavated. The excavation revealed a small area of loessic loam at 62.87m OD which is consistent with previous archaeological observations within the area which demonstrated that the undisturbed upper surface of the natural gravel would be encountered at c. 62.5 - 62.7 m OD, and the overlying red brown loessic loam (usually 0.3m thick) at c. 62.8 - 63.0m OD. Therefore the upper horizon of the in-situ geological loess was encountered at a depth of 1.88 metres below current concrete slab level.

### 1.3 Archaeological and historical background

1.3.1 The archaeological background to the evaluation has been the subject of a separate desk study (OA 2003), the results of which are summarised below. This report did not include the results of recent fieldwork by Oxford Archaeology at the Classics Centre immediately to the north, and a Watching Brief on geo-technical works inside the Ashmolean Museum (OA 2005a and b) and these are briefly summarised below also.

1.3.2 A considerable number of archaeological investigations have been carried out in the general study area in the past and some recently. The most relevant excavations are:

- Excavations by Wessex Archaeology on the site of the Ashmolean Museum forecourt, c. 50 m to the south of the area of proposed development, in 1994 (Andrews and Mephram 1998, 179).
- Excavations by OA in advance of the construction of the Sackler Library, c 50 m to the south-west of the area of proposed development in 1998-9 (Poore and Wilkinson 2001).
- Archaeological Watching Brief and Evaluation works on the Classics Centre by OA (OA 2005a and b) and the subsequent excavation (OA forthcoming).
- Observations on Geo-technical test-pits in the Ashmolean by OA (OA 2005c).

1.3.3 The excavation of the forecourt produced evidence of a continuous sequence of extra-mural medieval occupation beginning in the late 12th century in the form of two successive buildings dating to the 13th century and possibly 14th century, along with a series of domestic backyard rubbish pits. Two large 14th-century bread ovens were recorded in the adjacent property to the north.

1.3.4 Excavations at Sackler Library revealed evidence of two probable Bronze Age ring ditches (the ploughed-out remains of round barrows), one of which lay largely within the project area and enclosed an area 28 m in diameter. The development site was thought to lie at the eastern limit of the precinct of Beaumont Palace, a royal residence immediately outside the north wall of the medieval city of Oxford and in use between c. AD 1132-1318. Numerous medieval pits were found aligned in rows and were possibly dug as tree planters. The dating evidence suggested that they might have formed part of a formal garden associated with the palace. In the early 14th century, the palace site was granted to the Carmelite Friars. The excavations found evidence for a substantial east-west aligned buttressed stone building, which may originally have been built as part of the palace, but which ultimately formed part of the Friary complex. Evidence for a second medieval building was revealed a short distance to the north-east. Excavation also revealed a number of stone-lined garden features relating to an early-19th century development of terraced housing on Beaumont Street and St John Street.

1.3.5 As a result of the discovery of significant archaeology during a Watching Brief on the site of the Classics Centre (OA 2005a), immediately to the north of the Ashmolean, there was a subsequent evaluation (OA 2005b). This found evidence of

medieval and post-medieval tenements fronting onto St. Giles, including two boundary ditches dating from the 11th century, 13th-century garden soils and Post-medieval pits, buried soils, walls and yard surfaces. Subsequent area excavations were carried out by OA in late 2005, during which more comprehensive and extensive evidence in the form of pits, structural and occupation levels were recorded (OA forthcoming).

- 1.3.6 Watching Brief work has also been undertaken on Geo-technical Test Pits in the Ashmolean (OA 2005c). During these works walls, pits and a possible cellar structure were observed and attest to evidence for the medieval and post-medieval tenements that fronted St Giles.

## **2 EVALUATION AIMS**

### **2.1 General aims**

- 2.1.1 The trench was excavated in order to evaluate deposits at the eastern end of the proposed new basement. This location was as near to the frontage of the medieval burgage plots and the subsequent Post-medieval St. Giles as practicable. The location also coincides with the locations of buildings as shown on historic maps from the 17th - 19th Centuries.
- 2.1.2 The general aims were to establish the presence/absence of any archaeological remains within the trench location and to determine their extent, condition, nature, character, quality and date sufficient to determine the need for further mitigation during the construction process.
- 2.1.3 To establish the ecofactual and environmental potential of any archaeological deposits and features and to make available the results of the investigation.

### **2.2 Specific aims**

- 2.2.1 To detect and characterise areas of significant archaeological deposits in an area of high potential within the un-basemented areas, in relation to the projected plan of historic structures and any medieval antecedents, in order to inform a wider mitigation strategy.
- 2.2.2 To investigate and record any outliers to the Bronze Age ritual site known to the south-west and other evidence for pre-medieval land-use.
- 2.2.3 To investigate the development of St Giles as a suburb of Oxford from perhaps middle Saxon period onward, including the setting out of field strips and or burgage plots.

### 3 EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 Scope and method of fieldwork

- 3.1.1 A single evaluation trench (Trench 1) - measuring 18m by 2.5m was excavated in the former Chinese Gallery of the Museum (Fig. 2). This was 5m to the west of watching brief Test Pit 5 (OA 2005c), which revealed a limestone wall, and a single cut feature. Natural gravel in this trench was recorded at 62.70m AOD.
- 3.1.2 The trench was restricted to this size and location due to the available space within the Museum, limitations due to the standing buildings foundations and was specified by MACE and subsequently by OA in consultation with HBG the Principal Contractor.
- 3.1.3 The Principal Contractor broke out and removed the concrete floor at the location of the proposed trench. The trench was excavated - in spits of 0.1m or less, by a mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless bucket under control of a competent archaeologist, to the first significant archaeological horizon.
- 3.1.4 The first significant horizon related to buildings on the site immediately prior to the construction of the Evans Sheds in the early 20th Century. These occurred centrally and to the south of the trench at c. 1m below ground level and were hand cleaned, recorded and planned. In the absence of this horizon to the north of the trench machine excavation extended down to 1.60m from ground level
- 3.1.5 Mechanical excavation then continued and removed these structural remains to the next significant horizon at a maximum depth of 1.6m below ground level. This horizon was hand cleaned and planned. Suitable areas were then identified for further targeted sample excavation, in the form of sondages.
- 3.1.6 Hand excavation of 6 deeper sondages of varying sizes was carried out to evaluate the survival etc. of deposits at these deeper levels (Sondages 1 - 6 on Fig 2).
- 3.1.7 Hand dug sondages were excavated to a maximum depth of 62.77 m AOD within Sondage 1, 61.76 m AOD within Sondage 5 and 61.91 m AOD within Sondage 6. An auger was used to assess the depth of deposits that continued below the base of Sondage 1. This failed to find natural deposits at the maximum augered depth of 60.77 m AOD. This was 4m below the current ground level at 64.75 m AOD. As a result of these findings Sondage 1 was not opened up to its intended dimensions of a 2 m x 2 m square, and was not hand excavated to the top of the natural geology.
- 3.1.8 All archaeological features that were revealed were planned and where excavated their sections were drawn at a scale of 1:20. All features were photographed using a digital camera and a general record was kept using 35 mm colour slide and black and white print film, in addition to medium format colour film. Recording followed procedures laid down in the *OAU Fieldwork Manual* (ed. D Wilkinson, 1992).



### 3.2 **Finds**

3.2.1 Finds were recovered by hand during the course of the excavation and generally bagged by context. Finds of special interest were given a unique small find number.

### 3.3 **Palaeo-environmental evidence**

3.3.1 Bulk soil samples were taken from suitable contexts from a range of dated deposits to establish the ecofactual and environmental potential of the site and for the retrieval of finds.

### 3.4 **Presentation of results**

3.4.1 The various deposits and structures encountered during the evaluation are described below in Sections 4 and 5, (a context inventory can be found as Appendix 1). The descriptive text in Section 5 is followed by the finds and environmental reports - Sections 6 and 7 respectively, and a discussion and interpretation of this evidence can be found in Section 8.

## 4 **RESULTS: GENERAL**

### 4.1 **Soils and ground conditions**

4.1.1 The trench was located inside the Ashmolean Museum, and was undertaken under artificial lighting. The lighting occasionally made interpretation difficult, particularly when differentiating between features with very similar fills. This was, however, only a minor problem confined to deposits within the deepest excavations - particularly Sondage 6. Over the rest of the trench the recording remained relatively unaffected.

4.1.2 The ground conditions were dry and the water table was not reached.

### 4.2 **Distribution of archaeological deposits**

4.2.1 Due to the depth below current ground level of the archaeological deposits, a number of sondages had to be excavated down from a general level to which the whole trench was excavated. These sondages, numbered 1 - 6 are shown on Figure 2 and subsequent figures and are referred to in the text. The earliest features recorded were intercutting medieval pits located towards the centre and southern end of the trench. These were overlain by a buried soil horizon dating to the late medieval and early post medieval period. Above this were successive layers of made ground, structural remains and demolition layers dating to the post-medieval development and urbanisation of the area.

## 5 RESULTS: DESCRIPTIONS

### 5.1 Description of deposits

- 5.1.1 Natural deposits were observed in Sondage 2, at the northern end of the trench, and Sondage 6 to the south (Fig. 5). Within Sondage 6, a mid yellowish brown sandy gravel (40) was recorded at a depth of 62.26 m AOD. Within Sondage 2, a small area of mid brownish red clayey silt (39) overlaid these gravels at a height of 62.83 AOD. It survived to a maximum thickness of 0.08 m. The two deposits were interpreted as being the Quaternary River Gravels of the 2nd (Summertown-Radley) Terrace Deposits and Loessic loam described in the Desk Based Assessment (OA 2003, after British Geological Survey sheet 236).
- 5.1.2 The earliest cut features were a series of intercutting pits excavated within Sondages 5 and 6 (Figs. 4 and 5). The pits were cut from 62.75m AOD or 2m below current concrete floor level. The full dimensions of these pits could not be recorded, as they were not fully exposed within the sondages. They appeared to be sub-rectangular, sub-circular to ovoid in plan with steep/straight sides. The fully excavated examples had rounded bases. The maximum diameters of the cuts (as excavated) ranged from 1.4 m to 0.5 m. Where the pit bases were excavated depths of between 1 m and 0.75 m. were recorded. They were filled by grey and reddish brown sandy silts with 2-10% small limestone gravel inclusions.
- 5.1.3 The earliest pits in the sequence were 62, which was filled by deposits 61 and 60, and pit 72, which was filled by deposits 71, 70 and 69. Pottery from deposit 61 was dated to between the 12th and 14th centuries AD. Deposit 60 was cut by pit 59, which was itself filled by deposit 58. This deposit was cut by pit 55, which was filled by deposits 56 and 54. Pottery from context 56 was dated to the period 1225 -1300 AD.
- 5.1.4 The latest pits in the sequence, were pit 64, which was filled by deposit 63, and pit 52, which was filled by deposit 57. Pottery from context 57 was dated to between the 13th and early 14th centuries AD. These pit both cut deposit 54. The other stratigraphically latest pit was 68, which cut deposit 69 and was filled by deposits 67, 66 and 65.
- 5.1.5 It was not possible to differentiate between the upper fills of all the pits within Sondage 6. The finds from these fills were bagged together and assigned context reference number 73. The deposits included within this were 54, 60, 65, 68, 70, and 71. The pottery from these deposits was dated to 1225-1300/25 AD.
- 5.1.6 Sondage 5 also revealed very similar pit fills (82). Although no cut edges were seen an arbitrary cut number was given (81). Pottery from deposit 82 was dated to the Late 12th - 13th Century.
- 5.1.7 The latest pit fills 82, 65 and 57 were overlain by what appeared to be a buried soil horizon (53). A relationship between the buried soil and pit 64 could not be firmly established, though its fill (63) may be contemporary. Soil horizon 53 was a dark

brown sandy silt between 0.3 m and 0.4 m thick. It was recorded in Sondages 4 and 5 at a maximum height of 63.05 m AOD, and Sondage 6 at 63.08 m AOD (Figs. 4 and 5). It was also recorded within Sondage 2, as context 21, at a height of 62.95 m AOD. A relatively large number of pottery sherds dated to the late 14th - 15th century were recovered from this layer, all of them from context (53).

- 5.1.8 Within Sondage 4 soil horizon (53) was cut by posthole 80 (Fig. 4). The cut was circular in plan with a diameter of 0.35 m. It had vertical sides with a flat base, and was filled by sandy silt 79. Two packing stones had also been placed within this deposit. In the same area other small circular depressions were noted and planned. Some of these features may have been caused by animal disturbance
- 5.1.9 Make up layer 29 (Fig. 5) overlay posthole fill 79 and partially filled the cut. It also overlay deposit 21 at the northern end of the trench. Layer 29 was 0.25 m thick and was composed of compacted rubble gravel with frequent broken tile inclusions. The layer was truncated to the north by cut 43, the construction cut for structure 26.
- 5.1.10 Construction cut 43 was aligned east-west and filled by a primary deposits of silty clay, 0.04 m thick (37), and a sandy silt deposit (20), which was only recorded adhering to the north facing side of structure 26. These deposits were overlain by (38) a layer of clayey silt, that measured 0.26m thick. It was above this layer that structure 26 had been lain (Fig. 5 - Section 2).
- 5.1.11 Structure 26 was aligned east-west. It was 0.5 m wide and 1.4m long, and survived to a height of 0.30 m. The top was at 63.38 m AOD, and its base was at 63.07 m AOD. Its eastern end had been truncated by a later cut. Its construction was of roughly hewn limestone blocks approximately 0.25 m in length and 0.15 m deep and light brown sandy lime mortar. Not enough of the structure remained to suggest what type of bonding had been used.
- 5.1.12 To the south of 26 a second wall (27), this time aligned north-south, was recorded. It was 1.7 m in length and 0.4 m wide, and survived to a height of 0.22 m. The top of the wall was recorded at 63.18 m AOD, and the base of the wall was at 62.95 m AOD. This wall appeared to have been constructed from the same materials as wall 26, and may have been part of the same structure. The east facing side of the wall appeared to have been built with faced stone. Its northern end was also truncated by the same cut as wall 26. No direct relationship remained between walls 26 and 27. However, both walls were constructed after the deposition of makeup layer 29.
- 5.1.13 A probable east-west return to wall 27 was recorded at its southern extent (76). This wall was of a similar build to walls 26 and 27. A length of 0.4 m, and a height of 0.35 m were recorded. Sondage 3 showed the wall to have been built slightly deeper than 26 and 27. Its base was at 62.76 m AOD, and the truncated top of the wall was at 63.11 m AOD. It was not possible to record a relationship between 27 and 76 without removing part of the structure and destabilising the wall.

- 5.1.14 The truncated top of wall 26 had been used to support a later wall built on top of it. This second wall (17) was built on the same east-west alignment but approximately 0.15 m further north. It was 0.8 m in length and 0.35 m wide. It survived to a height of 0.6 m. The top of the wall was recorded at 63.79 m AOD and the base of the wall at 63.19 m AOD. This wall was randomly coursed with roughly hewn limestone bonded with a yellowish white lime mortar. Its north facing side was roughly faced. The eastern end of the wall was also truncated by the same later cut that truncated walls 26 and 27.
- 5.1.15 Wall 17 was abutted by a possible floor surface (86). It was constructed from what appeared to be compressed chalk, or mortar with a high chalk content. Only an area of approximately 0.5m square survived within the trench. Red brick could be seen within the matrix of the mortar, but could not be observed more closely without damaging what was left of the layer. The top of context 88 was at a height of approximately 63.64m AOD.
- 5.1.16 Although it was clear that wall 26 had been demolished prior to the building of wall 17 and floor 86, it was not clear whether walls 27 and 76 had been demolished in the same phase, and were perhaps rebuilt as part of the second phase.
- 5.1.17 Near the northern extent of the trench, deposits that may have been contemporary with this structure were excavated (12). The dark grey sandy silts survived to a height of 64.07 m AOD, 0.68 m below the present ground level. The deposit had been truncated by a later cut (see below). No cut associated with this deposit was recorded within the trench. Pottery from this context was dated to the 18th century AD. Two clay pipe bowls, in fresh condition, were dated to the periods 1660 to 1680, with one of these perhaps being as early as the 1630s.
- 5.1.18 Walls 17, 27 and 76 were truncated by demolition cut 83. This appeared to have proceeded the next phase of construction (in brick - see below).
- 5.1.19 A number of makeup layers filled the demolition cut. The deposits that filled the cut to the north of wall 76 differed from those to the south. Within the area to the north the cut was filled by a 0.60m thick demolition layer (75). Pottery from this deposit was dated to the late 18th - 19th century AD. This in turn was overlain by a 0.4 m thick layer of sandy silt (78), that appeared to have been used to level the ground prior to the construction of a new building.
- 5.1.20 A number of floors, a wall and domestic services had been built on, or cut into, these deposits. Context 22 was a north-south aligned service run that comprised a ceramic pipe, with a diameter of 0.1 m. This terminated with a brick-lined manhole at its northern end. An iron pipe with a diameter of 0.04 m, and a single course of brickwork constructed along the western side of these services, was also included in this context (22). These features had been cut into deposit 78. Above these services was a red brick wall, two courses wide, constructed from unfroged bricks (24). It was 2.2 m long, 0.22 m wide, and survived to a height of 0.18 m. The wall was aligned east-west, with a curving return towards the north at its eastern end. It was abutted by

surface 25 (see below). A wall constructed from limestone continued on the northern alignment of 23. This wall probably formed part of the same build. The stone did not appear to have been bonded with any mortar. It was constructed directly above wall 27, which formed part of an earlier structure. Material derived from stone wall 27 may have been utilised in its construction.

- 5.1.21 Deposit 78 was also overlain by surface 88. This was made from compacted chalk or chalk mortar. The surface was only seen in Section 1 (Fig.5). Very little of it was preserved within the trench. It was 1.3 m long and 0.2 m thick. The top of this layer was at a height of 63.87 m AOD. Truncation had removed any relationship between this surface and structures 23 and 24.
- 5.1.22 To the south of wall 76 demolition cut 83 was filled by deposit 84. This deposit was 0.38 m thick and probably derived from the re-deposition of deposit 29. This was itself overlain by 85, a layer of gravel and pea-grit, to a thickness of 0.3 m. Above this was a levelling layer of sandy silt (77), 0.1 m thick. This was in turn overlain by a sandy gravel (49), 0.3 m thick. A possible surface (48) was laid over this deposit. This surface was made from the same materials as surface 88. It was preserved across much of the southern half of the trench. The layer was 0.2 m thick, with a preserved length of 6.4 m. The top of the layer was encountered at a height of 63.47 m AOD. Its southern extent was truncated. To the north this surface abutted a large limestone block (28). This block protruded from the west facing trench section. The visible part measured 0.5 m square, and 0.15 m in depth. The top of the stone was at 63.57 m AOD.
- 5.1.23 Overlaying all of surface 48 and part of 28 was a makeup layer 0.2 m thick (47). Above this what appeared to be a resurfacing layer had been put down (25). It abutted wall 24, which overlay services 22. The composition of this layer was the same as that of surfaces 88 and 48. It was encountered at 63.87 m AOD. This was the same height as surface 88 to the north. Any direct relationship between these surfaces was destroyed by demolition cut 74.
- 5.1.24 Surfaces 25 and 88, along with walls 23 and 24 were truncated by two large cuts, 13 and 74. The cuts were both contemporary, and appeared to have demolished the underlying structures. To the north, cut 13 truncated deposit 12 vertically. A similar vertical cut was recorded against the north face of wall 17. In this area the excavation of Sondage 1 failed to reach the base of cut 13. Auger tests did not encounter natural deposits at the maximum augured depth of 60.77 m AOD, 4m below the current floor level. At this depth a buried obstacle prevented any further use of the auger.
- 5.1.25 The majority of deposits within cut 13 were sandy silts with occasional deposits rich in redeposited mortar. Contexts 11, 31 and 42 were the earliest recorded fills. Pottery from deposit 11 and 31 was dated to the 11th to 14th century AD, and 1770 to 1830 AD respectively. Context 31 was overlain by fills 30 and 34. Context 42 was overlain by 41, 16, 19 and 18. Context 11 and 34 were overlain by deposits 10, 15 and 6. Deposit 10 contained pottery dated to the 19th century and clay pipe stems dating to

the 17th - 18th century AD. Pottery from deposit 6 was dated to the 16th - 17th century AD. Context 6 was overlain by both deposits 9, which was overlain by deposit 8, and deposit 33, which was overlain by deposit 32. Deposit 5 overlay these contexts and was itself overlain by deposits 7 and 3. Deposit 2, which covered the entire trench, overlay contexts 3 and 18, and also filled cut 74.

- 5.1.26 Deposit 2 was truncated by construction cut context 2, for the Ashmolean Museum basement wall (45). It was aligned east west, and backfilled by deposit 44, and service pipe 51. Pottery from deposit 44 was dated to the 19th century AD. The entire trench was overlain by concrete floor 1, which was 0.2 m thick. The top of this floor was at a height of 64.75 m AOD.

## 6 FINDS

### 6.1 Assessment of the pottery

*by John Cotter*

*The Pottery: Introduction and Methodology*

- 6.1.1 A total of 180 sherds of medieval and post-medieval pottery weighing 1989g was recovered from 17 contexts. All the pottery was examined and spot-dated during the present assessment stage. For each context the total pottery sherd count and weight were recorded on an Excel spreadsheet, followed by the context spot-date which is the date-bracket during which the latest pottery types in the context are estimated to have been produced or were in general circulation. Comments on the presence of datable types were also recorded, usually with mention of vessel form (jugs, bowls etc.) and any other attributes worthy of note (e.g. decoration etc.).

*Date and Nature of the Assemblage*

- 6.1.2 The assemblage is fairly typical of sites in this part of Oxford. The earliest securely dated contexts date to the 13th century and contain early style glazed and decorated Brill/Boarstall ware jugs (Fabrics OXAW & OXAM) from Buckinghamshire. These, and other contexts, however, also produced residual 11th- and 12th-century local wares (OXY, OXAC). There is also a white-slipped green-glazed rim from an early rounded jug of 12th-century date in either London-type ware (LOND), which is rare in Oxford, or in a similar glazed sandy ware from the Ashampstead kilns in Berkshire (OXAG) (context 82U).
- 6.1.3 Brill/Boarstall jugs also dominate until the end of the medieval period. Rarer Brill forms include parts of two double-shelled oil lamps from contexts (53) and (82U) and a rim from a Brill lobed cup copying Surrey/Hampshire Tudor green ware (53). Context (84) produced an unusually thick green-glazed sherd of Brill/Boarstall ware from a tightly curved form with traces of applied features; it is suggested that this may be roof finial - possibly part of a 'horse and rider' finial. These are rare but an

example is known from Eynesham Abbey. Context (53) also produced a typologically late medieval (c 1375-1500) bifid rim jar in Coarse Border ware from the Surrey/Hampshire border potteries. The post-medieval assemblage dates as late as the 19th century and is unremarkable. Overall the pottery assemblage is quite fragmentary but not particularly worn.

### Pottery 'Spot date' table

Context	Spot-date	Sherds	Weight	Comments
3	c1800-1850	1	28	Pearlware or derivative mug
6	16-E17C?	2	83	?Late Brill (?OXBX) odd unglz bowl frag or horticultural vess?
10	19C	2	10	Blue transfer printed. Creamware
11	12-14C	2	10	Small bs OXAQ. Larger reduc bs ?OXY cpot
12	c1750-1800	4	68	Late Brill marbled slipware dish. 1x flowerpot
31	c1770-1830	3	83	Creamware. Flowerpot. 13-14C Brill jug handle
34	c1200-1300	2	49	Early Brill OXAW jug base
44	19C	1	25	Staffs WHEW
53	L14-15C	67	629	1x Coarse Border ware bifid rim cpot. 1x rim Brill Tudor Green copy lobed cup Few late plain or glazed Brill. Mostly 13-14C Brill incl rim double-shelled lamp. Some earlier incl OXY, OXAQ, OXAC. Mostly fairly scrappy
56	c1225-1300	4	67	OXAW Early Brill incl jug base & jug bs w red & white rouletted vertical strips
57	13-E14C?	2	20	Prob OXAW. Bs OXY
71	12-E14C?	2	20	Hard shell-temp fabric or OXAQ (12-E15C) with little/no flint? 1x OXAC
73	c1225-1300/25	48	462	Bss highly dec Brill OXAM jugs. 1x Abingdon-type OXAG jug bs w debased Rouen-style white lines and pellets or dots. OXAQ & OXY cpot and bowl rims
75	L18-19C	1	5	Burnt WHEW or Creamware
82U	13-E14C?	27	295	Upper Spit'. Brill OXAM large sherd from base of double-shelled lamp. Unglz OXAM ?late med triangular/clubbed jug/jar rim with trace of pulled lip. Few sherds early Brill OXAW incl rod jug handle. 1-2 poss OXY. Lots OXAQ incl cpot rim. 1x unglz OXAW or OXY bs with trace of red paint/dec. 1x early rounded jug rim (12C) prob London-type ware, sub-collared with incised wavy line dec ext, hard grey sandy with allover white slip under green glz or poss ?Ashampstead OXAG type (fabric ref collection)
82L	L12-13C?	10	83	Lower Spit'. 2x prob OXAW Early Brill incl yellow glzd jug neck (?or OXY) & incl 1 small green glazed. 2-3x OXAQ incl sharp angled cpot base. Bss prob OXY & OXAW cpts
84	13-14C	2	52	1x Brill v thick-walled tightly curved sherd - prob a roof finial w traces applied elements - poss a horse and rider finial or something zoomorphic? Prob representing part of the ?horse body. Copper green glz ext, pale grey sandy fabric. 1x bs OXAQ with traces combed dec
TOTAL		180	1989	

## 6.2 Assessment of the clay pipes

by John Cotter

6.2.1 A total of 5 pieces of clay pipe weighing 45g was recovered from 2 contexts. These were recorded on an Excel spreadsheet in a similar way to the pottery. These include stem and bowl fragments. In both cases the pipes are earlier than the pottery with which they are associated. Context 12, for instance, produced two complete pipe bowls of c 1660-1680, both of which were in a fresh condition but associated with pottery of c 1750-1800. However a sieved sample from the same context also produced a pipe mouthpiece of narrower stem bore suggesting an 18th or early 19th-century date, though stem bores are a less reliable means of dating than bowl typology.

**Clay pipe 'Spot date' table**

Context	Spot-date	Stem	Bowl	Mouth	Tot sherds	Tot Wt	Comments
10	17-E18C	1	0	0	1	4	Stem bore c3mm
12	c1660-1680	1	3	0	4	41	2x pipe bowls, one complete, one chipped. Stem bores c2.5 & 3mm. Both fresh. Stubby spurs. Complete bowl slightly smaller - poss c1630-1660? (Pottery from context is mid 18C).(Additional 2 pieces, 7g, from sieved sample <2> incl 17C stem & poss 18C mouthpiece with stem bore 2mm
TOTAL		2	3	0	5	45	

## 6.3 Metal

6.3.1 One fragment of copper alloy and 21 fragments of iron were recovered from the site. The table below gives quantification's for each context and identifies the objects where possible.

**Quantification of metalwork table**

Context	Sample	No of	No of	Weight	Material	Object
73		1	1	0	Copper	Folded strip of copper
56	1	1	1	0	Iron	Unidentified
53	3	1	5	0	Iron	Unidentified
12	2	1	14	0	Iron	Nail
75		1	2	0	Iron	Nail

## 6.4 Ceramic building material

6.4.1 A total of 137 fragments of CBM were recovered from site. It was composed of broken peg tile and pieces of brick. This material was subject to quantification only.



**Quantification of CBM table**

Context	No of Bags	No of Objects	Weight (g)	Material
5	1	1	53	CBM
10	1	1	521	CBM
11	1	7	163	CBM
31	2	5	490	CBM
53	5	27	1044	CBM
56	3	11	358	CBM
57	1	4	284	CBM
73	3	18	1040	CBM
75	1	1	156	CBM

**6.5 Flint**

6.5.1 A total of two flints were recovered from the excavations. After processing and examination these flints were found to be of natural origin.

**6.6 Slag**

6.6.1 A total of 4 fragments of slag were recovered from soil sampling. The table below gives quantification's for each context.

**Quantification of slag**

Context	Sample No	No of Bags	No of Objects	Weight (g)	Material	Object
53	3	1	3	20	Slag	SIEVED
56	1	1	1	3	Slag	SIEVED

**6.7 Animal bones**

*by Lena Strid*

6.7.1 A total of 209 animal bones were recovered from this site (see table 1). Most bones were in a good condition, with 94.7% being grade 1 and 4.3% being grade 2 (see Lyman 1994:355). Traces of burning and animal gnawing were found on one and two bones respectively.

6.7.2 With the caveat that it is very difficult to distinguish between greylag goose and domestic goose, the assemblage seems to consist of domestic species. The predominance of cattle and sheep/goat in the assemblage is to be considered normal, regardless of time period. The presence of dogs is evidenced by gnaw marks on a cattle calcaneus and a sheep/goat humerus.

- 6.7.3 Age estimation could be carried out on 24 bones. The majority of the cattle and sheep/goats were sub-adult/adult, whereas the majority of the pigs were juvenile (see table 2). Two juvenile cattle, five juvenile pig and one juvenile domestic fowl were also found in the assemblage.
- 6.7.4 Butchering marks were found on 12 bones. These marks comprised sagittal butchering of vertebrae, disarticulation of long bones and filleting. They occurred on all three major domesticates as well as on domestic fowl.

## Summary of animal bone

	Cattle	Sheep/ goat	Sheep	Pig	Domestic fowl	Goose	Bird	Medium mammal	Large mammal	Indeterminate
Skull	1	2	1	1						
Mandible		1		1					1	
Loose teeth	5	1								
Rib								6	19	
Vertebra								6	11	
Sternum							1			
Scapula		1							1	
Humerus		3		3	1					
Radius				1	1					
Ulna				3	1					
Carpometacarpus							1			
Metacarpal		4								
Pelvis	1	3		2	1			1		
Femur	3	1		1	1					
Tibia	1	2						1		
Calcaneus	1									
Metatarsal	3	2								
Tarsometatarsus					2					
Tarsal bone	1									
Phalanx 1	3						1	1		
Phalanx 3	1									
Metapodial	1	1								
Longbone							2	18	14	
Indeterminate									8	54
TOTAL	21	21	1	12	7	1	5	33	54	54
Weight (g)	495	201	8	145	7	2	4	96	502	144

**Epiphyseal fusion of cattle, sheep/goat and pig. (fusion stages after Serjeantson 1996:216-218).**

	Cattle		Sheep/goat		Pig	
	Unfused	Fused	Unfused	Fused	Unfused	Fused
Early fusion				4	1	1
Mid-fusion	1	5		1		
Late fusion	1	1		1		
Total	2	6		6	1	1

**List of contexts, species, weight/species/context**

Context	Species	Weight
3	Large mammal	7
11	Cattle	0
12	Cattle	6
	Indeterminate	16
	Large mammal	73
	Medium mammal	5
	Sheep/goat	1
53	Bird	0
	Cattle	266
	Indeterminate	85
	Large mammal	191
	Medium mammal	35
	Pig	43
	Sheep/goat	87
56	Cattle	45
	Domestic fowl	4
	Indeterminate	9
	Large mammal	46
	Medium mammal	8
	Pig	11
	Sheep	8
	Sheep/goat	19
57	Indeterminate	4
	Large mammal	19
	Medium mammal	6
61	Large mammal	20
	Medium mammal	10
	Pig	84
	Sheep/goat	27
71	Bird	2
	Large mammal	31
73	Bird	2
	Cattle	178
	Domestic fowl	3
	Goose	2
	Indeterminate	30
	Large mammal	115
	Medium mammal	32
	Pig	7
	Sheep/goat	67

## 7 PALAEO-ENVIRONMENTAL REMAINS

### 7.1 Environmental assessment

*by Dr Rebecca Nicholson*

#### *Methodology*

7.1.1 Three 40 litre samples were taken from a layer and two and pit fills (contexts 12, 53 and 56) as part of the evaluation, to assess the abundance and preservation of charred plant remains and other ecofacts. The samples were processed by flotation using a modified Siraf-type machine, with the flot collected onto a 250-micron mesh and air-dried. The residues were sieved to 500 microns, air-dried and sorted; the flots were scanned under a binocular microscope at x10 and x20 magnification.

#### *Results*

7.1.2 Sample 1, from context 56 (the fill of pit 55), produced frequent quantities of generally highly comminuted charcoal, and small numbers of charred grain (including wheat - *Triticum* sp(p).) as well as a single fragment of chaff. Occasional legumes and weed seeds were also present, as well as very low numbers of Mollusca. The sample also contained fragments of animal bone and fish scales, material also identified in the residues, along with small pieces of pottery, iron and possible hammerscale.

7.1.3 Sample 2, from context 12 (the fill of post-medieval pit 13). This sample contained a small number of charred weed seeds as well as small fragments of charcoal, coal and klinker. The charcoal and seed material had little identifiable internal structure and was poorly preserved. This might be consistent with high temperature combustion. Molluscs were infrequently noted in the flot. The residue contained fragments of pottery, glass, clay pipe, iron, bone, marine shell and coal Hammerscale was noted in the finest fraction.

7.1.4 Sample 3, from context 53 (a layer sealing pit 55), again contained quantities of well preserved charcoal, charred grain (including bread wheat *Triticum* cf. *aestivum*, barley *Hordeum* and oat *Avena sativa*), weed seeds, nutshell and legumes as well as fragments of cereal chaff. Animal bone (including rodent bone), fish scales, marine shell and pottery fragments were present in both flot and residue, and hammerscale was identified in the finest fraction.

#### *Discussion*

7.1.5 The preservation of charred remains from the evaluation samples was generally fair, with sample 3 containing the most useful assemblage in terms of preservation and numbers of identifiable items. All samples contained material consistent with mixed refuse, deriving from a range of activities, most of them probably domestic. None of the fills contained evidence of waterlogging or of cess.

## 8 DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATION

### 8.1 Reliability of field investigation

- 8.1.1 Generally the finds recovered during the evaluation were from well-defined contexts. The dating they provided, was considered secure. There was very little residual material recovered from the earlier (medieval) deposits. Residual material within the later (post-medieval) deposits could easily be eliminated on the grounds of securely dated stratigraphic relationships.
- 8.1.2 The need to use artificial lighting occasionally made interpretation difficult, particularly when differentiating between features with very similar fills. This was, however, only a minor problem confined to deposits within Sondage 6. When relationships were unresolvable it was clearly marked on the drawn record.

### 8.2 Overall interpretation

- 8.2.1 Natural deposits were identified in two areas located at the northern and southern ends of the trench. Loessic silts were only encountered in Sondage 2 at the northern end of the trench at a height of 62.87m AOD. This is comparable to the level that this deposit has been encountered on previous excavations in the area, and suggests the natural topography in this area of Oxford is relatively flat. In Sondage 6 towards the southern end of the trench natural gravels were encountered at 62.10 m AOD, with no natural deposits encountered in Sondage 5. The absence of the Loessic silts and the lower level at which the gravel was recorded was due to truncation from dense pitting in the southern half of the trench and a very large cut (possibly related to the demolition of a cellar) in the northern half of the trench.
- 8.2.2 The evaluation revealed no evidence of features or deposits that predated the 13th century AD although residual pottery dating to the 11th and 12th centuries AD, attested to activity from this period taking place in the vicinity and possibly on the site. The area where natural geology was exposed was very small and no prehistoric finds were recovered. On the evidence provided by the evaluation the presence of earlier in-situ activity should not be discounted.
- 8.2.3 The earliest features encountered were within Sondages 5 and 6. These pits are dated by pottery finds to the 13th century AD. The finds of pottery and bone suggested that the pits had been intermittently used for the disposal of domestic refuse. Of note is the presence of hammerscale potentially from small-scale iron working, and fragments of ceramic lamps. A piece of rare decorated roof finial indicates the presence of a fairly high status structure perhaps located in the vicinity if not on the site itself. The pits excavated during the evaluation were probably located within Salters tenement Plot No. 97 (labelled as 'once Templars' and probably relates to the Knights Templar). The latest pit fills contained pottery from the 14th century AD.

- 8.2.4 No evidence was found of the tenement boundary that was thought to cross east-west near the northern end of the trench. This area was, however, truncated by later features to a depth that may have removed any evidence of the boundary.
- 8.2.5 The evidence recorded during the evaluation concurs with the documentary sources, which clearly indicate use of these tenements from at least the early 13th Century (OA 2003).
- 8.2.6 These pits were overlaid by a deposit interpreted as a buried soil horizon. This layer was preserved over an area 11 m in length. A relatively large collection of pottery sherds was recovered from this deposit. They were dated primarily to the 14th century, when the pit digging activity appeared to have ceased. The latest pottery finds from this deposit were dated to the 15th century AD.
- 8.2.7 In the area of Sondage 4, a single posthole and other posthole-like features were recorded cutting into the surface of this deposit. These features showed no clear pattern within the confines of our evaluation. Some of the smaller features may also have been caused by bioturbation, for example rodent burrows. However, cut 80 was interpreted as a posthole, its fill contained packing stones and clearly indicates some form of timber structure was constructed after the 15th Century. Loggan's map (1675) shows the edge of a building or boundary in the same approximate position and it is possible that this posthole and the other similar features are in some way related to the structure shown on the map. However, no clear comparison or conclusion could be drawn from the limited evidence uncovered. The posts appeared to have been removed prior to the deposition of the layer 29. This material partially filled and sealed the postholes.
- 8.2.8 Layer (29) was a deposit of broken building material that predated a redevelopment of the area and may have been deliberately laid in advance of the construction of limestone walls (26, 27 and 76). No pottery was recovered from this layer. Walls 26 and 27 could not be physically linked because of later truncation. However, the builds were of a similar type, and the walls were positioned at right angles to each other. Given the depth of the walls, approximately 0.3 m, they probably represent the remains of foundations.
- 8.2.9 Wall 17 was built over the foundations of wall 26. This indicated at least two phases to the build of this structure. This wall, and the demolished wall 26, was abutted by floor surface 88 at a height of 63.64 m AOD. Given the height that deposit 12 (dated to the 18th century AD) had survived, 64.07 m AOD, it was suggested that this floor was positioned below the contemporary ground surface. The height at the top of deposit 12 also indicated that the preservation of archaeological deposits from this period might be better to the north of the evaluation trench.
- 8.2.10 The first phase of this structure, which included walls 26, 27 and 76, resembled the plan of the structure shown on Taylor's map (1750). Faden's map (1789) appears to show some alterations, which might have included the demolition of part of the structure to the north. Although the structures uncovered during the evaluation can

not be conclusively proven to be the same as the building shown in the maps, their position, shape and later alteration seemed to correlate with the cartographic evidence.

- 8.2.11 At the southern end of the trench, no evidence was found of a second building shown on Faden's map. This structure may have been destroyed by the construction cut for the basement of the present building (46).
- 8.2.12 Finds of pottery suggested that the structure found in the evaluation was demolished in the 19th century AD. Demolition layers and made ground were deposited over the demolished remains, and a new building was constructed. The red brick construction of wall (24), and ceramic and iron service pipes that underlay it, indicated that the building was built in the 19th century. No evidence was found for any walls above the contemporaneous ground level. The walls recorded during the excavation were either foundations or were sub-surface ducts associated with the below ground services. At least three surfaces were also identified. One to the south of wall 24 (48), that abutted stone block 28. The other two surfaces, 25, that abutted wall 24, and 88 were all probably contemporary. Stone 28 may have been a step associated with an entrance.
- 8.2.13 The OS 1st Edition Map of 1876 shows a building in the approximate position of these structural remains. Wall 24 is in the same position as the southern outer wall on the map. The surfaces to the south of wall 24 seemed to correspond with what appeared to be a courtyard on the 1876 map.
- 8.2.14 The 19th century structure was demolished by cuts 13 and 74. The evaluation revealed that demolition cut 13 had vertical sides, aligned east-west, at the point where the cartographic evidence suggested the northern outer wall should have been. It is possible that the vertical cut showed the imprint of where this wall had once stood, and that it may have revetted the 18th century deposits behind it. The demolition of a wall aligned east-west, and the rapid backfilling of the resulting void, may have preserved the earlier deposits behind it. Within Sondage 2, cut 13 also became a vertical cut aligned east-west against the northern side of walls 26 and 17. The augered depth of 60.77 m AOD, between the vertical sides of the cut, could indicate the presence of a basement associated with the structure. However, this was not proven during the evaluation. The augered deposits may indicate earlier features surviving below the base of the cut. In this area the cartographic evidence suggested that this was the approximate position of the medieval tenement boundary.
- 8.2.15 Cut 13 was filled by a succession of deposits that were interpreted as being associated with the demolition of the 19th century structure. The majority of deposits were, however, sandy silts that appeared as though they were redeposited pit fills derived from elsewhere (perhaps in the immediate vicinity), and used to level the ground. Finds of pottery suggested that some of the fills were derived from medieval contexts. The latest pottery dates from the deposits were 1800-1850 AD and 19th century AD.



8.2.16 The present museum structure, represented by contexts 44-46 and 51, was built over these deposits between the years 1892-5 (OA 2003).

### ***Summary of results***

8.2.17 The archaeological evidence broadly concurs with the documentary sources (OA 2003). Most of the significant phases described in the desk based survey were present. There was also a good correlation between the cartographic evidence and the features and structures observed during the evaluation.

### ***Significance***

8.2.18 The evaluation has shown that archaeological deposits were well preserved within the study area. Features were present from datable contexts spanning a period from the 13th century AD to the present day. The absence of earlier deposits was most likely due to the limited size of the sample sondages. The evaluation provides good empirical evidence from which further mitigation strategies can be designed.

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Oxford City Council 17th May 2006, *Brief for Archaeological Fieldwork*

## APPENDICES

## APPENDIX 1 ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONTEXT INVENTORY

Cxst No	Type	Length (m)	Thick. Depth (m)	Colour	Composition	Inclusions	Comment	Finds	No/wt	Date
1	Layer		0.2	Light grey	Concrete		Concrete floor			Modern
2	Layer	18	0.9	Dark brown	Sandy silt	10% fragmented mortar	Made ground incorporating demolition material			Modern (Late 19th c.)
3	Fill	8.2	1.35	Yellowish white	Sandy silt	80% mortar, gravel and CBM	Fill of demolition cut	pot Glass Animal bone	8g 7g	1800-1850 AD
5	Fill	4	0.6	Mid brown	Sandy silt	1% gravel	Fill of demolition cut	CBM	53g	
6	Fill	3	1.1+	Yellowish white	Sandy silt	80% mortar	Fill of demolition cut	Pot Stone	83g 14g	16th-early 17th c. AD Natural
7	Fill	1.1	0.24	Mid brown	Sandy silt	1% gravel	Fill of demolition cut			Modern (Late 19th c.)
8	Fill	0.7	0.8	Mid Grey	Silt		Fill of demolition cut			Modern (Late 19th c.)
9	Fill	1.8	0.5	Mid reddish Brown	Sandy silt	10% gravel	Fill of demolition cut			Modern (Late 19th c.)
10	Fill	3	0.3	Mid brown	Sandy silt	1% gravel	Fill of demolition cut	Pot Clay pipe CBM	10g 4g 521g	19th c. 17th-early 18th c.
11	Fill	1	0.7	Mid reddish Brown	Sandy silt		Fill of demolition cut	Pot Animal bone	10g 6g	12th-14th c.

Ctxt No	Type	Length (m)	Thick. Depth (m)	Colour	Composition	Inclusions	Comment	Finds	No/wt	Date
								CBM Stone	163g 19g	Natural
12	Fill	0.5	0.9	Dark grey	Sandy silt	2% gravel	Pit fill?	Pot Clay pipe Animal bone 14 iron nails Mortar	68g 41g 101g 381g	1750-1800 AD 1660-1680 AD
13	Cut	8.2	?				Demolition cut			Modern (Late 19th c.)
15	Fill	1.5	0.08	Dark greyish brown	Sandy silt	1% gravel	Fill of demolition cut			Modern (Late 19th c.)
16	Fill	1.2	0.4	Dark brownish grey	Clayey silt	3% gravel	Fill of demolition cut			Modern (Late 19th c.)
17	Wall	0.8	0.6		Limestone + lime mortar		Associated with 88			
18	Fill	1.8	0.3	Mid brownish grey	Clayey silt	2% gravel	Fill of demolition cut			Modern (Late 19th c.)
19	Fill	1.6	0.04	Mid whitish grey	Sandy silt	3% gravel	Fill of demolition cut			Modern (Late 19th c.)
20	Fill	0.6	0.2	Mid reddish brown	Sandy silt	6% gravel	Fill of construction cut			Modern (Late 19th c.)
21	Layer	0.6	0.26	Dark blackish brown	Clayey silt	2% gravel	Buried soil (Same as 53?)			Late 14th-15th c.
22	Services						Ceramic and iron pipes + associated brickwork			19th c.
23	Wall	1.5	0.35		Dry limestone		Associated with 22			19th c.
24	Wall	2.2	0.18		Red brick		Possibly associated with			19th c.

Cxt No	Type	Length (m)	Thick. Depth (m)	Colour	Composition	Inclusions	Comment	Finds	No/wt	Date
							23			
25	Surface	6.5	0.2	White	Chalky mortar		Possible floor associated with 88+24			19th c.
26	Wall	1.4	0.35		Limestone+lime mortar		Posibly associated with 27+76			Post medieval
27	Wall	1.7	0.22		Limestone+lime mortar		Posibly associated with 26+76			Post medieval
28	Stone block	0.5	0.15		Limestone		Associated with 25			19th c.
29	Layer	2.6	0.3	Yellowish brown	Sandy gravel	50% angular limestone fragments	Made ground for 27			Post medieval
30	Fill	1.4	0.1	Mid reddish Brown	Sandy silt	80% gravel	Fill of demolition cut			Modern (Late 19th c.)
31	Fill	1.2	0.32	Light greyish white	Sandy silt	30% powdery lime mortar. 5% CBM	Demolition layer	Pot CBM	83g 490g	1770-1830 AD
32	Fill	1.8	0.38	Mid reddish Brown	Sandy silt	3% lime mortar fragments. 2% small stones	Fill of demolition cut			Modern (Late 19th c.)
33	Fill	0.8	0.18	Dark greyish brown	Sandy silt	4% powdery lime mortar. 5% CBM	Fill of demolition cut			Modern (Late 19th c.)
34	Fill	2	0.6	Mid reddish Brown	Sandy silt	4% gravel	Fill of demolition cut	Pot (Residual?)	49g	1200-1300 AD (Modern, late 19th c.)
37	Fill	0.38	0.04	Mid yellowish green	Silty clay	2% gravel	Fill of demolition cut			Post medieval
38	Fill	1.4	0.36	Mid greyish brown	Clayey silt	6% gravel	Backfill of construction cut			Post medieval
39	Layer		0.08	Mid brownish red	Clayey silt	3% gravel	Natural Loessic silt			Quaternary

Ctxt No	Type	Length (m)	Thick. Depth (m)	Colour	Composition	Inclusions	Comment	Finds	Nu/wt	Date
40	Layer			Mid brownish yellow	Sandy gravel		Natural gravel			Quaternary
41	Fill	1	0.04	Mid reddish brown	Sandy silt	5% gravel	Fill of demolition cut			Modern (Late 19th c.)
42	Fill	1	0.5	Dark greyish black	Sandy silt	8% CBM 3% gravel	Demolition layer			Modern (Late 19th c.)
43	Cut	1.6	0.48				Construction cut for wall 26			Modern (Late 19th c.)
44	Fill	1.74	0.6	Mid brown	Sandy silt	10% gravel	Backfill of construction cut	Pot	25g	19th c.
45	Wall	1.8	1.6				Basement wall			Modern (Late 19th c.)
46	Cut	1.8	1.6				Construction cut for wall 45			Modern (Late 19th c.)
47	Layer	6.4	0.2	Mid greyish brown	Clayey silt	5% chalk fragments 1% CBM	Made ground for 25			19th c.
48	Surface	6.4	0.2	White	Crushed chalk fragments and mortar		Possible floor associated with 28			19th c.
49	Fill	6.4	0.2	Light brown	Sandy gravel		Made ground fro 48			19th c.
50	Service						Iron pipe			19th c.
51	Service						Iron pipe			Modern (Late 19th c.)
52	Cut	0.6	0.75				Pit			Modern (Late 19th c.)
53	Layer	11.1	0.4	Dark brown	Sandy silt	5% chalk fragments 1% gravel	Buried soil (same as 21?)	Pot Animal bone CBM Slag	598g 707g 1044g 20g	Late 14th-15th c.

Cxt No	Type	Length (m)	Thick. Depth (m)	Colour	Composition	Inclusions	Comment	Finds	No/wt	Date
								5 Iron objects Mortar	77g	
54	Fill	2	0.7	Mid brown	Sandy silt	1% chalk fragments 5% gravel	Pit fill			Medieval
55	Cut	2	0.8				Pit			Medieval
56	Fill	1.4	0.1	Mid Reddish brown	Sandy silt	2% gravel	Pit fill	Pot Animal bone CBM Slag Stone Iron object Mortar	67g 150g 358 3g 2g 343g	1225-1300 AD    Fossil shell
57	Fill	0.7	0.5	Light grey	Ashy silt	1% charcoal	Pit fill	Pot Animal bone CBM	20g 29g 284g	13th-early 14th c.
58	Fill	1.2	0.24	Mid Reddish brown	Sandy silt	1% gravel	Pit fill			Medieval
59	Cut	0.5	0.45				Pit			Medieval
60	Fill	0.9	0.12	Greyish white	Sand	40% gravel	Pit fill			Medieval
61	Fill	0.3	0.1	Light brown	Sandy silt		Pit fill	Animal bone	141g	Medieval
62	Cut	0.7	0.4				Pit			Medieval
63	Fill	1	1.4	Dark greyish brown	Sandy silt	10% gravel	Pit fill			Medieval
64	Cut	1	1.4				Pit			Medieval

Cxst No	Type	Length (m)	Thick. Depth (m)	Colour	Composition	Inclusions	Comment	Finds	No/wt	Date
65	Fill	1.2	0.5	Mid brown	Sandy silt	10% gravel	Pit fill			Medieval
66	Fill	0.4	0.1		Limestone blocks		Pit fill			Medieval
67	Fill	0.52	0.3	Dark brown	Silt	3% gravel	Pit fill			Medieval
68	Cut	1	0.8				Pit			Medieval
69	Fill	1.6	0.57	Mid brown	Sandy silt	10% gravel	Pit fill			Medieval
70	Fill	0.6	0.07	Greyish white	Sand	50% gravel	Pit fill			Medieval
71	Fill	1.4	0.24	Mid reddish brown	Silt	1% charcoal fragments, 1% gravel	Pit fill	Pot Animal bone	20g 33g	12th-early 14th c.
72	Cut	1.4	0.8				Pit			Medieval
73	Find Ref.						Fills 54, 60, 65 and 68-71	Pot Animal bone CBM Copper alloy	462 436g 1040g	1225-1300/25 AD
74	Cut	18	0.8				Demolition cut			Modern (Late 19th c.)
75	Fill	0.8	0.6	Mid greyish brown	Sandy silt	3% CBM	Fill of demolition cut	Pot CBM 2 iron nails	5g 156g	Late 18th-19th c.
76	Wall	0.4	0.35		Limestone + lime mortar		Possibly associated with 26+27			Post medieval
77	Layer	6.4	0.2	Mid reddish brown	Sandy silt	40% gravel and small rounded stones	Makeup layer for surface 48			19th c.
78	Layer	1.4	0.4	Dark brownish grey	Sandy silt	6% CBM	Makeup layer for surface 25			19th c.

Cxst No	Type	Length (m)	Thick Depth (m)	Colour	Composition	Inclusions	Comment	Finds	No/wt	Date
79	Fill	0.32	0.12	Dark brown	Sandy silt	2 Small packing stones	Fill of posthole			Medieval
80	Cut	0.4	0.3				Posthole			Post medieval
81	Cut						Pit?			Post medieval
82	Fill	1.3	0.78	Mid orangey brown	Sandy silt	10% gravel	Pit fill?			Medieval
83	Cut	3	0.8				Demolition cut			19th c.
84	Fill	1.2	0.8	Mid yellowish brown	Sandy gravel	10% deliberate deposit of limestone to 300 mm	Fill of demolition cut			19th c.
85	Fill	2.5	0.3	Light greyish brown	Sandy silt	90% gravel	Fill of demolition cut			19th c.
86	Surface	0.5	0.2	White	Chalky mortar		Possible floor associated with 17			Post medieval
87	Cut	1.4	0.35				Demolition cut			Post medieval
88	Surface	1.3	0.2				Possible floor associated with 23-25			19th c.



### Summary of Site Details

**Site name:** Ashmolean Museum, Oxford

**Site code:** OXASHE 06

**Grid reference:** NGR: SP: 5114 0656

**Type of evaluation:** Single trench inside standing building. Shored where necessary

**Date and duration of project:** late July - Early August 2006 (3 weeks)

**Area of site:** 18m x 2.5m = 45 sq. m

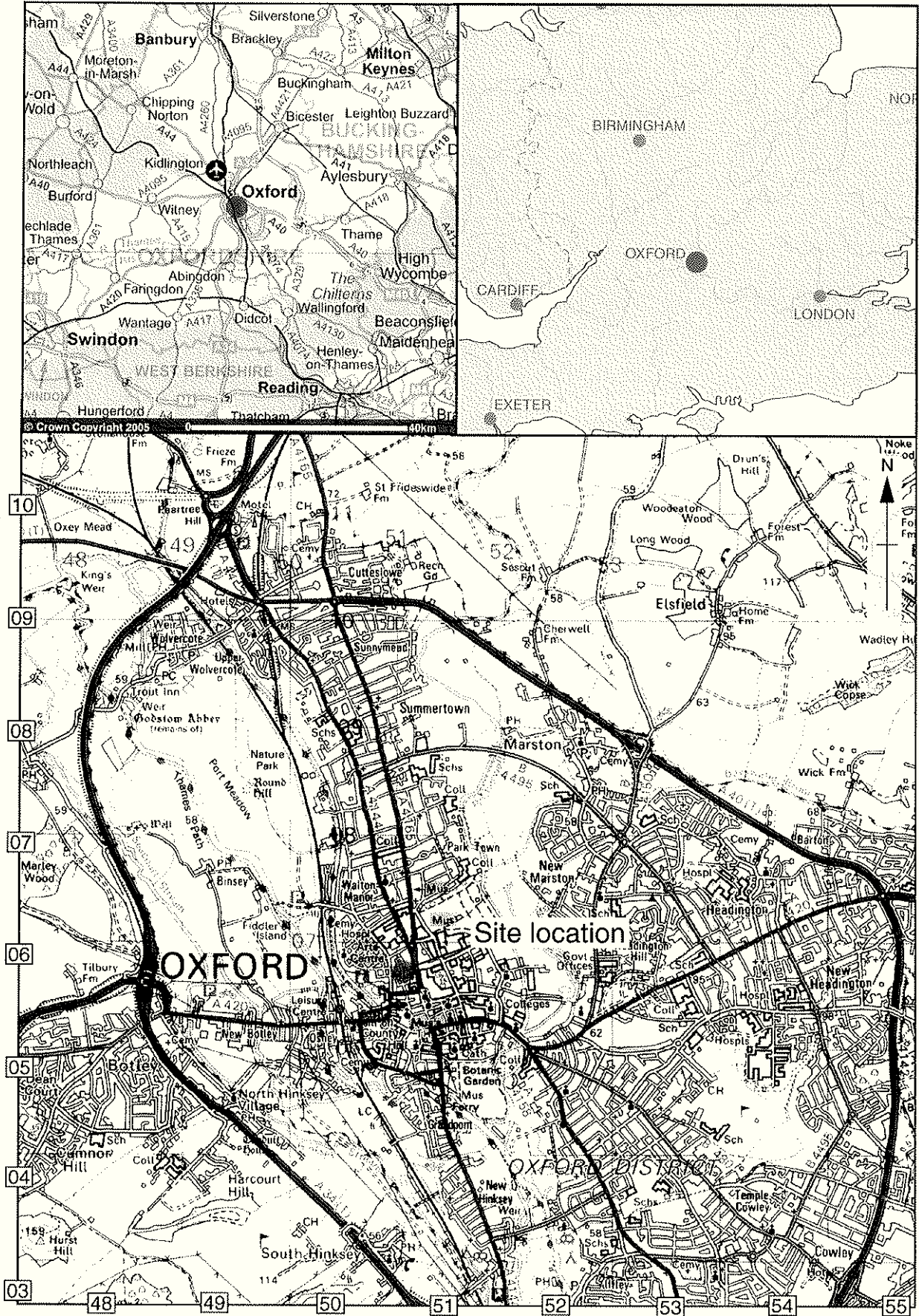
**Summary of results:** Natural Loessic deposits were extensively removed by later activity but, where present, were encountered at 62.87m OD. Locally produced pottery dated to the 11th and 12th Century was recovered from later features and attests to activity perhaps on the site from that date. The earliest in-situ evidence was shown to be from fairly intense early 13th - 14th Century activity, represented by densely distributed intercutting medieval pits associated with tenements established along the western side of St. Giles.

By the 14 - 15th Century this activity ceased and a ubiquitous humic soil horizon, some 0.30m thick, overlay the earlier pits, although the formation process that created this horizon is not known. A number of post-holes cut this horizon that formed no particular pattern but showed that a timber structure of some description occupied this area after the 15th Century that may represent structures shown on Loggans map of 1675.

Subsequently a limestone building was constructed - attested by a 'dog-legged' wall/foundation surviving to at least 3 courses high and extending beyond the trench to the east and west. The location and form of this structure matches a building shown on Faddens map of 1789. This structure formed the basis for later rebuilding works with its' part demolished remains forming a useful foundation for a new build. The new structure was made of 19th century brick and had associated salt-glaze ceramic service-pipe leading to a small square structure located internally to the brick foundations, and an Iron pipe (probably for water supply). This possibly represented a small outbuilding with an internal lavatory or basin.

This structure was demolished and levelled. Immediately to its north a very large cut measuring up to 7m across and augered to 3.5m deep possibly attests to an area occupied by a cellar that was so comprehensively demolished that no structural elements remain.

**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, under the following accession number: **2006.68**



Scale 1:50,000

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Figure 1: Site location

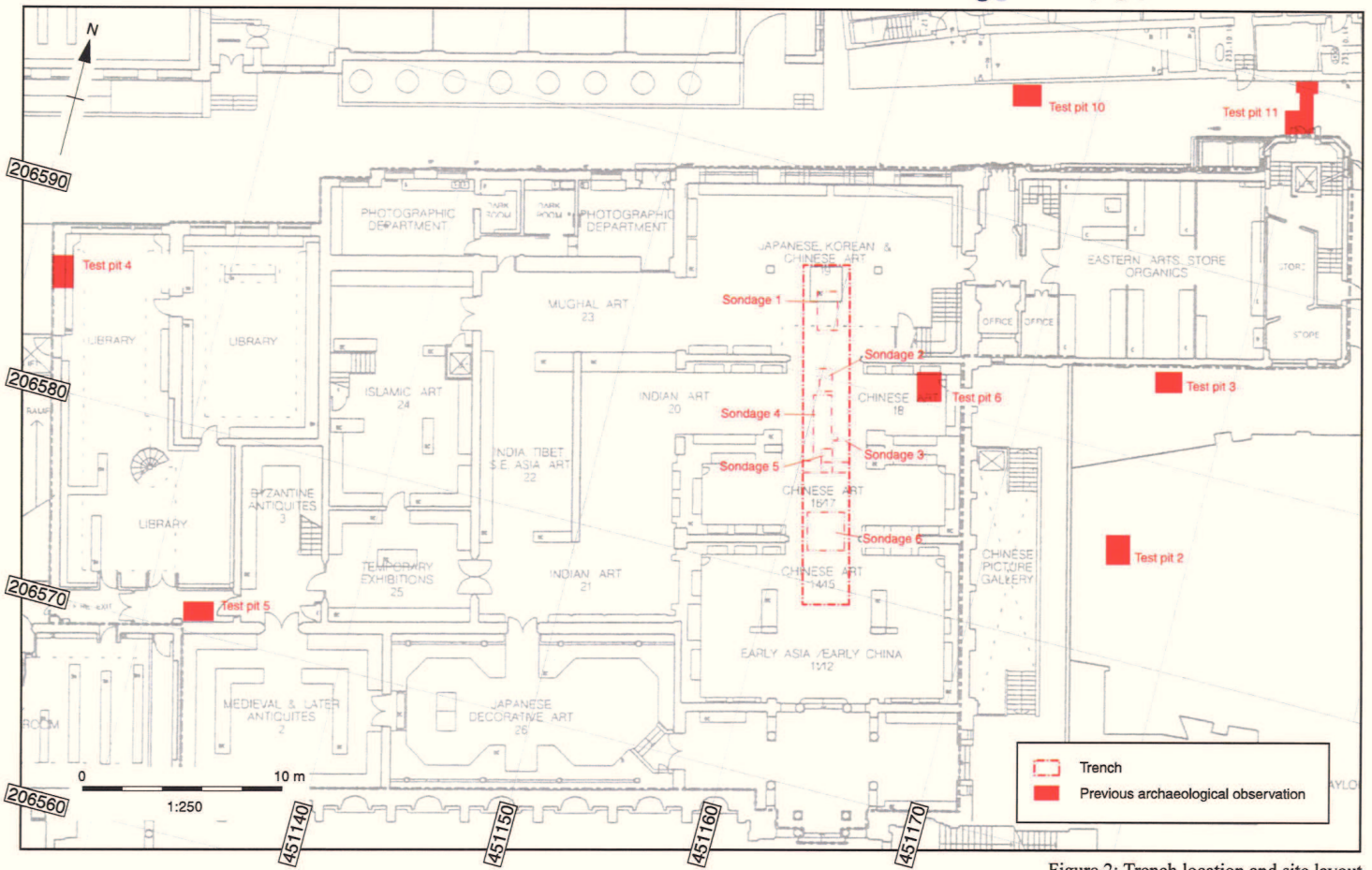


Figure 2: Trench location and site layout

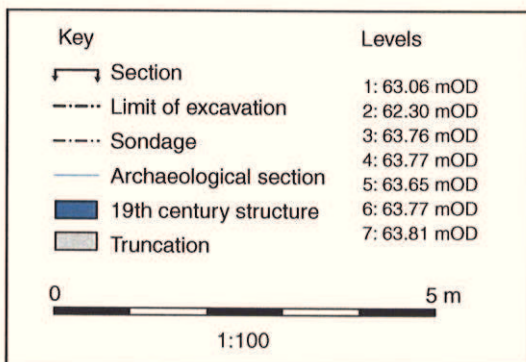
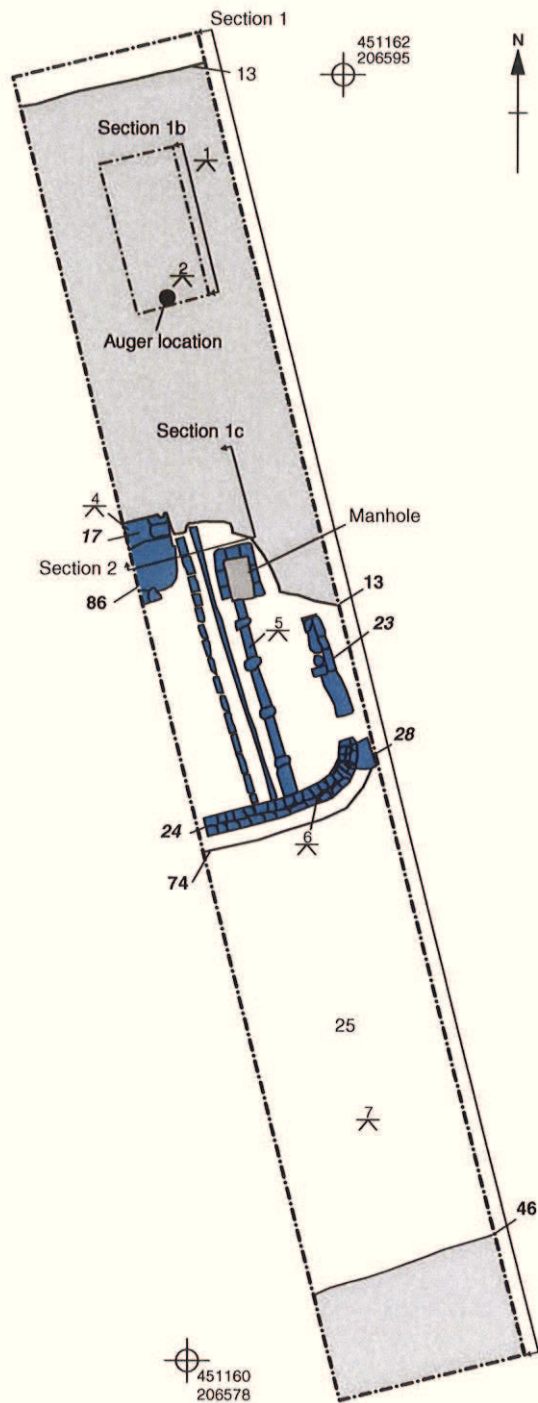
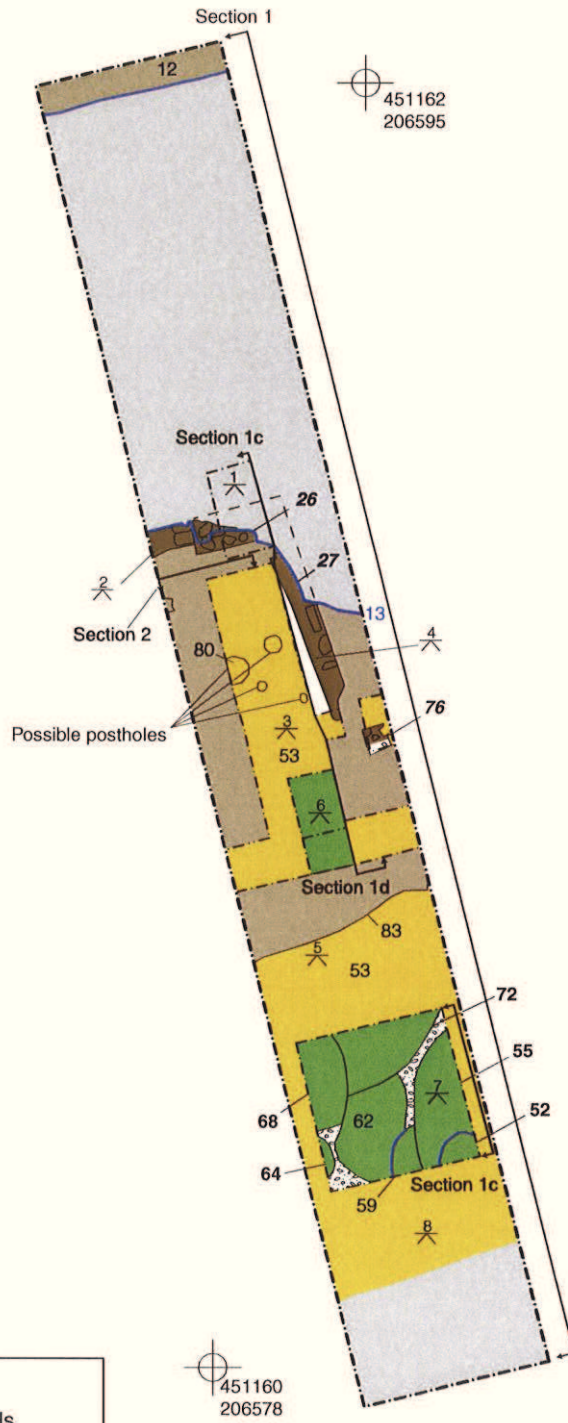


Figure 3: Victorian features



Key	
	Section
	Limit of excavation
	Sondage
	Projected line
	Post medieval truncation
	Truncation
	16-18th century
	16-18th century wall
	Buried soil horizon - late 14th/15th century
	13th/14th century
	Truncated natural gravel

Levels	
1	62.49 mOD
2	63.35 mOD
3	62.97 mOD
4	63.21 mOD
5	63.05 mOD
6	62.00 mOD
7	61.90 mOD
8	63.03 mOD

0 5 m

1:100

Figure 4: Post medieval and medieval features





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