

First Quad Works Jesus College Oxford



Archaeological Watching Brief



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on behalf of Jesus College**

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|-------|-----------------------------------|------------|--|-----------|
| 1 | Robin Bashford Site Supervisor | | Gerry Thacker Senior Project Manager | |

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Janus House

Osney Mead

Oxford OX2 0ES

t: +44 (0) 1865 263800

e: info@oxfordarch.co.uk

f: +44 (0) 1865 793496

w: oxfordarchaeology.com

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First Quad Works, Jesus College, Oxford

Archaeological Watching Brief Report

Written by Robin Bashford

illustrated by Hannah Kennedy

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Summary

In April 2014, Oxford Archaeology was commissioned by Savills (UK) Ltd on behalf of Jesus College, Oxford, to undertake an archaeological watching brief during the installation of a new platform lift and the excavation of service trenches for electric lighting and a sprinkler system within the First Quad, Jesus College, Oxford (SP 51409 06350). A trench for the installation of a new rainwater collection tank encountered significant archaeological deposits which will be the subject of a separate report. The remainder of the trenches did not impact below the 19th century garden soils of the quad, and no significant archaeological deposits or features were revealed. The exceptions to this were two brick-lined drainage channels which were aligned off existing downpipes within the quad. As the existing downpipes appear to be contemporary with the crenellations added to the buildings within the First Quad in the early 19th century (or at the very least incorporated into the new configuration), it seems likely that the brick drainage channels date from this phase of works.



1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Location and scope of work

- 1.1.1 Oxford Archaeology (OA), were commissioned by Savills (UK) Limited on behalf of Jesus College, Oxford, to undertake an archaeological watching brief during the installation of a new platform lift and the excavation of service trenches for electricity, lighting and a sprinkler system at the First Quad, Jesus College, Oxford (SP 51409 06350).
- 1.1.2 The work was undertaken as a condition of Planning Permission (planning ref: 14/00360/FUL). A brief was set by David Radford of Oxford City Council detailing the Local Authority's requirements for work necessary to discharge the planning condition (OCC 2014); OA produced a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) which outlined how OA would implement those requirements (OA 2014).
- 1.1.3 All work was undertaken in accordance with local and national planning policies.

2 METHODOLOGY

2.1 General methodology

- 2.1.1 A summary of OA's general approach to excavation and recording can be found in Appendix A of the WSI. Standard methodologies for geomatics and survey, Environmental evidence, Artefactual evidence and Burials can also be found in that document (Appendices B, C, D and E respectively).

2.2 Site specific methodology

- 2.2.1 The initial ground works were constantly monitored by an OA archaeologist Although no archaeological features or deposits were impacted by the vast majority of the present works;
- 2.2.2 the excavations in advance of the installation of the rainwater collection tank revealed significant archaeological horizons approximately 0.6m below existing ground level. Consequently, OA hand excavated the remainder of the deposits to the formation level for the concrete slab which will carry the collection tank. The results of this excavation will form the content of a separate publication.
- 2.2.3 The remaining trenching was monitored by the attending OA archaeologists, and the results are presented below.

3 RESULTS

3.1 Description of deposits

- 3.1.1 The trenches with the deepest impact were those for the installation of the new irrigation system. These were 0.6m wide and a maximum of 0.6m deep and were excavated through up to 0.4m of re-deposited gravel beneath the existing flagstones of the paths across the quad. The re-deposited gravel overlay a fairly homogeneous brownish grey clay silt, which also lay beneath the existing turf of the quad and is likely to represent a 19th century garden soil. The artefacts described in Section 4 below were recovered from this deposit.



3.1.2 Where the paths crossed in the centre of the quad, two brick-lined and stone-capped drainage channels were revealed. These appeared to truncate the 19th century garden soil and were aligned off existing the downpipes present on the extant buildings.

3.2 Description of finds

3.2.1 A number of artefacts were recovered during the excavation from the trenching through the 19th century topsoil deposits around and beneath the existing turf of the quad - these are detailed below:

- 19th century - English salt-glazed stoneware - ink or blacking bottle;
- 19th century - English porcelain with Chinese style transfer printed decoration – sugarbowl/teabowl;
- c. 1760-1830 - Staffordshire or Yorkshire creamware – dish;
- c. 1650 - Frenchen stoneware (Germany) - 'Bellarmine' bottle with grimacing face;
- c. 1650-75 - English (London) tin-glazed earthenware (Delftware) - footing base from a 'charger' dish with blue floral decoration. Traces of maker's or owner's mark on underside - very unusual;
- c. 1075-1300 - Oxford, medieval sandyware - cooking pot body sherd.

3.2.2 The notable finds will be discussed in more detail within the pottery report in the publication of the water tank excavation.

4 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

4.1 Discussion

4.1.1 The trench for the installation of a new rainwater collection tank encountered significant archaeological deposits which will be the subject of a separate publication. The remainder of the trenches did not impact below the 19th century garden soils of the quad, and no significant archaeological deposits or features were revealed. The exceptions to this were the two brick-lined drainage channels which were aligned off existing downpipes within the quad. As the existing downpipes appear to be contemporary with the crenellations added to the buildings within the First Quad in the early 19th century (or at the very least incorporated into the new configuration), it seems likely that the brick drainage channels date from this phase of the college buildings.



5 BIBLIOGRAPHY AND REFERENCES

- OA 2014 *First Quad, Jesus College, Oxford* Written Scheme Of Investigation for an Archaeological Watching Brief
- OCC 2014 Brief for an Archaeological Watching Brief: Jesus College

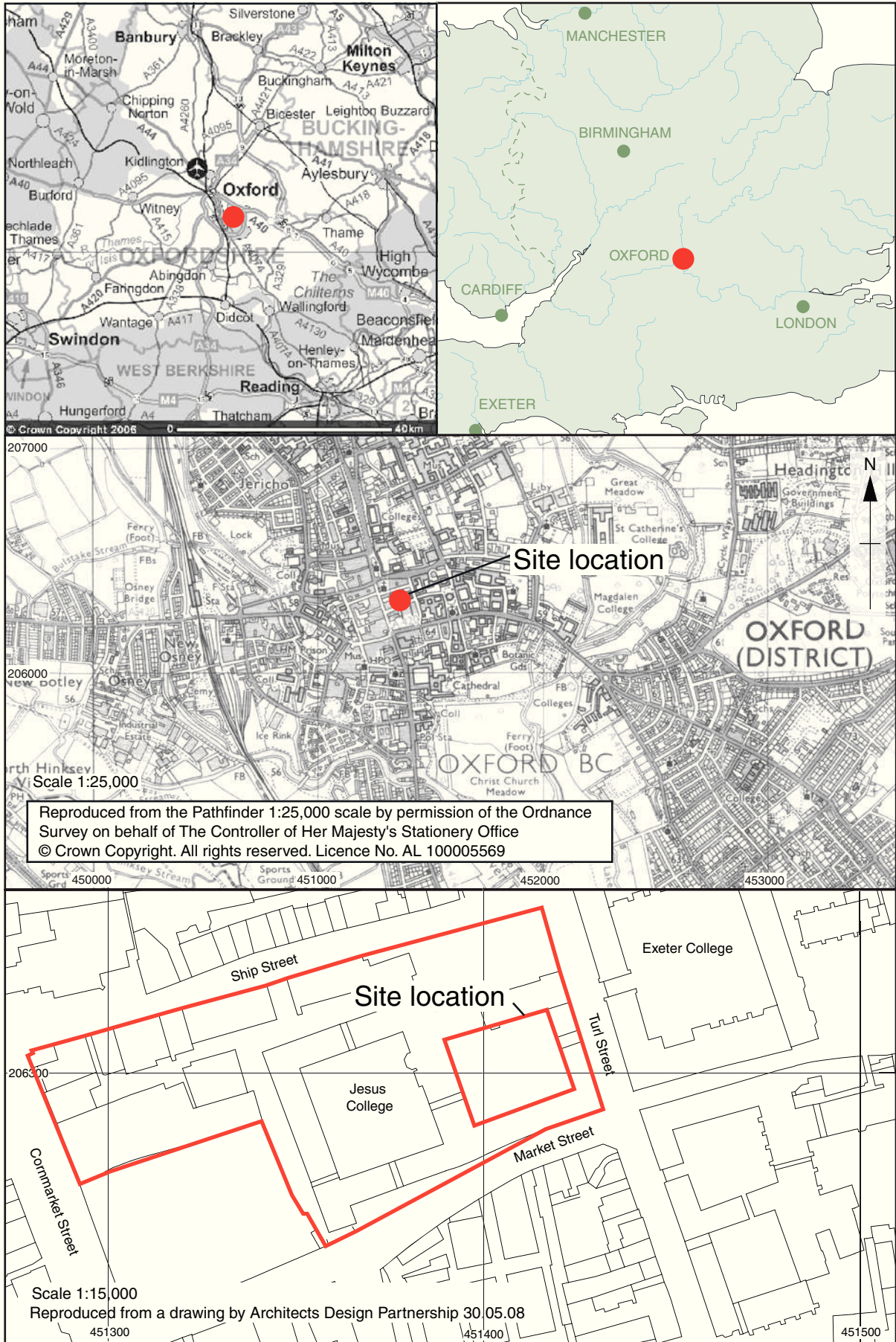


Figure 1: Site location

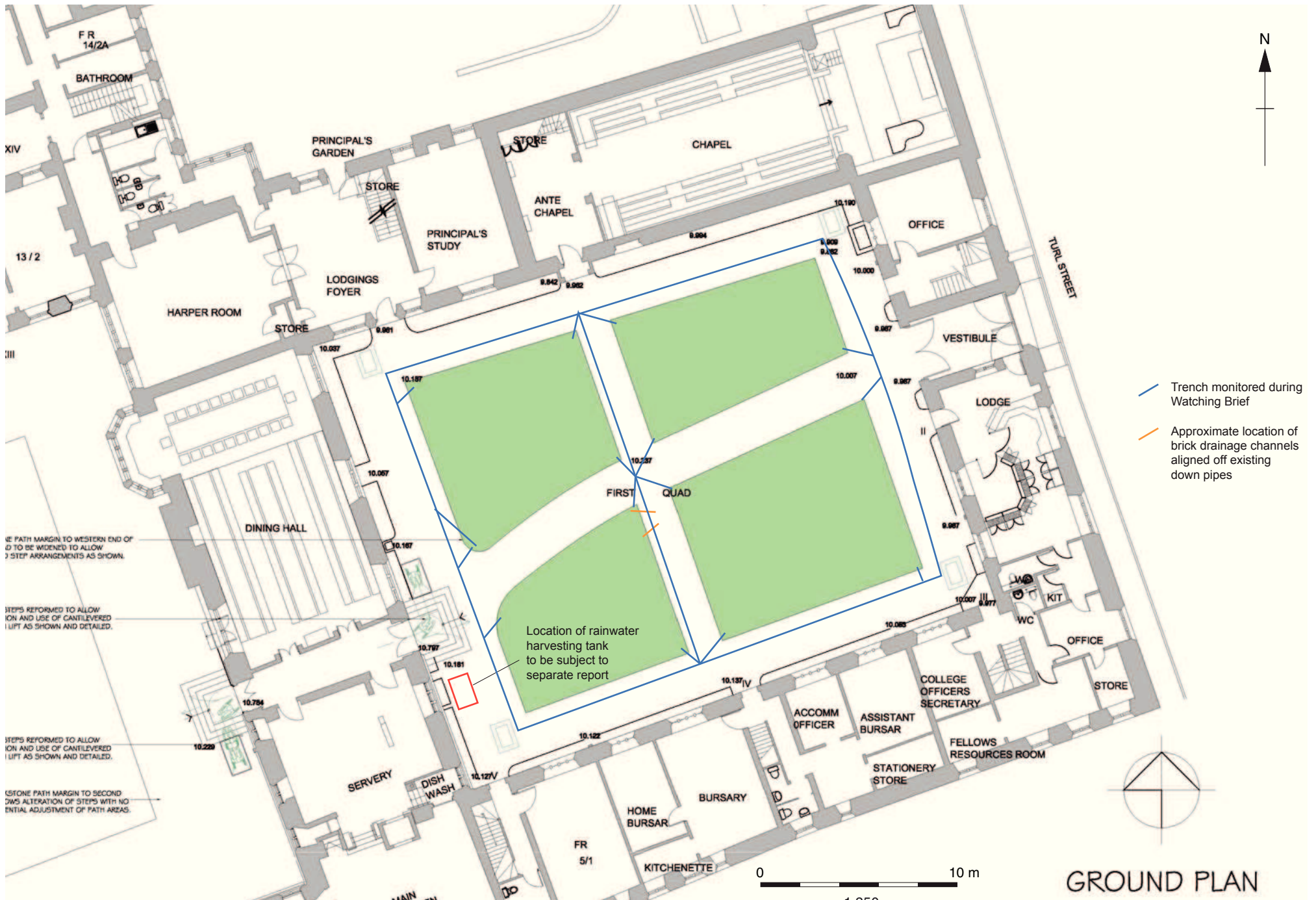


Figure 2: Trench locations



**Head Office/Registered Office/
OA South**

Janus House
Osney Mead
Oxford OX2 0ES

t: +44 (0) 1865 263 800
f: +44 (0) 1865 793 496
e: info@oxfordarchaeology.com
w: <http://oxfordarchaeology.com>

OA North

Mill 3
Moor Lane
Lancaster LA1 1QD

t: +44 (0) 1524 541 000
f: +44 (0) 1524 848 606
e: [oanorth@oxfordarchaeology.com](mailto: oanorth@oxfordarchaeology.com)
w: <http://oxfordarchaeology.com>

OA East

15 Trafalgar Way
Bar Hill
Cambridgeshire
CB23 8SQ

t: +44 (0) 1223 850500
e: [oaeast@oxfordarchaeology.com](mailto: oaeast@oxfordarchaeology.com)
w: <http://oxfordarchaeology.com>



Director: Gill Hey, BA PhD FSA MIFA
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