

# Old Cloisters Building Brasenose College Oxford



## Report on an Archaeological Investigation




December 2013

**Client: Brasenose College**

Issue No: 1.1  
OA Job No: 5796  
NGR: SP 515 063



Client Name: Brasenose College  
Client Ref No: n/a  
Document Title: Old Cloisters, Brasenose College, Oxford  
Document Type: Evaluation Report  
Issue/Version Number: 1  
Grid Reference: SP 515 063  
Planning Reference: N/A  
OA Job Number: 5796  
Site Code: OXBCL 13  
Invoice Code: OXBCLEV  
Receiving Museum: Oxfordshire Museum Service  
Museum Accession No: OXCMS: 2013.151  
Event No: N/A

Issue	Prepared by	Checked by	Approved by	Signature
1	Vix Hughes Project Officer	R.Brown Senior Project Manager	R.Brown Senior Project Manager	

Document File Location \\Server1\projects\o\Oxford\_Brasenose College\_Old Cloister\Report  
Graphics File Location Server GO OXBCL  
Illustrated by Julia Collins

**Disclaimer:**

*This document has been prepared for the titled project or named part thereof and should not be relied upon or used for any other project without an independent check being carried out as to its suitability and prior written authority of Oxford Archaeology being obtained. Oxford Archaeology accepts no responsibility or liability for the consequences of this document being used for a purpose other than the purposes for which it was commissioned. Any person/party using or relying on the document for such other purposes agrees, and will by such use or reliance be taken to confirm their agreement to indemnify Oxford Archaeology for all loss or damage resulting therefrom. Oxford Archaeology accepts no responsibility or liability for this document to any party other than the person/party by whom it was commissioned.*

© Oxford Archaeology Ltd 2013

Janus House

Osney Mead

Oxford OX2 0ES

t: +44 (0) 1865 263800

e: [info@oxfordarch.co.uk](mailto:info@oxfordarch.co.uk)

f: +44 (0) 1865 793496

w: [oxfordarchaeology.com](http://oxfordarchaeology.com)

Oxford Archaeology Limited is a Registered Charity No: 285627



# Old Cloisters, Brasenose College, Oxford

## *Archaeological Evaluation Report*

*Written by Vix Hughes*

*illustrated by Julia Collins*

### **Table of Contents**

<b>Summary.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>1 Introduction.....</b>	<b>4</b>
1.1 Location and scope of work.....	4
1.2 Geology and topography.....	4
1.3 Archaeological and historical background.....	4
1.4 Acknowledgements.....	5
<b>2 Evaluation Aims and Methodology.....</b>	<b>6</b>
2.1 Aims.....	6
2.2 Methodology.....	6
<b>3 Results.....</b>	<b>6</b>
3.1 Introduction and presentation of results.....	6
3.2 Trench 1 (Fig. 5).....	6
3.3 Trench 2 (Fig. 6).....	7
3.4 Trench 3 (Fig. 7).....	8
3.5 Trench 4 (Fig. 7).....	8
3.6 Finds summary.....	9
<b>4 Conclusions and Discussion.....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Appendix A. Trench Descriptions and Context Inventory.....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Appendix B. Bibliography and References.....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Appendix C. Summary of Site Details.....</b>	<b>17</b>

**List of Figures**

- Fig. 1            Site Location Map  
Fig. 2            Old Cloisters Location Plan  
Fig.3            Plan of Investigations  
Fig.4            Plan of Investigations Overlying Burial Plan  
Fig.5            Trench 1 Plan and Section  
Fig.6            Trench 2 Plan and Section  
Fig.7            Trenches 3 & 4 Plans

**Plates**

- Plate 1           Trench 1 looking west  
Plate 2           Trench 1 section 101 looking east  
Plate 3           Trench 2 looking west  
Plate 4           Trench 2 section 201 looking east  
Plate 5           Trench 3 looking west  
Plate 6           Trench 4 looking north





## Summary

*Oxford Archaeology South (OAS) carried out an evaluation on the site of a proposed refurbishment at the Old Cloisters, Brasenose College, Oxford (centred on SP 515 063). The investigation was not subject to local authority planning regulations at this time but was carried out under the Diocese jurisdiction and planning control.*

*The work took place between 12<sup>th</sup> -13<sup>th</sup> November and 5<sup>th</sup> December 2013. A total of four trenches were excavated.*

*The earliest dated deposit sequences contained pottery in use between 1550-1650 and survived as islands of strata left intact between late 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century graves. These deposits were a (upto) 400 mm thick sequence of mortar floors interleaved with silts which overlaid an undated homogeneous garden soil.*

*The main Quadrangle at Brasenose was built in the 16<sup>th</sup> century with the Second Quadrangle construction beginning in 1656. The mortar deposits represent a building or buildings between these two construction phases.*

*A total of five separate graves were located, but not excavated, within the evaluation trenches. The graves and marker stones largely corresponded with an historic plan of the interments, although one marker stone was revealed to have no grave beneath it.*

*The graves are undergoing gradual post-depositional decay and consequently it was observed that there are significant below ground voids where coffins have disintegrated but the spaces have not infilled with surrounding material.*



## 1 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Location and scope of work

- 1.1.1 During November to December 2013 Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out intermittent investigation works in the Old Cloisters building at Brasenose College Oxford (Fig. 1).
- 1.1.2 OA were commissioned to undertake the investigation by Lee/Fitzgerald Architects and PSP Consultants on behalf of Brasenose College.
- 1.1.3 The work was carried out in order to inform a proposed design for the refurbishment of the Old Cloisters which includes the re-use of a flagstone floor underlying the existing wooden flooring and the insertion of ducts below the historic flagstone floor level. The aim of the investigation was to characterise the depth of inhumations known to be interred beneath the level of the earlier flagstone floor.
- 1.1.4 The Old Cloisters (Fig. 2) is a Grade I Listed Building (list ref: 1369649). Investigation did not require Listed Building Consent as no permanent alterations to the building's fabric were to be effected by the works. The investigation was not subject to planning regulations. However Listed Building Consent and planning regulations will apply to any future development.
- 1.1.5 The investigation was within a consecrated burial ground and consequently was subject to the approval of the Consistory Court as advised by the Diocesan Advisory Committee (DAC) and Diocesan Archaeological Advisor. A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI – OA 2013b) sets out the methodology and standards for the investigation provide sufficient information on the works to allow the granting of a faculty permitting the investigation.
- 1.1.6 The Diocesan Archaeological Advisor (Julian Munby) was consulted during the investigation in order to address the requirements of the faculty, as was the City Archaeologist and archaeological planning advisor (David Radford) as the works may be relevant to future planning applications.

### 1.2 Geology and topography

- 1.2.1 Brasenose College is located on the northern side of High Street c 230m east of Carfax, the historic cross roads at the centre of Oxford. St Mary's Entry and Radcliffe Square run along its east side, where the Old Cloisters (now a reading room with the college library above) is located (centred on SP 515 063, Figs. 1 and 2). To the north of the college is Brasenose Lane and adjoining it to the west is Lincoln College.
- 1.2.2 The location of the site is shown on Figure 1. Historically the site lies within the city parish of St Mary the Virgin.
- 1.2.3 The site is located upon the Summertown/Radley (Second) Gravel terrace of the River Thames, which has its highest point of this terrace (65.5m OD) at Carfax. From this centrally placed crossroads the ground slopes downwards in all directions.
- 1.2.4 Brasenose College itself slopes slightly from west to east, with New Quad at c 63.1m OD and the east side at c 62.5m OD.

### 1.3 Archaeological and historical background

- 1.3.1 An archaeological Desk Based Assessment (OA 2013a) has been produced for the site, this explores the history of the site, the college and burials beneath the Old Cloisters, it also assesses the implications of proposed alterations to the Old Cloisters and to the Stocker Room to the north of the Old Cloisters. The background is not fully replicated



here and references are not included, but the assessment should be read in conjunction with this document.

- 1.3.2 Brasenose College was founded in 1508-12, on the site of Brasenose Hall, an existing group of halls with medieval origins. Building operations on the main quadrangle commenced in 1509 and consisted of hall, chapel, library and chambers in one square of buildings. In the south-west of Old Quadrangle was the Principal's Lodging, which was enlarged in 1652 and 1770 by the addition of what is now the Stocker Room. This became the Bursar's Office with the muniments stored on the upper floors when the Lodging was moved in 1771. In 1736 Brasenose college had acquired the whole of the High street frontage and a new President's Lodging was built on the corner of High Street and St Mary's Entry.
- 1.3.3 The Second Quadrangle was built in 1656-66. The present Chapel and Library were constructed as part of the work. At that time the Old Cloisters (below the Library) was open and used as a covered walkway. The chapel and Old Cloisters were used for college burials. As the college grew more library space was needed and the Old Cloisters were closed off and converted into several study rooms in 1807.
- 1.3.4 Interments in the Old Cloisters date from c 1669 to 1754. Some burials records have been preserved in the college archives and a list of known burials is given in Appendix 3 of the DBA. There is also a plan showing the position of grave markers (see Figure 4).

#### ***Previous works***

- 1.3.5 Excavations for changes to the college kitchen in 2012 were carried out at Brasenose College. The test pits were dug at the proposed location of a lift pit and within the footprint of a proposed cellar extension. These uncovered the remains of buildings thought to pre-date the construction of the college and pits containing 11th-13th century pottery. The modern ground level was c 61.4m OD and the pits, over 0.5m deep, lay c 2.5m below that, at c 58.9m OD (OA 2012b, 20).
- 1.3.6 Survival of similarly dated archaeological features below basement depth has been demonstrated at several other locations within the centre of the city.

## **1.4 Acknowledgements**

- 1.4.1 Acknowledge client and site staff. The evaluation was carried out by Mark Gibson and Dan Bashford. The report was compiled by Vix Hughes and illustrated by Julia Collins. Richard Brown managed the project and edited the report.



## 2 EVALUATION AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

### 2.1 Aims

- 2.1.1 The general aim of the investigation was to provide information that can be used to determine with confidence the implications of below ground alterations to the Old Cloisters which are currently elements of an ongoing design for refurbishment of the building.
- 2.1.2 It was intended that the following specific questions are addressed by the investigation:
- (i) Was the former flagstone floor still in situ – if so what condition was the floor in:
  - (ii) How reliable is the plan of grave markers (OA 2013a – Figure 4) in showing the locations of all burials:
  - (iii) What burial types are present (e.g. earth-cut, shafts, vaults):
  - (iv) What is the depth of the burials:
  - (v) Is there archaeological strata between the graves ?

### 2.2 Methodology

- 2.2.1 Investigation was undertaken over a number of visits. The initial phase constituted the removal of the existing wooden floor in the centre of the building followed by the exposure of the flagstone floor and careful lifting of the minimum amount of the flagstones possible in order to achieve the aims of the investigation.
- 2.2.2 It was immediately apparent the graves on the site were earth-cut (as oppose to built brick or stone lined shaft graves). The grave cuts and fills were clear and not disturbed although in several instances the grave fills collapsed as they were clearly overlying voids created by the disintegration of coffins.
- 2.2.3 Archaeological strata was identified between the grave cuts and a portion of these were excavated in order to define their date and character. Finds were recorded and dated but in compliance with the Diocese Faculty requirements no artefacts or ecofacts were removed from the site. Finds were reburied during reinstatement.
- 2.2.4 Following full reinstatement of the central area (grave voids were infilled with inert silica sand and the flagstone and wooden floors were relaid) two small areas were carried out in the opposing ends of the building to confirm the continuity of the strata recorded in the central area.

## 3 RESULTS

### 3.1 Introduction and presentation of results

- 3.1.1 The results of the evaluation are presented below, beginning with a summary of the trench results including the stratigraphic description, and full details are contained within Appendix A. Four evaluation trenches were excavated (Fig. 3)

### 3.2 Trench 1 (Fig. 5)

- 3.2.1 Trench 1 was located in the centre of the Old Cloisters building and was positioned to investigate beneath a grave marker on the eastern side of the room, inscribed J B 1700, which corresponds to James Buerdsell on the list of burials. On the western side of the room the trench was placed over a grave indicated by a marker stone on the burial plan which is difficult to read but may be GP 1741 relating to George Polley on the burial list. The marker stone on the west side of the trench was not revealed as it

was beneath cables and service pipes. The trench was aligned east-west, it measured 3.34m x 0.7m and was at least 0.8m in depth. The trench was located in the central part of the investigation area.

- 3.2.2 The earliest deposit revealed in Trench 1 was context 113; a friable dark greyish brown loam (probable garden soil) with occasional inclusions of stones and charcoal flecks. This was overlain by a possible floor deposit 103, of compacted firm white lime mortar. The sequence of floors and deposits continued with 106 as a deposit, 107 as a floor, 108 as a deposit, 109 as a floor and at the top of the sequence was deposit 112 which contained animal bone and oyster shell fragments.
- 3.2.3 Deposit 112 (and the previous underlying sequence, Plate 2) was truncated by two visible east-west aligned grave cuts 104 and 110.
- 3.2.4 Grave cut 104 was visible in plan (at 63.58m OD) and partially in section. There was evidence for the decay and decomposition of the wooden coffin, with a void exposed at one end (Plate 1). The western end of the cut was seen and the grave extended to the east and north. The grave fill 105 was partially excavated to a depth of 63.08m OD but no human remains were encountered.
- 3.2.5 Grave cut 110 was visible in plan and partially in section as there was evidence for the decay and decomposition of the wooden coffin, with a resulting void at the western end. The cut appeared oval in plan and only the eastern end of the grave cut was seen. The cut extended west and south. The grave fill 111 was partially excavated to a depth of 63.08m OD but no human remains were encountered.
- 3.2.6 The graves were sealed by the bedding 102, for the flagstone floor 101, which lay beneath the brick supported present wooden floor, at an average depth of 63.74m OD.
- 3.2.7 Each grave was beneath a grave marker stone, although it is clear from Cut 104 that the marker stones do not necessarily indicate the head of the burial.

### **3.3 Trench 2 (Fig. 6)**

- 3.3.1 Trench 2 was located in the centre of the Old Cloisters building, immediately to the south of Trench 1. It was positioned on the east side of the room to investigate beneath a grave marker inscribed W W 1679, which corresponds to William Wood on the list of burials. On the west side of the room the trench was over the area of a grave indicated by a marker noted as being inscribed A G 1725 on the burial map, which relates to Adam Gartsid on the burial list.
- 3.3.2 The trench was aligned east-west, measured 3.14m x 0.9m and was investigated to a maximum depth of 0.52m.
- 3.3.3 The earliest deposit in the trench was a possible floor layer (207) of compacted white lime mortar. Above this was a friable dark greyish brown sandy silt, with occasional inclusions of stones and charcoal flecks; Context 208. This deposit contained pottery which included fragments of Frechen Stone ware and Border Ware, which suggests a date for the layer of between 1550-1650.
- 3.3.4 The sequence of floors and deposits continued with 209 (floor layer) and 210 as a deposit and at the top of the sequence was deposit 211 which contained pottery, clay pipe, glass and a copper alloy pin. The material may be derived from occupation of a building. The pottery included fragments of a Bellarmine vessel with an heraldic medallion decoration, and clay pipe which suggested a date of between 1580-1625 for the deposit.
- 3.3.5 Deposit 211 was truncated by two visible east-west aligned grave cuts 203 and 205 (Plates 3 and 4). The full depths of the graves was not investigated.



- 3.3.6 Grave cut 203 was visible in plan (at a depth of 63.49m OD) and partially in section. There was evidence for the decay and decomposition of the wooden coffin, with a resulting void observed at the northern end. The eastern end of the cut was seen and the grave extended to the west and north. The grave fill 204 was partially excavated to a depth of 63.23m OD but no human remains were encountered, only fragments of animal bone within the backfill.
- 3.3.7 Grave cut 205 was visible in plan (at a depth of 63.49m OD) and partially in section.
- 3.3.8 There was also evidence in this cut for the decay and decomposition of a wooden coffin, with a resulting void. The eastern end of the cut was seen and the grave extended to the west, north and south. The grave fill 206 was partially excavated to a depth of 62.99m OD but no human remains were encountered.
- 3.3.9 The graves were sealed by the bedding 202, for the flagstone floor 201, which lay beneath the present wooden floor, on brick supports, at an average depth of 63.73m OD.

### 3.4 Trench 3 (Fig. 7)

- 3.4.1 Trench 3 was located in the southern end of the Old Cloisters building. It was positioned to investigate beneath a grave marker inscribed C W Dec 1694, which corresponds to Charles Walters on the list of burials.
- 3.4.2 The trench was aligned north-south, measured 1.1m x 0.38m and was investigated to to a maximum depth of 0.75m.
- 3.4.3 The trench revealed a mortar floor (deposit 303) truncated by a visible east-west aligned grave cut 304. The full depth of the grave was not reached within the trench.
- 3.4.4 Grave cut 304 was visible in plan (at a depth of 63.34m OD) and partially in section. There was evidence for the decay and decomposition of the wooden coffin, with a resulting void (Plate 4). The only visible part of the grave was a segment of the southern side. The grave fill 305 was partially excavated to a depth of 63m OD but no human remains were encountered.
- 3.4.5 The grave was sealed by the concrete bedding (302) for the flagstone floor (301) which lay beneath the present wooden floor. The concrete bedding was indicative of the floor having been relaid in this area. Concrete bedding was not identified in the other three trenches.

### 3.5 Trench 4 (Fig. 7)

- 3.5.1 Trench 4 was located in the northern end of the Old Cloisters building. It was positioned to investigate beneath a grave marker inscribed G W 1701 on the burial map although the actual marker stone was inscribed (and the burial list notes) C W 1710. This corresponds to Charles Wright on the list of burials. There is no G W buried in 1701 on the list.
- 3.5.2 Trench 4 was aligned north-south, it measured 0.84m x 0.6m and was seen to a maximum depth of 0.37m (63.38m OD).
- 3.5.3 The trench revealed a sequence of earlier mortar floor deposits and either levelling or occupation debris (Plate 5). The earliest deposit was a firm yellowish white lime mortar probable floor layer (405). Above this was a friable dark greyish brown sandy silt, with occasional inclusions of stones (404). This in turn was overlaid by a second possible floor deposit of firm yellowish white mortar (403).
- 3.5.4 This sequence was sealed by the bedding (402) for the flagstone floor 401. No grave cut was present below this marker stone.





### 3.6 Finds summary

- 3.6.1 Pottery, clay pipe, ceramic building material and animal bone were recorded from the exposed deposits. The items were examined, spot dated and left on the site in accordance with the Faculty directives. These are sufficient to date and characterise the features.

## 4 CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION

- 4.1.1 The investigation recorded the condition and character of historic floor levels within the building as well as the burial ground and archaeological strata below. The findings have addressed all the aims of the investigation and should provide sufficient evidence to inform upon the implications of below ground alterations to the Old Cloisters, as part of an ongoing design for refurbishment of the building.

### **Flagstone Floor**

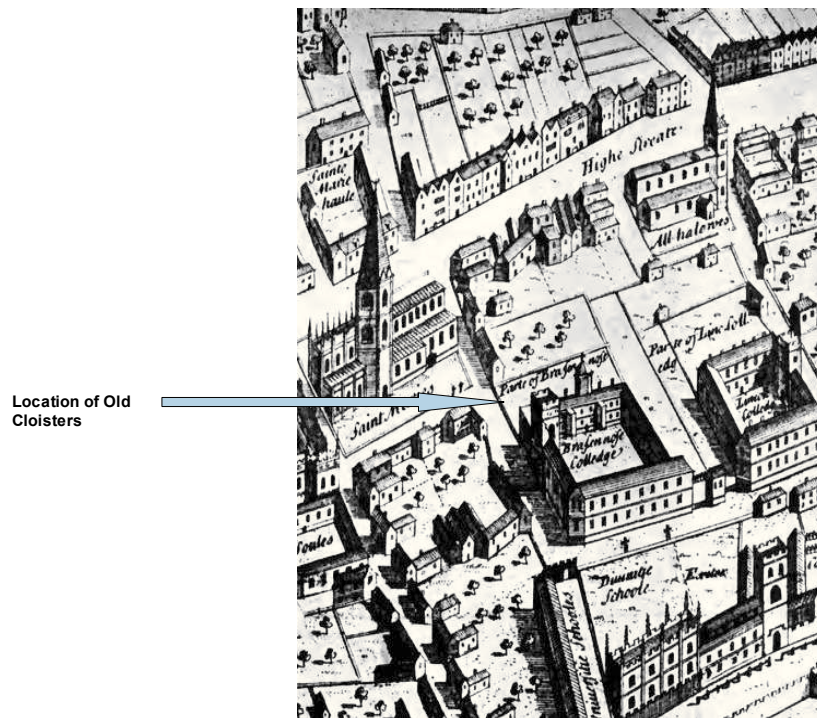
- 4.1.2 The evaluation determined that the flagstone floor was still in-situ and in very good condition. The flagstone floor was recorded in all four of the trenches. In Trench Four the presence of a concrete bedding for the floor rather than the mortar recorded elsewhere indicated that the floor had been more recently lifted and re-set.

### **The Burials, Burial Plan and Burial List**

- 4.1.3 As far as has been tested in this evaluation the burial plan appears to be accurate in terms of measurement and in record of inscription.
- 4.1.4 In all cases but one (Trench 4) the mapped and located marker stones indicated the presence of an earth-cut grave. In Trench 4 no grave was present. However the correlated individual on the burial list is noted as having died from small pox and it is possible the marker is memorial to a rapid and less distinguished interment elsewhere.
- 4.1.5 All the burials recorded were east-west aligned, earth-cut and exhibited voids created by the disintegration of coffins. It should be noted that the flagstone and wooden flooring are laid over strata that has now been seen to have many gaps within it. The effect of this on the ongoing stability of the floor and/or any works being carried out in this area should be taken into consideration.
- 4.1.6 The marker stones overlie the burials but do not necessarily indicate the head of the burial.

### **Archaeological Strata**

- 4.1.7 There was clear evidence of archaeological strata preserved between the graves. The deposits pre-dating the grave cuts comprise an undated garden soil (seen in Trench 1) overlain by a succession of mortar floors, each covered by probable darker occupation debris. The layers were all less than 0.1m thick. The greatest number of floors and debris sequences was seen in Trench 1, where at least three sequential floors were visible. Dating from two layers in Trench 2 indicates that the visible layers are of mid 16<sup>th</sup> to mid 17<sup>th</sup> century in date. The lower floor deposits dated to c 1550- 1650 the upper floor layers are likely to be of 1580-1625 date.
- 4.1.8 A brief history of the college construction phases is reiterated below in order to put the deposits into context.



An extract from Agas' pictorial plan of Oxford 1578 (north to bottom of plan)

- 4.1.9 The main Quadrangle at Brasenose was of early 16<sup>th</sup> century construction. The second Quadrangle was built between 1656 and 1666. Agas' pictorial map of 1578 (see above) shows the area immediately to the south (top of the map) of Brasenose has been subsumed in to the college property and any pre-existing medieval halls in the location of the cloisters have been removed.
- 4.1.10 The land required for the southern expansion of the college and the construction of the second quadrangle and chapel had been acquired in two stages. The vacant land immediately to the south of the first quadrangle (shown in Agas' map) had been purchased in 1510 from Oriel College, but had only 'kitchen, offices and woodsheds' built on it by 1656 (<http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=63882>) when the remainder of the plot (shown with extant building on Agas' plan) was purchased and 'Little Edmund Hall pulled down' (ibid). The construction of the second quadrangle is well documented.
- 4.1.11 As the 'kitchen' is extant it is therefore likely that the floor sequences represent the 'offices or woodsheds' noted above or other college buildings in place for several years but of minor significance.





### **Development Proposals**

- 4.1.12 The table below shows the space between the underside of the flagstone floor and the lowest levels of investigation. The lowest levels of investigation have not exposed human skeletons although they are indicative of the point at which grave fills have collapsed due to the empty voids created by decayed coffins. This suggests the skeletons may be relatively close to the level indicated.

Trench	A) Level at underside of Flagstone top	B) Lowest level reached without disturbance to human remains	A-B
1	63.71 m OD	63.26 m OD	450 mm
2	63.70 m OD	63.18 m OD	520 mm
3	63.71 m OD (from T2)	63 m OD	710 mm
4	63.71 m OD (from T2)	-	-

- 4.1.13 The levels indicate some ground reduction could be carried out (subject to regulatory approval) without disturbance to the burials. Although it is important to note that a sample investigation such as this cannot give absolute assurance that the remains recorded are indicative of all the remains within the proposal area. The possibility that there are shallower burials with human remains closer to the flagstone floor level within the proposal area cannot be ruled out on the basis of this investigation.
- 4.1.14 The methodology for any future flooring and/or any intended ground reduction will need to be mindful of the instability of the burial infill soils. In addition any ground reduction would require the removal of the historic floor levels recorded in the evaluation.



## APPENDIX A. TRENCH DESCRIPTIONS AND CONTEXT INVENTORY

Trench 1						
General description					Orientation	E-W
<p>The trench revealed a sequence of earlier mortar floor deposits and either levelling or occupation debris. This sequence is truncated by two visible E-W aligned grave cuts. The full depths of the graves was not reached within the trench. The graves were sealed by the bedding for the flagstone floor which lay beneath the present wooden floor, on brick supports. Natural was not reached.</p>					<b>Avg. depth (m)</b>	0.8
					<b>Width (m)</b>	0.7
					<b>Length (m)</b>	3.34
Contexts						
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
101	Layer	-	0.07	Floor: stone slabs bonded with lime mortar, above 102	-	-
102	Layer	-	0.1	Deposit: bedding material for flagstone floor, above 105 and 111	-	-
103	Layer	-	0.05	Deposit: possible floor - firm pale yellowish white lime mortar, below 106 and above 113	-	-
104	Cut	0.3+	0.78+	Grave cut: orientated E-W, vertical sides, filled by 105, cuts through 112	-	-
105	Fill	0.3+	0.78+	Grave fill: fill of 104, loose dark greyish brown sandy silt, occasional stones and mortar flecks	-	-
106	Layer	-	0.08	Deposit: occupation or levelling material, friable dark greyish brown sandy silt, occasional stones and charcoal flecks, below 107 and above 103	-	-
107	Layer	-	0.04	Deposit: possible floor - firm white lime mortar, below 108 and above 106	-	-
108	Layer	-	0.06	Deposit: occupation or levelling material, friable dark greyish brown sandy silt, occasional stones, CBM and charcoal flecks, below 109 and above 107	-	-
109	Layer	-	0.04	Deposit: possible floor - firm white lime mortar, below 112 and above 108	-	-



110	Cut	0.7	0.5+	Grave cut: orientated E-W, vertical sides, filled by 111, cuts through 112	-	-
111	Fill	0.7	0.5+	Grave fill: fill of 110, loose pale greyish brown silty clay, occasional charcoal and mortar flecks frequent	-	-
112	Layer	-	0.05	Deposit: occupation or levelling material, friable dark greyish brown sandy silt, occasional stones and charcoal flecks, cut by 104 and 110 and above 109	Bone, oyster shell	-
113	Layer	-	0.4+	Deposit: occupation or levelling material, friable dark greyish brown sandy silt, occasional stones, below 103	-	-

Trench 2						
General description				Orientation	E-W	
The trench revealed a sequence of earlier mortar floor deposits and either levelling or occupation debris. This sequence is truncated by two visible E-W aligned grave cuts. The full depths of the graves was not reached within the trench. The graves were sealed by the bedding for the flagstone floor which lay beneath the present wooden floor, on brick supports. Natural was not reached.				Avg. depth (m)	0.52	
				Width (m)	0.9	
				Length (m)	3.14	
Contexts						
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
201	Layer	-	0.1	Floor: stone slabs bonded with lime mortar, above 202	-	-
202	Layer	-	0.14	Deposit: bedding material for flagstone floor, above 204 and 206	-	-
203	Cut	0.84	0.26+	Grave cut: orientated E-W, vertical sides, filled by 203, cuts through 211	-	-
204	Fill	0.84	0.26+	Grave fill: fill of 204, loose dark greyish brown sandy silt, occasional stones and mortar flecks	Animal bone	-
205	Cut	0.4+	0.5+	Grave cut: orientated E-W, vertical sides, filled by 206, cuts through 211	-	-
206	Fill	0.4+	0.5+	Grave fill: fill of 205, loose	-	-



				mid greyish brown silty clay, moderate charcoal and mortar flecks		
207	Layer	0.66	0.08	Deposit: possible floor - firm white mortar, below 208	-	-
208	Layer	0.66	0.05	Deposit: occupation or levelling material, friable dark greyish brown sandy silt, occasional stones and charcoal flecks, below 209 and above 207	Pottery, CBM, animal bone, oyster shell	1550-1650
209	Layer	0.66	0.05	Deposit: possible floor - firm white mortar, below 210 and above 208	-	-
210	Layer	0.6	0.1	Deposit: firm mid orangey brown silty clay, frequent gravel inclusions	-	-
211	Layer	0.6	0.12	Deposit: possible floor - firm mid greyish white silty mortar, cut by 203 and 205 and above 210	Pottery, clay pipe, glass, metal	1580-1625

Trench 3							
General description				Orientation		N-S	
<p>The trench revealed an earlier mortar floor deposit truncated by a visible E-W aligned grave cut. The full depth of the grave was not reached within the trench. The grave was sealed by the bedding for the flagstone floor which lay beneath the present wooden floor, on brick supports. Natural was not reached.</p>				<b>Avg. depth (m)</b>		0.75	
				<b>Width (m)</b>		0.38	
				<b>Length (m)</b>		1.1	
Contexts							
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date	
301	Layer	-	0.07	Floor: stone slabs, above 302	-	-	
302	Layer	-	0.04	Deposit: concrete bedding for flagstone floor, above 305	-	-	
303	Layer	0.38	0.07	Deposit: possible floor - firm white lime mortar, cut by 304	-	-	
304	Cut	0.26+	0.75+	Grave cut: orientated E-W, vertical sides, filled by 305, cuts through 303	-	-	
305	Fill	0.26+	0.75+	Grave fill: fill of 304, loose dark greyish brown sandy silt, occasional stones and mortar flecks	CBM, animal bone	-	



<b>Trench 4</b>						
<b>General description</b>				<b>Orientation</b>	N-S	
The trench revealed a sequence of earlier mortar floor deposits and either levelling or occupation debris. This sequence was sealed by the bedding for the flagstone floor which lay beneath the present wooden floor, on brick supports. No graves were identified in this trench. Natural was not reached.				<b>Avg. depth (m)</b>	0.37	
				<b>Width (m)</b>	0.6	
				<b>Length (m)</b>	0.84	
<b>Contexts</b>						
<b>context no</b>	<b>type</b>	<b>Width (m)</b>	<b>Depth (m)</b>	<b>comment</b>	<b>finds</b>	<b>date</b>
401	Layer	-	0.1	Floor: stone slabs bonded with lime mortar, above 402	-	-
402	Layer	-	0.08	Deposit: bedding material for flagstone floor, below 401 and above 403	-	-
403	Layer	-	0.1	Deposit: possible floor - firm yellowish white mortar, below 402 and above 404	-	-
404	Layer	-	0.09	Deposit: occupation or levelling material, friable dark greyish brown sandy silt, occasional stones and charcoal flecks, below 403 and above 405	-	-
405	Layer	-	-	Deposit: possible floor - firm yellowish white mortar, below 404	-	-



## APPENDIX B. BIBLIOGRAPHY AND REFERENCES

Alfrey, E W 1909, *The Architectural History of the College*, Brasenose College Quartercentenary Monograph III

Brasenose College Archives (no date), *Brasenose College, Oxford – Deer Park*, online at: <http://www.bnc.ox.ac.uk/345/brasenose-college-archives-and-history-38/college-buildings-217/deer-park-403.html> [Accessed 22/04/13], University of Oxford

Dodd A (ed) 2003, *Oxford Before the University*. Oxford Archaeology

Hibbert, C (ed) 1988, *Encyclopaedia of Oxford*

Lee/Fitzgerald Architect 2013, *Brasenose College, Old Cloisters Reading Room and Basement Archive: Final Briefing Document*, unpublished

Oxford Archaeology 2012b, *Brasenose College Oxford: Historic Building Recording and Archaeological Investigations Report*, unpublished report

Oxford Archaeology, 2013a *Old Cloisters, Brasenose College, Oxford: Archaeological Desk Based Assessment*, unpublished report

Oxford Archaeology, 2013b *Old Cloisters, Brasenose College, Oxford: Archaeological Written Scheme of Investigation*, unpublished report

Salter H E (ed by Pantin W A and Mitchell W T) 1960, *Survey of Oxford*, Oxford Historical Society, New series Vol 20

(VCH III) Salter, H E & Lobel, M D (eds) 1954, *The Victoria history of the County of Oxfordshire III*, Oxford: Oxford University Press



## APPENDIX C. SUMMARY OF SITE DETAILS

**Site name:** Old Cloisters, Brasenose College, Oxford

**Site code:** OXBCL 13

**Grid reference:** SP 515 063

**Type:** Evaluation

**Date and duration:** 12-13<sup>th</sup> November and 5<sup>th</sup> December 2013

**Area of site:** 6.11m<sup>2</sup>

**Summary of results:** Oxford Archaeology South (OAS) was commissioned by Lee/Fitzgerald Architects on behalf of Brasenose College to undertake an evaluation of the site of proposed refurbishment of the Old Cloisters, Brasenose College, Oxford (centred on SP 515 063). The investigation is not subject to planning regulations at this time.

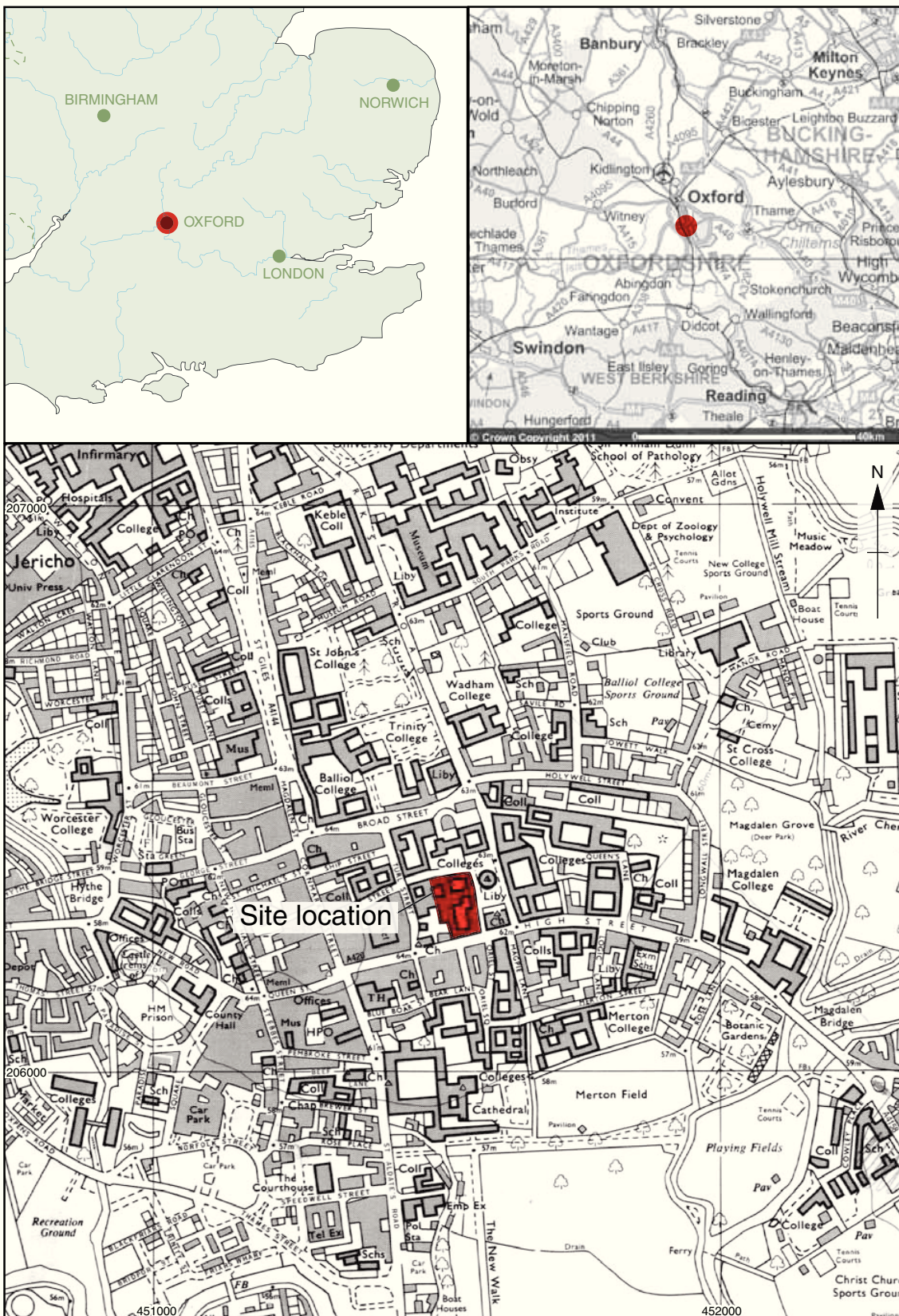
The work took place between 12-13<sup>th</sup> November and 5<sup>th</sup> December 2013. A total of four trenches were excavated.

The earliest deposit sequences were an homogenous garden soil overlain by interleaved floor and occupation deposits dated to 1550-1650. These survived as islands of material left intact in the gaps between late 17<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> century graves. The deposits represent buildings probably dating between 1578 (a plan of Agas shows no buildings on the Old Cloisters site at this time) and 1656 when works commenced on the Chapel and Old Cloisters.

A total of five separate graves were located within the evaluation trenches.

**Location of archive:** The archive is currently held at OA, Janus House, Osney Mead, Oxford, OX2 0ES, and will be deposited with the Oxfordshire County Museum in due course, under the following accession number: OXCMS: 2013.151





Reproduced from the Explorer 1:25,000 scale by permission of the Ordnance Survey on behalf of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office © Crown Copyright 1999. All rights reserved. Licence No. AL 10005569

Figure 1: Site location map



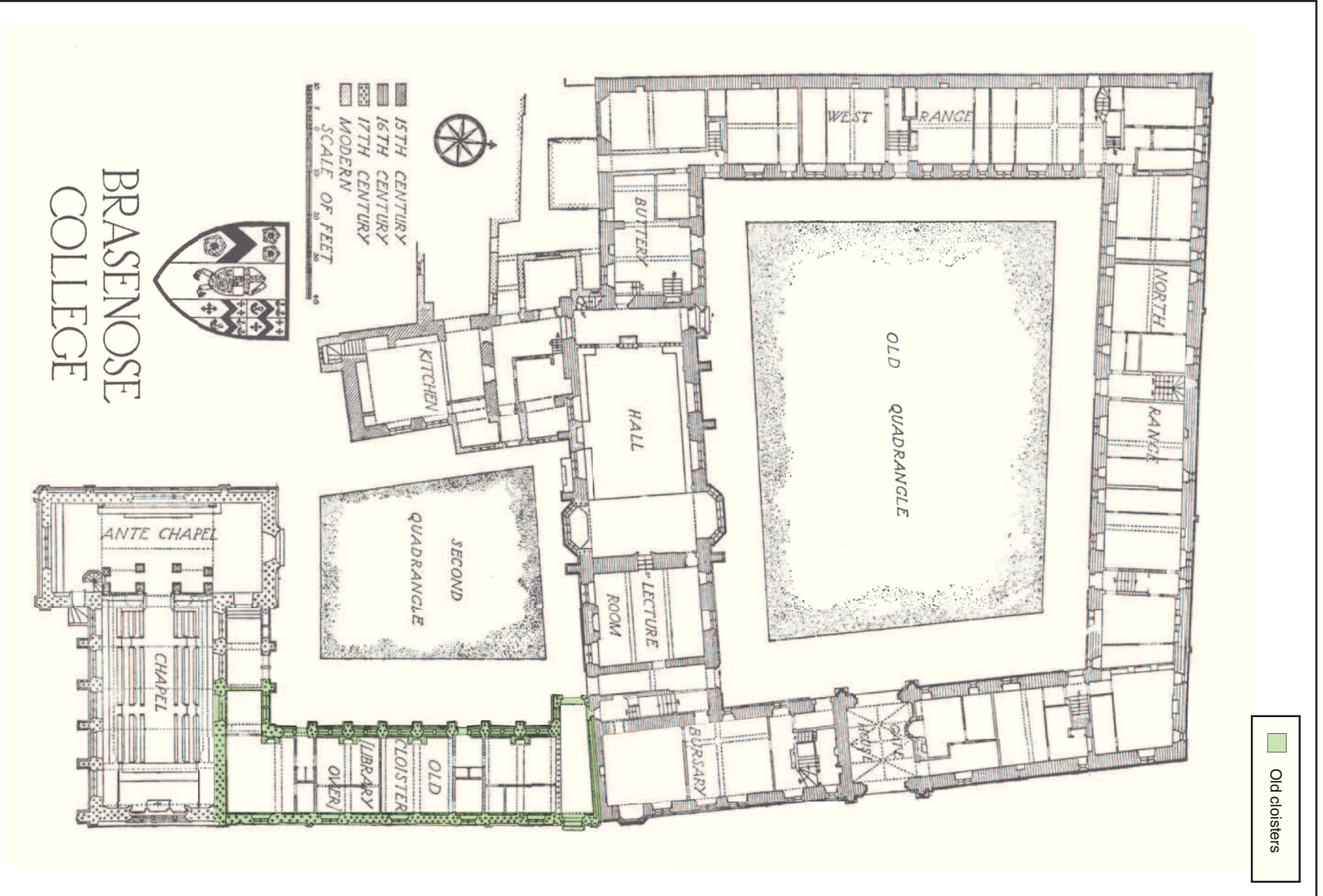


Figure 2: Plan of the College in 1939 (RCHME)

Survey Data supplied by :  
Midland Survey Ltd.

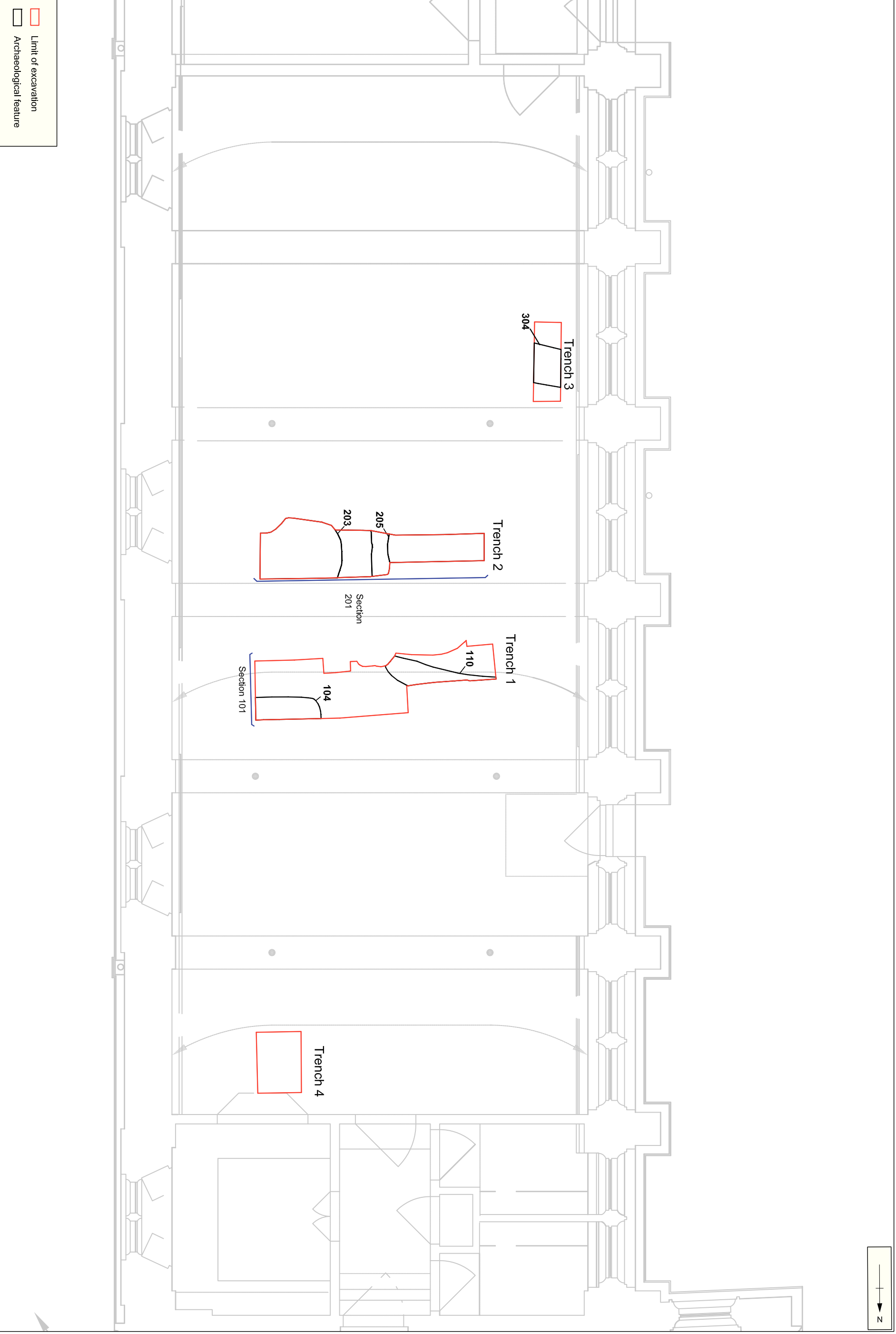


Figure 3: Plan of Investigations



Survey Data supplied by :  
Midland Survey Ltd.

0 2 m  
1:50 @ A3

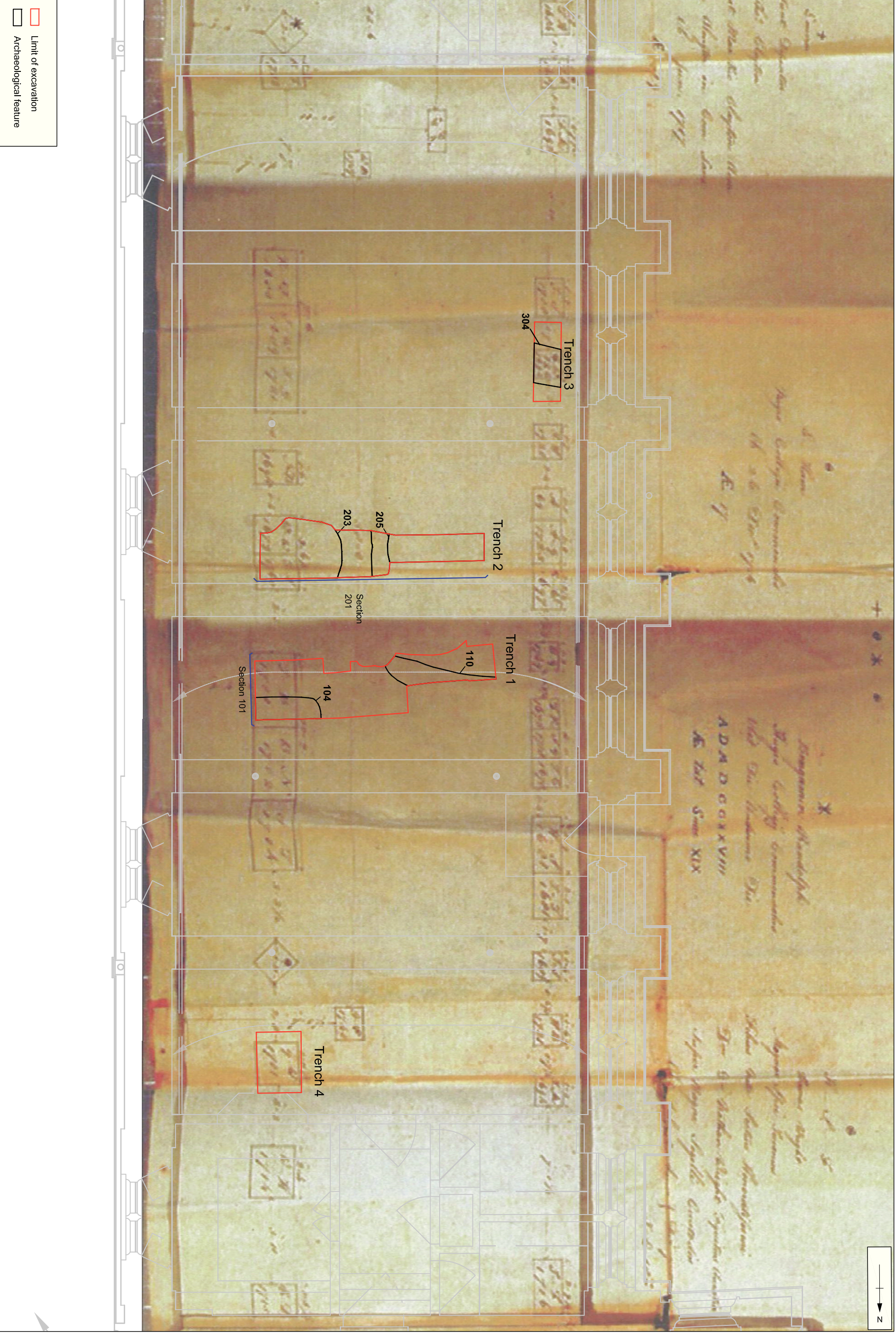


Figure 4: Plan of Investigations overlying burial plans



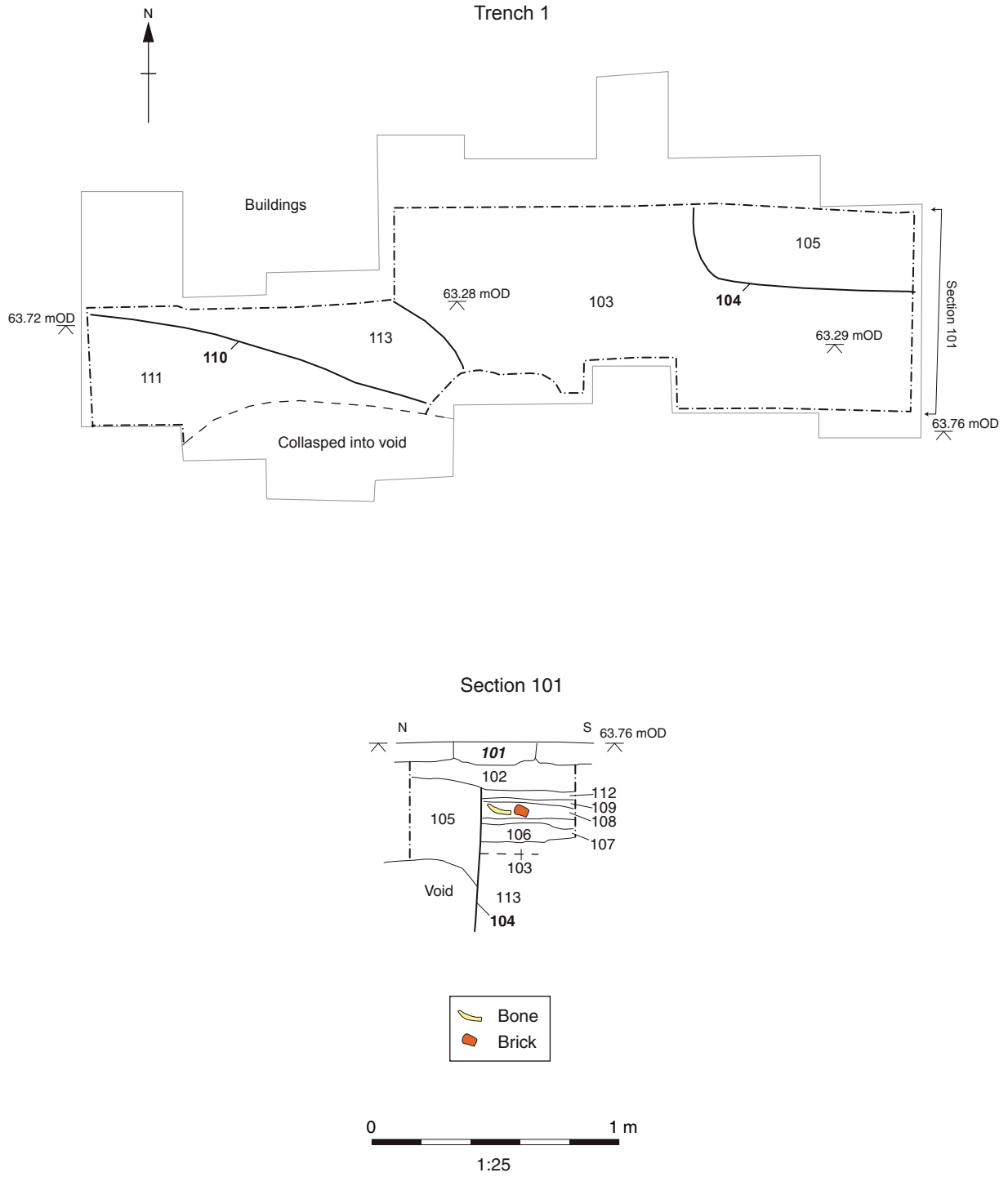


Figure 5: Trench 1, plan and section

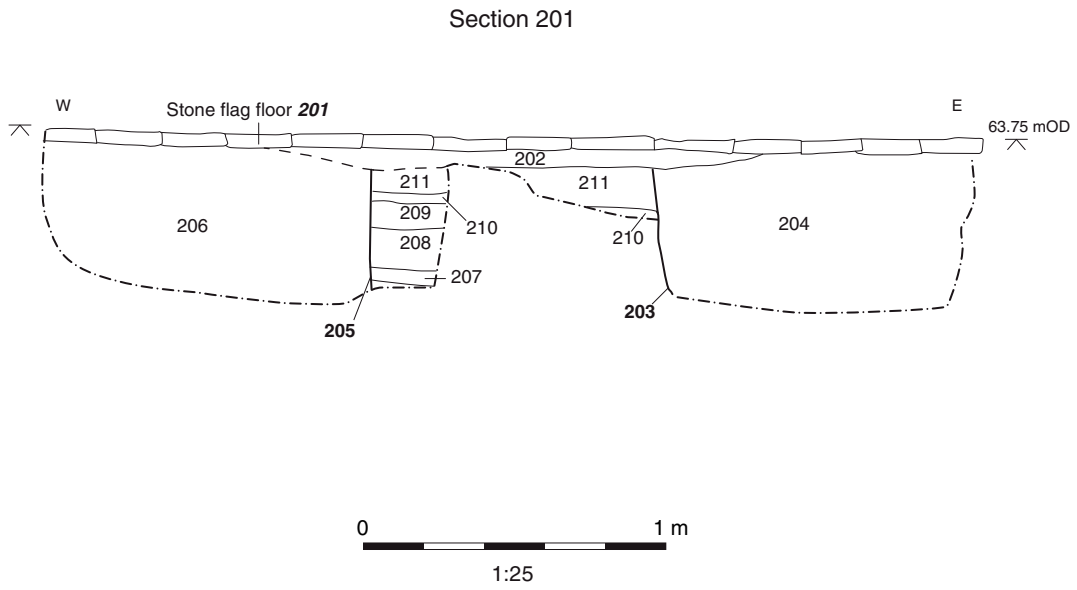
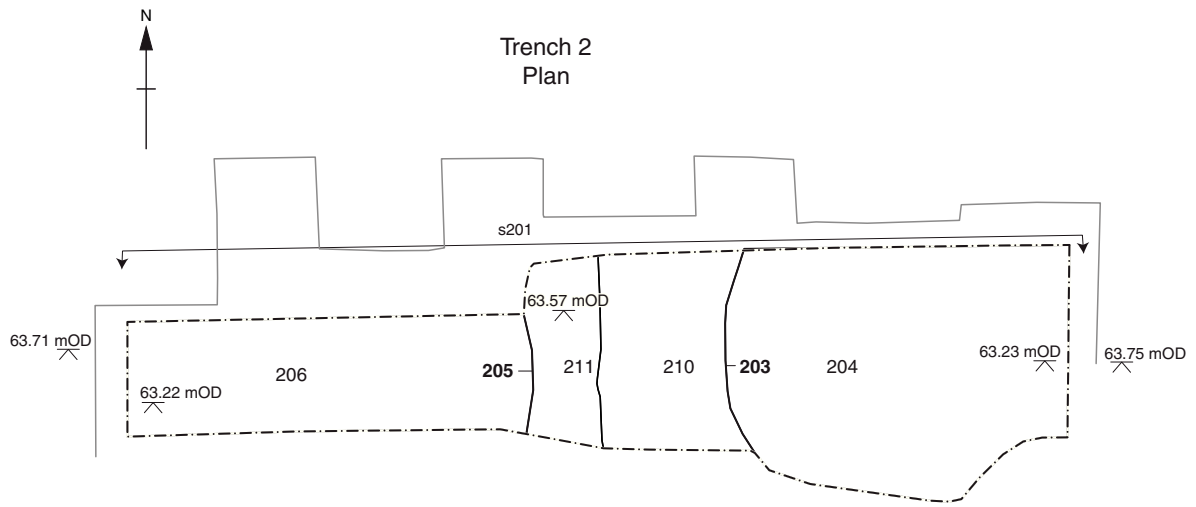


Figure 6: Trench 2, plan and section

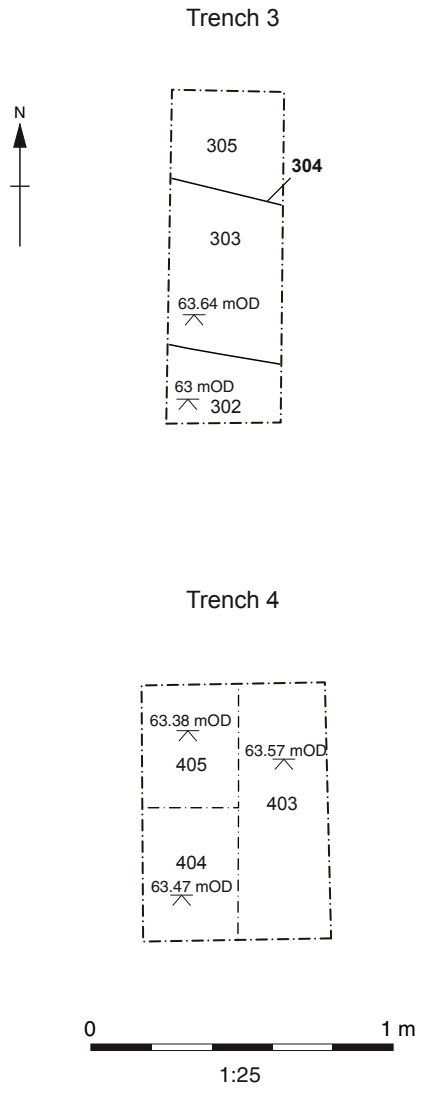


Figure 7: Trenches 3 and 4, plans



Plate 1: Trench 1, looking west



Plate 2: Trench 1, section 101 looking east





Plate 3: Trench 2, looking west



Plate 4: Trench 2, section 201 looking east





Plate 5: Trench 3, looking west



Plate 6: Trench 4, looking north



**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@oxfordarch.co.uk](mailto:info@oxfordarch.co.uk)  
w: <http://thehumanjourney.net>

**OA North**

Mill 3  
Moor Lane  
Lancaster LA1 1GF

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

**OA East**

15 Trafalgar Way  
Bar Hill  
Cambridgeshire  
CB23 8SQ

t: +44 (0) 1223 850500  
f: +44 (0) 1223 850599  
e: [oaeast@thehumanjourney.net](mailto: oaeast@thehumanjourney.net)  
w: <http://thehumanjourney.net>



**Director:** David Jennings, BA MIFA FSA

*Oxford Archaeology Ltd is a  
Private Limited Company, N<sup>o</sup>: 1618597  
and a Registered Charity, N<sup>o</sup>: 285627*