

Oxford, Salter's Boatyard,  
Abingdon Road, Oxford

Archaeological Watching Brief Report

**1 Introduction**

- 1.1 In January 2000 the Oxford Archaeological Unit maintained a watching brief on the excavation of a pit at the boatyard, which formed part of an ongoing programme of work to install water pumps for new residential housing. The project was undertaken by Thames Water.
- 1.2 The archaeological observation work was arranged following discussions with representatives of Thames Water who had contacted the City Archaeologist, and took place under the remit of a Written Scheme of Investigation previously prepared by OAU. The Project engineers were FLYGT, an ITT Industries company.

**2 Methodology**

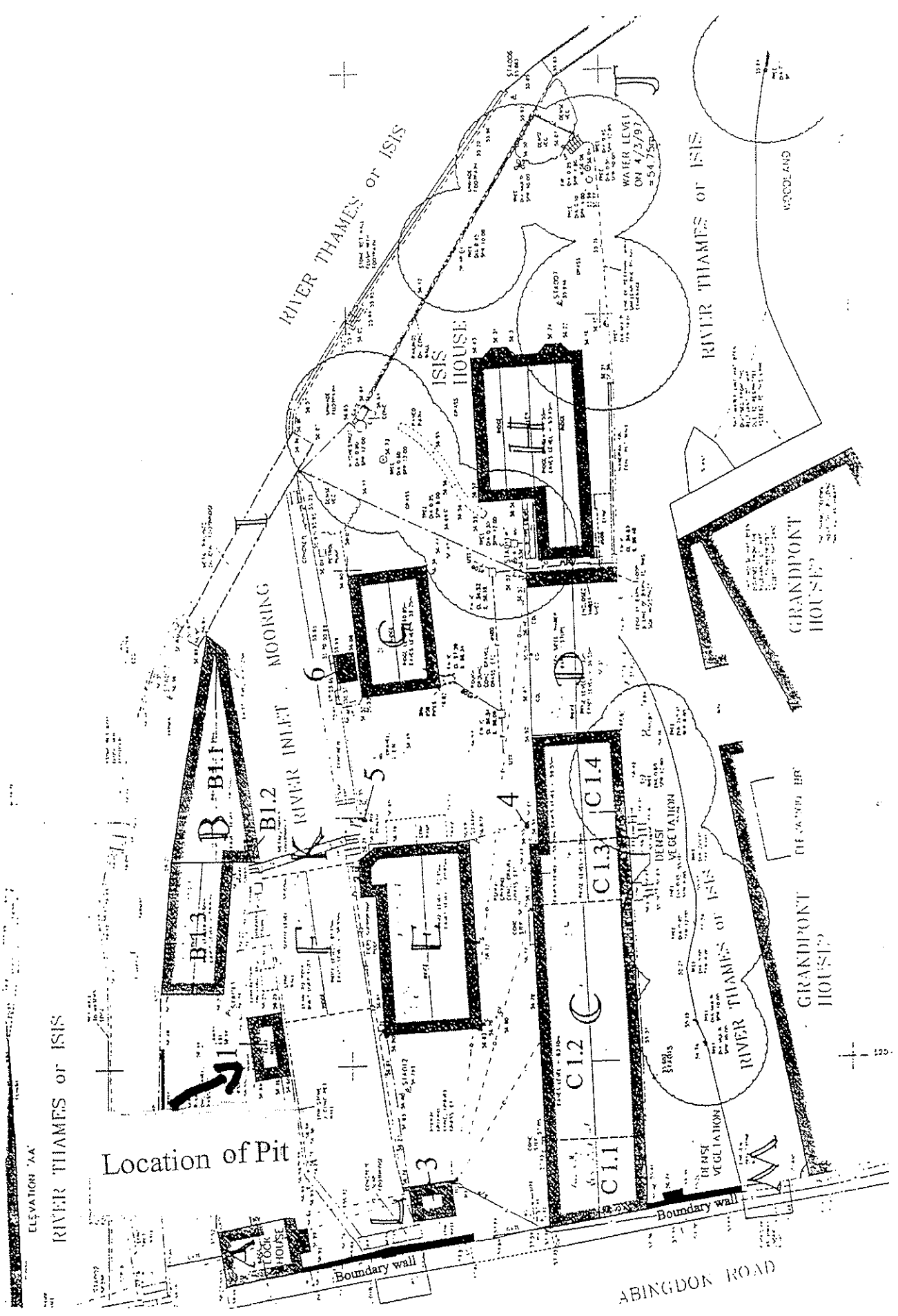
- 3.1 Colour photographs were taken of the site works and a section drawing made of the excavated pit, which was 2.4 m deep.

**4 Results**

- 4.1 At the base of the pit were two layers of silty clay [12,11], one of which contained two oyster shells a piece of animal bone. Above these lay further layers of clay, {10 and 9}, sealed beneath a sequence of deposits of made ground, combining clay and stone.
- 4.2 Part of a limestone wall (3) was observed in the section of the pit, sealed beneath modern make-up for the boatyard [2, 1].

**5 Conclusion**

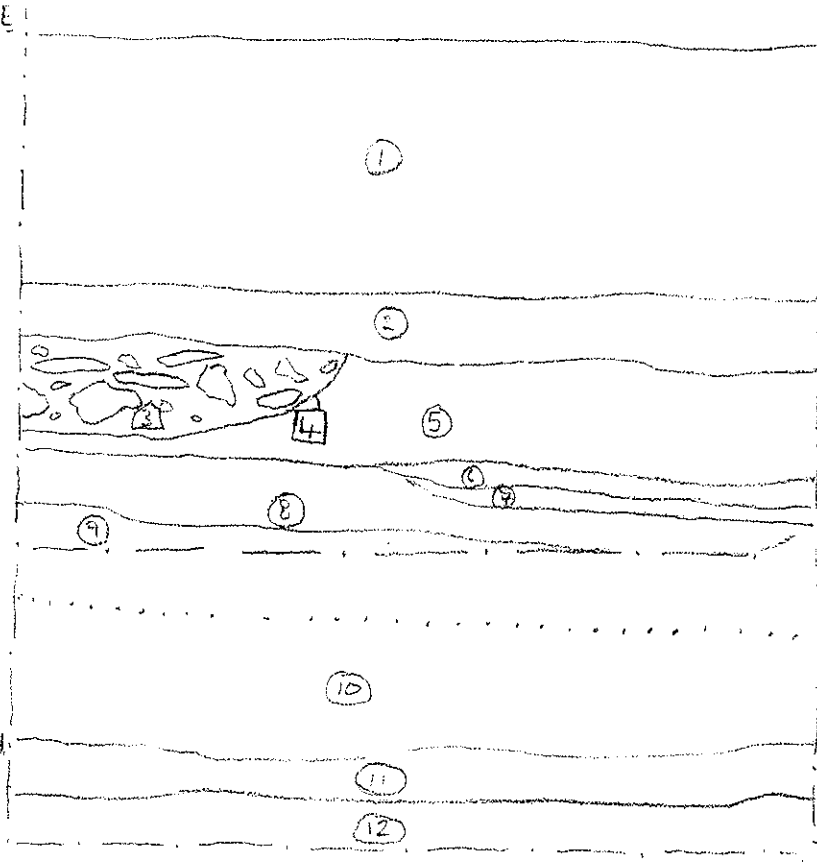
- 5.1 The watching brief was limited in nature. Clay deposits at the base of the pit could relate to clay layers observed elsewhere in Oxford by the river. The bone and shell suggest that refuse was dumped here though the layers were not dated. On analogy with deposits dated elsewhere these layers could be Saxon. Above the layers probably represent periods of land reclamation at the river edge. The date of the wall is unknown, but could be part of building at the waterfront, possibly a precursor to the later boatyard buildings.



Location of Pit

Figure 8: Building location plan

56.0m  
REDUCED  
LEVEL



W  
OXSALT 00  
SECTION 1  
SCALE 1:20  
3/1/00 GUY

BREEZE  
BLOCK  
RING  
BLAM

1/2/00  
Shoring goes  
in at this point  
v. difficult to  
see section so  
information  
here is extrapolated  
from what is  
seen in plan  
during excavation