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65-67 St Giles
Oxford



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SUMMARY

In February 2005 Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out a field evaluation at the Classics Centre, 65-67, St Giles, Oxford (SP 5116 0662). The Oxford University Estates Directorate commissioned the work in advance of a proposed planning application (05/00110/FUL), for a new construction with associated basements, and demolition of existing buildings on the site. The evaluation revealed evidence for medieval and post-medieval tenements fronting onto St Giles. Two boundary ditches dating from the 11th century were revealed and 13th-century garden soils were seen. Post medieval pits, soils, walls and yard surfaces were also observed.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Location and scope of work

- 1.1.1 In February 2005, Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out an archaeological evaluation at the Classics Centre, 65-67, St Giles, Oxford (SP 5116 0662). The Oxford University Estates Directorate commissioned the work in advance of a proposed planning application (05/00110/FUL), for a new construction with associated basements, and demolition of existing buildings on the site.
- 1.1.2 Architects van Heyningen and Haward of London have prepared plans for the new development.
- 1.1.3 The work was in respect of a brief set by Brian Durham, City Archaeologist on behalf of the Local Planning Authority (OCC 2005), in accordance with PPG16. OA prepared a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) detailing how it would implement the brief (OA 2005b).

1.2 Geology and topography

- 1.2.1 The area of proposed development is located along the north side of a small alleyway named Ashmolean Lane, which runs west to east to the adjacent Ashmolean Museum (Fig. 2).
- 1.2.2 The site is currently occupied by late 19th century buildings used by the University Admissions Office and by the Modern Languages Faculty for storage, to the rear of Nos. 65-67 St Giles. St Giles once formed the main road into the medieval town of Oxford, the northern walls of which once lay c 200 m to the south.
- 1.2.3 The site is located on 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. The area of proposed development lies at c 64 m Ordnance Datum (OD), with variations in ground levels owing to variations in building (stairs, basements etc), and measures c 0.07 ha in area.

1.3 Archaeological and historical background

- 1.3.1 The site was subject to an archaeological watching brief in December 2004, commissioned by the Oxford University Estates Directorate. The watching brief revealed significant archaeological evidence for medieval or post-medieval tenements fronting onto St Giles. Several phases of yard surfaces and a garden wall were seen to the rear of the existing properties. The base of a large but undated pit was seen beneath the existing basement area. No dating evidence was recovered from the monitoring exercise and natural gravel was not revealed (OA 2005a).
- 1.3.2 The Oxford University Estates Directorate had previously commissioned OA to carry out an archaeological desk-based assessment (OA 2004). The results of which have been combined with a desktop study commissioned for a proposed development at the Ashmolean Museum (OA 2003) and summarised below.
- 1.3.3 A considerable number of archaeological investigations have been carried out in the general study area in the past. The most relevant comprise an excavation, by the Oxford Archaeological Unit (now OA) in 1998-9, prior to construction of the Sackler Library, c 50 m to the south-west of the area of proposed development (Poore and Wilkinson 2001); and an archaeological excavation 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).
- 1.3.4 Excavations carried out by Oxford Archaeological Unit at the site of Oxford University's 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 c 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.
- 1.3.5 The excavations found evidence for a substantial W-E 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.
- 1.3.6 The Wessex Archaeology excavation of the Museum forecourt produced evidence of a continuous sequence of extra-mural 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.

2 EVALUATION AIMS

- 2.1.1 To assess the risk of damage from proposed construction impact to deposits that may hold significant information for the people of Oxford and their visitors in respect of the following:
- the medieval and later use of the back yards;
 - use of the properties that fronted the yards;
 - development of St Giles as a suburb of Oxford from perhaps middle Saxon period onward, including the setting out of field strips and or burghage plots;
 - pre-medieval land-use
- 2.1.2 The trenching was carried out in order to evaluate deposits at the front of the proposed basement (comparable location to significant archaeological deposits discovered within the Ashmolean Forecourt, 1994) and the rear of the plots (to establish the extent of redeposition of medieval deposits by later usage).
- 2.1.3 General aims were to establish the presence/absence of any archaeological remains within the proposal area and to determine the extent, condition, nature, character, quality and date of any archaeological remains that may affect further need for mitigation during the construction process.
- 2.1.4 To establish the ecofactual and environmental potential of any archaeological deposits and features and to make available the results of the investigation.

3 EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

3.1 Scope of fieldwork

- 3.1.1 The evaluation consisted of two trenches within the backyard area of 65-67 St Giles (Fig. 2). Trench 1 measured 4 m N-S and 2 m W-E. A 1 m by 1 m extension was excavated at the north end of the trench and a 0.5 m N-S by 0.7 m W-E extension at the south end. The extensions were designed to investigate the existence of medieval property boundaries. Trench 2 measured 3 m W-E and 1.5 m N-S.
- 3.1.2 The upper levels, which comprised yard surfaces and make-up deposits, were hand excavated by contractors under archaeological supervision. Brick structures and masonry were left in place so that they could be recorded archaeologically. The lower, archaeologically significant deposits were hand excavated by a competent archaeologist.
- 3.1.3 So as to evaluate the deposits fully it was necessary to excavate a 2 m by 2 m sondage in the centre of Trench 1. The sondage was excavated to a depth of 2 m below ground level (bgl), a depth of 62.4 m OD. It was not possible to excavate a deeper, shored section in the centre of Trench 2 because of an adjacent, unstable lean-to building.

3.2 Fieldwork methods and recording

- 3.2.1 The trenches were cleaned by hand and the revealed features were sampled to determine their extent and nature and to retrieve finds. All archaeological features were planned and where excavated their sections drawn at scales of 1:20. All features

were photographed using colour slide and black and white print film. Recording followed procedures laid down in the *OAU Fieldwork Manual* (ed D Wilkinson, 1992).

3.3 Finds

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

3.4 Palaeo-environmental evidence

3.4.1 The deposits encountered during the evaluation were generally dumped, re-deposited layers and fills. No environmentally significant deposits were encountered.

3.5 Presentation of results

3.5.1 Section 5 comprises a detailed description of archaeological observations within each trench and includes individual context descriptions, with archaeological deposits and features described from earliest to latest. Each trench is also shown in plan and section, where appropriate (see figures at back of report). Context information is summarised in the context inventory (Appendix 1).

4 RESULTS: GENERAL

4.1 Soils and ground conditions

4.1.1 The soils encountered during the work, were generally free draining sandy silt and silty clay deposits. The water table was not reached and no particular problems were encountered.

4.2 Distribution of archaeological deposits

4.2.1 Similar deposits were encountered in both trenches. Soil layers were revealed that were truncated by pits and ditches and overlain by yard surfaces. Later garden walls were also recorded.

5 RESULTS: DESCRIPTIONS

5.1 Description of deposits

Trench 1 (Figs 3 and 4)

5.1.1 Natural gravel (144) was revealed 1.9 m below ground level (bgl) at a height of 62.5 m OD. The gravel was overlain by silt layers (142 and 133) that contained pottery which dated from the 13th century. The layer was below a possible plough or garden soil (115, 134 and 130) that dated from the 15th century. The soil was cut by a pit (153) filled with a brown silt loam (152), the pit was not fully excavated. The fill was overlain by a garden soil (111) dated from the mid 16th century. The soil (111) was truncated by a pit (146) that was 0.6 m deep and over 0.5 m in diameter. It was filled with a brown silt (145) that was cut by a second pit (150). Pit 150 was 0.65 m deep and 1.2 m in diameter, it was filled with bands of brown and yellow silts (129, 131,

148, 149 and 151). The fills were truncated by a third pit (135) that was not fully excavated. The fills (127 and 147) were similar to those in pit 150. The pits were probably dug to dispose of refuse or to extract soil for use elsewhere; pottery dated from the 13th century was recovered, although this was likely to be residual.

- 5.1.2 The pit fills were overlain by a layer of garden soil (128) and make-up layers (108, 138, 139) for a compact mortar surface (107). A foundation cut (137) for a W-E aligned limestone wall footing (136) truncated the surface. The wall was 0.5 m wide and 0.13 m high. Much of the wall appeared to have been removed by a robber trench (126) that was filled with dumps of rubble silt (123 and 125).
- 5.1.3 Surface 107 was also overlain by a garden soil (114), which contained pottery dated to the 17th-19th centuries, and a make-up deposit (106) for a mortar surface (105). A levelling layer (104) and a compacted 19th century sand surface (103) overlay the mortar surface. The surfaces were truncated by the foundation cuts (113 and 117) for a N-S limestone wall (112) and a W-E limestone wall (116). The structures were 0.45 m high and 0.50 m wide, they may have formed post-medieval garden walls. The walls were overlain by a modern garden soil (102) that was truncated by the foundation cut for a modern brick wall (110). The garden soil was also cut by a landscaping feature (119) filled with silty loams (118, 124 and 122). The fills were truncated by service trench (121) filled with a mixed silt deposit (120). The service trench was overlain by a modern garden soil (100) and levelling layer (140) for a garden path (141).

Trench 2 (Figs 5 and 6)

- 5.1.4 Natural gravel (224) was revealed at 62.25 m OD (1.2 m bgl). The gravel was cut by two W-E aligned ditches (212 and 215). Ditch 212 was over 0.5 m deep although the base was not seen. It was filled with a dump of silt (213) below a layer of stones (214) and a layer of limestone slabs (217). The silt contained a sherd of pottery dated to the 11th-14th centuries, the stones may have been used to consolidate an area of soft ground after the ditch had been infilled. Ditch 215 was 0.25 m deep and had several depressions along its base, the depressions might have been formed by root action or, possibly, by a row of stakes. The ditch was filled with a grey clay silt (216) that were overlain by a 13th century garden soil (211). The soil was overlain by a series of levelling layers (218-223). The deposits were seen during the watching brief in Test Pit 3 and it is possible that they formed crude surfaces.
- 5.1.5 The layers were cut by a pit (209), filled with a silty clay (210) dated from the mid 16th century. The pit fill was overlain by late 17th century make-up layers (205 and 206) for a crude surface (204). The deposits were truncated by a construction trench (201) for a brick and stone culvert (200) that was backfilled with a silty loam (207). The deposits were overlain by a make-up layer (203) for a concrete floor (202).

5.2 Finds

General

- 5.2.1 The following section contains summaries of the finds assemblages. Full reports, for the significant assemblages, can be found in Appendices 2-4.

Pottery

- 5.2.2 The pottery assemblage comprised 121 sherds with a total weight of 2,242 g. It comprised a range of medieval and post-medieval types that are common from similarly dated excavations within Oxford. The assemblage indicated that there was virtually unbroken activity at the site from around the 13th century until the present day.

Ceramic building material

- 5.2.3 The ceramic building material comprised 33 fragments weighing 2430g. Most of the fragments were from peg tiles probably of late medieval (15th-16th centuries) and early post-medieval (16th-17th centuries) date and are probably of local manufacture. The only piece of roof furniture of note was a fragment from a late medieval crested ridge tile (context 208) which had knife-cut pyramidal crests (damaged).
- 5.2.4 Two other fragments were from classes of ceramic building materials not connected with roofing. One of these was a corner fragment from a decorated medieval floor tile, perhaps of 13th-15th century date. The other was a fragment from a narrow brick with obvious sooting along one edge. This may come from a brick-built fireplace or bread oven also, most probably, of late medieval date.
- 5.2.5 Two stone roofing tiles were also recovered.

Clay tobacco pipe

- 5.2.6 The clay tobacco pipe assemblage comprised 11 stem fragments and a fragment of a heeled bowl. The fragments were undiagnostic and displayed no makers marks or stamps. The assemblage was recovered from dumped deposits such as garden soils and levelling layers and formed part of a background spread of redeposited material.

Glass

- 5.2.7 Seven fragments of glass were recovered from the evaluation. The glass was recovered from levelling layers and garden soils. All the glass was post-medieval in date.
- 5.2.8 The glass was identified as belonging to a number of very common forms. There were two fragments of late window glass from (114), a base from a Victorian press-moulded tumbler (102), whilst the remaining four fragments were all from 18th- and 19th-century wine bottles.

Metalwork

- 5.2.9 A total of three copper alloy objects were recovered from the evaluation. All three were highly corroded discs, the two from context 207 were almost certainly modern coins. The third and smaller disc from context 206, dated by the pottery to the late 17th century, could also be a coin or possibly a discoidal button.
- 5.2.10 The iron work assemblage comprised five corroded structural nails recovered from contexts 102, 111, 115, 131 and 205.

Stone

- 5.2.11 Three pieces of marble floor tile were recovered from a post medieval mortar yard surface (105) and an associated make-up layer (103).

5.3 Palaeo-environmental remains

Animal bone

- 5.3.1 A total of 73 bones were recovered from this site, weighing 1590 g. A small number of the bones had fresh breaks, the re-fitting of which reduced the fragment count to 69. The bones were recovered in good condition, which allowed for approximately 58% to be identifiable to species. Those animals identified were domestic animals associated with general domestic waste, namely cattle, sheep/goat, pig and goose. Whilst the total fragment counts suggested that cattle and sheep/goat were present in similar numbers, the MNI indicated that sheep/goat were dominant. Pig and goose were only represented by two bones each.
- 5.3.2 Age at death suggested that both pig bones were from juveniles, and that adult and juvenile cattle and sheep/goat were present. Butchery marks indicated that whilst many of the long bones were chopped for marrow extraction, the cut marks on the cattle and sheep/goat bones, recovered from contexts 111, 114 and 115, were those associated with skinning. It may be that they were remnants from a small area of industrial activity. Withers heights could be calculated on two sheep/goat metatarsals using the methods of Teichert (1975), giving heights of 0.64m and 0.66m, which were likely to be from animals post-dating the Roman period due to their relatively large size.

Shell

- 5.3.3 The shell assemblage comprised three fragments of oyster shell recovered from contexts 103 and 115.

6 DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATION

6.1 Reliability of field investigation

- 6.1.1 Although the site had been disturbed by service trenches and later garden walls the stratigraphic sequence was relatively undisturbed. There was a general background count of medieval artefacts within post medieval features but there was little cross-contamination of medieval dating evidence.

6.2 Overall interpretation

- 6.2.1 The results of the evaluation further support those of the watching brief. The area appears to have been used as backyard space for properties fronting St Giles since the 13th century, if not before. A possible garden soil or plough soil, seen in Trench 1, was dated from the 13th century although the ditches seen in Trench 2 may have dated from the 11th century.
- 6.2.2 The pits seen within Trench 1 are likely to have been rubbish pits or cess pits located within the back yards of the post-medieval properties (Fig. 7). They may also have been dug to extract soil for use elsewhere; such as for the infilling of cess pits.
- 6.2.3 The surfaces and walls revealed within Trench 1 also formed part of the post-medieval yard spaces. The walls may have formed property boundaries or garden walls.
- 6.2.4 Two ditches were revealed within Trench 2, dating from the 11th century. They appeared to represent boundary ditches between early medieval tenements, but may have separated late Saxon properties or functioned as field boundaries. The dating evidence was recovered from the upper fills of ditch 212, which was not fully excavated. The ditch may have pre-dated medieval activity but been infilled during the late 11th century. The site lay outside the late Saxon burgh but it is reasonable to assume that suburban dwellings may have existed or the area might have had an agricultural use and been divided into field strips.
- 6.2.5 A layer of 13th century garden soil overlay the ditch fills and perhaps marked a change from ditched to walled or hedgeline property boundaries. The post medieval levelling deposits may have been laid to reclaim the yard for the construction of later buildings. The later pit and culvert may have been associated with the existing structure.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONTEXT INVENTORY

Trench	Ctxt No	Type	Width (m)	Thick. (m)	Comment	Finds	Spot Date
1	100	layer		0.3	topsoil	pot/bone/clay pipe	19th
	101	fill		0.85	fill of construction cut 109	pot/bone	19th
	102	layer		0.35	Garden soil	pot/glass/bone/metal	19th
	103	layer		0.15	Levelling	pot/glass/cbm/shell/bone	19th
	104	layer		0.11	Levelling		
	105	layer		0.2	Surface	stone	
	106	layer		0.08	Levelling		
	107	layer		0.1	Surface		
	108	layer		0.12	Levelling		
	109	cut	0.6	0.95	Construction cut		
	110	masonry			Wall		
	111	layer		0.33	Garden soil	pot/cbm/bone/metal	M16th
	112	masonry	0.3	0.3	Wall		
	113	cut	0.5	0.4	Construction cut		
	114	layer		0.02	Garden soil	pot/glass/cbm/bone/clay pipe	17th
	115	layer			Garden soil	pot/glass/cbm/shell/bone/metal	M16th
	116	masonry	0.6	0.5	Wall		
	117	cut	0.6	0.5	Construction cut		
	118	fill		0.8	Landscaping fill of 119		modern
	119	cut	2	0.8	Landscaping		modern
	120	fill		0.3	fill of service trench 121		modern
	121	cut	0.5	0.6	Service trench		modern
	122	fill		0.45	Landscaping fill of 119		modern
	123	fill		0.13	fill of robber trench 126	clay pipe	
	124	fill		0.42	Landscaping fill of 119		modern
	125	fill		0.2	fill of robber trench 126		
	126	cut	0.6	0.5	robber trench		
	127	fill			fill of pit 135	pot	13th
	128	layer		0.2	Levelling		
	129	fill		0.25	fill of pit 150		
	130	layer		0.22	Levelling		
	131	fill		0.3	fill of pit 150	bone/metal	
	132	layer		0.3	Levelling		
	133	layer			Levelling		
	134	layer		0.1	Levelling		
	135	cut	1	0.6	Pit		
	136	layer	0.5	0.13	Wall		
	137	cut	0.6	0.2	construction cut		13th
	138	layer		0.15	garden soil		
	139	layer		0.11	Levelling		

Trench	Ctxt No	Type	Width (m)	Thick. (m)	Comment	Findings	Spot Date
	140	layer		0.1	Levelling		
	141	layer		0.05	Surface		
	142	layer			Levelling	pot/cbm/bone	13th
	143	layer		0.15	Levelling	pot/bone	13th
	144	layer			natural gravel		
	145	fill		0.68	fill of pit 146		
	146	cut	0.48	0.58	Pit		
	147	fill		0.2	fill of pit 135		
	148	fill		0.16	fill of pit 150		
	149	fill		0.14	fill of pit 150		
	150	cut	1.2	0.58	Pit		
	151	fill		0.16	fill of pit 150		
	152	fill		0.19	fill of pit 150		
	153	cut			Pit		
2	200	masonry			Culvert		modern
	201	cut			Construction cut		
	202	layer		0.15	Surface		
	203	layer		0.12	Levelling		
	204	layer		0.06	Surface		
	205	layer		0.08	Levelling	pot/glass/cbm	L17th
	206	layer		0.2	Levelling	pot/coin	L15th
	207	fill		0.3	fill of construction cut 201	coin	
	208	group			Levelling	pot/cbm/bone/clay pipe/coin	15th
	209	cut	1	0.6	Pit		
	210	fill			fill of pit 209	pot/cbm	M16th
	211	layer		0.3	garden soil	pot/bone	13th
	212	cut		0.54	Ditch		
	213	fill			fill of ditch 212	pot	11th
	214	fill		0.4	fill of ditch 212		
	215	cut	0.7	0.15	Ditch		
	216	fill		0.15	fill of ditch 215		
	217	fill		0.5	fill of ditch 212		
	218	layer		0.06	Levelling		
	219	layer		0.08	Levelling		
	220	layer		0.2	Levelling		
	221	layer		0.12	Levelling		
	222	layer		0.15	Levelling		
	223	layer		0.2	Levelling		
	224	layer			natural gravel		

APPENDIX 2 POTTERY*by Paul Blinkhorn*

The pottery assemblage comprised 121 sherds with a total weight of 2,242 g. It comprised a range of medieval and post-medieval types which are common on excavations of the period in Oxford, and indicates that there was virtually unbroken activity at the site from around the 13th century until the present day.

Fabric

The pottery was recorded utilizing the coding system and chronology of the Oxfordshire County type-series (Mellor 1984; 1994), as follows:

- OXAC: Cotswold-type ware, AD975-1350. 9 sherds, 105 g.
- OXBF: North-East Wiltshire Ware, AD1050 – 1400. 3 sherds, 40 g.
- OXY: Medieval Oxford ware, AD1075 – 1350. 2 sherds, 20 g.
- OXAM: Brill/Boarstall ware, AD1200 – 1600. 55 sherds, 748 g.
- OXBN: Tudor Green Ware, late 14th century - c. 1500. 1 sherd, 2 g.
- OXST: Frechen Stoneware, AD1550 – 1700. 5 sherds, 92 g.
- OXCL: Cistercian ware, 1475-1700. 2 sherds, 9 g.
- OXDR: Red Earthenwares, 1550+. 18 sherds, 674 g.
- OXFH: Border wares, 1550 - 1700. 6 sherds, 93 g.
- OXCE: Tin-glazed Earthenware, 1613 – 1800. 2 sherds, 16 g.
- OXFG: Staffordshire Manganese Glazed ware. 18th century. 1 sherd, 78 g.
- OXFM: Staffordshire White-glazed English Stoneware, 1730 – 1800. 1 sherd, 3 g.
- WHEW: Mass-produced white earthenwares, mid 19th - 20th C. 16 sherds, 362 g.

The pottery occurrence by number and weight of sherds per context by fabric type is shown in Table A2.1. Each date should be regarded as a *terminus post quem*. Most of the context-specific groups date to the 13th century or later, although one context, 213, may date to around the time of the Norman Conquest. As only one sherd of pottery occurred in the deposit in question, the date should be treated with caution.

The pottery is, in the main, fairly typical of the assemblages usually noted in Oxford, comprising sherds from coarseware jars and glazed jugs, although two sherds from a brown-glazed Border ware vessel were noted with a fragment of a bearded face surrounded by stamped decoration. A parallel for this could not be found, and it may be an imitation of a German stoneware *Bartmann*-type vessel.

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

Cntxt	OXAC		OXB F		OXY		OXAM		OXB N		OXS T		OXC L		OXDR		OXF H		OXC E		OXF G		OXFM		WHEW		Date	
	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt		
100											1	17			1	61										6	53	19thC
101																										3	55	19thC
102															6	206			1	13			1	3	4	33	19thC	
103															5	234										3	221	19thC
111	2	15					18	149			1	11	1	3	1	25												M16th C
114							4	133							2	89			1	3								17thC
115			3	40			7	45	1	2	1	24			3	59	4	79										M16th C
127	2	28					1	3																				13thC
131	1	2			2	20	3	124																				13thC
142	1	7					8	65																				13thC
143							2	20																				13thC
205											1	25									1	78						L17thC
206													1	6														L15thC
208	1	37					5	125			1	15																15thC
210																	2	14										M16th C
211	1	14					7	84																				13thC
213	1	2																										11thC
Total	9	105	3	40	2	20	55	748	1	2	5	92	2	9	18	674	6	93	2	16	1	78	1	3	16	362		

APPENDIX 3 BUILDING MATERIAL

by J Cotter

Ceramic building material

The ceramic building material comprised 33 fragments weighing 2430g. These are described in more detail in the catalogue (see table A3.1 below). Most of the fragments were from peg tiles probably of late medieval (15th-16th century) and early post-medieval (16th-17th century) date and are probably of local manufacture. A few had circular nail holes. A few fragments came from glazed and unglazed ridge tiles which were also probably of late medieval date. The only piece of roof furniture of note was a fragment from a late medieval crested ridge tile (context 208) which had knife-cut pyramidal crests (damaged). This was in a fine pink-buff fabric, with a partial clear greenish-yellow glaze, and may have been a product of either the Brill/Boarstall kilns (Bucks), or from an Oxfordshire source.

Two other fragments were from classes of ceramic building materials not connected with roofing. One of these was a corner fragment from a decorated medieval floor tile, perhaps of a 13th-15th century date. The other was a fragment from a narrow brick with obvious sooting along one edge. This may have come from a brick-built fireplace or bread oven also, most probably, of late medieval date.

Table A3.1 Incidence of CBM by context

Context	No. Sherds	Weight (g)	Comments
103	4	750	Prob 1 large tile curving towards broken edge, Possibly a ridge tile. Thick, with knife-trimmed edges. Oxidised sandy. Fresh. Poss 16-18C?
111	13	852	Mostly smallish peg tile frags. Variety of oxidised sandy fabrics. Fairly thick. 1 with circular nail hole Prob 15-17C? Also 2 frags ?ridge or hip tiles with clear or brownish-green glaze (1 glazed int & ext). Late Medieval, poss 15-16C?
114	2	120	1 x curved tile (?or pipe) frag, prob ridge tile. Oxidised sandy, worn/weathered. Prob post-med. 1x smallish edge frag from a narrow brick 43mm thick. Oxidised sandy fabric with calcareous inclusions. Sooted along surviving edge - possibly derived from a fireplace or bread oven? Possibly 15-16C?
115	6	303	Includes: 5 x smallish oxidised sandy peg tile frags, fairly thick - prob a mixture of late med and early post-med (16-17C), but also 1x much finer frag with circular nail hole - 18C? Also 1 x worn ?ridge tile frag with part of bevelled edge & patches of purplish-brown glaze ext. Poss 15-16C?
205	1	45	Damaged corner frag medieval decorated floor tile - prob 13-15C. This is part of a triangular filler tile (used for floor edges) made from square tile cut diagonally into 2 or 4 triangular tiles before being fired. Traces of inlaid design in white slip (includes white border-line and oblique strokes within), under decayed clear brown glaze. Worn. sanded underside. Vertical edges. Max thickness 24mm. Max length 45m.
207	0	0	Not CBM = 1x rim red earthenware jar 17-18C. Clear int glaze. Worn. Weight 29g.
208	6	316	Includes 4 x various oxidised sandy peg tile frags. 1 with circular nail hole, prob 16-18C? Also 2x joining frags of a ?late med, prob 15-16C, crested ridge tile in very fine sandy pink-buff fabric with partial clear greenish-yellow glaze ext. Pyramidal 'crests' (damaged) cut from central ridge. No surviving edges. Possibly Brill/Boarstall (Bucks) or Oxford product?

Context	No. Sherds	Weight (g)	Comments
210	1	44	Peg tile edge frag. Oxidised sandy. 16-18C?
TOTAL	33	2430	

Stone building material

These comprised two stone roofing tiles weighing 1884g (see Table A3.2). The first of these, in a coarse shelly limestone, was complete and of sub-triangular shape with a central nail hole near its apex. The second, in a much finer laminar limestone, was a squarish fragment of uncertain original form with a circular nail hole in the centre of the fragment.

Table A3.2 Incidence of stone building material by context

Context	No. Sherds	Weight	Comments
103	2	1884	2 x stone roof 'tiles'. Medieval or post-medieval (pre-19C). Includes 1 x complete tile of sub-triangular shape in coarse yellowish shelly limestone, with a single circular nail hole near apex. Dimensions c. 250mm x 175 mm x 25mm thick (max). Weight 1426g. Also frag of 1 other stone tile (458g). Uncertain original shape but currently squared/rectangular. Existing dimensions 150mm x 80mm x 25mm thick. Single circular nail hole in centre of frag. In much finer, silty grey laminar limestone (or shale/limestone).
TOTAL	2	1884	

APPENDIX 4 GLASS*by Dr Hugh Willmott*

Seven fragments of glass from the excavations at St Giles Classics Centre, Oxford OXSGCC05 were submitted for assessment (summarised by context below). Most are relatively stable and require no further specialist treatment. All the glass is post-medieval in date.

The assemblage is very small in size and all glass can be identified as belonging to a number of very common forms. There were two fragments of late window glass from (114), a base from a Victorian press-moulded tumbler (102), whilst the remaining four fragments were all from 18th- and 19th-century wine bottles.

Due to the very limited nature of the assemblage and the fact that only a very narrow range of common forms are present, there is little further meaningful work that can be undertaken. Therefore it is recommended that this assemblage receive no further study and only this brief assessment be included in the site archive.

Table A4.1 Brief Summary of the Glass (by context)

<i>Context</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Other</i>
102	1 clear press-moulded tumbler base	mid to late 19th century
103	2 fragments of wine bottle body	18th century
114	2 fragments window glass	late 18th- 19th century
115	1 fragment of wine bottle	late 18th-early 19th century
205	1 wine bottle neck	early-mid 18th century

APPENDIX 5 BIBLIOGRAPHY AND REFERENCES

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APPENDIX 6 SUMMARY OF SITE DETAILS

Site name: The Classics Centre 65-67 St Giles, Oxford

Site code: OXSGCC05

Grid reference: SP 5116 0662

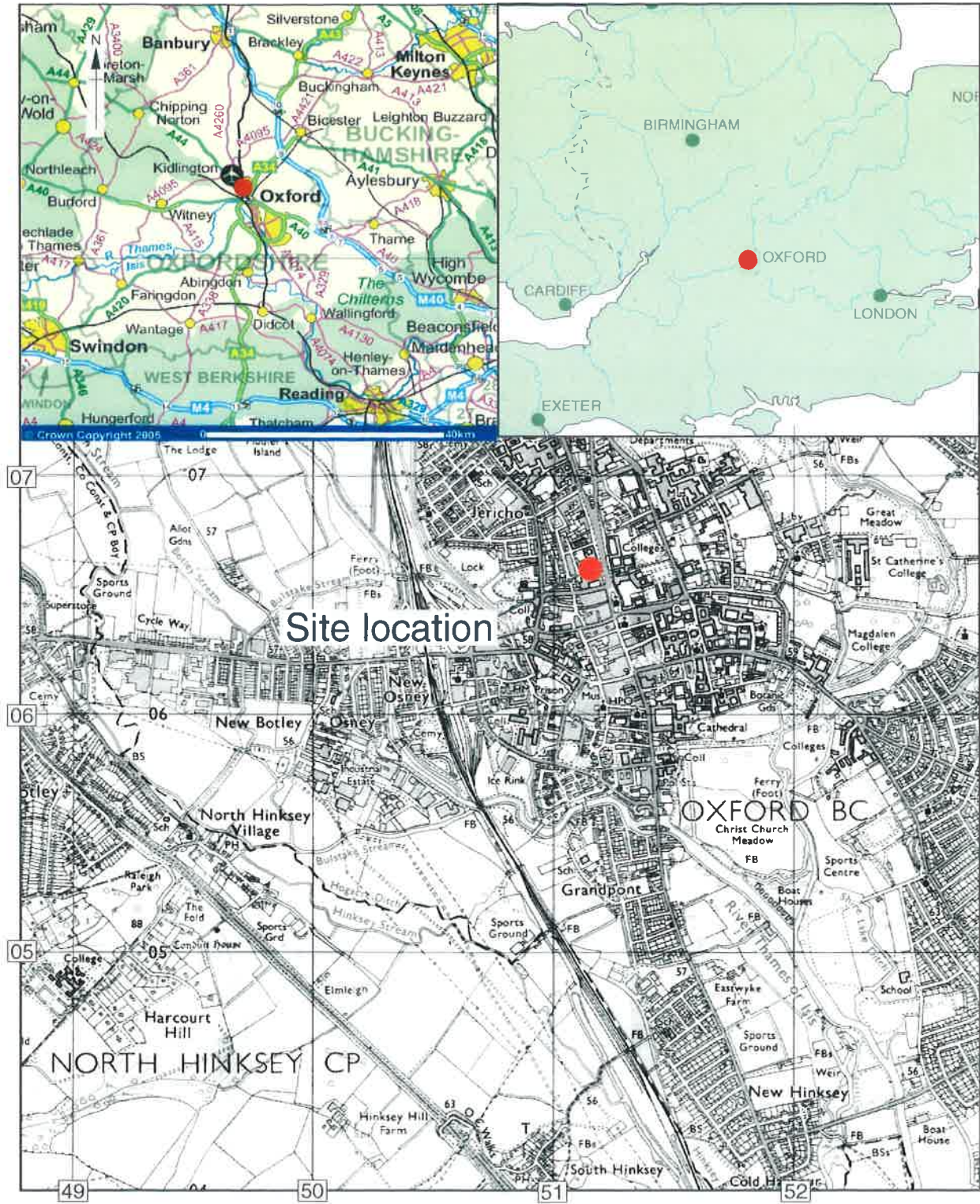
Type of work: 2 hand dug trenches

Date and duration of project: 17/02/05-24/02/05

Area of site: 0.07 ha.

Summary of results: Medieval and post medieval soil layers, pits and ditches. Post medieval walls delineating property backyards.

Location of archive: The archive is currently held at OA, Janus House, Osney Mead, Oxford, OX2 0ES, and will be deposited with the Ashmolean Museum in due course.



Scale 1:25,000

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Figure 1: Site location



Figure 2: Trench location



Trench 1
Plan

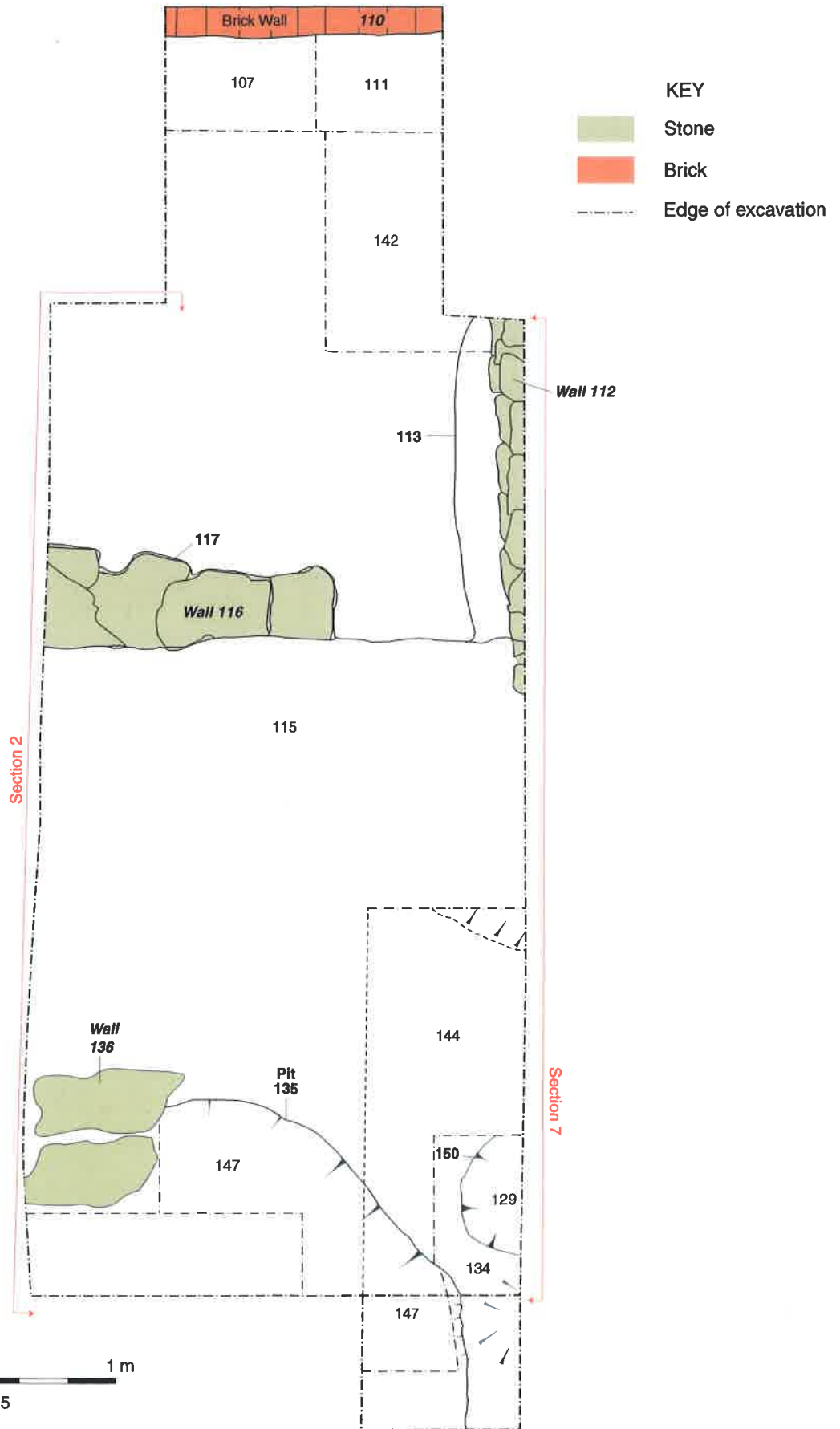
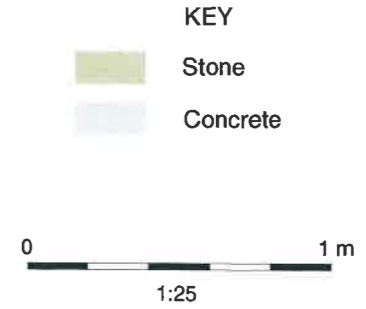
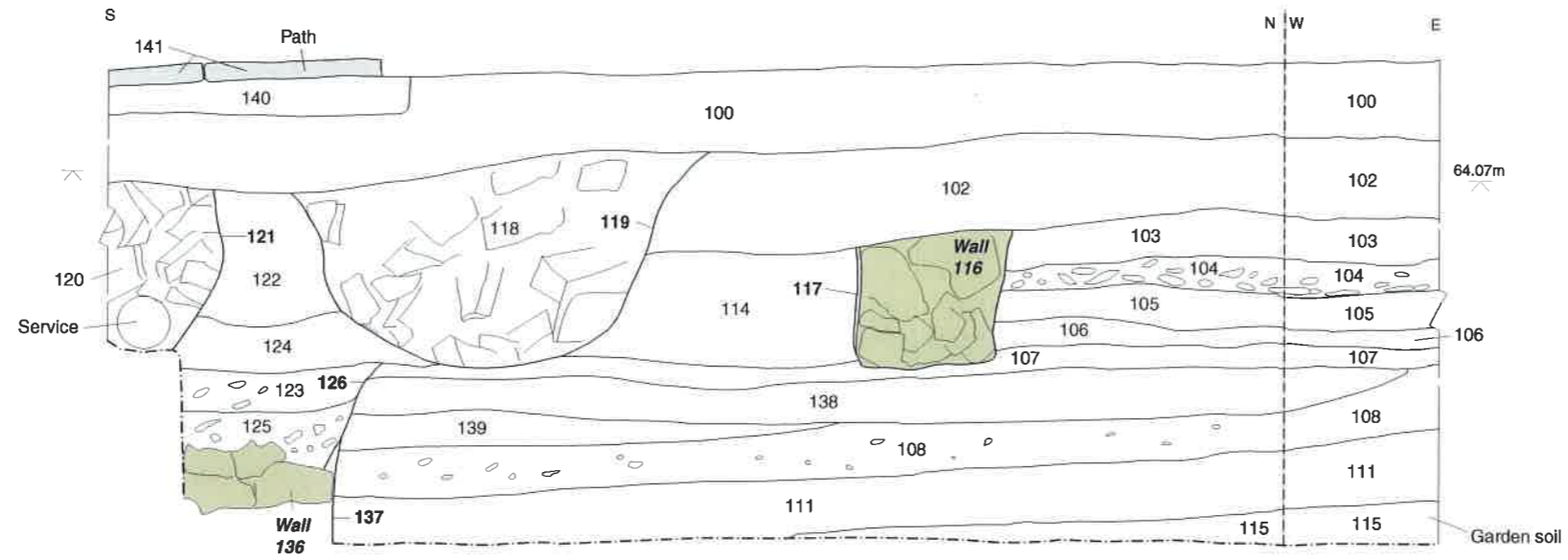


Figure 3: Plan of Trench 1

Trench 1 Section 2



Trench 1 Section 7

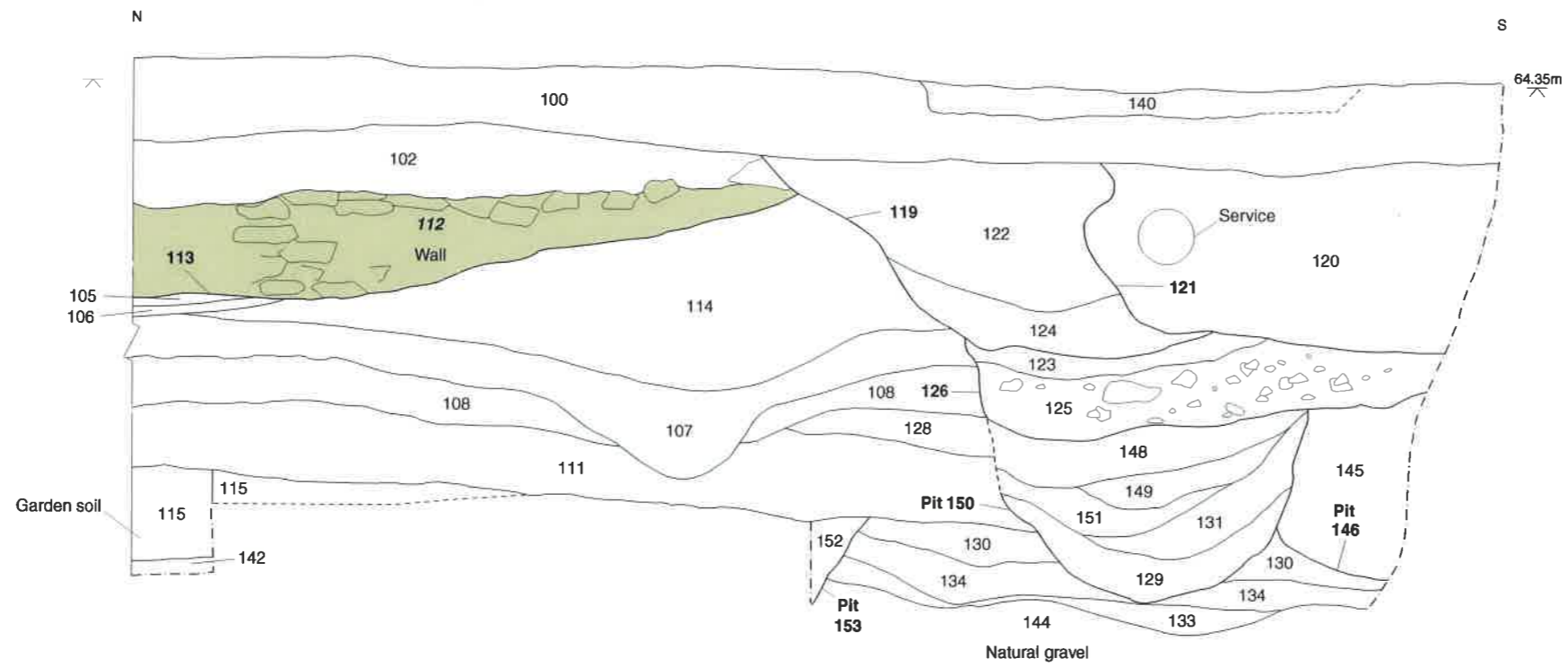


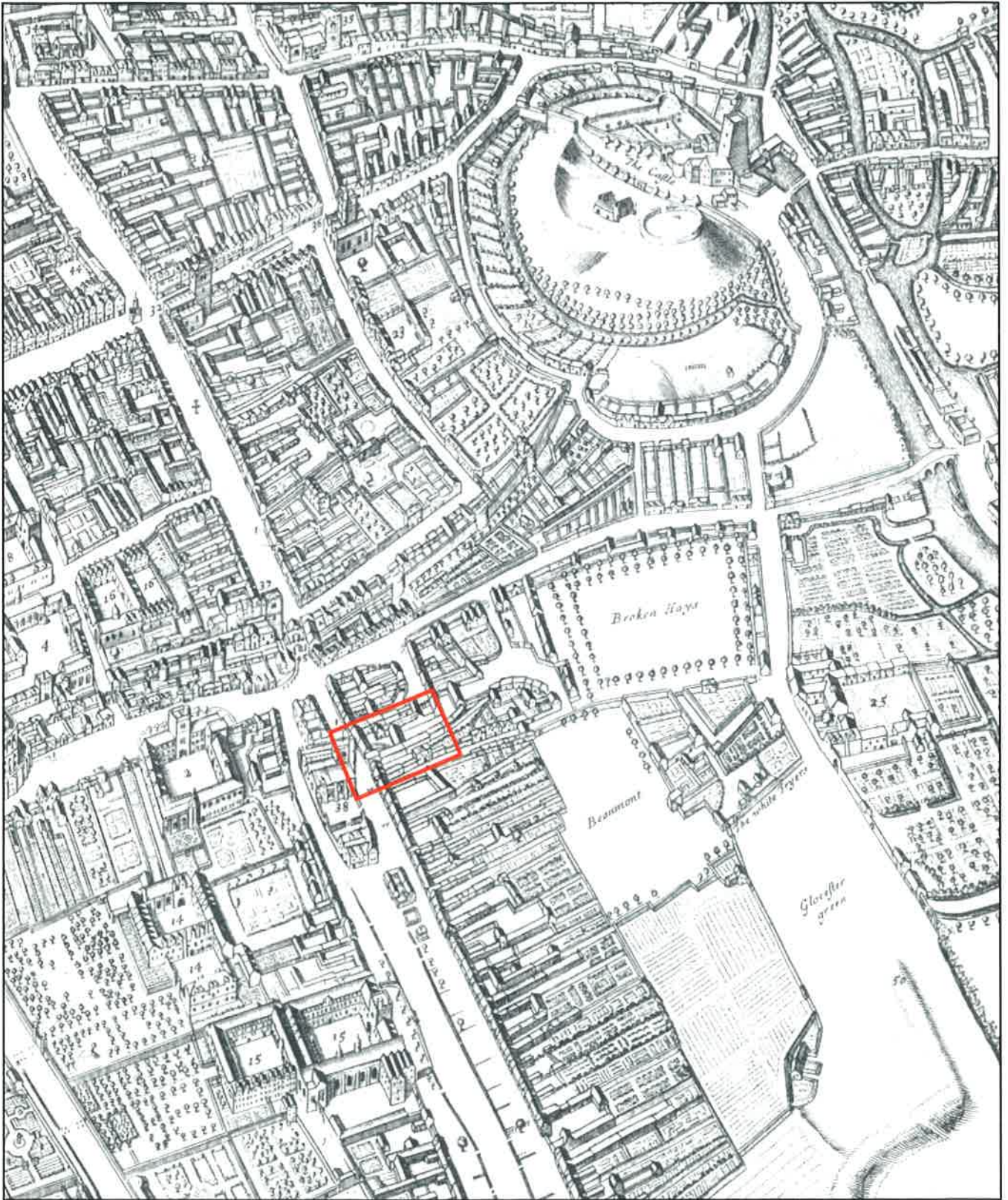
Figure 4: Trench 1, Sections 2 and 7



Trench 2 Plan



Figure 5: Plan of Trench 2




 Approximate site location

Figure 7: Logan's map of Oxford 1675



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