

# Postmaster's Hall Yard Merton College Oxford



## Archaeological Watching brief



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Allies and Morrison/Merton College

**Postmaster's Hall Yard, Merton College  
Oxford**

NGR SP 5172 0614

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ON GEO-TECHNICAL TEST PITS*****CONTENTS**

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## SUMMARY

*In October/November 2001, Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out an extended watching brief at the Postmaster's Hall Yard, Merton College, Oxford (NGR SP 5172 0614). The work was undertaken on behalf of the college for Allies and Morrison Architects, and involved the monitoring of 4 geo-technical test pits excavated in advance of the construction a new building with basement on the site. This watching brief followed an earlier phase of geo-technical test pits in 2000, and one of those test pits was re-excavated in the course of the work.*

*The main finds from this phase of work included the discovery of a well-constructed stone-built cellar or basement that abutted an earlier wall, possibly a tenement boundary. The basement cut deep into the natural gravel, removing in the process the red-brown subsoil that overlay the gravel noted in another test pit. Associated pottery suggests that both structures date to the 11th-12th centuries. The basement appears to have had a floor, above which domestic debris accumulated, including the remains of a possible hearth/oven. The basement wall was later robbed, possibly in the 13th or 14th century. Occupation material accumulated above, with traces of a stone floor. Later medieval pottery was recovered from all three new test pits. Tentative traces of further medieval structures were revealed, together with structural remains relating to the stable block known from 19th century maps.*

*The excavations are notable for a remarkable ceramic assemblage spanning the 11th-19th centuries, including part of a vessel associated with late medieval industrial or distilling processes. Over 800 animal bones were recovered, including a complete post-medieval dog skeleton together with a small number of human bones. A quantity of ceramic building material is testimony to the location on the site of structures, and a small assemblage of metalwork was also recovered. The excavations have substantially added to the results of the 2000 season of work, and demonstrate that the Postmaster's Hall Yard overlies nearly 900 years of accumulated and largely undisturbed occupation material.*

## 1 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Location and scope of work

- 1.1.1 In October/November 2001, Oxford Archaeology (OA, formerly Oxford Archaeological Unit, OAU) carried out an extended watching brief at the Postmaster's Hall Yard, Merton College, Oxford (Fig. 1). The work was undertaken on behalf of the college for Allies and Morrison Architects, and involved the monitoring of geo-technical test pits excavated in advance of the construction of a new building with a basement on the site.
- 1.1.2 This watching brief followed an earlier phase of watching brief on test pits on the same site in 2000. The results from these were reported in the desk-based assessment of the site prepared by Oxford Archaeological Unit for the same architects in December 2000 (OAU 2000).



- 1.1.3 The proposed development comprises a three-storied building with a basement on the western half of the Postmaster's Hall Yard, which is currently occupied by garages. Additional building works will include a two-storied bicycle shed, without a basement, to the north of the Real Tennis Court and a small annex for a new set of stairs on the eastern side of Grove House, on land currently occupied by a small garden shed.
- 1.1.4 The work will also involve hard landscaping and the demolition of a brick wall on the eastern side of Postmaster's Hall. The existing probable medieval stone walls that form the boundaries of the Yard will be retained (Ben Elsdon, Allies and Morrison, pers. comm.). The two and three-storied buildings will both have piled foundations extending down into natural solid geology.

## 1.2 Geology and topography

- 1.2.1 The site is part of Merton College and is located on the north side of Merton Street (NGR SP 5172 0614). Immediately south of the proposed development are the rear of the buildings fronting Merton Street, opposite the main entrance to Merton College. Oxford's High Street is c 110 m to the north. At the time of the watching brief a row of garages occupied the west part of the yard, the remainder of which was an open space
- 1.2.2 The site slopes gently to the south from 62 m above Ordnance Datum (OD) at the northern end of the site to 60.1 m above OD at the southern end of the site (Milton Keynes Surveys July 2000/Job no. 6977).
- 1.2.3 Postmaster's Hall Yard is located on the edge of Quaternary 2nd (Summertown - Radley) Terrace Deposits comprising River Gravels (BGS sheet 236). Immediately south and east of the site area is the 1st Gravel Terrace. The gravel terraces form an 'island' surrounded by the alluvial floodplains of the River Cherwell c 350 m to the east and the River Isis (Thames) some 500 m to the south-west.

## 1.3 Archaeological and historical background

- 1.3.1 The archaeological background to this project has been the subject of a separate desk study (OAU 2000), the results of which are briefly summarised below. A gazetteer produced for the desktop report is reproduced in Appendix 4 (see also Fig. 1).
- 1.3.2 *Prehistoric* (500,000 BP - 43BC): A number of residual struck flints of Neolithic or Mesolithic date were found at the 1962 Logic Lane excavations c 70 m to the east of this site, where two prehistoric ring ditches interpreted as the remains of ploughed out Bronze Age round barrows were also excavated (OAU 8).
- 1.3.3 *Roman Period* (43BC - AD410): Little evidence of Roman activity is known from this part of Oxford. Part of a Roman settlement was found c 700 m to the north of this site at Mansfield College, while locally a few residual sherds of Romano-British pottery were found at Logic Lane.

- 1.3.4 *Early Medieval Period* (AD410 - 1066): Merton College lies immediately east and outside of what is believed to be the first fortification of the Saxon town, which follows the line of Schools Street and Oriel (earlier Shidyerd) Street (Fig. 1). The line of the boundary ditch, so far undiscovered, should run through Oriel and Corpus Christi. The Logic Lane excavations produced Saxo-Norman pottery.
- 1.3.5 *Later medieval Period* (AD1066-1550): South of Merton Street tenement plots were acquired for the foundation of Merton College in the 1260s. The college also obtained the houses across the road, which now comprise Postmaster's Hall, the Tennis Court and the garage block (formerly the site of the College Stables). Investigations within the college have revealed structures, which appear to date from before the college's foundation (OAU 20). Merton Stables and Postmaster's Hall occupy the site of three 12th-13th-century tenements.

#### 1.4 Acknowledgements

- 1.4.1 OA extends its thanks to the labourers from Symm Construction, who excavated the test pits. OA's Mark Peters carried out the watching brief.

## 2 PROJECT AIMS

- 2.1.1 To further identify and record the presence/absence, extent, condition, quality and date of archaeological remains in the areas affected by the proposed construction programme, and to supplement the background research undertaken for the desk-based assessment.
- 2.1.2 To make available the results of the archaeological investigation.

## 3 METHODOLOGY

### 3.1 Scope of fieldwork and methodology

- 3.1.1 Three further test pits excavated by the contractors were monitored by OA within the existing garages where the new basement and building is proposed. A test pit excavated in 2000 (Test Pit 6) was reopened for further investigation. Two of the test pits were opened inside the existing garages on the site, and a third was opened outside the doorway of one of the garages. Once shored, the test pits were investigated visually and records made of the excavated strata and structures.
- 3.1.2 Recording followed procedures in the *OAU Fieldwork Manual* (Wilkinson, 1992). Each deposit or structure identified was allocated a unique context number and recorded on a *pro forma* sheet. Sample sections were drawn of all test pits at a scale of 1:20. Plans were made at various levels within each test pit, and a full level survey made related to Ordnance Datum.
- 3.1.3 Each test pit was also recorded photographically in colour slide and monochrome print film. Finds were retrieved and bagged by context; details regarding the finds are presented in section 5 below.



### 3.2 Palaeo-environmental evidence

3.2.1 No environmental samples were taken in the course of the work.

### 3.3 Presentation of results

3.3.1 Each test pit excavated in the 2001 season of work is described. An appendix detailing the results from the year 2000 (Fig. 2) test pits is presented at the end of this report. The test pits from 2001 have been given a letter suffix to distinguish them from the earlier phase of work [e.g. Test Pit 1a, 2a, 3a, 4a refer to the recent work]. A letter suffix was added to the contexts recorded in the recent test pits, to differentiate them from those recorded in the 2000 season [e.g. 100a, 101a etc].

## 4 RESULTS: DESCRIPTIONS

### 4.1 Test Pit descriptions

#### *Test Pit 1a*

- 4.1.1 This test pit (Fig. 4, Fig. 8 plate 1) measured c 1.3 m x 1.1 m and was excavated to a maximum depth of 2 m below existing ground level (to 58.78 m OD). Natural gravel was not reached during excavation.
- 4.1.2 The earliest deposit was a layer of organic silty clay (115a) containing medieval pottery of 13th–14th century date. A further layer of organic silty clay (114a) overlay this and contained pottery dated broadly from the 11th–15th century with animal bone and shell.
- 4.1.3 A truncated cobbled surface (113a) overlay 114a. A remnant of the bedding for the cobbles (112a, probably equivalent to 114a) was observed west of the garage foundations (104a) that truncated the cobbles, suggesting that the surface could extend outside the limit of the test pit. The cobbled surface was overlain by a layer of compact silty clay (110a) that formed the base for a north-south aligned, roughly built stone wall (108a), the top of which was at 60.23 m OD.
- 4.1.4 Traces of an alluvial clay deposit (109a) were observed beneath the wall, which from similar observations in Test Pit 2a (211a) could indicate the remains of a floor surface, and which may have acted as a waterproof seal associated with the wall. The modern garage foundations heavily truncated both the wall and the floor surface. Similar structures in Test Pit 1 from the 2000 work and 2a to the west would indicate that this wall represents the east wall of the stables building depicted on maps from 1878 to 1939.
- 4.1.5 The foundations of the present garages were 1.4 m deep. The garage wall footing (103a) was of brick construction using an English cross bond laid on a mass of concrete that was c 0.5 m thick (104a). To the west of the wall, a loosely packed rubble backfill (102a) extended beyond the limits of the trench, possibly filling a construction cut (not observed). To the east and abutting the garage footings and



overlying the remnants of the stone wall (108a) were two layers: a make up layer of sandy clay (107a) overlain by a thin bedding layer of sand and decayed mortar (106a), which provided the base for the modern cobbled yard surface (105a).

### ***Test Pit 2a***

- 4.1.6 This test pit (Fig. 5, Fig. 8 plate 2) measured *c* 1.65 m x 2 m and was dug adjacent to the garage wall, which incorporates the current Merton College boundary wall. The pit was a maximum 2.1 m deep (to 58.70 m OD). Natural gravel was not reached during the excavation of this trench, which was stepped for safety reasons.
- 4.1.7 At the base of the south-west corner of the test pit was the corner of a possible stone wall (213a), probably extending south beyond the test pit section. It was exposed following the removal of the upper surface of a sandy clay layer of unknown thickness (212a). A clear interface was observed showing that a later north-south aligned wall (205a) was built up to and over this wall. It is therefore possible that 213a is part of an earlier medieval building. Overlying 212a was a tenacious alluvial clay layer (211a), possibly laid down to provide damp-proofing for the wall.
- 4.1.8 The roughly built north-south stone wall (205a) extended beyond the test pit limits and had a maximum thickness of 0.51 m. This wall abutted the Merton College boundary wall situated immediately to the west. Layer 211a was overlain by a beaten floor surface (210a) composed of sand and grit that lay *c* 1.5 m below ground level (at 59.30 m OD). The layer extended across the entire area of the test pit. The wall and floor probably belongs to the stables building shown on maps from 1878 to 1939, as seen in Test Pit 1a.
- 4.1.9 A sequence of layers overlay 210a, the earliest of which (208a) produced a quantity of horse bones. Pottery dates the layer broadly between the 16th-19th century. Further make up layers (207a, 206a and 204a), containing varying quantities of domestic debris were overlain by a redeposited garden soil (203a), and these layers represent the make up prior to the construction of the garages, and probably incorporate demolition debris of the stables block. A bedding layer of sand (202a, containing residual pottery sherds) overlay 203a, and was covered with a brick rubble hardcore layer (201a) that formed the base of the garage floor (200a).

### ***Test Pit 3a***

- 4.1.10 This test pit (Fig. 7, Fig. 9, plates 3 and 4) measured 2.1 m x 1.6 m and was located at the rear of Garage 3, *c* 11 m north of the rear of the Postmasters Hall building, and against the Merton College boundary wall. It was excavated to a depth of 3.8 m below ground level (to 57.01 m OD) where natural gravel was observed. There was no indication in this trench of the characteristic reddish loam subsoil that usually overlies the Oxford gravel (and which was observed in Test Pit 4a, see below). The test pit was stepped and shored, such that parts of the sections were not available for detailed recording and inspection. The test pit was enlarged by the contractors to

enable its full depth to be reached. As a result, this pit produced the most complex stratigraphy.

- 4.1.11 The earliest observed structure was a roughly built stone wall (310a) aligned east-west, at the south side of the test pit. The structure, clearly a wall, was first observed at 0.8 m below ground level (at 60.01 m OD). It was constructed of roughly squared Ragstone blocks of variable size, with irregular bonds of silty clay. The full width of this wall was not observed as it extended beyond the southern limits of the test pit, but it was at least 0.5 m wide. The wall was built over by, and incorporated into, the later Merton College boundary wall and could well extend further west. The structure was well preserved despite later stone robbing, but its original full height is unknown.
- 4.1.12 Wall 310a was abutted by two well constructed stone walls (311a) that formed a corner of a probable building, possibly a cellar or basement. The footings for the walls were cut down into the gravel to a depth of *c* 3.8 m below ground level, so it is likely that the full depth of wall 310a is comparable.
- 4.1.13 The building/basement consisted of a narrow east-west aligned wall that clearly abutted wall 310a, with a north-south return wall of unknown width at the west side of the test pit. Where the two structures formed a corner, the stones were interleaved, indicating that they are clearly of one build. This basement certainly extends to the north outside of the test pit.
- 4.1.14 Wall 311a was built of tightly bonded, roughly squared Ragstone blocks laid in an irregular fashion. They were bonded with a silty clay with inclusions of crushed lime. The tight coursing, similar to a dry-stone wall and the use of thin, tile-like, blocks produced a finely finished face.
- 4.1.15 The east-west return was noticeably thinner than the north-south part of the structure, suggesting that the building utilised the pre-existing ?boundary wall (310a) and required no more than a facing, either for decorative purposes or to provide a comparable width to the north-south wall.
- 4.1.16 At the base of the test pit in the north-east corner were two layers of organic silty clay (not illustrated). The lowest layer (314a) contained large quantities of domestic debris including large pieces of pottery vessels of 11th – 12th century date. A similarly dated pottery group was recovered from the overlying charcoal rich deposit (313a). These deposits were overlain by a possible floor layer (312a).
- 4.1.17 The possible floor layer (312a) consisted of clay with water rolled pebbles and lime mortar fragments. The layer was located 2.5 m below ground level (at 58.31 m OD). This was overlain by a sequence of deliberately dumped deposits, possibly demolition layers. Layer 309a contained pottery of 11th – mid 13th-century date, shell, animal bone and ceramic building material.



- 4.1.18 At the interface of this layer and the overlying layer (308a) was part of a demolished ?structure consisting of large mortar pieces. The upper surface the structure exhibited a cylindrical depression, possibly the remnant of a flue or stoke hole, with the underside showing evidence of burning. It is possible that this once formed part of demolished oven or a hearth. Another curved fragment of mortar was recovered from the overlying deposit 308a, and may be associated. Pottery from layer 308a was of 11th – 13th century date.
- 4.1.19 Over 308a was a similar clay loam layer (307a) from which pottery of 11th-16th century date were recovered. This was overlain by 306a, and contained pottery dating from the 11th – mid-16th century. These deposits were cut by a robber trench (319a), which truncated the east-west wall (310a), and the stone facing of the ?basement wall (311a). The backfill of the robber trench, which was similar to layer 306a, produced a few sherds of pottery dating from the 11th – 14th century. The fill of the robber trench and layer 306a were sealed beneath a layer of clay loam (305a) that lay at the same height as the surviving top of wall 310a. Pottery from this deposit is dated from the 11th – 17th century.
- 4.1.20 A crudely built structure (315a) seen only in the south-east corner of the test pit partly overlay layer 305a. The structure comprised a layer c 0.2 m thick of variably sized, fragmented limestones (317a). A single fragment of pottery was recovered from between the limestone fragments, dating from the 13th – 15th century. The crudity of construction could suggest a floor surface, however the full extent of the feature is unknown
- 4.1.21 Structure/surface 315a was overlain by a compact beaten clay surface (316a) at a depth of 0.9 m below ground level (at 59.91 m OD - not illustrated). A make up layer of clay loam (304a) extending across the entire area of Test Pit 3a covered this layer. In the north-east corner of the test pit at c 0.84 m below ground level (at 59.97 m OD), a dog burial was discovered at the level of layer 304a. The burial had been placed on a thin layer of charcoal (though there was no sign of burning on the bones), on a thin bed of lime. The dog appeared to be placed carefully, slightly curled, but with the head laid upright on the base of the pit. The burial was not directly dated, but its stratigraphic position in the sequence suggests a date somewhere from the 17th – 19th century.
- 4.1.22 The latest deposits in Test Pit 3a consisted of make up layers (303a and 302a) which contained a variety of domestic debris and fragmentary building material. Pottery from 303a was dated from the 11th – mid-16th century and that from 302a, dated from the 11th – 17th century. These deposits represent the final sequence of activity prior to the construction of the garage building, which incorporated a brick rubble hardcore layer (301a) overlain by a concrete floor (300a).

#### ***Test Pit 4a***

- 4.1.23 This test pit (Fig. 7) measured 1 m x 1 m and was a re-excavation of Test Pit 6 from the 2000 season (see Appendix 3 for full trench description). The trench was re-



excavated to a maximum depth of 2.1 m below ground level (58.51 m OD) into the natural gravel. The red-brown subsoil over the gravel was observed at 2.05 m below ground level.

- 4.1.24 Above the subsoil was the fill of the construction cut (see Appendix 3) on which the base of the Merton College boundary wall footings were laid (at c 1.7 m below ground level). No further archaeological information was recovered from this test pit.

## 4.2 Finds

### *The pottery by Paul Blinkhorn*

- 4.2.1 The pottery assemblage comprised 325 sherds with a total weight of 7,611 g. The estimated vessel equivalent (EVE), by summation of surviving rimsherd circumference was 2.38. The assemblage comprised a range of medieval and post-medieval wares, which indicate that there was occupation at the site from the 11th century until the present day, and that the archaeological deposits are extremely well preserved.
- 4.2.2 The pottery occurrence by number and weight of sherds per context by fabric type is shown in the table presented as Appendix 2. The given chronology is the date range based on the types of wares present, rather than an absolute context date.
- 4.2.3 The range of ware types present indicates that occupation at the site was more or less continuous from the 11th century until the present day. The assemblage also appears to be very well preserved; the mean sherd weight for the whole group is in the region of 23 g, with the medieval pottery having a mean weight of c 18 g, including the material redeposited in later deposits. This suggests that the groups are well stratified, and deposited as a result of activity in the immediate vicinity of the excavations.
- 4.2.4 Some of the individual vessels/groups are worthy of note even at this early stage, in particular an extremely unusual (?unique) 15th – 16th century bifid-rim Brill/Boarstall bowl from context 306a. Such a vessel was likely to have been used in some sort of industrial or scientific distillation process as a support for a cucurbit. Context 314a comprised a group of semi-complete and sooted early medieval vessels, indicating that there was domestic activity at the site in the 11th or 12th century.
- 4.2.5 Generally, the assemblage appears exceptional for a group of pottery recovered by test-pitting, and suggests that there are extremely well preserved archaeological deposits at the site.

### *The Animal Bone by Beth Charles by Bethan Charles and Gaylynne Carter*

- 4.2.6 A total of 827 fragments of bone were collected, of which 217 fragments have been assessed. The remainder were briefly scanned, and include a complete post-medieval dog skeleton from context 304a. All bone fragments were counted. Detailed

methodology is held in the archive. Four pieces of human bone were recovered from the site and are noted below.

- 4.2.7 The animal bone was in good condition. Many bones had been butchered, and gnawing of bones by dogs was evident; a few bones were burnt. The bones have been tabulated according to period (either medieval or post-medieval). The majority of bone was from medieval contexts. Domestic fowl bones dominate the assemblage; the majority of these came from layer 314a and represent the remains of no more than three animals. Cattle and sheep are common in the assemblage, which also includes rabbit, wood pigeon and fish. A few fragments of fish spines and vertebrae were recovered from contexts 306a and 307a.
- 4.2.8 Also noted within the assemblage were the large number of immature bones from the main domestic species at the site (cattle and sheep). Of note were bones from a post-medieval context (208a), which included a large number of horse bones with butchery marks; at least two individuals were identified.
- 4.2.9 Of note was the discovery of Human Bone from the following: 308a, juvenile pelvis fragment, 107a, juvenile pelvis fragment, 207a adult ulna (broken), and 305a, adult left metatarsal.

*Table 4.1 Identification of numbers of bones per species according to period*

<i>Species</i>	<i>Medieval</i>	<i>Post-medieval</i>	<i>Total</i>
Horse	3	8	11
Cattle	33	4	37
Sheep	44	7	51
Pig	3	0	3
Dog	0	1	1
Rabbit	4	0	4
Cat	0	3	3
D.Fowl	65	0	65
D.Goose	4	0	4
Woodpigeon	1	0	1
Bird	3	1	4
Unid	29	0	29
<b>Total</b>	<b>189</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>213</b>

#### ***Ceramic building material by Leigh Allen***

- 4.2.10 A total of 5620 g of ceramic building material was recovered from the test pits. The majority is medieval, comprising fragments from thin flat roof tiles. Two fragments from ridge tiles came from contexts 208a and 307a and two fragments with peg holes from contexts 305a and 309a.
- 4.2.11 There are four possible glazed floor tile fragments from contexts 114a, 204a, 207a and 304a. Each fragment is glazed with a single colour only; there are no fragments of highly decorated floor tile.



Table 4.2 Ceramic building material by context

<i>Context</i>	<i>Weight</i>	<i>No of fragments</i>	<i>Comments</i>
110a	67	1	
114a	78	1	Glazed floor tile
203a	117	1	
204a	138	1	Glazed floor tile
207a	158	2	Glazed floor tile
208a	745	2	1 frag ridge tile
302a	37	1	
303a	63	1	
304a	216	2	Glazed floor tile
305a	441	9	Peg hole
306a	742	10	
307a	1371	22	1 frag ridge tile
308a	363	6	
309a	323	2	Peg hole
313a	593	8	
314a	87	1	
317a	81	1	

- 4.2.12 The assemblage is small but indicates the presence of a building in the vicinity. Detailed analysis of the material would require the types and fabrics in this assemblage to be compared with similar assemblages from other excavations of similar date in Oxford.

#### *The metalwork by Leigh Allen*

- 4.2.13 A small assemblage of metalwork was recovered. The assemblage comprised 8 copper alloy objects, 15 iron and 2 lead. The assemblage has not been x-rayed and the majority of the ironwork is very corroded and not identifiable at this stage.
- 4.2.14 The copper alloy. A large circular boss or mount (SF 5) with a diameter of 46 mm was recovered from context 303a. The centre is domed and ridged and there are 3 rivets visible in the flange for attachment. There are traces of iron on the reverse. From context 304a there is a small hooked clasp (SF 10) it has two plates between which the end of a strap would have been secured by a rivet. The upper plate has a scalloped end and an eyelet projecting from it. A small loop of circular section wire found with the clasp could have passed through the eyelet. Hooked clasps of this type tend to be post-medieval in date. A lace tag and a drawn wire pin were also recovered from this context. An irregular shaped fragment and two lace tags (SF 11) were recovered from context 305a and an irregularly shaped fragment of thin copper alloy sheet (SF 7) from context 306a. A loop with a short section of shank protruding (SF 8) was recovered from context 313a; it is possibly a drape ring for hanging drapes or curtains.



- 4.2.15 The Iron. The ironwork is very corroded and very difficult to identify at this stage. The objects are mainly nails and miscellaneous fragments and are summarised in the following table:

4.3 Table of metalwork by context

<i>Context</i>	<i>Objects</i>
114a	Shank with a hook at one end
203a	Corroded object
204a	Sheet fragment and corroded object
208a	Number of fragments of sheet some of them fairly large, rivet visible through one fragment.
304a	3 nails
305a	Nail
306a	Nail and a corroded object
307a	Strip and a corroded object
308a	Corroded object
309a	Nail

- 4.2.16 The Lead: two irregularly shaped fragments of lead, possibly waste product, were recovered from context 309a.
- 4.2.17 The hooked clasp, the lace tags and the drawn pin are all post-medieval in date. The remaining objects are not closely datable.

### 4.3 Palaeo-environmental remains

- 4.3.1 No environmental samples were taken in the course of the work.

## 5 DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATION

### 5.1 Reliability of field investigation

- 5.1.1 The test pits were excavated by the site contractors under supervision by an archaeologist from OA. All excavated spoil was monitored for finds, and plans were drawn at descending levels within each test pit.
- 5.1.2 OA's attending archaeologist visually inspected the test pit sections, and context recording was undertaken. The stratigraphy at the base of Test Pit 3a could not reliably be observed due to poor lighting conditions and the confined nature of the shored trench. Context distinctions were made when a definite soil change could be identified and the deposits subsequently treated as layers.
- 5.1.3 Nonetheless, reconstructing the stratigraphic sequence for each test pit has confirmed the integrity of the ceramic assemblage, which spans some eight centuries. Therefore the method of recovery of data and the way in which the excavations were

undertaken do not appear to have compromised the reliability of the archaeological information recovered.

## 5.2 Overall interpretation

- 5.2.1 The natural gravel was exposed in Test Pit 4a at a depth of 2.1 m below ground level. The gravel was capped by red-brown subsoil that was clearly removed by the construction of the basement in Test Pit 3a. The size and extent of the basement is unknown, but its base lies 3.8 m below the present ground level, indicating that the gravel has been removed in this part of the site.
- 5.2.2 The rough construction and substantial size of the east-west wall adjacent to the basement (310a) could suggest that it is an early medieval tenement boundary wall, dividing land plots between Merton Street to the south and Kybald Lane to the north.
- 5.2.3 The basement to the north of this wall (310a) is an interesting feature. Cellar pits are known from beneath late Saxon houses along the High Street and Cornmarket in Oxford. Early medieval stone-built cellars are very rare, and the one here could suggest a building on the site of some importance. Occupation material adjacent to the walls suggests that they date to the 11th - 12th century, and these layers were overlain by a floor layer demonstrating continued use and re-use of the structure.
- 5.2.4 Demolition debris above the floor layer in Test Pit 3 included substantial remains of a mortar structure tentatively identified as an oven or hearth, and presumably dumped into the basement when it went out of use. This suggests that there was a superstructure above the basement, though the precise nature of activity within the structure is unclear.
- 5.2.5 The ?demolition layers above the remains of the ?hearth could provide a date for the disuse and leveling of this building, which may be at the time the properties here were acquired by the College around 1291-2.
- 5.2.6 The information gained from this test pit exercise and the previous one (OA 2000) suggests that a deeply stratified sequence of deposits exists beneath the yard and the garages in Postmaster's Hall Yard. The pottery sequence spans some 800 years, and the good condition of the material indicated that it has not suffered post-depositional damage.
- 5.2.7 The presence within the pottery assemblage of a vessel likely to have been used in some sort of industrial or scientific distillation process as a support for a cucurbit is an interesting line of enquiry. The 15th – 16th century date for the piece could shed light on Oxford's academic society in this period.
- 5.2.8 The small number of human bones recovered from the site should be noted, although a context for them here is difficult to establish. The bones may derive from a prehistoric burial disturbed by later medieval activity on the site. The remains of two individuals are present on the site.

- 5.2.9 The remainder of finds from the excavations indicate that a large quantity of domestic and possibly college refuse has been deposited on the site, beginning in the 11th-12th centuries to the present.



## APPENDICES

## APPENDIX 1 ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONTEXT INVENTORY

## Test Pit 1a

<i>Context</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Depth (m)</i>	<i>Width (max) m</i>	<i>Length (max) m</i>	<i>Comments</i>	<i>Finds<sub>1</sub></i>
100a	Layer	0.10	1.30	1.10	Modern garage floor	None
101a	Layer	0.12	1.30	1.10	Hardcore	None
102a	Layer	0.98	0.53	1.10	Rubble Backfill	None
103a	Structure	0.80	0.50	1.10	Garage wall footings	None
104a	Layer	0.49	0.82	1.10	Concrete foundations	None
105a	Structure	0.12	0.48	1.10	Existing yard surface	None
106a	Layer	0.05	0.48	1.10	Bedding layer	None
107a	Layer	0.35	0.48	1.10	Made ground	B, Hu
108a	Structure	0.12	0.48	1.10	N – S aligned wall	None
109a	Layer	0.12	0.09	1.10	Clay floor	None
110a	Layer	0.21	0.48	1.10	Made ground	P, B
111a	Layer	0.16	0.46	1.10	Made ground	P, B
112a	Layer	0.31	0.46	1.10	Made ground	None
113a	Structure	0.12	0.32	1.10	Cobbled floor surface	None
114a	Layer	0.58	1.30	1.10	Made ground	P, B, Bm
115a	Layer	0.23 +	1.30	1.10	Made ground	P, B, Bm
116a	Cut	1.4	0.82	1.10	Construction cut	None

Notes: P = Pottery; B = Bone; Bm = Building Materials; G = Glass; Fe = Iron; Cu = Copper Alloy; Hu = Human Bone;

## Test Pit 2a

<i>Context</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Depth m</i>	<i>Width (max) m</i>	<i>Length (max) m</i>	<i>Comments</i>	<i>Finds<sub>1,2</sub></i>
200a	Layer	0.07	2.00	1.70	Modern garage floor	None
201a	Layer	0.18	2.00	1.70	Hardcore	None
202a	Layer	0.24	2.00	1.70	Bedding sand	None
203a	Layer	0.43	1.14	1.70	Made ground	P, B, G, Bm
204a	Layer	0.32	1.14	1.70	Demolition rubble	P, B, G, Fe, Bm, L
205a	Structure	1.13	0.51	1.70	N – S aligned wall	None
206a	Layer	0.03	0.68	1.70	Made ground	P, B, G, Bm
207a	Layer	0.24	0.68	1.70	Made ground	P, B, G, Bm, Hu

208a	Layer	0.46	0.68	1.70	Deliberate backfill	P, B, Bm
209a	Layer	0.06	0.68	1.70	Beaten clay floor	None
210a	Structure	0.32	0.68	1.70	Building floor surface	None
211a	Layer	0.28	0.68	1.70	Clay bedding/sealing	None
212a	Layer	0.20	1.14	1.70	Made ground	B
213a	Structure	0.58	0.56	0.34	Corner of wall	None
214a	Structure	N/A	N/A	N/A	Stables building	None
215a	Structure	N/A	N/A	N/A	Merton boundary	None

Note<sub>2</sub>: L = Leather

### Test Pit 3a

<i>Context</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Depth m</i>	<i>Width (max) m</i>	<i>Length (max) m</i>	<i>Comments</i>	<i>Finds<sub>1</sub></i>
300a	Layer	0.04	1.70	2.10	Modern garage floor	None
301a	Layer	0.27	1.70	2.10	Hardcore	None
302a	Layer	0.20	1.70	2.10	Made ground	P, B, G, Fe, Bm
303a	Layer	0.24	1.70	2.00	Made ground	P, B, G, Cu, Bm
304a	Layer	0.33	1.70	2.00	Made ground	P, B, G, Cu, Bm
305a	Layer	0.38	1.44	2.00	Made ground	P, B, G, Cu, Bm, Hu
306a	Layer	0.48	1.32	2.00	Made ground	P, B, G, Fe, Cu, Bm
307a	Layer	0.32	1.08	1.98	Made ground	P, B, Bm
308a	Layer	0.26	0.88	1.52	Deliberate backfill	P, B, Bm
309a	Layer	0.40	0.88	1.52	Deliberate backfill	P, B, Bm
310a	Structure	2.94	0.54	2.10	E – W boundary wall	None
311a	Structure	1.78	1.02	2.00	Building walls	None
312a	Structure	0.03	0.88	1.30	Floor surface	None
313a	Layer	0.60	0.90	0.78	Deliberate backfill	P, B, Cu, Bm
314a	Layer	0.65	0.90	0.78	Deliberate backfill	P, B, Bm
315a	Structure	0.18	0.80	0.94	Floor/yard surface	None
316a	Layer	0.05	0.48	0.84	Beaten clay layer	None
317a	Layer	0.13	0.80	0.94	Crushed limestone	P
318a	Fill	2.15	0.70	1.40	Robber trench fill	P, B, Bm
319a	Cut	2.15	0.70	1.40	Robber trench	None



## 6 APPENDIX 2 POTTERY CHRONOLOGY

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

OXR: St. Neots Ware type T1(2), AD1000-1200. 3 sherds, 23 g, EVE = 0.  
 OXAC: Cotswold-type ware, AD975-1350. 34 sherds, 568 g, EVE = 0.4.  
 OXBF: North-East Wiltshire Ware, AD1050 – 1400. 4 sherds, 65 g, EVE = 0.  
 OXY: Medieval Oxford ware, AD1075 – 1350. 83 sherds, 1561 g, EVE = 1.07.  
 OXAM: Brill/Boarstall ware, AD1200 – 1600. 74 sherds, 1354 g, EVE = 0.83.  
 OXBN: Tudor Green Ware, late 14th century - c. 1500. 3 sherds, 6 g, EVE = 0.08.  
 OXST: Frechen Stoneware, AD1550 – 1700. 26 sherds, 397 g.  
 OXDR: Red Earthenwares, 1550+. 46 sherds, 3,076 g.  
 OXCE: Tin-glazed Earthenware, 1613 – 1800. 19 sherds, 188 g.  
 CRM: Creamware, mid 18th - early 19th C. 9 sherds, 108 g.

The following wares were also noted. The numerical codes refer to the column headings in the table in the appendix. Table 1

SW: Kingston Ware (Pearce and Vince 1988). c. 1250-1450. White fabric with abundant, well sorted iron-stained, pink, white and clear quartz, sparse to moderate red and black ironstone. Mainly jugs with a rich copper-green glaze, often highly decorated with incised and applied decoration. 3 sherds, 20 g, EVE = 0.

WEST: Westerwald/Cologne Stoneware. Also classified as OXST in the Oxford type-series. Typical hard, grey Rhenish stoneware, usually with cobalt and/or manganese painted decoration. 1 sherd, 5 g.

PW: Pearlware. Similar to Creamware, but with cobalt added to the glaze, giving it a blue tinge. Later examples with painted or transfer decoration. 1765 - 19th century. 7 sherds, 124 g. 19<sup>th</sup>C: Miscellaneous 19<sup>th</sup> century wares such as late English stonewares, mass-produced white earthenwares, etc. 13 sherds, 116 g.

## POTTERY ASSEMBLAGE BY CONTEXT

	OXR		OXAC		OXBF		OXY		OXAM		SW		OXBN		OXST		OXDR		WEST		OXCE		CRM		PW		19thC		
Ctx	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	No	Wt	Date Range
114a			1	8					1	16			1	1															11th-15th
115a									5	233	1	5					1	38											13th-14th
202a																													16th-18th
203a																					3	30							17th-18th
204a															1	29	3	104									7	37	16th-19th
206a															1	31													15th-17th
207a																	1	5											16th-18th
208a																	19	2433			1	19	9	108	7	124	6	79	M16th - 19th
302a							1	22							4	56	14	368	1	5	11	110							11th-17th
303a							1	5	3	76			1	2	1	18					1	17							11th-M16th
304a									13	51					13	222	7	124			1	4							13th-17th
305a	1	2	1	5					6	95	1	7			3	26					2	8							11th-17th
306a			6	69			14	142	16	483			1	3	1	4	1	4											11th-M16th
307a	2	21	8	114	3	55	19	217	16	161					2	11													11th-16th
308a			6	36			9	82	6	105																			11th-13th
309a			8	257			8	47	5	109	1	8																	11th - M13th
313a			3	49	1	10	16	203																					11th-12th
314a							14	837																					11th-12th
317a									1	14																			13th-15th
318a			1	30			1	6	2	11																			11th-14th
Total	3	23	34	568	4	65	83	1561	74	1354	3	20	3	6	26	397	46	3076	1	5	19	188	9	108	7	124	12	96	



**APPENDIX 3 PHASE 1 WATCHING BRIEF RESULTS: (OAU 2000)*****Test Pit 1***

Test Pit 1 was located to the south-west corner of Postmaster's Hall Yard, up against the southern wall of the garages and the Merton boundary stone wall (see Figure 2). Natural was not reached in this pit during the watching brief. The boundary wall to Merton College, which forms the western boundary of the site, continued from the present surface to a metre deep and no foundation was located. Butting this stone wall was another stone wall, aligned east-west, located beneath the existing garages. It is thought that this possibly belonged to the stables shown on maps from 1878 to 1939. The wall had been incorporated into the existing garage foundations. The base of the stone wall or garage foundations extended beyond the depth of the Test Pit. Two recent drains were located in the centre of the Test Pit. Finds from the deposits reached in this test pit indicate that they are of post-medieval (18<sup>th</sup> century and later) origin.

***Test Pit 2***

This test pit was located to the south and up against the rear of Postmaster Hall, south-east of Test Pit 1. The gravel natural was reached at a depth of 0.85 m from present surface at 59.27 m above OD. Most of the deposits encountered was rubble make up, and included two small east-west aligned modern pipes along the north and south sides of the pit. One of the rubble layers, located c. 0.60 - 0.80 m below ground level, contained medieval (11<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> century) pottery.

The test pit revealed evidence for a doorstep and a blocked doorway in the rear wall of the Postmaster's Hall building. It is possible that this represents evidence for a rear wing to the existing Merton Stables building, the doorway providing access between the two buildings. Beneath the rubble, a posthole and a possible pit were identified, cutting directly in to the natural gravel. These features were cut by the construction trench for the Postmaster's Hall, indicating that they are earlier than this medieval structure. Pottery retrieved from the pit dates to the 11<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> century and includes sherds of residual (outside the context in which it was originally deposited) possibly early medieval pottery.

***Test Pit 3***

This test pit was located against a free-standing stone wall along the eastern edge of the yard. Natural was not located in this test pit during the watching brief. Several layers of build up, demolition rubble and garden soil of uncertain date were recorded above two silty clay layers located c. 0.60 m below the present ground surface. Finds from both silty clay layers date to the 15<sup>th</sup> century. The upper layer may be re-deposited material, while the bottom layer possibly represents a medieval rubbish pit, the sides of which extend beyond the excavated area. The construction trench of the stone wall cut the silty clay layers, indicating that the layer is earlier in date than the wall.

***Test Pit 4***

This test pit was located just north of Test Pit 3, against the western wall of the Real Tennis Court, which forms the eastern boundary of the Yard. Natural was not reached in this test pit during the watching brief. Garden soil and build up of post-medieval date were recorded above a silty clay layer located at a depth of c. 1.03 m below existing ground level. This layer was cut by a construction trench for the solid stone wall of the Real Tennis Court (not

bottomed). The fill of the construction cut for the wall contained finds dating to the 15<sup>th</sup> century. Finds indicate that the silty clay layer is of 13<sup>th</sup> century date. The western section of the test pit, partly exposed by workmen after the watching brief (but subsequently recorded by OAU) revealed the presence of a stone wall. This is probably the remains of the central section of a wall shown on Agas' map of 1578, of which only the northern section survives above ground.

### *Test Pit 5*

This test pit was situated 2.5 m to the north-east of Test Pit 4, against a free standing stone wall along the eastern edge of the Yard. Excavation of the test pit revealed two stone walls. One of the walls was of high quality, aligned north-south, located beneath the existing free-standing stone wall. It had been partly demolished and reused as foundations for the later (existing) wall. The footing of the wall was recorded on natural gravel at c. 2.6 m below ground level. Finds from the fill of the construction cut for the wall indicate that it is of 15<sup>th</sup> century date and it is likely to be the wall forming the eastern boundary of the Yard shown on Agas' map of 1578. The second stone wall discovered keyed into the earlier wall and aligned east-west. It had been partly robbed for stone at a later date. The foundations of both walls extended beyond the depth of the test pit.

Most of the deposits recorded in the trench comprised make-up layers of post-medieval date. Two pits were recorded beneath these layers at a depth of c. 0.80 m below existing ground level. Unfortunately neither pit produced any dating evidence although they are at least of a later date than the two aforementioned walls.

### *Test Pit 6*

Test Pit 6 was located immediately to the north of the existing garages in an area currently occupied by a bike shed. The test pit was located against the Merton boundary stone wall along the western side of the Yard. The excavation revealed a succession of demolition and make up layers. The lower two layers (the top of which was located at 0.7 m below ground level) contained 15<sup>th</sup> - 17<sup>th</sup> century pottery and fragments of 13<sup>th</sup> century pottery. The base of the Merton College wall was located on natural gravel at 1.70 m below ground level.

### *Summary of Phase 1 Watching Brief*

The Phase 1 watching brief demonstrated the presence of later medieval deposits across the entire site at between 0.6 m below ground level to 1.03 m below ground level. The depth of natural varied considerably from 0.85 m below ground level at the southern end of the site to 1.7 and 2.6 m at the northern end of the site.

The watching brief revealed a blocked doorway to the rear of the Merton Stables building, which might suggest that there was a rear wing to this building on the site of the proposed Postmaster's Hall Yard building. The watching brief revealed the presence of medieval stone walls shown on Agas' map of 1578, in the area of the eastern wing of the proposed Postmaster's Hall Yard building.



## 7 APPENDIX 4 GAZETTEER OF ARCHAEOLOGY DEPICTED ON FIGURE 1

The gazetteer was compiled by OA's John Chandler and Ianto Wain for inclusion in the desk based assessment. Only Listed Buildings within the immediate vicinity (25 m) of the area of proposed development are included in the gazetteer and on the features mapping (see Figure 1)

**Abbreviations:**

OAU = Oxford Archaeological Unit

SMR = Oxfordshire County Council Sites and Monuments Record

NMR = National Monuments Record

UID = Unique Identifier

OAU No.	DESCRIPTION	NMR UID/ SMR No.
1	Merton College. Founded by Walter de Merton, later Bishop of Rochester, in 1264, moving to Oxford 1274. Some of the present buildings date from this year. The pre-existing church of St John the Baptist was converted to secular use and entirely rebuilt. The buildings for the earliest example of collegiate planning in Oxford. The church moved to site of Magdalene College 13 <sup>th</sup> century. Hall and chapel begun late 13 <sup>th</sup> century. Wardens' lodging built 1299-1300. Mob quad, Treasury and Old Library 13 <sup>th</sup> -14 <sup>th</sup> century. Gatehouse 1418. Fitzjames Gateway c. 1500, restored 1905.	NMR UID 338330  SMR 3472
2	Corpus Christi College. Founded in 1516 by Richard Fox, Bishop of Winchester	SMR 3598
3	Oxford City Wall. <b>Scheduled Ancient Monument no 26.</b> The line of the medieval defences followed the late Saxon defences. The Scheduled section is well-preserved, elsewhere it is fragmentary or non-extant. The section which falls within the study area contains a medieval bastion (extensively repaired and rebuilt) and a blocked doorway or postern of possible 14 <sup>th</sup> or 15 <sup>th</sup> century date immediately to the west of the bastion.	SMR 3459 3460 6275
4	Beam Hall ( <i>Biham Hall</i> ) and No. 3 Merton Street. Listed Building grade II*. Built in two sections; Beam Hall on the east in the 15 <sup>th</sup> century and the western block in 1600. Alterations and additions made to the west wing in 18 <sup>th</sup> and 19 <sup>th</sup> centuries. Major alterations 1964.	NMR UID 338370  SMR L/3549
5	Merton College Stables, 4a Merton Street. Listed Building Grade II. Part medieval 2 storeys rubble with Welsh slate roof. Internal roof timbers are late medieval.	NMR UID 1092591  SMR L/6382
6	Postmaster's Hall (Portionist's Hall). Grade II Listed. Dated to 16 <sup>th</sup> -17 <sup>th</sup> century with modern additions on north. Interior includes original panelling, fireplace, roof. In 1290 Peter of Abingdon had acquired three houses which constituted the property now known as Postmaster's Hall. He was the first warden of Merton and the houses were probably used to house the scholars for whom there was no room in the college.	SMR L/3550
7	Real Tennis Court. Grade II Listed. Site of court dating from 1600, burnt down and rebuilt 1798.	NMR UID 1310771  SMR 6610
8	Logic Lane excavations in 1960 revealed that Kybald Street, which was closed in 1447, was probably laid out c. 1130 (not earlier than 1120) and that its construction truncated many properties which were subsequently subdivided to form tenements fronting the new street. The excavation also revealed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>two prehistoric ring ditches interpreted as the remains of ploughed out Bronze Age round barrows. One of the ditches contained a sherd of Bronze Age pottery;</li> <li>early medieval occupation in the form of three pits (probable rubbish pits) and a beam-slot and posthole (possible boundary fence);</li> </ul>	NMR Event UID 632553  SMR 6195 6465

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>later medieval occupation in the form of 16 pits and four distinct sections of 13<sup>th</sup> century walls.</i></li> </ul> <p>A number of residual finds (outside the context in which they were originally deposited) were also found, including struck flints of Neolithic or Mesolithic date, a probable Bronze Age arrowhead and several sherds of Romano-British pottery.</p>	
9	Three possible late Saxon gravel road surfaces beneath 2ft of later deposit were seen in contractor's excavations in Logic Lane. The surfaces appeared similar to those found in Kybald Street cutting (see OAU 8).	SMR 6466
10	Corpus Christi College. Founded in 1516 by Richard Fox, Bishop of Winchester.	NMR UID 1003239 1092907  SMR 3598
11	OAU excavation in 1972 revealed large ditch cut through loam, believed to be part of 10 <sup>th</sup> century defences. No natural gravel was seen. Auguring in nearby beer cellar in 1979 revealed clay to a dept of 1.70m and to 0.80m to the west and east of the cellar. No trace of ditched defences were identified.	NMR Event UID 632554  SMR 6201
12	OAU carried out a watching brief in 1994, revealing a medieval pit. No trace of the Saxon defences were found, which may lie to the west.	NMR Event UID 1053255
13	The High Street. The western half of the road was laid out as part of Saxon burh, the curved eastern part may have followed a cart track to the river. High Street is first mentioned in 13 <sup>th</sup> century and was previously named East Street (c.1195). A watching brief by OAU during drainage operations on High Street in 1982 revealed 12 <sup>th</sup> century pits and a central kennel or gutter possibly of late Saxon date.	SMR 6516
14	No.1 Kybald Street. Grade II Listed Building. House, once 'The Black House Inn', probably built c. 1600.	---
15	Nos. 4 and 5 Kybald Street. Grade II Listed. Built in 1816 as an Almshouse.	NMR UID 1013332
16	No. 2 Kybald Street. Grade II Listed house. Main part in the centre is 17 <sup>th</sup> century with later additions on the east and west. 3-storeyed roughcast timber-framed with cellars and a Welsh slate roof.	---
17	Possible prehistoric clay net sinker or loom weight and numerous animal bones found by chance c. 12 feet from the surface during drainage works in 1912.	NMR UID 338258
18	Oriel College. Founded in 1324. Whole college was rebuilt in 1620-42 although some 15 <sup>th</sup> century parts remain in St Mary's quadrangle.	NMR UID 338331
19	University College. Grade I Listed Building. The foundation of the college is ascribed to King Alfred but the earliest historical endowment dates from 1249. The foundation stone of the existing building dates to 1634. OAU carried out an assessment of the historic fabric of the hall, kitchen and buttery in 1998.	NMR UID 338333  NMR Event UID 1224239
20	Mob Quad. HW Garrod carried out an excavation here in 1922 which uncovered a small building predating the Mob buildings of 1309 along with medieval pottery.	NMR Event UID 632433
21	D Sturdy carried out an archaeological watching brief at this location in the 1963 and revealed undisturbed natural gravel at a depth of 2.5 feet..	NMR Event UID 654392
22	Oxford Archaeological Excavation Committee carried out a watching brief during the construction of a new strong room in 1969 revealing a medieval rubbish pit.	NMR Event UID 654997
23	Oxford Archaeological Excavation Committee carried out a watching brief prior to the construction of a new common room in 1969 and revealed a large stone-lined chamber with a brick vault, almost certainly a post-medieval cess pit. The site lay across the line of medieval Kybald Street..	NMR Event UID 655015
24	Approximately 3 m of medieval deposits (probable rubbish pits) above natural ground were revealed during development in 1997 (Mr Jeffs of the Merton College Estates Office <i>pers. comm.</i> ). There is no record of this at SMR.	---



## APPENDIX 5 BIBLIOGRAPHY AND REFERENCES

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Pearce, J and Vince, A, 1988 Surrey Whitewares. *London and Middlesex Archaeol Soc Special Paper* 10

## APPENDIX 6 SUMMARY OF SITE DETAILS

**Site name:** Postmaster's Hall Yard, Merton College, Oxford

**Site code:** OXMEPH 01

**Grid reference:** SP 5172 0614

**Type of project:** Watching brief on Geo-technical test pits

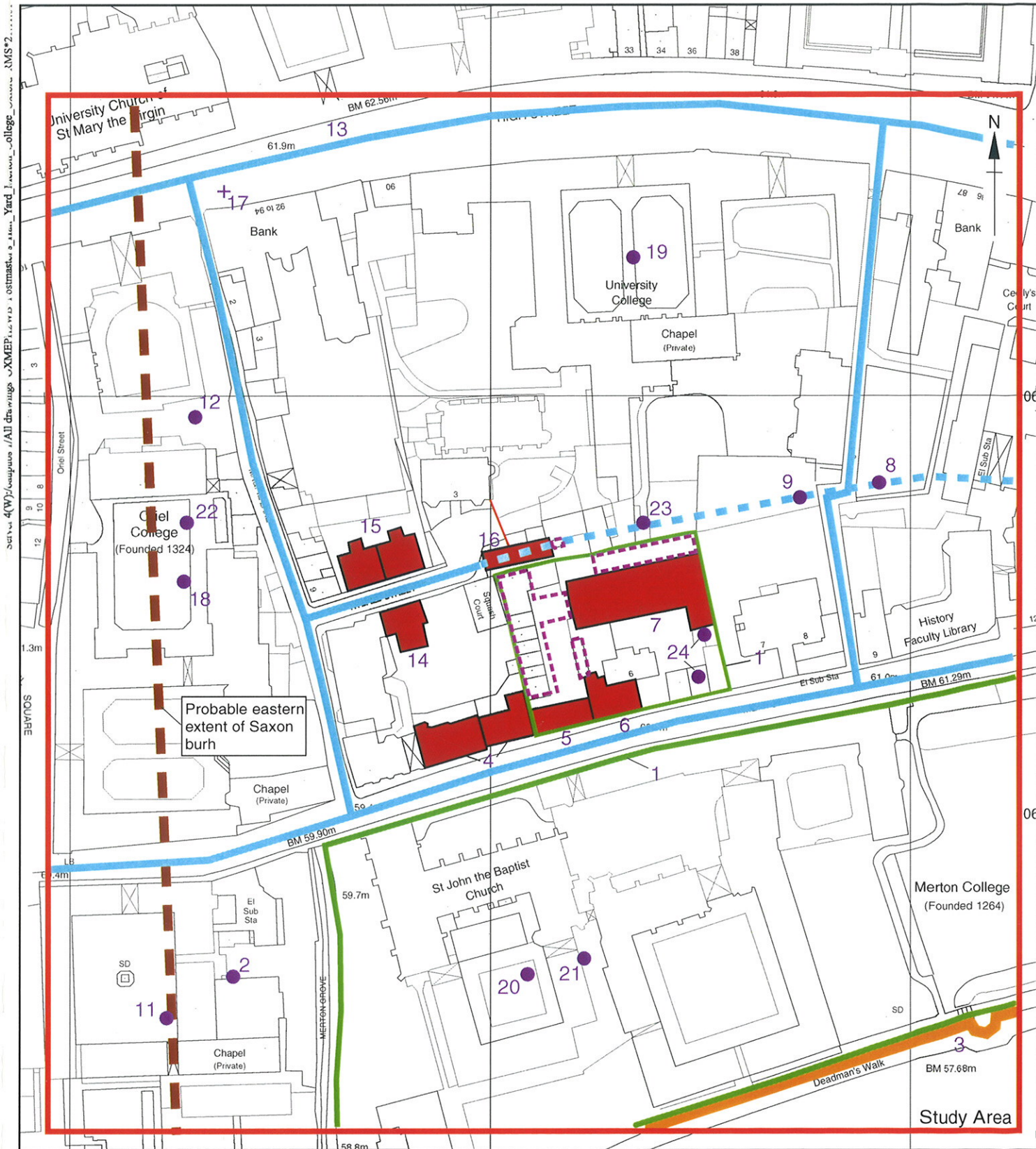
**Date and duration of project:** October-November 2001 (4 weeks)

**Area of site:** 30 m by 8 m

**Summary of results:** Early medieval basement recorded over 3 m below ground level, deeply stratified medieval and post-medieval deposits with a ceramic assemblage spanning 800 years.

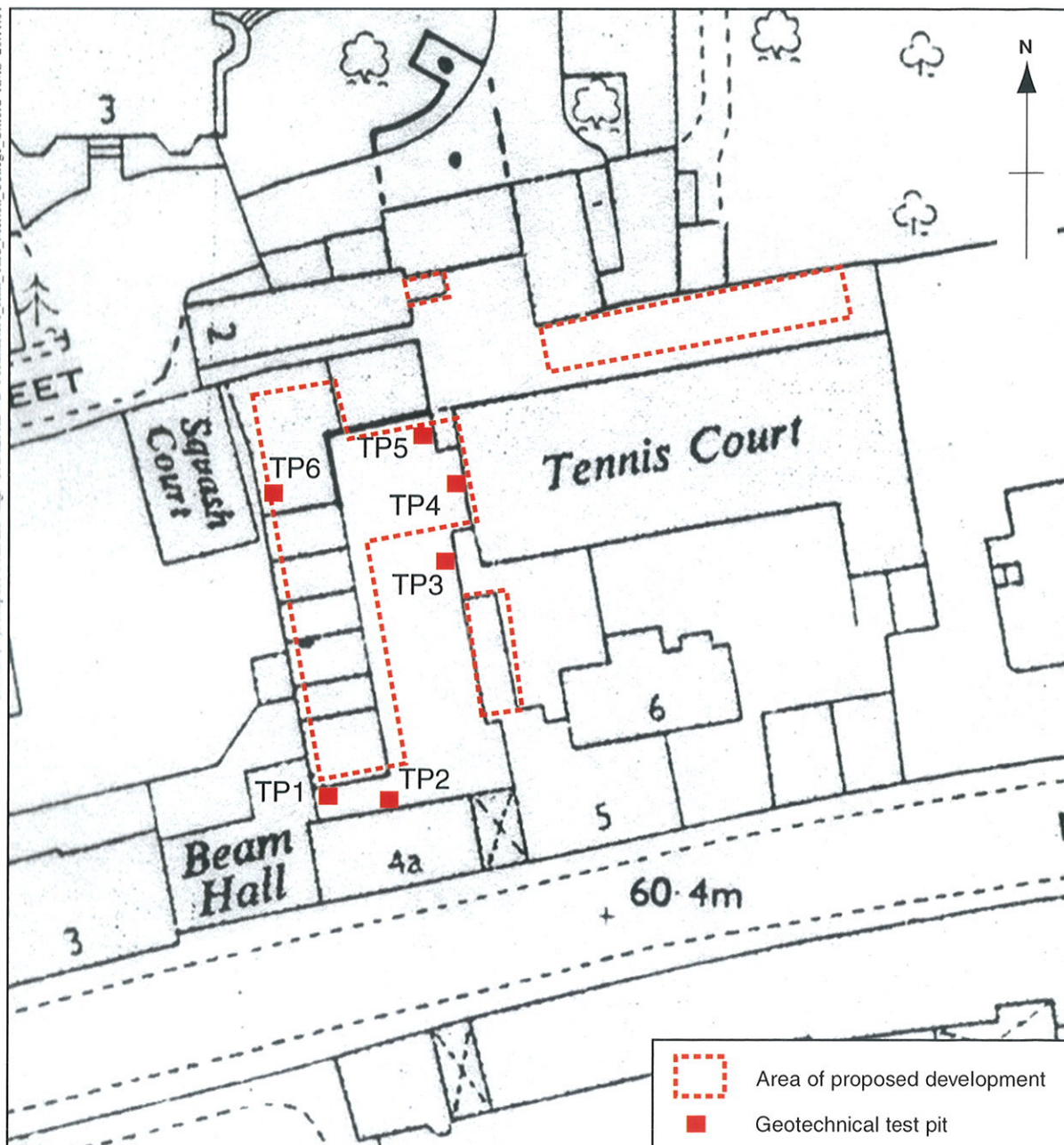
**Location of archive:** The archive is currently held at OA, Janus House, Osney Mead, Oxford, OX2 0ES, and will be deposited with Oxfordshire County Museums Service in due course, under the following accession number: 2000.145





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Figure 1: Archaeological features within the study area



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not to scale

Figure 2: Location of Test Pits Dug in 2000



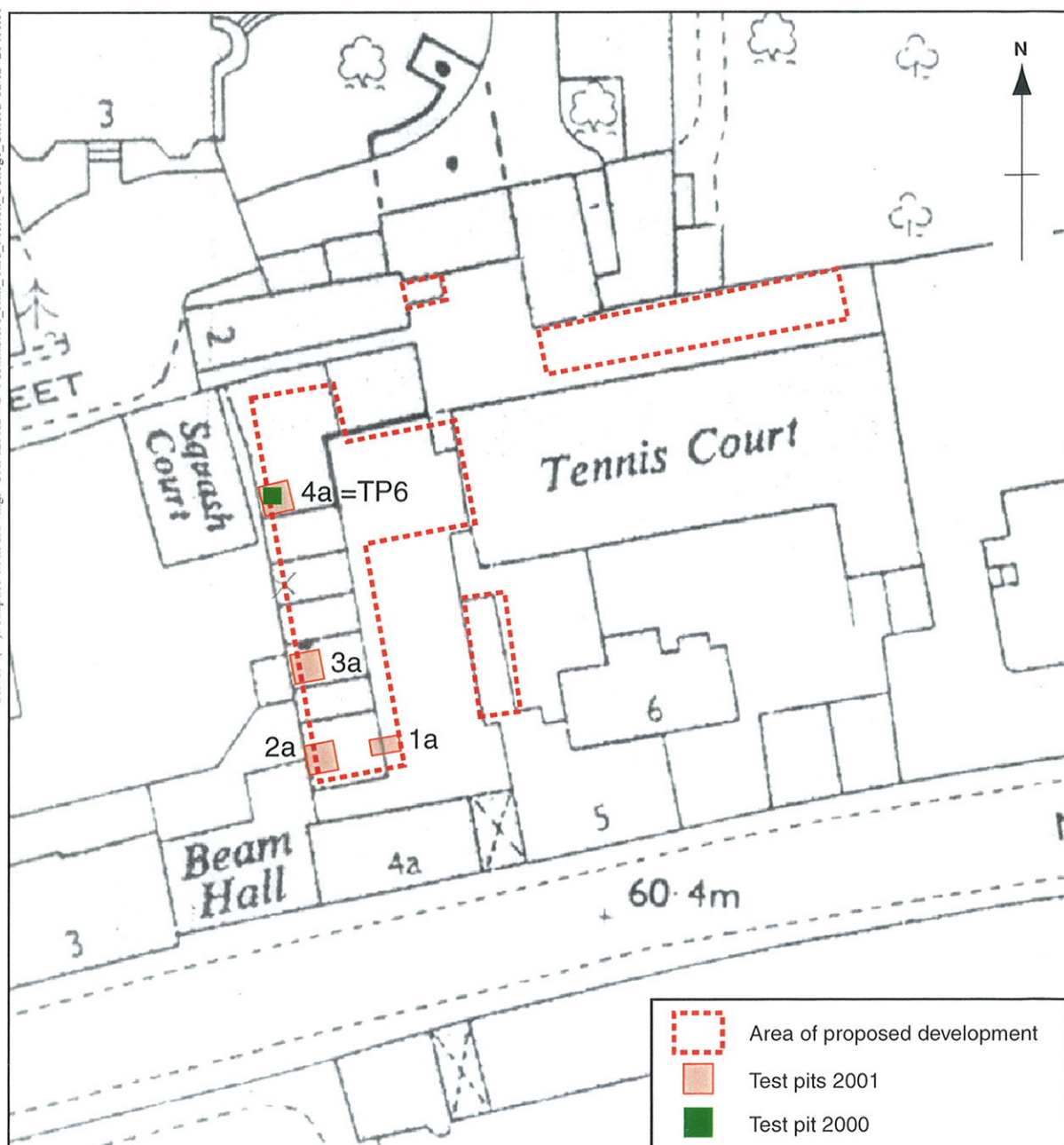


Figure 3: Location of Test Pits Dug in 2001

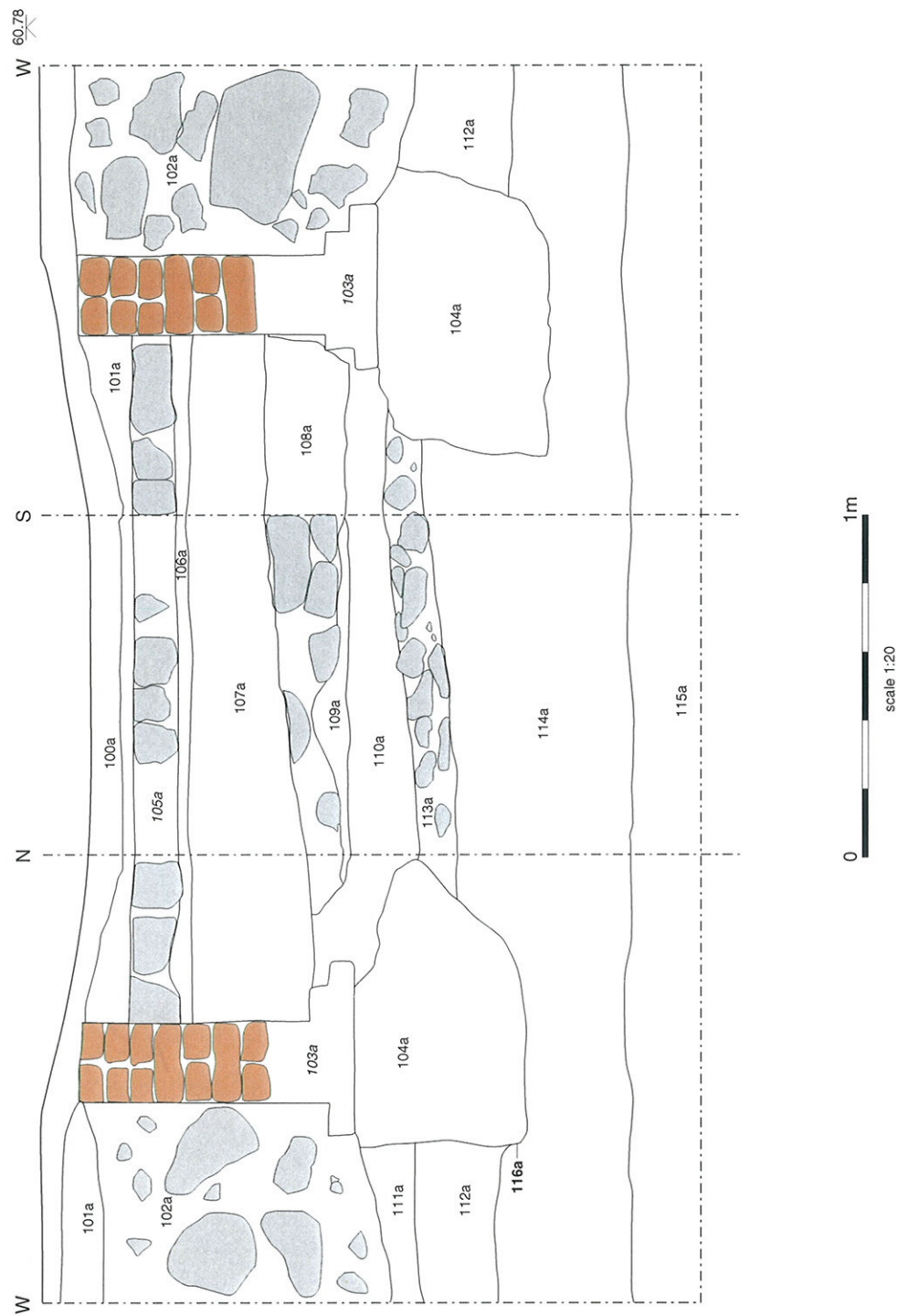


Figure 4 : Trench 1a Section



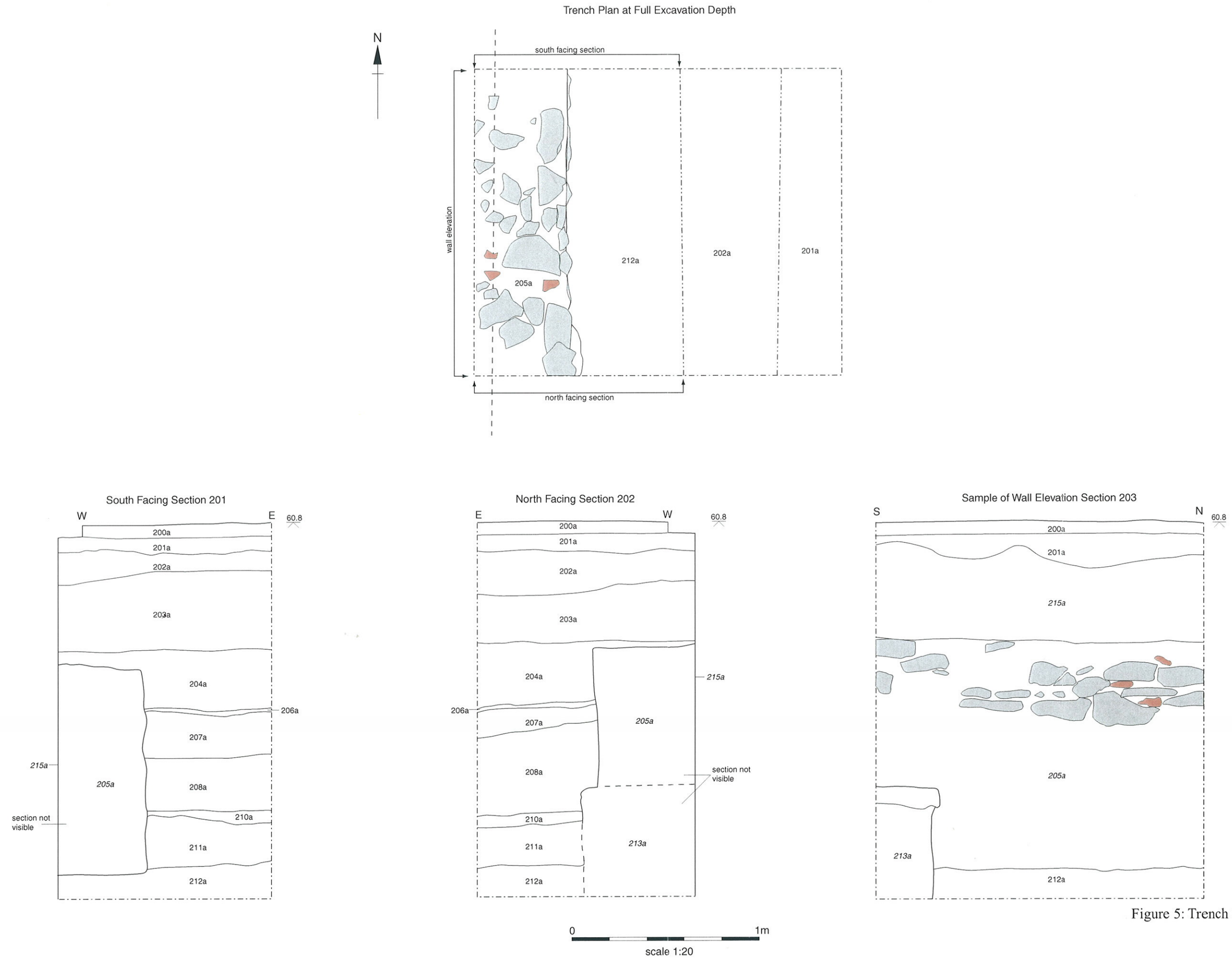


Figure 5: Trench 2a, Plans and Sections

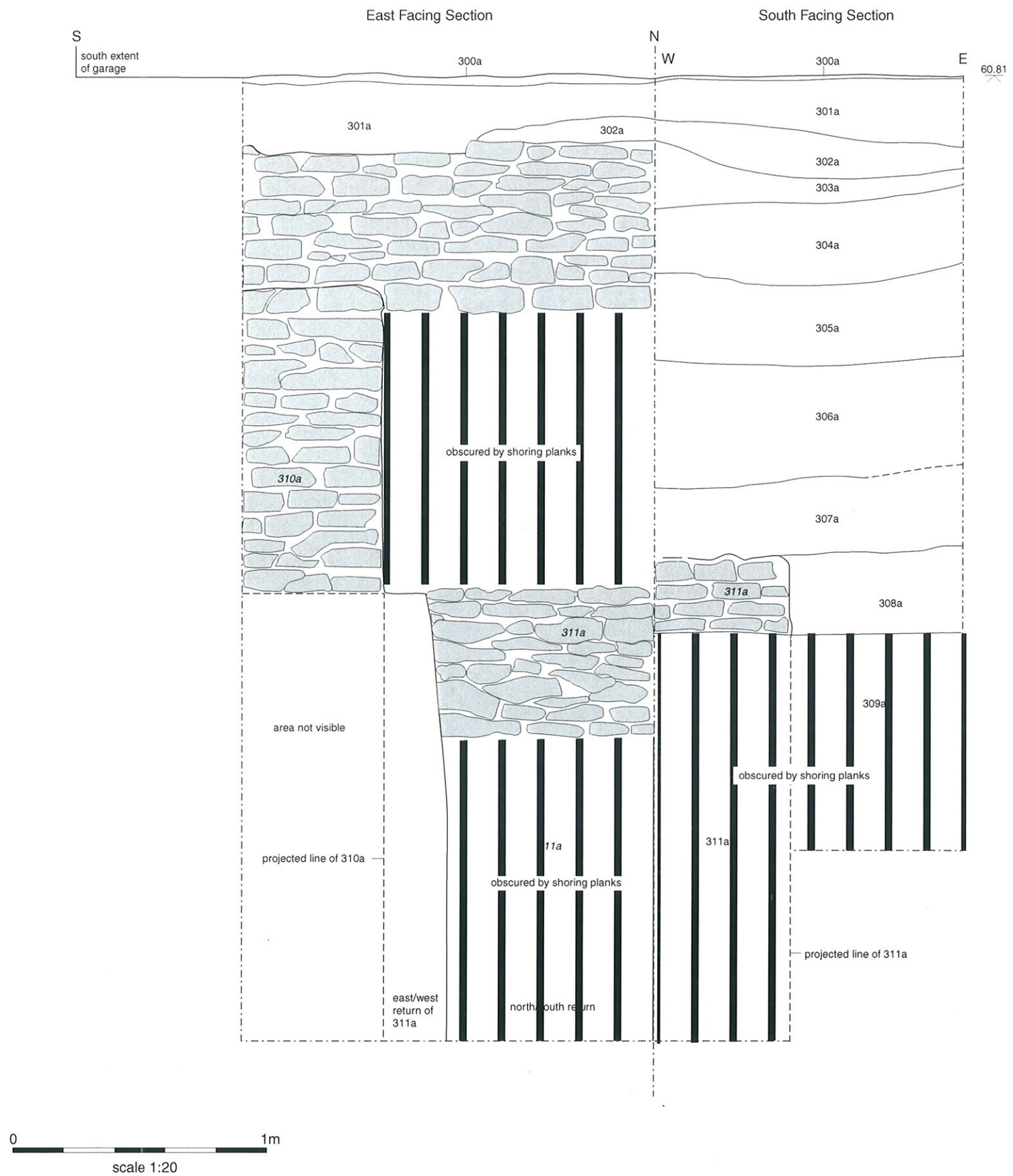
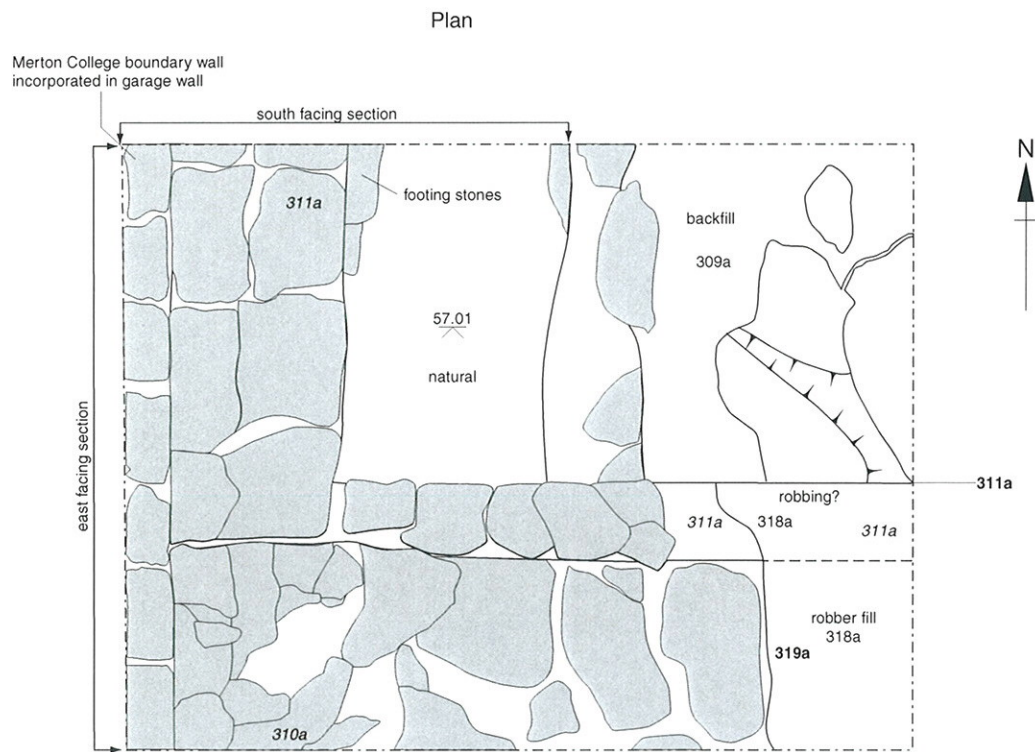


Figure 6: Trench 3a, Plans and Sections



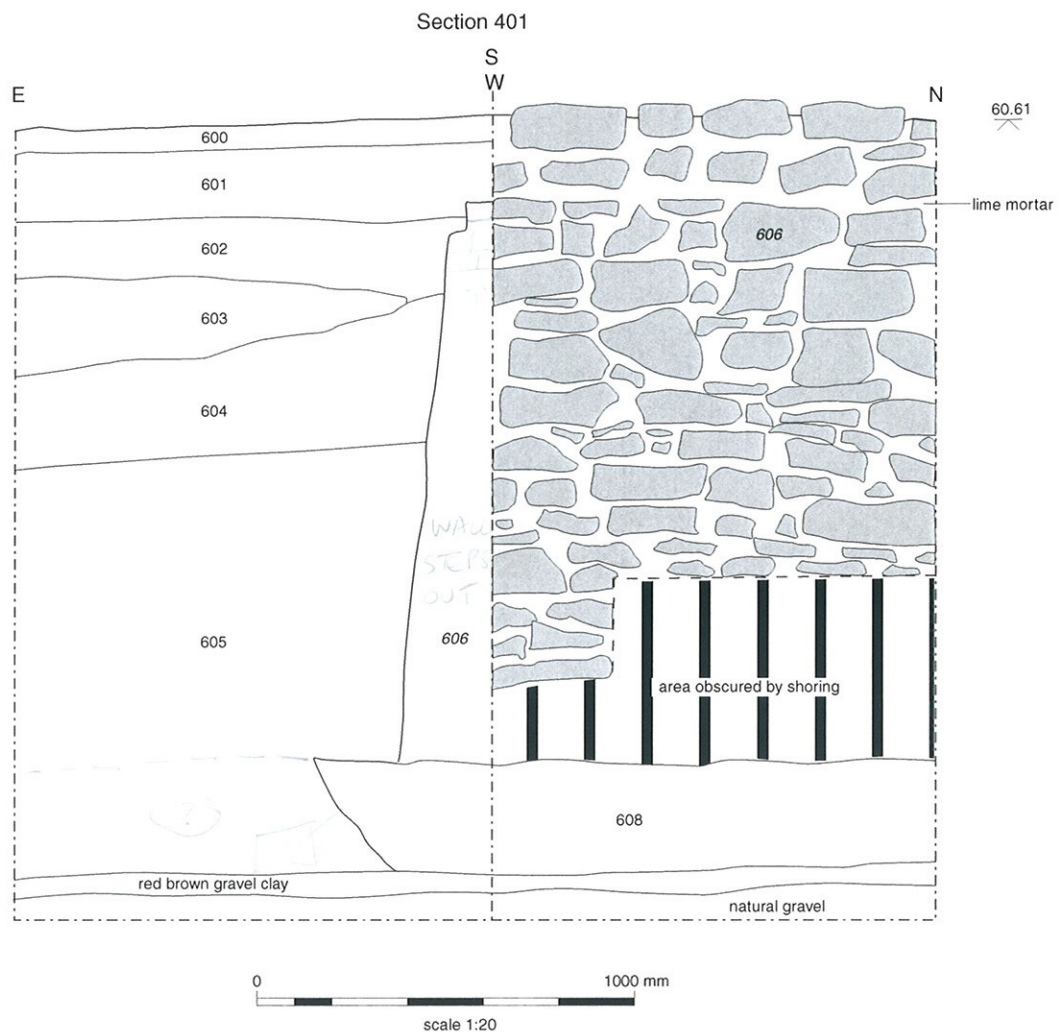


Figure 7 : Test Pit 4 Section



Plate 1: Trench 1a showing footing of garage cutting post-medieval and medieval soil layers, looking South



Plate 2: Trench 2a showing medieval soil layers at depth, looking South

Fig 8 : Plates 1 and 2



Plate 3: Trench 3a Walls 310 and 311



Plate 4: Trench 3a full excavation

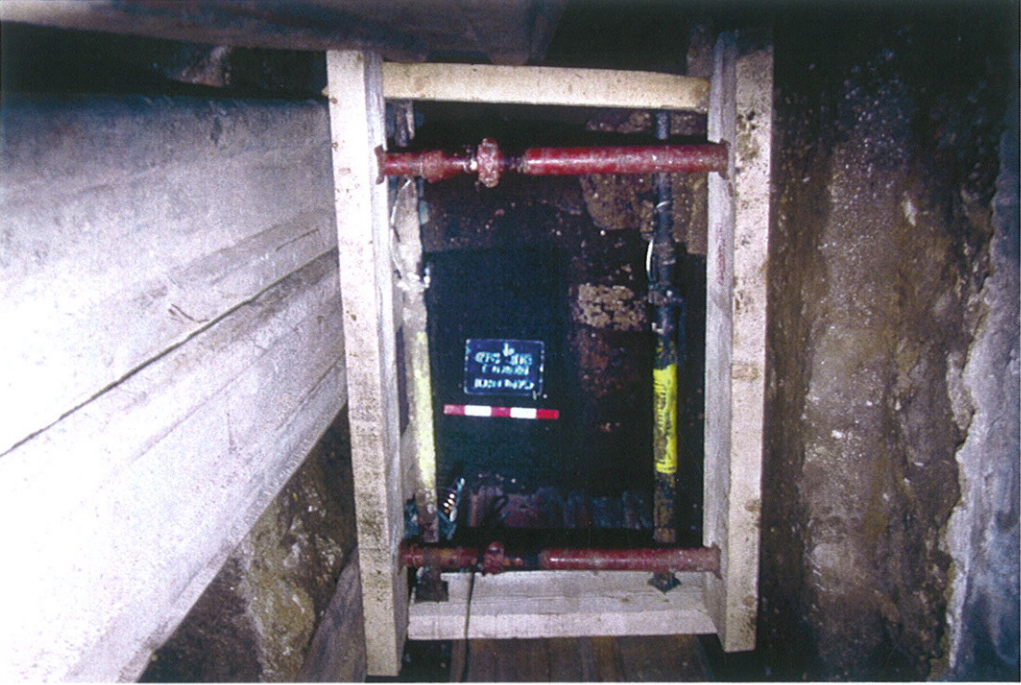


Fig 9 : Plates 3 and 4



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