

Castle, Canal & College: Worcester Street Car Park & related areas, Oxford

HISTORIC CONTEXT STUDY & CONSERVATION PLAN



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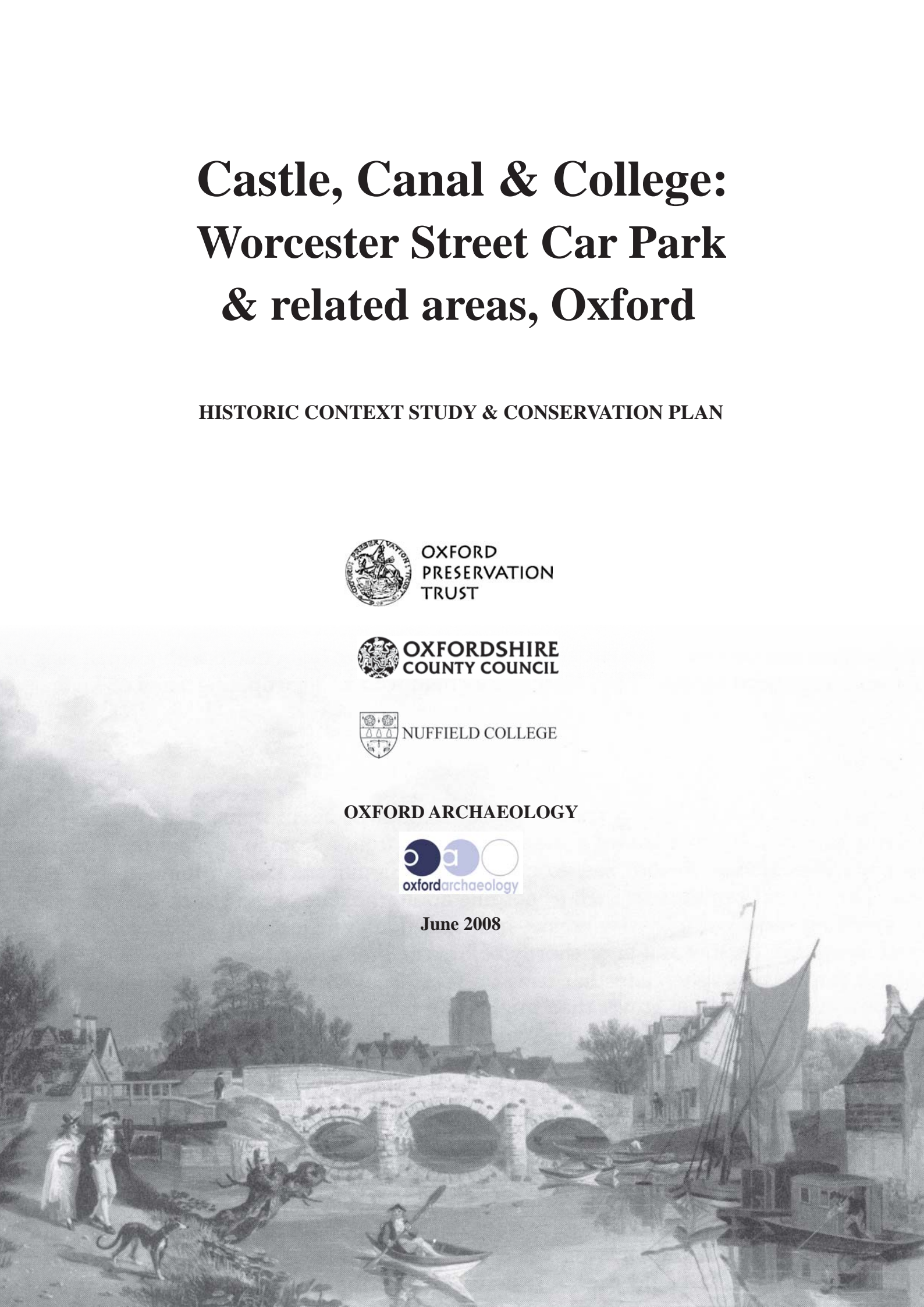


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June 2008



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**Prepared for Oxford Preservation Trust in partnership
with Nuffield College and Oxfordshire County Council by**

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Castle, Canal & College: Worcester Street Car Park & related areas

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Nuffield College, Worcester Street and Car Park

**Castle, Canal & College:
Worcester Street Car Park & related areas, Oxford**

Summary List of Principles

Principle 1

Existing strategies for the area and the support shown for them by public consultation should as far as possible be reflected in future development planning.

Principle 2

Nuffield College's wishes for development on its site might be facilitated through the possibilities of partnership arrangements with other agencies and accompanied by the securing of public benefit.

Principle 3

The historic character of the sites and their settings should be reflected in the location, design and materials of new building.

Principle 4

Potential links with the riverside throughout the area should be encouraged.

Principle 5

As far as practicable in planning development of the Car Park site, recognition and serious consideration should be given to the historic importance of the Oxford Canal Wharf, and the potential public benefit of its partial revival.

Principle 6

Key views which promote enjoyment of the character and features of the neighbourhood should be protected or enhanced.

Principle 7

New development should aim to foster a sense of place and identity for the area, celebrating its value as a focal point through the enhancement or creation of significant pedestrian routes.

Principle 8

Encouragement of public awareness and appreciation of the historic character and distinctiveness of this major area of Oxford's heritage should be central to its future planning.



Macclesfield House, the forecourt off New Road



Tidmarsh Lane, the rear of Macclesfield House to the left, beyond the 1911-14 County Offices

Castle, Canal & College: Worcester Street Car Park & related areas

HISTORIC CONTEXT STUDY & CONSERVATION PLAN

1 GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 Worcester Street Car Park, part of the former Oxford Canal wharf built within the outworks of Oxford Castle, was made available by Lord Nuffield in 1938 for an element of his new college, but was never built on. Its original and intended uses have been almost forgotten as it has remained open land for more than half a century. Public interest in the future potential of the Car Park has increased in recent years, especially with the growing leisure use of the Oxford Canal, and the realisation that the canal might once more be brought back into the area of the former wharf. This aspiration has been reflected in recent planning documents, and a local campaign to promote a revived Canal basin, but other uses have also been suggested in various planning studies.
- 1.1.2 The closure of HM Prison in Oxford Castle in 1996, with subsequent conservation of the historic buildings of the castle and their conversion to public uses - hotel, shops, restaurants, and associated heritage centre - in effect created by 2006 a whole new accessible area for the city and attracted new interest and attention towards its west central quarter. The development was the first and largest element of a wider process which recognised the need to make more of this historic but hitherto neglected part of the city, improving its physical form and structure and the ways in which it functioned, remedying some of the mistakes of the past and valuing its historic character.
- 1.1.3 The process of re-planning has been informed since the mid-1990s by public consultation with neighbourhood and other interested groups, and by the development of strategic studies and initiatives. These led to the production by Oxford City Council in June 2007 of the *West End Area Action Plan*, which proposes a framework for development of the neighbourhood. It encourages an attractive network of streets and spaces, a high quality of the built environment, a balanced range of accommodation for the local community, and a vibrant mix of uses and provision for employment, retailing, tourism, cultural activity, education and leisure. The Action Plan recognises that such development will best be carried out with a clear understanding of the historic qualities of the West End, and the opportunities which new development can afford for fostering a sense of continuity and identification.

1.2 Commissioning

- 1.2.1 The present Historic Context Study for the Worcester Street Car Park and related areas was commissioned in September 2007 by Oxford Preservation Trust in partnership with Nuffield College, and Oxfordshire County Council (OCC), in order to develop such an understanding for this small but significant element of the west central area.
- 1.2.2 The study of the Car Park site was extended to reflect also OCC's wish to consider the future of Macclesfield House, the two sites together forming the nucleus of a historically coherent part of the ancient city which represents some of Oxford's more dramatic moments and major elements of its military and industrial past. With the building of the Norman Castle, this area on the west side of the Saxon town became the western part of the castle's defences, occupied principally by the ditch at the foot of the mound and the area of the western barbican. Outside the great ditch, the 12th-century siege works became known as the Jews Mount and Mount Pelham, and were transformed, with the arrival of the canal in Oxford in 1790, into the site of the terminal wharf, lying mostly along the line of the castle ditch. The building of Nuffield College in the 1950s buried the wharf, partly beneath the buildings of the college, partly beneath the car park.
- 1.2.3 Despite destruction of the wharf and most of its buildings, there remains in the topography and surviving features of the area much evidence for Oxford's military and industrial past in this part of the city. The study was commissioned to draw together this evidence and other information and to establish an understanding of the area's development, as a basis for future planning. It sets out historic and other types of significance while attempting to define former historic character, and considers how such significance has been affected by a variety of issues or might again be affected in the future. It also reflects on how development might provide opportunities for beneficial improvement, and it proposes principles for protecting what is significant, and for building on former qualities in future planning and design.

1.3 Basis and Structure

- 1.3.1 The historic context study is not strictly a conservation plan, in that much of the evidence and former character of the place is lost or concealed beneath modern uses. However, the archaeological potential of the whole area, the extent of documentary and pictorial evidence, and the degree of communal recollection of the area in what are still relatively recent times make a conservation plan approach appropriate, especially in the need to identify, protect and gain contemporary value from the significance of the place. Organisation of the study is based on the model brief in *Conservation Plans in Action* (English Heritage, 1999) and on *Conservation Plans for Historic Places* (Heritage Lottery Fund, 1998), the underlying principles being derived from *The Conservation Plan*, James Semple Kerr, 1996, which promotes the need to understand a historic site and protect its values through processes of change. These principles are also enshrined in Government's Planning Policy Guidance Notes, *PPG 15 Planning and the Historic*

Environment and *PPG 16, Archaeology and Planning*. The study also takes account of the general policies contained in *Power of Place, the future of the historic environment* (English Heritage, 2000) and *Informed Conservation* (English Heritage, 2001).

1.3.2 The study follows a three-part structure:

Part One: Understanding identifies the topographical elements which go to make up the study area, and traces their historical development through time.

Part Two: Significance establishes types of value and importance embodied in the area, and makes a statement of significance for the area as a whole and for its individual elements.

Part Three: Issues and Principles sets out factors which embody threats and opportunities, and proposes principles which aim to protect or enhance the area's significance and character through processes of change, conservation or development.

In considering the issues and potential for beneficial development, ten strategic principles are proposed, drawn from the historic uses and personality of the area. These are supported by subsidiary guidelines, by which principles might be translated into action.

1.4 Authorship, Consultation and Acknowledgements

The study has been compiled for Oxford Archaeology by Julian Munby and John Rhodes.

Oxford Archaeology would like to thank the following for valuable discussion, advice and information:

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Part One: Understanding the historic context

2 INTRODUCTION

2.1 Scope of Survey

- 2.1.1 The study focuses on two component areas of West Oxford in particular: the small piece of land occupied by the Car Park west of Nuffield College (defined by the present line of Worcester Street, Hythe Bridge Street, New Road, and the Castle Mill Stream) together with the site occupied by Macclesfield House, immediately northwest of the Castle Mound. Both in historical and topographical terms, neither site can be properly understood in isolation from the context of their surrounding areas and street patterns. The scope of the study is therefore extended beyond these primary areas to include the whole of the zone enclosed by the river, Hythe Bridge Street, George Street Mews, Bulwarks Lane, the Castle Mound and Tidmarsh Lane, and to consider also the relationship with the wider setting and context. This visual and historical framework is created by Nuffield College itself, the adjacent parts of Worcester College, New Inn Hall Street, New Road and the Castle, and both sides of the Castle Mill Stream, towards St Thomas's and between Park End and Hythe Bridge Streets (see Figure 1). These areas are considered in more detail in Section 4 of the study.

2.2 Review of Sources

- 2.2.1 Oxford is well served by an abundance of records relating to historic land-ownership (from the 13th century to the present), historic maps (from the 16th century), and topographical drawings and photographs of buildings and streets. The western area was the subject of a classic illustrated work of local history, Thomas W. Squires' *In West Oxford* (1928), and the principal source for Oxford history as a whole is now the Victoria County History vol. IV *City of Oxford* (Crossley 1974). A full list of relevant published works is set out in Section 7, Bibliography.
- 2.2.2 The Oxford Canal has been the subject on one historical account (Compton 1976), partly based on original records. Historical records of the Oxford Canal Company have been sought and have been found to survive in abundance: they can be found in the Public Record Office of the National Archives, the Warwickshire Record Office, and the Inland Waterways Archives in Gloucester (see Bibliography).

3 HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

3.1 Topography and setting

3.1.1 The Worcester Street Car Park lies towards the edge of the gravel terrace where it drops towards the River Thames. The Castle Mill Stream of the Thames is the inner arm of the multi-channelled river as it passes around Oxford. Its present configuration would suggest that it is a straightened mill-stream based on a meandering backstream (the Warham Stream) that still passes through St. Thomas's.

3.1.2 The natural course of this stream will have been a wider river channel, and the west side of this channel has been identified in excavations in St Thomas Street (on the far side of the river). Thus the western side of the site may have deposits from the ancient river channel, whereas the eastern side rises up towards Worcester Street. Recent excavations have clarified the process of forming the regular line of the Castle Mill Stream as distinct from the earlier natural course that still survives as a meandering stream to it west.

3.1.3 The Macclesfield House site equally lies on gravel just above the floodplain, at about the same level as the higher parts of the Car Park.

3.2 Historical background – phases of development

Eight phases are proposed within the four principal periods which have characterised the site's historic development:

<i>PRE-CASTLE</i>	Phase 1: <i>Saxon Oxford</i>	to 1066
<i>CASTLE</i>	Phase 2: <i>Norman & early medieval</i>	1066-1270s
	Phase 3: <i>Later medieval</i>	1270s-1570s
	Phase 4: <i>Early modern</i>	1570s-1769
<i>CANAL</i>	Phase 5: <i>New communications - 18th to mid-19th century</i>	1769-1840
	Phase 6: <i>Official building - late 19th to early 20th century</i>	1840-1930
<i>COLLEGE</i>	Phase 7: <i>Nuffield College - mid-20th century</i>	1930-1975
	Phase 8: <i>Modern times</i>	1975-present

Phase 1: Pre-Norman – Saxon Oxford (to 1066)

- 3.2.1 A primary road passed north-south on the line of Worcester Street to Walton Street, perhaps from an old river crossing in the vicinity of the castle at Quaking Bridge.
- 3.2.2 The Saxon town, primarily a square based on Carfax (c.900 AD), was later extended westwards towards St. George's Tower in the Castle, which may be a pre-conquest 'westgate', possibly guarding a river crossing. The road would have led north from this. There may well have been habitation on the east side of the river, and the 'hythe' of Hythe Bridge may already have been a landing place.
- 3.2.3 The line of the present Queen Street continued westwards (through the later castle site) and the traces of Saxon houses found beneath and around the mound suggest that there was a flourishing west 'suburb', possibly extending to Macclesfield House and the Car Park and down towards the river.

Important lost features

Possible buried remains of riverside wharves and other riparian activity

Phase 2: Norman & early medieval – the building of the castle (1066-1270s)

- 3.2.4 The construction of the castle earthworks and ditches from 1071 to form a 'motte and bailey' castle transformed this quarter of the town, and established a secure stronghold on the edge of the late Saxon town, guarding the Thames valley and western approaches. Building the castle involved the removal of an entire urban quarter described above.
- 3.2.5 The castle ditch system, which had a wet ditch at river level (though protected by sluices) occupied a wide swathe of land round the castle, encompassing the motte or mound, on the eventual line of New Road and occupying much of the Nuffield College site, limited by Bulwarks Lane (north) and Paradise Street (south).
- 3.2.6 On the north side the water-filled ditch seems to have followed a curving and relatively confined line (the site of the later canal basin), but on the north and west of the mound the area of water seems to have been more extensive to judge from the early illustrations (see Fig. 3) and the observations of extensive waterlogged areas in excavations and building works (see below).
- 3.2.7 The Normans' propensity for water engineering is shown in the construction of mill streams (Castle Mill), and bridges and causeways (Hythe Bridge) that also transformed the topography of this suburban quarter.
- 3.2.8 All of the Macclesfield House site was in or on the edge of the castle ditch, as shown by excavations that found deep waterlogged deposits of ditch fill (Hassall 1976, 242). The south-east part of the Car Park was in a distinct area occupied by earthen mounds shown on Loggan's 1675 map. Known as

Jews Mount and Mount Pelham, they are believed to have been siege mounds erected by King Stephen when besieging Matilda in the castle in 1142.

- 3.2.9 Most of the remainder of the Car Park was a series of domestic properties of Oseney Abbey. The 1279 Hundred Rolls gazetteer of West Oxford describe properties extending all the way from the west gate of the castle (Tidmarsh Lane) up to Walton Street. This back way from the castle west gate was also the road leading to the 'King's Houses' otherwise known as Beaumont Palace, an important dwelling of the Angevin Kings (now Beaumont Street).
- 3.2.10 One of the occupants of the north end of Tidmarsh Lane in the late 13th century was called Geoffrey de la Barbican, which suggests that there was a castle western barbican somewhere here (possibly as far out as the Car Park site). This may have been no more than a defended outer gate (of the castle's west gate that was found beneath the Castle Education Centre), but the eastern barbican, found in building the Westgate Centre in the 1960s, was an elaborate affair with a large semi-circular ditch and a double bridge.

Important lost features

Possible buried remains of riverside wharves and other riparian activity
Possible buried remains of Hythe Bridge causeway
Possible buried remains of medieval houses and domestic activity
Possible buried remains of castle western barbican
Remains of castle ditch.

Phase 3: Later medieval – the castle in decline (1270s- 1570s)

- 3.2.11 The 13th-14th centuries may have been the heyday of the north and west Oxford suburb, for the continuous rows of houses noted in 1279 did not continue, and much of George Street and Walton Street were depopulated. The houses on the Car Park site seem to disappear in the 14th century, and are not apparent on Ralph Agas's map of 1578/88.
- 3.2.12 The significance of the Castle declined to the point where it was only used for assizes and county courts, and as a prison, and its buildings decayed.

Important lost features

Possible buried remains of riverside wharves and other riparian activity

Phase 4: Early modern – development of the site: gaol and housing (1570s to 1769)

- 3.2.13 This period saw the re-growth of suburban areas especially round George Street, with much new building taking place in the city-owned wastes in the castle and town ditches and around Jews Mound (and in Fisher Row). The west suburb in general, especially St Thomas's, largely belonged to Christ Church, which was endowed with the lands of the former Oseney Abbey.
- 3.2.14 The Shire Hall was abandoned after the Black Assize of 1577 and became a ruin, although the prison remained near St George's Tower. The Castle was

sold by the Crown to Christ Church in 1600, which led to a lawsuit with the city over the limits of the land purchase. This fruitless dispute did however produce a wealth of verbal testimony on the appearance of the castle and its environs, and two picture maps illustrating the evidence.

- 3.2.15 The map of c.1616 (Figure 2b) shows the Car Park site empty, except for a branch of the river entering the site (not shown elsewhere), and perhaps one building. The same was true of Loggan's 1675 birdseye view (Figure 3), showing one building and the site under cultivation (perhaps as a market garden or nursery, an area later known as Bossom's Garden).
- 3.2.16 The castle ditches gradually filled up with rubbish though remaining partly wet, but were not much built on. As late as Malchair's late 18th-century view down Tidmarsh Lane (Figure 19a) nothing is shown on the east side (Macclesfield House) except for a marshy area opposite the Malthouse.

Important lost features

- Possible buried remains of riparian activity
- Infilled castle ditches

Phase 5: 18th - mid-19th century – new communications: New Road and the Oxford Canal (1769 -1840)

- 3.2.17 Considerable changes were introduced during this major phase, effectively transforming the medieval topography of the castle defences and siege works in the western area of the town (both inside and outside the line of the town wall) into a pattern of road and water communications which survived until the mid-20th century and remains the basic structure of the area today.
- 3.2.18 The defining change was the construction of New Road, built in 1769-70 on the north side of the castle as an improved turnpike route from the town centre directly out towards Botley and the west.¹ It connected with Tidmarsh Lane and with a new road to be built on the line of Park End Street, and crossed the Castle Mill Stream by a new bridge (Pacey's Bridge).² It effectively duplicated the existing route which ran outside the line of the town wall, down George Street and along Hythe Bridge Street; today these parallel routes create the modern network of traffic routes through the area. The New Road cut through what remained of the northern rampart-and-ditch defences of the castle and clipped the foot of the mound (which was consciously preserved '*as a venerable Monument of Antiquity*' by Christ Church when they might otherwise have sold it for use as road material), leaving a stretch of the old castle ditch detached and isolated on the north side of the new thoroughfare.
- 3.2.19 On the southwestern side of the New Road, where it joined Tidmarsh Lane, a small triangle of land was sold in 1779 to the City on which to build a pound, later to be the site for St Peter-le-Bailey School, and in 1911 that for the

¹ Munby and Walton, 'The Building of New Road', *Oxoniensia* LV, 1990, 123-130.

² Named after an 18th-century innkeeper of the Queen's Arms.

County Offices. This was in the area of the old water-filled ditch and castle barbican, north and west of the mound; the waterlogged underground conditions were observed during the building of the County Offices, and of Macclesfield House in the 1960s (Phase 7).

- 3.2.20 The area of castle ditch north of New Road, with the remains of the 12th century siege works known as Jews Mount and Pelham Mount, was defined on the north by the ancient line of Bulwark's (Bullock's³) Lane, which followed the northern side of the former castle ditch, with a dog-leg where it crossed the line of the town wall. In 1789, as the extension of the Oxford Canal south from Banbury reached its destination, this land and the area lying across Worcester Street from it were sold by the City to the canal company to allow construction of its terminal basin (Figures 5 and 6).
- 3.2.21 The canal had commenced building from Hawkesbury in Warwickshire in 1769 and paused for a while at Banbury as additional funds were sought. Both the Oxford City authorities and individuals from the University were keen to see the benefits of good transport communications with the Midlands made available to the city and through it downriver to London, especially for coal, building materials and timber.⁴ A key promoter of the canal was Sir Roger Newdigate, Warwickshire coal-owner, MP for the University of Oxford and one of its major benefactors. Although the area of the University Parks was initially (in 1769) proposed as the location for the terminus, a connection with the Thames had become a crucial factor and instead a site was identified close to the Castle Mill Stream and to Hythe Bridge. The present Hythe Bridge/Car Park site was purchased first, but as the need for more extensive wharfage became clear, the New Road/present College area was added to it. As the navigation approached Oxford, the basin was built with considerable speed and the canal ceremonially opened to traffic, with the ringing of St. Thomas's church bells, on New Year's Day, 1790.
- 3.2.22 Building and completion of the basin and wharfs were contracted by the Canal Company to Daniel Harris using felons from the County Gaol in the Castle, of which he was Keeper. A Coal Wharf was laid out on the arm of the basin alongside New Road, utilising the line of the old and now silted castle ditch (Figure 15). Boats entered the Coal Wharf through a bridge beneath Worcester Street and, in the area of the Worcester Street wharf itself, a stone and brick warehouse on arches was built to protect a Merchandise or Goods Wharf, for dry and other vulnerable cargoes, completed by 1795. An office and residence were then built on land acquired in New Inn Hall Street (Wyaston House, now the main entrance range of St Peter's College) though the offices were transferred in 1829 to a new building in Doric temple style overlooking the Coal Wharf from its eastern end on Bulwark's Lane (the Wharf House, now the Master's Lodgings for St Peter's College). To make a connection to the Thames a flash lock was built in 1789-90 close to Hythe Bridge (in the position of the present weir) but it proved unsatisfactory and had been replaced by 1796 with a new Isis Lock.

³ Bullock was a common scavenger in the 16th century (Wood).

⁴ Though in order to obtain general parliamentary support, the original Bill specified that coal carried on the Oxford Canal was not to be allowed onto the Thames.

- 3.2.23 Plans produced in the early part of the 19th century demonstrate the existence of other buildings around the Y-shaped basin by 1840. On the Goods Wharf on the Worcester Street site, in addition to the main warehouse, there were other warehouses on both sides of the canal and backing on to the Mill Stream, which appear on photographs for the later part of the century and, facing across Worcester Street towards George Street Mews, a Wharfinger's House and office, surviving until after 1939. Further warehouses lay in the Coal Wharf close to the Worcester Street Bridge; the area of the wharf, bounded on the north by a row of small houses with gardens on George Street Mews, was largely open with individual plots for coal merchants and building materials, as it remained until the 1930s. At the eastern end of the Coal Wharf site was a Weighbridge (already there by the time of the 1838 Plan) accessed from New Road.
- 3.2.24 Bridge 244, through which the canal entered the basin under Hythe Bridge Street, was widened on the north side around 1860, adding to the original brick-arched bridge built on the common Oxford Canal pattern, a parallel bridge of iron girders and jack arches. Both bridges substantially remain to carry the present Hythe Bridge Street (though the arch of the earlier bridge was destroyed and infilled in 1968 - see note on page 16), and now carry also a fresh water main within their structure.



Principal surviving features of the phase
 New Road 1769-70

Wyaston House (Oxford Canal Company), 1790-95
 Oxford Canal Company Offices (The Wharf House), 1829
 Boundary walls to Worcester Street Car Park, representing demolished warehouses
 Surviving elements of Canal Bridge 244 on Hythe Bridge Street Prison buildings (Entrance range; C & D wings), 1790-1800

Important lost features

Canal basin, Worcester Street Goods Wharf and Coal Wharf
 Warehouse buildings, especially at Worcester Street Wharf
 Canal Bridge (245) on the former line of Worcester Street

Boundary walls along Hythe Bridge Street, 18th century stonework (above) and the patched remains of the brickwork of Bridge 244 (below)

Phase 6: Late 19th/early 20th century – official buildings: Prison, Militia Armoury, County Hall, Education Offices (1840–1930)

- 3.2.25 While the area of the Canal Basin remained much as it had been developed by the mid-19th century, this succeeding phase is characterised by a good deal of building activity in the area south of New Road, mostly for public bodies and to provide accommodation for the prison, the local militia, and the administration of local government.
- 3.2.26 This substantial building phase began with the construction of new Assize Courts on New Road (Old County Hall, designed by John Plowman, 1839–41, in a remarkable neo-Norman castellated style) signalling a return of local justice to the castle site after its removal in 1578, and by enlargements for the Prison, southeast of the Castle Mound, during the 1850s. On the northwest side (i.e. on the Macclesfield House site), with a frontage onto New Road, the Militia Drill Hall and Armoury was built in 1854 (a castellated design by J.C. Buckler), soon becoming also the first headquarters of the County Police. Behind it, alongside Tidmarsh Lane, was the Drill Ground where Macclesfield House itself now stands, and beyond it, at the corner of New Road and Tidmarsh Lane, St Peter-le-Bailey's School was in existence by 1850 (Hoggar map). The school was replaced in 1911–14 by new County Offices by the Oxford architect W.A. Daft, a very successful two-storey corner building, which remains in use by the County as Registry Office at this important focal point.
- 3.2.27 Across New Road, in the area of gardens at the east end of the Coal Wharf, the (surviving) Probate Registry, by Charles Buckeridge, was built in 1863. Within the Canal Company's wharf itself there were modest changes from time to time: the widening of the bridge (Bridge 245) and roadway where Worcester Street crossed the long arm of the basin (1852, probably involving the building of the yard gate-pier which survives adjacent to the public house, which itself may have been built in the 1840s if not earlier); a new store by 1878 for Phillips the Brewers, off Hythe Bridge between the canal and the Mill Stream (or perhaps a new frontage for an existing building); and a new warehouse built against the north side of the Worcester Street Bridge between 1900 and 1921.



Principal surviving features of the Phase

Old County Hall	1839-41
Prison buildings (A wing, Chapel Range)	1850s
Probate Registry	1863
County Offices	1911-14
The public house by Pacey's Bridge (formerly Pacey's, The Queen's Arms and now Rosie O'Grady's) maybe of the very beginning of this phase	
Gate pier adjacent to public house, 1852	

Important lost features

Militia Drill Hall	(1854-1966)
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Upper: Old County Hall
Lower: Canal basin gate pier, adjacent to Rosie O'Grady's public house



Left: County Offices at corner of New Road and Tidmarsh Lane
Right: Rosie O'Grady's Irish Pub, at corner of Worcester Street and Park End Street

Phase 7: Mid 20th century – Nuffield College and new buildings for the County Council (1930-75): Nuffield College, Macclesfield House, New County Hall

- 3.2.28 By 1930 the canal, which had been highly profitable in its early days, was suffering considerable loss of trade through competition from the railways and, increasingly, road transport. It was still used in the earlier part of the century for carriage of coal through to Oxford, and for cement from the Kirtlington quarries, but by the late 1920s the Worcester Street Wharf was largely disused, and photographs show the coal wharf as empty and desolate. In 1927 the Company considered that remaining traffic could be handled at the smaller wharfs in Jericho, and resolved to dispose of the New Road and Hythe Bridge sites.
- 3.2.29 Just prior to the Second World War (in 1937), Lord Nuffield offered a benefaction to the University of around one million pounds, primarily to found a new college to be devoted to the social sciences.⁵ He had recently purchased from the Oxford Canal Company the Coal Wharf area of the basin, and offered this as the site for his new college, hoping he could also by this means achieve a wish to improve the whole aspect of the approach to the city from the west. As plans developed, the college was to include a new institute for research and teaching in addition to the conventional college functions, and to accommodate this the area of the Worcester Street Wharf, intended originally for the library building, was also acquired and transferred to the University. Austen Harrison (most of whose work to date had been abroad, in Greece and, particularly, Palestine, rather than in England) was chosen as architect.⁶ His first designs for the two parts of the foundation were modern, bold and impressive but they were not liked by Nuffield, as being not sufficiently English, nor ‘in an Oxford tradition.’ Harrison redesigned the college ‘on the lines of Cotswold domestic architecture’ but retained the axial planning intended to unite the two parts of the new foundation, which was to be further achieved by the straightening of the old curved line of Worcester Street, as applied for in 1939 (Figure 43).
- 3.2.30 The coming of war prevented any start on building before 1949, and the Coal Wharf was used to house the single-storey wartime Municipal Restaurant which remained into the post-War years (Figure 27). Thomas Sharpe in his 1948 study *Oxford Replanned*, made few suggestions about changing what was envisaged for the immediate area, and apart from proposing a new road parallel with George Street on the north, to connect with Hythe Bridge on the way to the stations, mainly lamented the unattractiveness as shopping streets of New Road, Park End Street and Hythe Bridge Street.

⁵ Brian Harrison, ed., *The History of the University of Oxford, Vol. VIII, The Twentieth Century*, 1994.

⁶ Howard Colvin, *Unbuilt Oxford*, Yale University Press, 1983, 166-77.

- 3.2.31 The foundation stone for the new college was laid in 1949 and through the 1950s Nuffield College in its present form was built in the area of the old Coal Wharf, along New Road and the re-aligned Worcester Street. In the area of the Worcester Street Wharf itself, however, although the warehouses, including the fine Merchandise Wharf building of 1795, were demolished, the canal filled in, the bridge hole below Hythe Bridge Street blocked off⁷ and the canal cut short on its present termination, no building took place (See Figures 29 - 31 for photographs of the basin at the time of the demolitions). The site of the Wharf was surfaced as a temporary measure to form a car park, but with the increase in building costs in the war years and afterwards, it was not possible to fulfil Nuffield's intentions and to complete Harrison's designed scheme with the building of the proposed institute, and a car park it has remained for over half a century.



Main (west) front of Nuffield College, looking across Worcester Street from the Car Park

- 3.2.32 After completion of the existing parts of Nuffield College in 1960, across New Road the County Council carried out other major building works. Macclesfield House (by the County Architect, completed 1969) was built to replace the demolished Militia Armoury, hard up against the Castle Mound. It is arguably more visually successful on the New Road side, where it respectfully draws back and allows good views of the mound itself, than on its rear side, where it is badly out of scale and unsympathetic in its materials to the small scale character of Tidmarsh Lane. Soon after (1974) came the

⁷ The brick arch of the 1790s bridge, initially blocked with brickwork, was demolished in 1968 as in poor condition and the space below filled with ballast between concrete retaining walls. The corresponding space below the girder and jack-arch bridge widening of c.1860 was left open until sealed in 1976, and the remaining void eventually infilled with concrete, faced with brickwork, in 1990. At this time the water main, until then mounted externally on the north side on the bridge, was incorporated within the bridge structure (Information OCC Environmental Services, correspondence with British Waterways, 4/4/2000). Only a short row of brickwork, outside the line of lost voussoirs, remains to indicate the position of the bridge arch on the south (Car Park) side.

even more massy new County Hall (by the County Architect) on the corner of New Road and the (re-aligned) Castle Street.

Principal surviving features of the Phase

Nuffield College	1949-60
Macclesfield House	1969
New County Hall	1974

Phase 8: Modern – (1975-present)

- 3.2.33 Very little new building has taken place anywhere in the study area in the third of a century since New County Hall and the Westgate Centre in the early 1970s, though there has latterly been significant new buildings on its periphery, in Hythe Bridge Street, Park End Street and along the Mill Stream. The principal changes in the immediate area have been in the use of buildings rather than their structure, with the development in recent years of leisure zones in George Street and the area around Park End/Hythe Bridge Street. This trend has been continued and promoted in the development for public access of the whole Castle/Prison site, accompanied by conservation and/or generally sensitive conversion of historic buildings and only one major new building, the Living Room restaurant southeast of the Castle Mound (by Sir Jeremy Dixon for Trevor Osborne Group). The site was fully opened in June 2006.
- 3.2.34 Closure of the prison has removed one major historic use from the area, but its overall character - as the traditional centre in Oxford for the exercise of justice and local administration over nine hundred years - remains. The Coroner's Court still meets in Old County Hall and the County Council retains a strong presence in New County Hall and Macclesfield House. Surrender of the latter to new uses will of course lessen this, though the County's interest and involvement in the future of the Castle in its new roles will continue to reflect the long association.
- 3.2.35 The transformation of the former prison site into a new public area of hotel, shops and restaurants, associated with the interpretation of the site's history through the *Oxford Castle - Unlocked* project, has been the focus of more wide-ranging approaches to regeneration of the area from the mid-1990s onwards. The encouragement of these new approaches to development by Oxford City Council led to the commissioning of an Urban Design Strategy for the West Central Area (Roger Evans Associates, 1999) which identified the importance of the Worcester Street Car Park as a key component of the area, and made proposals for its future development. These included the establishment of a flagship civic building such as a concert hall, reconstruction of the former canal basin to incorporate turning and mooring facilities for narrowboats, and the creation of new public space and pedestrian routes by the waterside.

Although not adopted as policy, the Roger Evans report represents a background of thinking to current strategies for the area, which have

recognised many of the same significances and opportunities. The Oxford City Council Local Plan 2001-2016 contained a range of policies for the area, though these are now superseded by those of the *West End Area Action Plan 2007-2016* (Oxford City Council, adopted June 2008) written to address the development of the West End as a whole (see Section 6.1). It was in connection with the Action Plan that the present study was commissioned in September 2007.



Principal surviving features of the Phase

Elements of the Oxford Castle
development project

Living Room, New Road 2004-6

Left: Living Room Restaurant, New Road

Below: Looking across the Car Park towards the George Street/Worcester Street crossroads, with the Gloucester Green buildings (1987-90) on the left and between the wars neo-Georgian on the right



4 ELEMENTS OF THE SITE – DESCRIPTION AND DESIGNATIONS

4.1 The primary study areas

- 4.1.1 The area of study has been divided into the two main areas of the Car Park and Macclesfield House, two secondary areas adjoining Nuffield College, and six areas around the site providing a wider context (Figure 1).

Area A: Nuffield College areas; Worcester Street Car Park & the present college

- 4.1.2 The *Worcester Street Car Park* is an open area with some minor features relating to car park payments and street boundaries. The surface is tarmac covered, and slopes in curving hollow towards the river, which is bordered by a brick wall (possibly remaining from the former warehouses in this position) and willow trees on the river bank. Along the north side is the stone and brick revetment wall supporting the roadway as it rises to Hythe Bridge; on the south is the rear wall of the Rosie O’Grady public house.
- 4.1.3 The Car Park site was crossed by the line of the canal, which passed under the hump-back Bridge 245 (just within the present Car Park) on its way into the main Coal Wharf (within Nuffield College). An eastward branch of the canal provided a turning point for narrowboats, and led into the large Goods Warehouse parallel with Hythe Bridge Street. Along Worcester Street was the Wharfinger’s House and office. Further sheds were aligned along the river edge. Substantial buried remains of the wharf and buildings are likely to survive below the tarmac, but the only visible remains are the gate pier next to the public house (possibly of c.1852), a few bricks of the canal arch on the Hythe Bridge Street revetment wall,⁸ and remnants of former warehouses along this street frontage.
- 4.1.4 The area is open to the street on the east side, and is overseen from the rising pavement of Hythe Bridge Street, but is closed off from the river. Significant views across the site include those up New Road towards the castle mound, and down Tidmarsh Lane towards St George’s (Figure 47).
- 4.1.5 *Nuffield College* is like all colleges designed as much for its internal spaces as its contribution to the street scene, but its tower and spire have become part of the Oxford skyline, and the massing of the tower in New Road and the gabled front on Worcester Street are not without merit, and the view into the main quadrangle through the western gates is appreciated by visitors. The most notorious aspect of the college design, the ‘Cotswold’ roofs are of course not part of the original design. Hints of the design’s Near-Eastern origins can still be seen however in the pointed arch form of the voussoirs above the round arches (e.g. the college entrance and western gateway).

⁸

See above at §3.2.31 note 7 for this arch; photograph on page 12.

- 4.1.6 Important archaeological remains were found during the construction of the college, including the outline of the castle ditch, and traces of late Saxon occupation, and it is likely that elements of the castle ditches and earlier occupation will still survive below ground where not destroyed.
- 4.1.7 The west end of the college addresses the (re-aligned) Worcester Street, in expectation of the designed matching building across the road. The east end of the college ends in a service yard and car park. The college now features in the established street scene of New Road, as seen from both ends, and in views up and down Worcester Street.

Listed buildings

Nuffield College Grade II
Nuffield College, Pool (kerbstones) Grade II

Other significant buildings

Rosie O'Grady's Irish Pub (former Queen's Arms)

Lost buildings

Canal warehouses
20th century heat exchange building in centre of Car Park

Left, looking east across the car park to Nuffield College
Right, the south side of the car park along the Castle Mill Stream



Area B: Oxfordshire CC areas: Macclesfield House and former County Offices

- 4.1.8 The 1911-14 County Offices building (by W.A. Daft, now the Registry Office) modestly dominates the corner of New Road and Tidmarsh Lane with its mixed stonework and classical detailing. The gap behind it on New Road is the site of the former Militia Armoury demolished in 1966 to provide access to the new Macclesfield House.
- 4.1.9 Macclesfield House is very much a building of its age (1969) that has had few admirers, while performing its function of providing office space on the county site. It is built close to the Castle Mound, without wholly detracting from the monument, although its open car park allows good visual and perhaps too-easy physical access to the Mound. On Tidmarsh Lane Macclesfield House is a rather more dominating aspect of the street scene, although its unrelieved front has been set back, and is partly screened by the older County Offices at the corner.
- 4.1.10 As has been shown by observations during building works in 1914 and 1969, the whole site falls within or on the edge of the castle ditch systems and the linking branches to the Thames. Nonetheless there may remain significant deposits, e.g. of waterlogged remains in the ditch fill, with the possibility of the surviving road surface of the route from Castle west gate to the western barbican in this direction. The barbican itself may have been located closer to the junction of Tidmarsh Lane, or even within the Car Park area.
- 4.1.11 The County Offices are an important aspect of the street scene in views down Worcester Street (and along Park End Street), and as a foil to Nuffield College. The gap for the lost Militia Armoury serves an important function in allowing views of the Castle Mound especially from e.g. Hythe Bridge, and on the approach along Park End Street.

Listed buildings

None

Other significant buildings

County Offices (Registry Office)

Lost buildings

Militia Armoury/Police Station



Nuffield College and the County Offices, looking along Worcester Street

4.2 Secondary study areas

- 4.2.1 Secondary areas around Nuffield College, although marginal, are relevant both for historical context and for their potential part in development proposals.

Area C: George Street Mews and Bulwarks Lane

- 4.2.2 The perimeter route around the north side of the castle remains one of Oxford's most intriguing and evocative streets/lanes. George Street Mews is the northern edge of the Jews Mount, and had a row of houses on the south of which the last was only removed for Nuffield College (Figure 37). At the east end of George Street Mews the lane turns around the end of the former Mount, and rises up towards the point where the City Wall approached the Castle ditch (indeed, the last few yards of the wall face onto the lane). Inside the line of the City Wall the lane returns to the main curve following the castle ditch, and passes between St Peter's and Nuffield Colleges. The first building on the left is the former parish school, whose blocked windows can be seen, and further along is the back of the Wharf House (the Master's Lodging of St Peter's). Shortly after this is a view back towards the Castle Mound, from a surprisingly high point, and the lane then falls down again to the level of New Road. The last few houses here were removed in recent decades.
- 4.2.3 There were houses on both sides of Bulwarks Lane, and there will remain some potential for medieval and post-medieval remains of domestic occupation.
- 4.2.4 The visual aspects of Bulwarks Lane are nearly all internal, but it is an historic street of great value for understanding the history and topography of the area.



Listed buildings

None

Other significant buildings

(The Wharf House)

Lost buildings

No. 10 George Street Mews, C17th house (RCHM *Oxford Inventory* (1939), No. 175)

Houses on Bulwarks Lane

The western end of Bulwarks Lane



The Wharf House seen from the south



George Street Mews, eastern end

Area D: Former Probate Registry and Conservative Club site

- 4.2.4 Between the Canal Wharf and Bulwarks Lane was a triangle of land at the eastern end of New Road. The main part of this was taken by Buckeridge's Probate Registry of 1863 (now part of St Peter's College), but between it and the St Peter's car park a strip between New Road and Bulwarks Lane has been used for a low-lying Conservative Club building. The next part of New Road is taken by the St Peter's College car park (backing onto the Master's House and garden).
- 4.2.5 Like most of the perimeter road/lane around the castle, this was the site of houses built in the 16th century with gardens sloping down to the castle ditch, and there is some potential for surviving remains even from before the castle.
- 4.2.6 The site is rather neutral, with the Probate Registry contributing to the view down New Road, but the Conservative Club and car parks neither form nor detract from views (except the view over the top of the Conservative Club from Bulwarks Lane).

Listed buildings

Probate Registry

Grade II



The Probate Registry on New Road

4.3 Areas of context and setting

- 4.3.1 The wider context of the site includes the streets and waterways which surround it.

Area E: Oxford Canal, Worcester College, Jericho

- 4.3.2 The Oxford Canal runs immediately parallel to the Castle Mill Stream of the Thames, and forms the western boundary of Worcester College Gardens. These gardens, formed from the low-lying Gloucester Meadows, are one of Oxford's most admired gardens, with the extensive lake sweeping round the Provost's Garden. There is also a walk and wooded belt alongside the Canal, but with no designed views out or across it.
- 4.3.3 Jericho, built on Jericho (nursery) Gardens and nearby meadows was one of Oxford's first suburbs that built out on new land rather than infilling existing areas of housing. It contains a canal wharf (recently closed by British Waterways for re-development) and another boat-hiring wharf next to it. At the north end of Worcester Gardens is a 50-foot winding hole on the canal, which allows turning just before the Isis Lock that gives access to the River Thames via the Sheepwash Channel. There is a further opportunity for turning (for boats up to 70' in length) in the stream immediately below the lock. Isis Lock was opened in 1796 as a replacement, very shortly after the canal was completed, for the unsatisfactory flash lock above Hythe Bridge.
- 4.3.4 Pedestrian routes from Jericho to the city (or station) are by way of Walton Street, or a single footbridge near the end of Juxon Street and Canal Street. There are currently discussions about the possibility of new bridges or improved access to the city and station along the canal towpath.



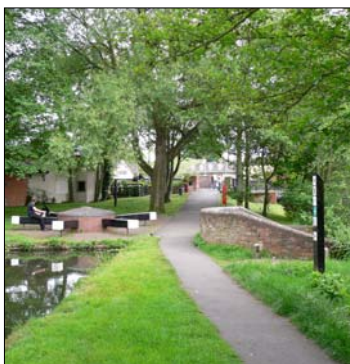
Listed buildings

Worcester College Grades I/II

Bridge at Isis Lock Grade II

Other significant buildings

Houses and workshop buildings in Jericho



Registered Park and Garden

Worcester College Gardens Grade II*
(College gardens and grounds, approx
3.5ha, C18, and landscape gardens of
c.1820 by Richard Burswell)

*The present termination of the canal, seen from the south
(upper photograph) and north*

Area F: Castle Mill Stream, Hythe Bridge Street; Tidmarsh Lane, Park End Street

- 4.3.5 The Castle Mill Stream, itself a canalisation of an earlier and less direct stream, was partly formed by the embankment of the west side with what became known as 'Waram Bank', occupied by Upper, Middle and Lower Fisher Row, a busy suburban street whose inhabitants worked on or around the river (Prior, *Fisher Row*). This was removed in post-war 'slum clearance'. The stream itself led nowhere, and returned to the main stream below the Castle Mill (which was itself demolished as an impediment to traffic in 1930). Hythe Bridge was a new Norman creation, and the stone bridge with small arches survived until the early 19th century, being recorded in a cork model before its removal (Ashmolean Museum), and included in numerous illustrations such as MA Rooker's oil painting (Museum of Oxford) and drawings by William Westall (Figure 19b) and others. The 'hythe' was the landing place for goods (e.g. Cotswold stone) brought down river from the Thames above Oxford.
- 4.3.6 Hythe Bridge Street was made in c.1130 as a new western exit to Oxford; Park End Street was part of the New Road made in 1769 to bring the Botley Turnpike directly into Oxford, and this part of the new road was subsequently named after the Park End Colliery, which had an office and depot there. Tidmarsh Lane was the continuation of Worcester Street leading to the west gate of the castle, and also over Quaking Bridge to High Street, St. Thomas.
- 4.3.7 This part of Oxford was noted for brewing, and until recently the Morrells Brewery was operating in High Street, St Thomas's. The long building on the west of Tidmarsh Lane was a malt house, successfully converted in 1956 into offices and workshop for the University Surveyor (University Estates Department).
- 4.3.8 Despite the huge loss of historic townscape in the demolition of the Fisher Row houses in the 1950s the riverside walk is still valued, and plays an important role in linking areas north and south of Park End Street, and provides a series of visual links along and across the river.



Castle Mill Stream, above (left) and below Hythe Bridge

Listed building (& SAM)

St George's Tower
1, 2 and 3 Fisher Row

Other significant buildings

Tidmarsh Lane Malthouse
Oxford Retreat (former Antiquity Hall) public house
Archer Cowley depository in Park End Street
Hartwell's and King's Motor Showrooms (Staples and Kwik Fit premises),
Park End/Hythe Bridge Street.
Royal Oxford Hotel (J C Leed, 1935)

Lost buildings

Hythe Bridge

Houses on Fisher Row (RCHM *Oxford*
Inventory nos. 165-168)
Oxford Castle Mill (1930)



Hythe Bridge, seen from the road with remaining section of iron parapet, and from the river

Area G: George Street, New Inn Hall St, St Peter's College

- 4.3.9 George Street was a populous suburban street and when illustrated by Buckler in the early 19th century had the appearance of Holywell Street for the number of historic houses it contained. It has the rare distinction of having been rebuilt twice, in the 19th and again in the 20th century, and has passed from being a residential to a commercial street, and most recently an entertainment quarter of food and drink outlets.
- 4.3.10 New Inn Hall Street has maintained a less hurried air of an urban backstreet, although it has seen numerous changes. St Peter's College, itself a 20th-century foundation, comprises former institutional buildings such as the Canal Office (Wyaston House), New Inn Hall, the Central Girls School, and

the rebuilt parish church of St Peter the Bailey, and has brought them together as an harmonious group of college buildings. Its expansion across Bulwarks Lane to include the Wharf Master's House, the Probate Registry and land on the south and west of Oxford Castle has secured a compact landholding.

- 4.3.11 The former site of St Peter the Bailey Church stood out into Queen Street and was left beside the New Road but later removed, leaving its churchyard (now known as Bonn Square).

Listed buildings

Wyaston House, St Peter's College Grade II
Wesley Memorial Methodist Church Grade II
War memorial in Bonn Square
St Peter le Bailey church (St Peter's College Chapel)
Central Girls' School



South end of George Street, looking towards Hythe Bridge Street and the Worcester Street crossroads

Area H: New Road and Oxford Castle

- 4.3.12 New Road descends from some height down past County Hall and the Castle Mound down to river level. It was created in 1769 to bring the Botley Turnpike into Oxford, and cut obliquely across Queen Street and Castle Street in a straight line towards the Botley Causeway.
- 4.3.13 Until the 1960s development of the Westgate, there yet remained the ‘Macfisheries corner’ at the junction of Castle Street and New Road, with a short length of Bulwarks Lane continuing behind it. The new County Hall and straightened Castle Street removed this historic relationship.
- 4.3.14 Beyond the new County Hall the 19th-century Old County Hall and the Castle/Prison form a visual group of great interest.⁹ The successful conversion of prison buildings and creation of public access to the older castle buildings and mound (and through the site as a whole) has been a notable result of the closure of Oxford Prison.

Listed buildings

Castle/Prison buildings (variously Grade II, II*)
(Old) County Hall Grade II*
Old County Hall, screen wall and gateways Grade II

Scheduled Ancient Monument

Oxford Castle, Mound and Well chamber

Other significant buildings

New County Hall; Macclesfield House



The weir west of Hythe Bridge, replacing the flash lock initially built in this position to allow boats to transfer between Canal and Castle Mill Stream

⁹ Best appreciated recently in the few months after removal of the 20th century offices and before the hotel extension onto New Road was built.

Part Two: Significance of sites and buildings

5 ASSESSMENTS OF SIGNIFICANCE

5.1 Basis of the assessments

5.1.1 In developing principles to help guide a historic place through a process of change, it is useful to define what it is that makes it important, merits protection or provides opportunities for improvement. The assessments of significance set out here derive from the understanding of the area in its setting established in Section Three, and are based on what is hoped are relevant and appropriate criteria.

5.1.2 Major types of significance, especially for buildings and landscapes/townscapes, are expressed in the designations set out in Policy Guidance Notes *PPG 15* and *PPG 16*:

- Special architectural or historic interest (for listed buildings)
- Character and appearance (for conservation areas)
- National significance (for scheduled monuments).

The criteria for listed building designations themselves include:

- Architectural interest - design, decoration, craftsmanship, building types and techniques, plan forms
- Historic interest - important aspects of the nation's social, economic, cultural and military history
- Historical association - with nationally important people or events
- Group value - where buildings comprise an important architectural or historic unity.

5.1.3 A further group of criteria is represented by the Secretary of State's non-statutory criteria for scheduling monuments:

- Ability to characterise a period
- Rarity of survival
- Extent of documentation
- Association with other monuments in a group
- Fragility/vulnerability
- Diversity - the combination of high-quality features.

5.1.4 For less tangible qualities, it is useful to employ types of significance derived from the Conservation Plan approach initially developed for Australian sites.¹⁰ These additional values are:

- Representative value - the ability to demonstrate social, cultural or economic developments
- Historical continuity - in buildings and activities
- Literary and artistic values
- Formal, visual and aesthetic qualities
- Evidence of social historical themes
- Contemporary communal values
- Power to communicate values and significance.

5.1.5 In some of the following assessments, levels as well of types of significance are proposed. Four levels of significance are conventionally expressed as: exceptional; considerable; moderate; minimal. A fifth category of *intrusive* may be used where a feature detracts visually or in other ways from historical merit or threatens to obscure understanding or significance.

5.2 **Statement of Overall Significance**

5.2.1 The overall value and significance of the Worcester Street Car Park and related areas may be seen to lie in particular in four linked areas:

- The exceptional interest of its long history of topographical development, as part of the ancient heart of the city for over 1000 years
- The remarkable association of the medieval royal castle and the later canal basin in its outworks, bringing together major elements of military and industrial history within a relatively small and coherent area
- The value of these elements of significance in being very much of the City, an area of exceptional interest and consequence to set alongside the higher-profile contributions of the University to the interest, character and international celebrity of Oxford
- The focal location of the area in a major zone planned for new attention and development, presenting opportunities to use its rich heritage in creating vibrant and authentic character, fostering identification and pride among the local communities, and greatly extending the interest of Oxford for its visitors.

¹⁰ Categories are developed from those proposed in James Semple Kerr, *The Conservation Plan*, 1996

5.3 Specific aspects of significance

- 5.3.1 More particular aspects of the significance of the site, in its individual elements, areas of interest, and periods of development, are also proposed:

5.4 Historical & archaeological

- *Archaeological potential*

The archaeological potential of both primary sites is exceptional, for revealing their earlier urban and suburban character on the west of the Saxon town, their roles in the layout of western defences and siege works to the medieval castle, and for their separate development, as prison and related uses on one hand and as canal basin for the later town on the other. The degree of below-ground survival is likely to be high because of the waterlogged nature of the ground, and the possible survival at no great depth on the Car Park site of the structural remains and foundations of the basin, related warehouses and (on both sites) possibly also features of the Castle, should allow detailed recovery of information.

- *Extent of documentation - role in Oxford studies*

The range of sources for developing knowledge of the area, additional to the site archaeology, is extensive and for the most part well-known and well-studied. The area is a key location for investigating the city in one of its most complex and significant areas, and the role of Oxford as a birthplace of medieval and post-medieval studies, archaeological and documentary, will make the area and its future treatment of national importance and, if well-done, widely celebrated.

- *Diversity of interest - military and industrial archaeology*

The association in one small area of two topics of primary importance and considerable historical interest in the town - military in the Castle defences and industrial archaeology in the Canal basin - is of exceptional interest in both national and regional terms.

- *Historical significance of the Oxford Canal*

The Oxford Canal itself is of exceptional significance in national terms as an early canal which, because of being bypassed at an early stage by the Grand Union Canal, has survived largely unaltered and un-modernised. On completion, it became a vital element in the strategic canal 'Cross', linking the Midlands with the ports of Hull, Liverpool, Bristol and, via the Thames, London. Until 1805 Oxford was one of the great interchanges of this national network. The canal has retained most of its narrow locks and variety of bridges, and its only missing major element is the lost canal terminal wharf in Oxford.

5.5 Contemporary & strategic values

- ***Local communal values - potential for fostering pride of place***

The character and history of the area provides a rare opportunity in Oxford to celebrate on a substantial scale something of consequence which speaks of the Town and the life of its people rather than, as more commonly, the University. This is exceptional potential, in considering the future character of the site, for fostering a sense of continuity with the past and of pride of place among Oxford's communities, as well as a source of new interest to visitors and tourists.

- ***Potential for regenerating an exceptional area of Oxford***

Already in the west central area, the conversion and opening to public access of Oxford Castle has demonstrated the value of basing a forward-looking development of considerable public appeal on a valuing of the past. The possibility of extending this approach to a wider area, as part of a programme of strategic improvement, presents an exceptional opportunity to make links with the past in defining the character and layout of the new area, especially with respect to the Worcester Street Car Park.

- ***Contemporary strategic value - potential focus for communication and transport***

The Worcester Street site has been throughout its history a focus for communication in West Oxford. It remains central to the movement of pedestrians and vehicular traffic in this part of the city, and its development provides valuable opportunities to enhance the role in ways which bring benefit and amenity value. There is great potential in redesigning the area to emphasise this importance as a natural focus and a visual and communication centre for both vehicular and pedestrian traffic. It can serve as a worthy and dignified gateway to the city on the approach from the west, and operate as a focal point for connections between the Station and Said Business School, through Nuffield College, to the city centre and main university areas.

- ***Amenity values - potential for encouraging riverside pedestrian links***

The canal basin was of considerable interest and significance as the place where the canal met the river, historically part of the pattern of national communications which gave Oxford a new transport link with the industrial areas and with London. More locally now, this meeting of routes retains considerable importance for foot traffic, and there is very significant potential for development as an important link in improved riverside routes, from Jericho into central West Oxford, and beyond into St Thomas' and Westgate areas.

5.6 Visual & aesthetic considerations

- *Viewpoints - historical and amenity benefits*

The viewpoints from and along the canal/riverside and between the two elements of the primary study area (Car Park and Macclesfield House) are of exceptional quality in terms of enjoyment and understanding of the area, topography and historic features, and they merit careful protection and enhancement in future development. The most significant views are those from the canal towpath and across the centre of the Car Park site towards the Castle Mound, and those along the towpath, riverside routes and Tidmarsh Lane towards St George's Tower. The view lines along the parallel routes of Park End and Hythe Bridge Street also have considerable potential value in enhancing enjoyment of a newly developed area of the historic town.

- *Potential for quality of design and building*

Both parts of the primary study area are currently visually intrusive (see below) and there is significant potential, in planning new structures for the improved area, to secure building design which respects and enhances its historical context and setting, relates well to the scale and design of surrounding buildings, protects and frames important view lines and, where appropriate, reflects the historic character of the area in design and materials. There is particular significance in the axial planning and materials of the existing parts of Nuffield College, and an opportunity in areas of both sites to take account of the modest scale and utilitarian brick materials of much of the historic building along the riverside (including the lost buildings of the canal basin).

5.7 Social & economic values

- *Potential for fostering recreation and tourism*

The destruction of the canal basin in order to build Nuffield College has removed a feature of the city of exceptional significance to its economic and social history. Any potential for even partial recreation will therefore be seen as highly significant. There will plainly be an interest for many in restoring to perception and use an important part of the past (especially when it is the city's rather than the university's past), and in providing an adequate and attractive terminus in Oxford to one of Britain's busiest canals.

5.8 Negative values - intrusiveness

- *Intrusive elements of the sites and buildings*

Both sites in their current condition are considerably intrusive, in their settings and in public perceptions. Macclesfield House is

generally unsuccessful in its massing and relationship to its setting, especially towards Tidmarsh Lane. The bleak area of the Worcester Street site in its present form provides a wholly inadequate setting for Nuffield College, for other surrounding buildings of decent quality, and for the attractive riverside walkways and bridges of the immediate area. The abrupt termination of the canal north of Hythe Bridge is itself intrusive and confuses understanding of how this important communication link historically arrived in Oxford.

Part Three: Conservation and development

6 ISSUES, OPPORTUNITIES & PRINCIPLES

6.1 Current policy context

6.1.1 Existing Policies

The whole site lies within the Oxford Central Conservation Area. Nuffield College is a Grade II listed building. The Oxford Castle Scheduled Ancient Monument is coterminous with the Castle Mound, and does not otherwise enter the site.

6.1.2 Existing Strategies

The principal planning document is the *West End Area Action Plan 2007-2016* (Oxford City Council, adopted June 2008). The Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016 also contains general policies that will apply to the West End.

THE WEST END AREA ACTION PLAN 2007-2016

The Area Action Plan (AAP) provides a framework to guide future development and change in the West End. The AAP sets out in broad terms what development will take place in the area and when. The AAP does not consider the west End as a series of individual sites that happen to be located near to each other, but instead addresses the issues and needs of the West End as a whole. All the policies contained in the AAP could potentially be relevant to any site. However, there are some policies that are particularly relevant in terms of the historic environment, design and the Worcester Street Car Park / Macclesfield House sites. These are:

*Policy WE5: **Public spaces** The City Council will seek delivery of a series of public spaces in the West End in line with the principles outlined. For Worcester Street Car Park, it is stated that: 'New development should enhance the setting of Nuffield College and the Castle site. The development of this site should accommodate a public space as part of any development; this could be linked to opening up the Castle Mill Stream frontage. Another preferable option could be to open up a further stretch of the Oxford Canal that once passed through the site. Applications to implement this preferred option will be encouraged unless it is shown to be not practicable or economically viable ...'*

*Policy WE7: **Castle Mill Stream** A streamside park will be created along Castle Mill Stream to create a route through the West End. New developments alongside the stream should face the stream. Developers of sites adjacent to the stream will be required to submit and implement a comprehensive landscape, management and maintenance*

plan for the streamside park. The guidelines in Appendix 6 for the design of the streamside park should be followed.

*Policy WE10: **Historic environment** New development must respect the character and setting of listed buildings, scheduled ancient monuments and buildings of local interest. It should enhance existing local interest. Applicants should demonstrate ... that new development has been designed with an understanding of the area's heritage, street patterns, views and important buildings.*

*Policy WE11: **Design Code** Planning permission will only be granted for new developments that follow the framework set out in the Design Code.*

*Policy WE20: **Mixed uses** On sites of 0.2 hectares or greater, planning permission will only be granted for developments that incorporate more than one use.*

Appendix 2 to the Action Plan identifies the range of appropriate uses for selected development sites.

- For Worcester Street Car Park, the Priority Use is Public Space. Education, flats, offices, food & drink and museums are suggested as secondary uses.
- For the Macclesfield House site, suggested secondary uses are listed as: flats, amenities for housing, offices, food & drink, and education.

OTHER WEST END STUDIES AND STRATEGIES

There are a number of other studies and strategies being undertaken by the West End partnership that, where relevant, should be used to inform development in the area. West End strategies that may be relevant include:

- Improving the Street Environment
- Sustainability Strategy
- Community and Neighbourhood Cohesion
- Green Infrastructure
- Cultural Strategy
- Skills Strategy
- Business Strategy
- Tourism Strategy.

6.1.3 **Principle 1**

Existing strategies for the area and the support shown for them by public consultation should as far as possible be reflected in future development planning

6.2 Preconditions/assumptions

- 6.2.1 The Worcester Street Car Park area forms part of the original land purchased with Lord Nuffield's endowment for a new college. The 1939 designs for the College included full use of this site, though it was not developed during the 1950s when the main area of the existing college was built. Nuffield College, however, retains ownership, and will, whatever the recommendations of the Local Plan and supporting documents, wish to use the land for expansion of its buildings for college or linked institutional uses. Although the college may be willing to see some part of the site developed for public amenity and access, it would expect the costs of this to be met outside college funding, perhaps through some appropriate commercial development in partnership.
- 6.2.2 It is assumed that the Oxford Canal is an important amenity with a continuing potential for leisure use by visitors to Oxford as much as by long-term local boat owners and residents.
- 6.2.3 OCC may be willing to surrender use of Macclesfield House, with the possibility of a lease or sale of the existing building, or with the expectation of demolition and new development on site, with the opportunities which that presents for a recasting of this important area.
- 6.2.4 It is assumed that under any new overall plan for the area, the defining road system will remain at least as important a part of the strategic traffic framework as currently, and with the possibility of more intensive use of Worcester Street itself.

Land-use

- 6.2.5 The assumptions based on land ownership outlined above might in theory be altered through a more extensive rethinking of the area, with the possibilities of land exchange. This might for instance allow development of the Macclesfield House site for academic purposes and the conversion of the Car Park to more broad-ranging public amenity and access, with or without an element of commercial development, as part of a comprehensive plan which maximises the opportunities of the larger area. There is, however, no indication that Nuffield College would be willing to see the surrender of such an important part of its original endowment, and it ought anyway to be possible to achieve much in the way of public and townscape benefits through a properly co-ordinated approach.
- 6.2.6 Even if the car park land were publicly owned and available it is likely that commercial considerations would in any case be foremost, and that (given the location) some academic use would have to be considered, while any schemes for an extended canal basin would have to be viable and fundable.
- 6.2.7 If Macclesfield House is retained in its present form for use under a new ownership or lease, it would presumably retain its current office uses. Even so, there would be opportunities for mitigating its current impact on its setting, and particularly on the Castle Mound, and for improving (to varying degrees)

the contribution which the building makes to important viewlines and access routes along New Road, Tidmarsh Lane and into the Castle site. Plainly however, the opportunities for improvement and a positive contribution is greatly enhanced by the possibility of new development, allowing good principles to be applied in the areas of building design and quality, protection or development of viewlines, quality of setting and context, the enhancement or creation of access routes and the reinforcement of historic character.

6.2.8 Good land-use guidelines would in all cases need to include:

- location and quality of building
- protection or creation of viewlines
- importance of creating/encouraging access routes
- promotion of riverside and
- links to the Oxford Canal.

6.2.9 ***Principle 2***

Nuffield College's wishes for development on its site might be facilitated through the possibilities of partnership arrangements with other agencies and be accompanied by the securing of public benefit.

Nuffield College's wish to develop maximum academic value from its historic ownership of the car-park site should be recognised. At the same time possibilities might be explored to facilitate such development through practical partnership arrangements with a degree of commercial development on site, and with the achievement of good levels of public benefit and enjoyment in a site of such pivotal importance to the west central area.

The possibilities of involving the Macclesfield house site also in such arrangements should be borne in mind in order to achieve broad benefits across the area.

6.3 Design

- 6.3.1 While it is desirable that the historic character of the Canal Wharf site should be retained where it survives, and reflected in any new building, it is also important that the developed site relates to its surrounding built context, and introduces new building of high quality along important street frontages. It should, for instance, be possible for Nuffield College to balance its existing front towards Worcester Street with a building of similar dignity and scale, and to reflect also the axial planning of the main college building.
- 6.3.2 The extension of such a building westward to the corner with Hythe Bridge Street would underline the importance of this intersection, creating a crossroads of considerable visual and townscape quality, closing the curving view down George Street, balancing the wall and buildings of Worcester College, and creating a dignified approach route to and from the railway station.
- 6.3.3 Perhaps the more 'industrial' historic character of the canal basin site could be more particularly reflected on the south, towards Park End Street, and towards the Castle Mill Stream.
- 6.3.4 Any new building produced by development of the Macclesfield House site will need to take regard of location, scale, materials and quality of design in order to avoid the mistakes of the present building. It will need to work carefully to create an appropriate setting which better respects the Castle Mound, and to serve as a positive component of the New Road/Nuffield College piece of Oxford townscape at an important gateway to the city centre, as well as in the more modestly scaled but historically rich context of Tidmarsh Lane. At the same time it will need to preserve and enhance viewlines along these two routes, and if possible allow new visual (and possibly physical) access to the western areas of the Castle site.
- 6.3.5 Key design guidelines would include:
- Need for quality of building
 - Importance of street frontages
 - Relation of car park site to Nuffield and Worcester
 - Importance of crossroads
 - Quality of design and contribution to setting created by new building on Macclesfield House site.

6.3.6 *Principle 3*

The historic character of the sites and their settings should be reflected in the location, design and materials of new building.

In their location, and in the design and materials employed for new buildings, opportunities may be taken to draw on the former historic character and layout of the sites, and to reflect also the character of existing significant buildings in the immediate setting.

This principle might be reflected in the observance of the axial planning and grand scale of Nuffield College in any new building facing it across Worcester Street, and in a more informal, smaller scale of buildings, possibly in brick, towards Tidmarsh Lane, Hythe Bridge Street and the riverside.

6.4 Context – River Thames

6.4.1 The canal wharf historically turned its back towards the Castle Mill Stream, with a range of warehouses shutting off access from the site as the relict brick/stone wall still does, though the row of willows creates a riverbank of considerable visual quality. It is highly desirable that the qualities of the riverbank here are retained and cherished, and that public access along the eastern bank is created as part of an extension of riverside pedestrian routes. Such a pathway here could connect the canal towpath route from Isis Lock and Jericho with the riverside path on the western side on the line of Fisher Row and on to Paradise Street and Westgate.

6.4.2 A new route such as this would require three constraints to be resolved:

(i) The ability to cross under Hythe Bridge Street on a towpath below a re-instated canal bridge. The bridge here was historically low, in order to restrict unauthorised access to the Wharf site. A level survey has been carried out to help indicate whether a pedestrian route beneath the bridge is actually feasible (Figure 46). Otherwise, a pedestrian crossing over the heavily used Hythe Bridge Street would be necessary.

(ii) Since a walkway continuing along the eastern bank would be blocked by the riverside bar of the public house, a riverside route would need to cross to the western bank. This was provided for in the 1999 West Central Oxford Urban Design Strategy by a proposed new footbridge.

(iii) Some upgrading of the area of the western bank would be necessary. The former historic character here was of small-scale houses along the river frontage (Middle Fisher Row) until their demolition and replacement by the present gardens in the 1960s; it could with advantage be restored

6.4.3 River context guidelines would include:

- Maintenance and enhancement of river bank
- Visual inclusion of the riverside in the site
- Improved access along both riverbanks.

6.4.4 ***Principle 4***

Potential links with the riverside throughout the area should be encouraged.

In developing the Car Park site, links with the river should be celebrated and extended. As far as possible the site should be opened up towards the riverside, with easy view- and physical access, retention of the willows, and pedestrian routeways directed along the riverside to provide links across and through the area, towards St Thomas's, the Castle, Westgate, and St Ebbe's.

6.5 **Context – Oxford Canal**

6.5.1 The whole present area of the Car Park and of Nuffield College itself was taken up until the mid-1950s by the Goods Wharf of the Oxford Canal Company (Car Park) and its Coal Wharf (present College), divided by the line of Worcester Street on an earlier alignment. There is considerable public interest in developing a new scheme for the Car Park in considering at least a partial reconstruction of the former wharf, as a more fitting arrival for the canal in Oxford and an engaging new element of waterside townscape, in what could become an attractive focus for this western area of the city. The principle of a water-filled feature which reflects the canal's historic significance is constrained by two main factors:

- (i) Whether the restoration of the line of the canal beneath Hythe Bridge Street into the area of the former wharf is technically feasible.
- (ii) How far Nuffield College, as site owners with a clear wish to continue the development of the college, may be prepared to surrender to public uses a sufficient area to allow a worthwhile extent of canal basin.

There would currently seem to be two main options for the reintroduction of water into plans for the Car Park area:

- ***Re-creation of a functional canal basin***
- ***Creation of a water feature as a memorial of the canal***

6.5.2 *Re-creation of the former functional canal basin.*

This is in reality capable of being done at two levels, both of which would require a connection to be re-opened beneath Hythe Bridge Street to the existing termination of the canal.

One approach would be to reconstruct the element of the basin formerly within the Car Park site on something close to its approximate historic Y-shaped plan, scale and extent, possibly utilising the survivals of its original kerbs, buried beneath the car park, to define the plan. Such a re-creation of the former, more restricted plan of the canal in the Car Park area would restore an historically justifiable and appropriate termination of the canal.

A more extensive approach would increase the plan size of the Y-shaped arms of the basin to accommodate side-by-side moorings, not provided by the original plan.

The historic Y-shaped plan would be retained in both cases, and could provide adequate turning for a 70-foot narrowboat. A further development of this, creating a circular area of water at the junction of the arms, would help to facilitate turning.

Such a feature would provide an attractive setting to an area of new College building but would involve large-scale public amenities and could require the College to curtail or abandon plans for expansion on its own site. Public access into the college areas themselves might not be desirable, though the length of water could itself serve as a protection for college areas, as well as an attractive landscape feature.

6.5.3 *A water feature as a non-functional memorial to the canal*

Without connecting functionally to the existing termination of the canal through a restored bridge hole beneath Hythe Bridge Street, an area of water based on the former plan of the wharf might serve as a memorial to the Oxford Canal, an attractive landscape setting for other buildings on the site, a form of protective 'moat' for any College building on the eastern side of the site, and a visual amenity in a new pattern of pedestrian walkways through this area of the city.

Such an area of water would, however, have no functional value in providing an adequate terminus to the Oxford Canal in Oxford.

6.5.4 Canal context guidelines would include:

- Consideration of the practicality of part re-opening the canal wharf
- Potential for re-use of canal elements
- Potential for inclusion of water feature.

6.5.5 ***Principle 5***

As far as practicable in planning development of the Car Park site, recognition and serious consideration should be given to the historic importance of the Oxford Canal Wharf, and the potential public benefit of its partial revival.

The key historic character of the Car Park/New Road area is as a Canal Wharf, following on from and closely related to its previous topography as the ditch of the medieval royal castle. These are powerful aspects of the communal heritage of the Town, rather than that of the University, and are worthy of celebration. Because of its relevance to Oxford, and to the significance of the historic Oxford Canal as a whole, opportunities to revive an understanding and appreciation of the canal wharf might be accorded a high importance in planning future development.

6.6 Viewpoints

6.6.1 This is a busy part of the city, at the centre of well-frequented routes in and out of the centre, providing a gateway experience for thousands of visitors to Oxford. With this and the historic context of river and built heritage, the visual aspects of any redevelopment are of major importance. Certain key views can be identified that must be considered in any new proposals:

- *Key viewpoints across to Castle from Hythe Bridge*

6.6.2 At present there is a series of views of the Norman castle mound from Hythe Bridge Street and along the adjacent pavements. Closer views are obtained along New Road. The key view of the Norman castle from the Norman Hythe Bridge must be considered in development proposals. The New Road frontage along the front of Macclesfield House site should be kept clear to maintain long views of the Castle Mound across the Worcester Street Car Park site and also along the line of approach from the station to the town centre. Whether or not the existing building remains, it is desirable to avoid new building along the New Road frontage, and to retain (while improving) the openness of the forecourt area. The provision of railings along the street frontage would allow such views while also usefully protecting the Mound.

- *Views up and down Worcester Street.*

6.6.3 The views down Worcester Street are an interesting combination of the historic topography of curving roads, and the built form on an urban scale (that includes historic and modern buildings). The creation of new buildings at the junction with George Street underlines the importance of good design of quality building of appropriate urban scale at the Worcester Street/George Street crossroads.

- *Views along Tidmarsh Lane to St George's Tower*

6.6.4 The view of St George's Tower in the Castle along Tidmarsh Lane in the context of the Registry Office and the historic malthouse is one of Oxford's most evocative views, and it opens an under-used route through the Castle site towards the Westgate. View lines along the Lane are at present severely compromised by the bulk of Macclesfield House, and demolition and replacement may be desirable, but only if a replacement is sensitively designed with a placing and massing which respect and complement the scale and historic significance of the mound, as well as the attractive quality of Tidmarsh Lane itself as an important link in the pedestrian routes along the riverside. The Registry Office (former County Offices) is a valuable visual focus at the junction of New Road and Tidmarsh Lane, as well as an important surviving representative of the ancient association of county government with the Castle site.

6.6.5 Visual guidelines would include:

- Consideration of key views of historic fabric and urban form
- Design of new buildings to create and enhance existing views.

6.6.6 ***Principle 6***

Key views which promote enjoyment of the character and features of the neighbourhood should be protected or enhanced.

This will be particularly important with respect to views of the Castle Mound from Hythe Bridge, the Car Park site and New Road, views along the riverside on both banks and along routeways, including Tidmarsh Lane, and views created along the major traffic routes of New Road/Park End Street, Hythe Bridge Street and Worcester Street.

6.7 **Access and communication**

6.7.1 The development of the Worcester Street Car Park has potential to improve access through the site, and the achievement of visual desire lines.

6.7.2 New pedestrian routes have the potential to link the canal and river to the castle and Tidmarsh Lane, and enhance cross-routes from George Street to Park End Street, and New Road to Hythe Bridge Street.

6.7.3 Two major directional routes can be enhanced through or close to the site at large:

East - west, from City Centre to Station via

- George Street/Hythe Bridge Street. For Nuffield College this has a particular significance in connecting the Said Business School with the College and any new buildings or institute on the Car Park site)
- New Road and Castle/ Park End Street.

North - South, via

- Walton Street, Worcester Street/ Tidmarsh Lane
- From Jericho via the canal towpath (or Worcester College Gardens), then via the Car Park site, and the western side of Castle Mill Stream.

6.7.4 The arrival at the Car Park site of a pedestrian route extending the canal towpath should allow a path along the river and passing behind Rosie O'Grady's (the Irish Pub), on the line of the former canal wharf and up towards New Road. This could be positioned to run alongside a restored stretch of water, which thus could protect any new college building from public access.

6.7.5 Development of the Worcester Street Car Park site should take full advantage of opportunities to enhance or extend public pedestrian routes within the existing road pattern, between town centre and railway station, and along the canal and riverside paths.

6.7.6 Any re-development of the Macclesfield House site could explore the possibilities for introducing new public access around the base of the Mound

and into the western areas of the Castle around St George's Tower - certainly visual access but with potential also for physical access.

Access guidelines would include:

- desirability of improved access throughout the site
- the creation or improvement of riverside routes along the Castle Mill Stream
- access from the canal towpath across Hythe Bridge Street into the canal basin/car park site
- access towards the Castle in and around the Macclesfield House site
- access along Tidmarsh Lane as part of longer distance pedestrian route.

6.7.7 **Principle 7**

New development should aim to foster a sense of place and identity for the area, celebrating its value as a focal point through the enhancement or creation of significant pedestrian routes.

The most significant of these routes would be the linking of Jericho with St Thomas's along the canal towpath and riverside path, with a related new route from Hythe Bridge across the Car Park side towards New Road, the Castle Mound and the Macclesfield House site. Existing pedestrian routes such as George Street Mews and Bulwarks Lane should be preserved and brought into the regular town-centre network.

6.8 **Historic character**

- 6.8.1 The historic character of the Car Park site from the 1790s to the 1950s was determined by the industrial, working character of the canal wharfs, with largely brick warehouses, other buildings and walls, and the areas of water formed by the arms of the canal. Despite the demolitions of the 1950s, something still remains of this character, principally in the buildings of the public house on Park End Street (Rosie O'Grady's Irish Pub, formerly the Queen's Arms) with the associated remaining brick pier of the gateway into the Coal Wharf and the brick/stone revetment wall along Hythe Bridge Street.
- 6.8.2 On a broader scale, the desirability of retaining historic character where it survives should be extended as a principle to plans for Tidmarsh Lane, with its surviving brick-built converted malthouse along the Castle Mill Stream and the key historic building of the former County Offices (1911-14), on the important focal site at the corner of Tidmarsh Lane and New Road. Any new building in Tidmarsh Lane (in possible replacement of Macclesfield House),

should respect and complement the scale and materials of the malthouse, as Macclesfield House fails to do, and enhance the quality of the Lane as an important pedestrian route from New Road towards Paradise and the Westgate area.

6.8.3 The defining street pattern of the larger site is of exceptional significance in charting the very long period of development of this area of the city and a vital link with the past.

6.8.4 Guidelines for protecting and reflecting historic character should include:

- retention of existing historic structures
- reflection of former historic character in the scale, design and materials of new buildings
- preservation of such ancient routes as Bulwarks Lane and their use as part of the functioning network of pedestrian routes in the city.

6.8.5 ***Principle 8***

Encouragement of public awareness and appreciation of the historic character and distinctiveness of this major area of Oxford's heritage should be central to its future planning.

Smaller-scale buildings of quality, character or historic interest should wherever possible be retained, providing visual continuity and a reference for the former nature and uses of the site.



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Photographic collections, newspapers, printed materials
Sites and Monuments Record

Bodleian Library of the University of Oxford

Card index of Oxford Topographical Views
MSS Top. Oxon (especially Minn Collection)

Warwickshire County Record Office

Deposit no. **CR 1590** consists of canal records from the Hatton and Hillmorton depots.
Oxford Canal Co. Papers are numbered 1-565; plans are numbered P1 - P498]

CR 1590/77 etc.	Letter books of J. Dunsford at Canal Office, Oxford, 1792 - XXXX
CR 1590/P266	Plan of canal and river from Worcs. College Meadow to old and new canal wharfs, c.1800
CR 1590/P263/1-15	Plans, elevations and details, portico to Company's offices, 1827-8
CR 1590/P267	Plan of canal basin and coal wharf, 1838
CR 1590/P269/1-3	Plan and section of drain across site of wharf, 1849
CR 1590/P270	Plan of canal basin and coal wharf etc. c.1850
CR 1590/P271	Plan of land between New Inn Hall St. and Castle Hill, possibly copied c.1850, showing owners before acquisition to build canal wharf
CR 1590/P293/1,2	Plan for widening Worcester St. bridge and bridge over canal, between goods wharf and coal wharf, 1852
CR 1590/P73A/1-45	Plan of whole Oxford Canal, 20" scale, 1853 and n.d.
CR 1590/P296/1-9	Plan for alterations to Phillips Ale Stores, adjoining canal, 1869-70
CR 1590/291/1-4	Plan for diverting Worcester St. and moving bridge, prior to building of Nuffield College; City Engineers Dept., 1939

British Waterways Archive, Gloucester

BW162/4/9/1	Accounts of land purchased for construction of Oxford Canal, 1769-90
BW162/5/2	Notes of plans for house & offices for clerk to canal company at Oxford, 1827

BW 162/18/16	Proposed alterations to site of warehouse for Oxford Cement Co. at Oxford Wharf, 1909
BW162/18/17	Oxford Canal Navigation wharf, 1924
BW 162/19/1	Plan for alteration to basement of Oxford Canal office, 1838

Public Record Office of the National Archives at Kew

RAIL 855	Oxford Canal Company Historical Records 1769-1948 (157 files and volumes)
OXC1/1-12	Minutes and Reports, 1800-1948
OXC2/1-7	Stock and Share Registers, 1775-1847
OXC3/1-3	Deeds, Agreements, Contracts, Specifications, Estimates & Plans
OXC4/1-111	Miscellaneous Books & Records, 1787-1948
RAIL 888/4	Small scale map of proposed canal, 1826
RAIL 1112/41	Oxford Canal Navigation papers 1791-1830
RAIL 1112/42	Oxford Canal Navigation papers 1831-1895
RAIL 1112/43	Oxford Canal Navigation papers 1895-1912
RAIL 1112/44	Oxford Canal Navigation papers 1913-1941

Barclays Group Archives, Dallimore Road, Wythenshawe, Manchester [not seen]

Records of Parsons Thomson & Co [Oxford Old Bank] 1771-1900
include material relating to Oxford Canal (ex inf. Nigel Ramsey).

Nuffield College Archives, Oxford [not seen]

MSS Nuffield	(miscellaneous papers and correspondence of William Richard Morris (1877-1964) Viscount Nuffield) NRA catalogue reference <i>NRA 24354 Morris</i>
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Note: The majority of Lord Nuffield's business records and papers were destroyed in his lifetime

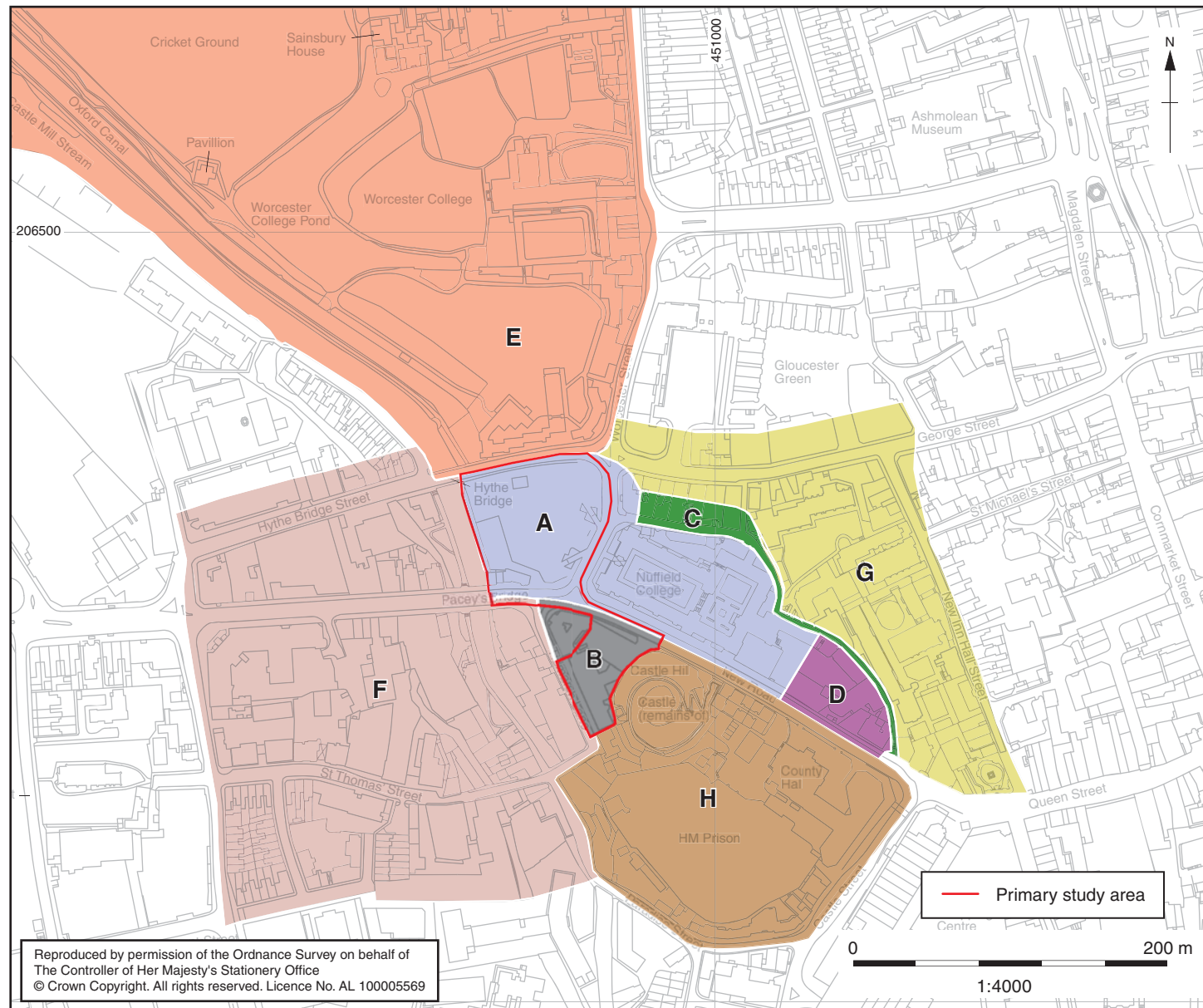


Figure 1: Site location map and study areas A - H (see Section 4)



Figure 3: Loggan map, 1675



Figure 4: Taylor map 1750

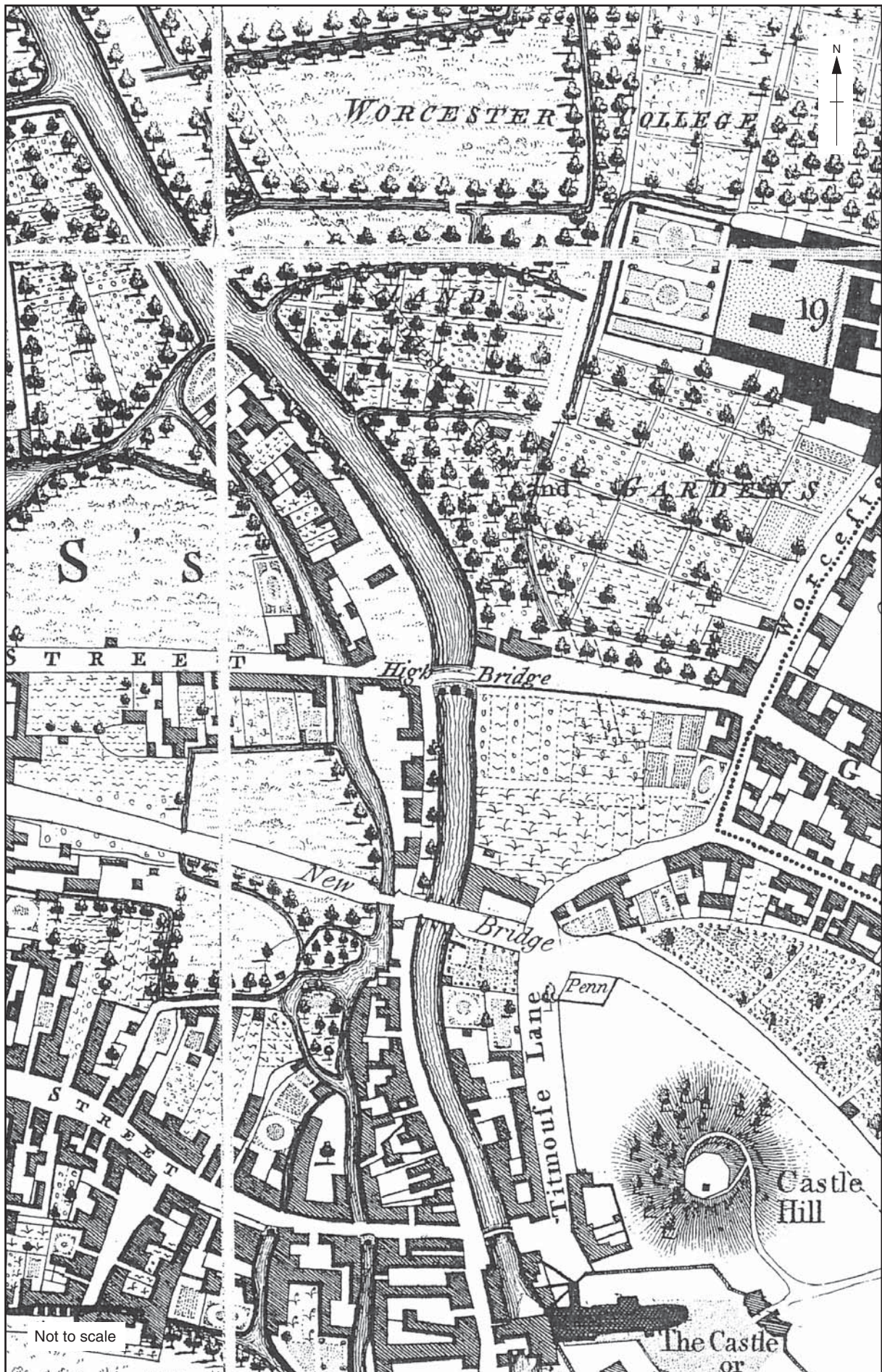


Figure 5: Faden map 1789

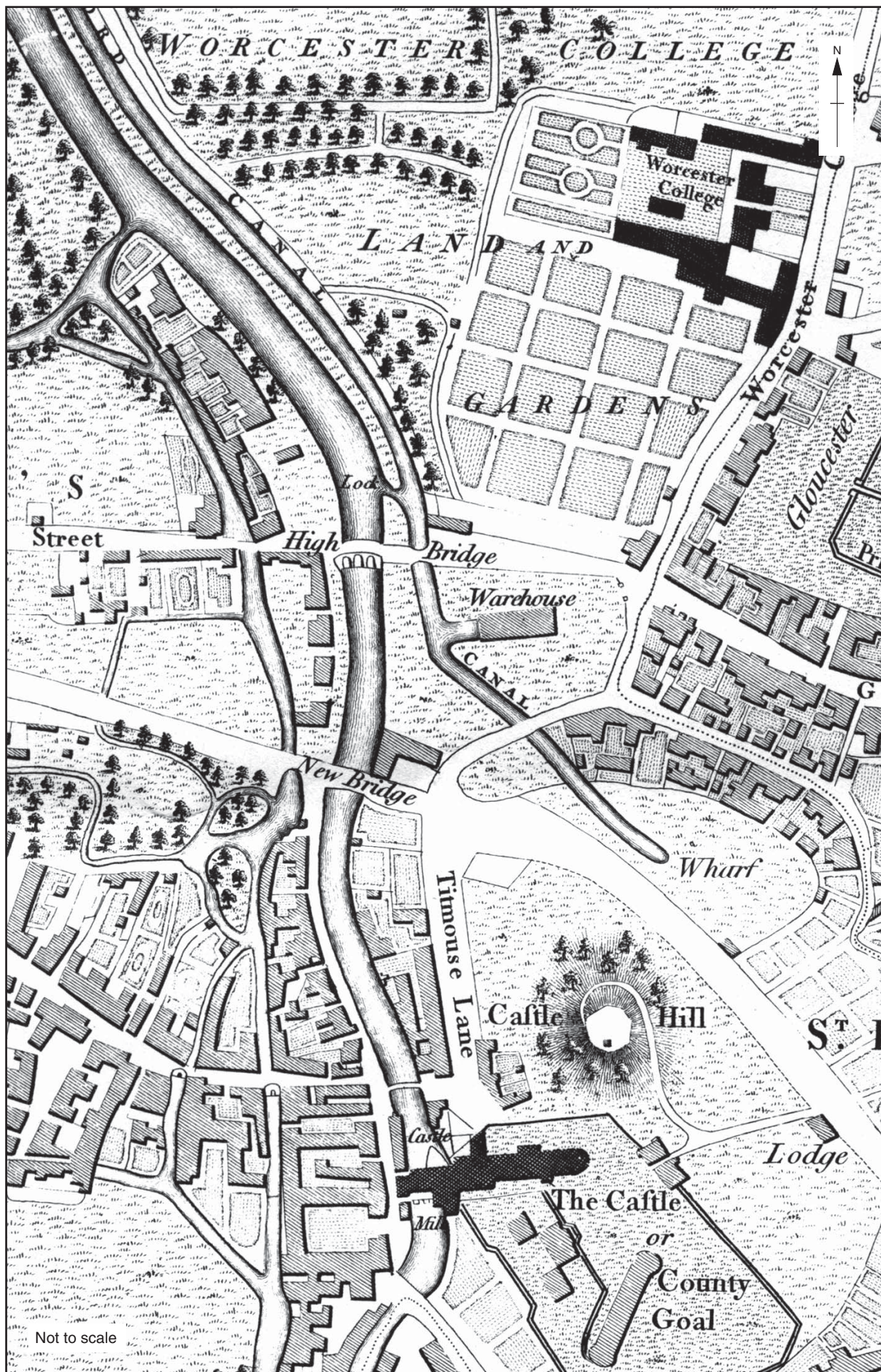
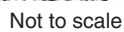


Figure 6: Davis map 1797



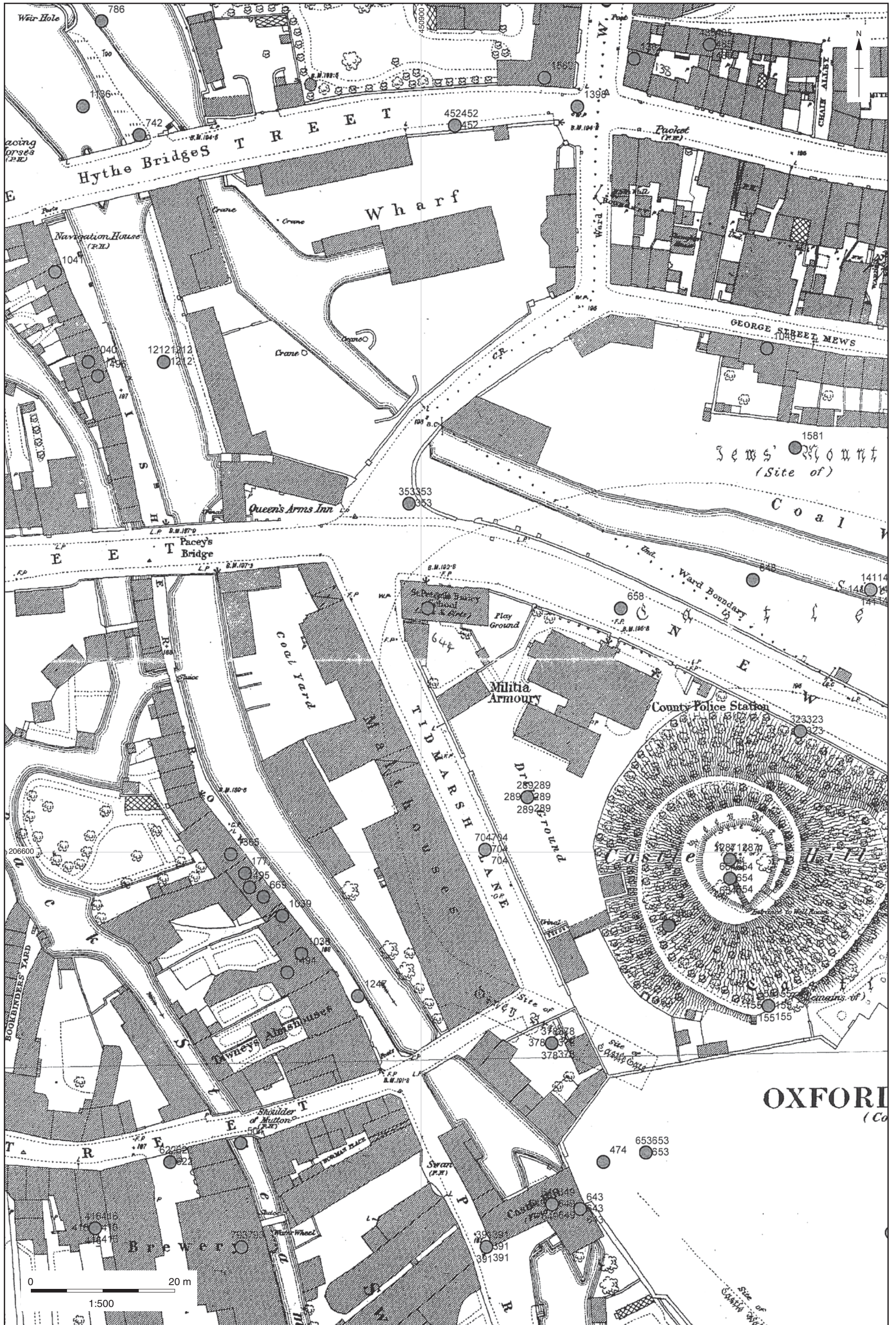


Figure 8: 1st Edition Ordnance Survey, 1:500 (reduced), 1878

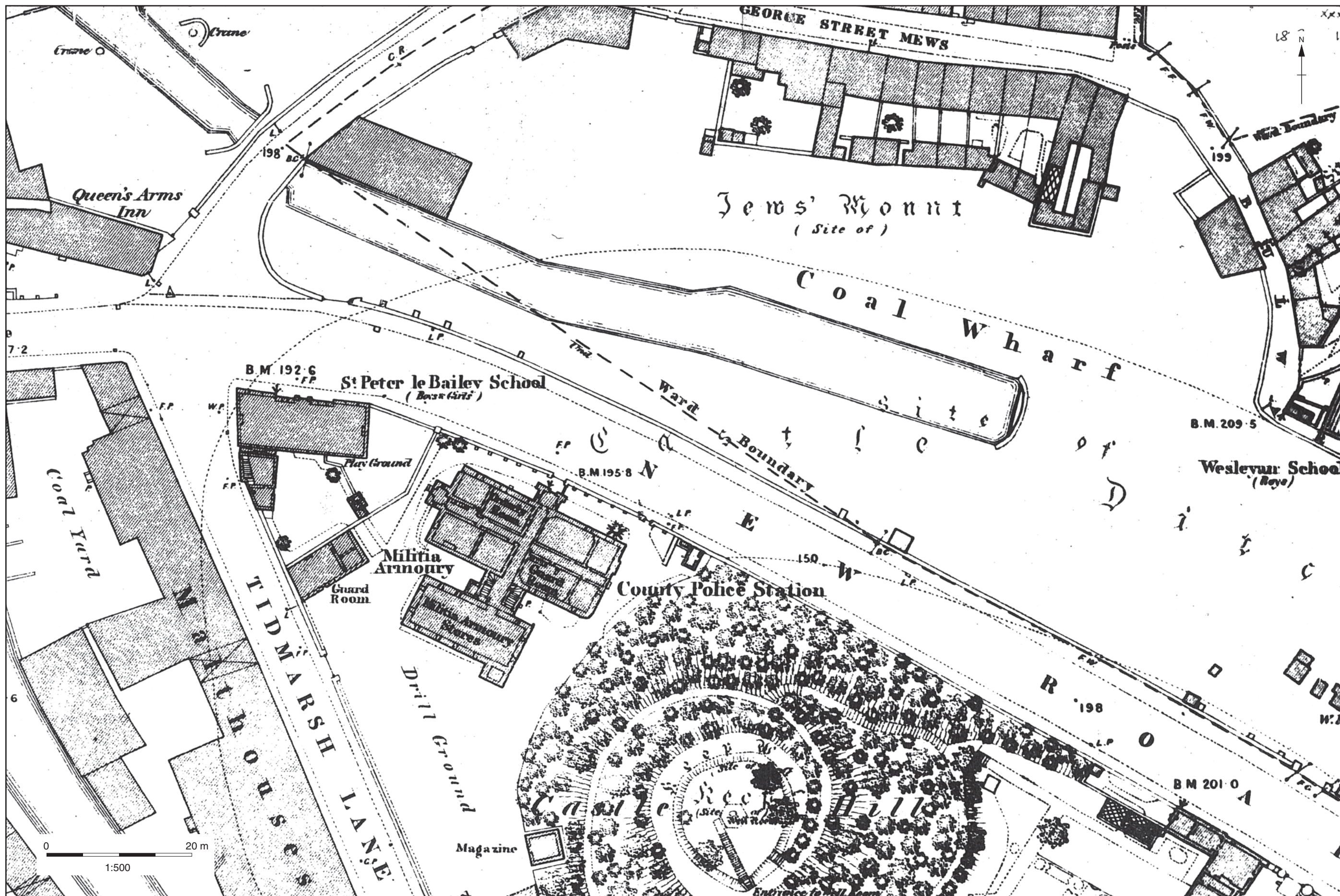


Figure 9a: 1st Edition Ordnance Survey, 1:500 (southern area), 1878

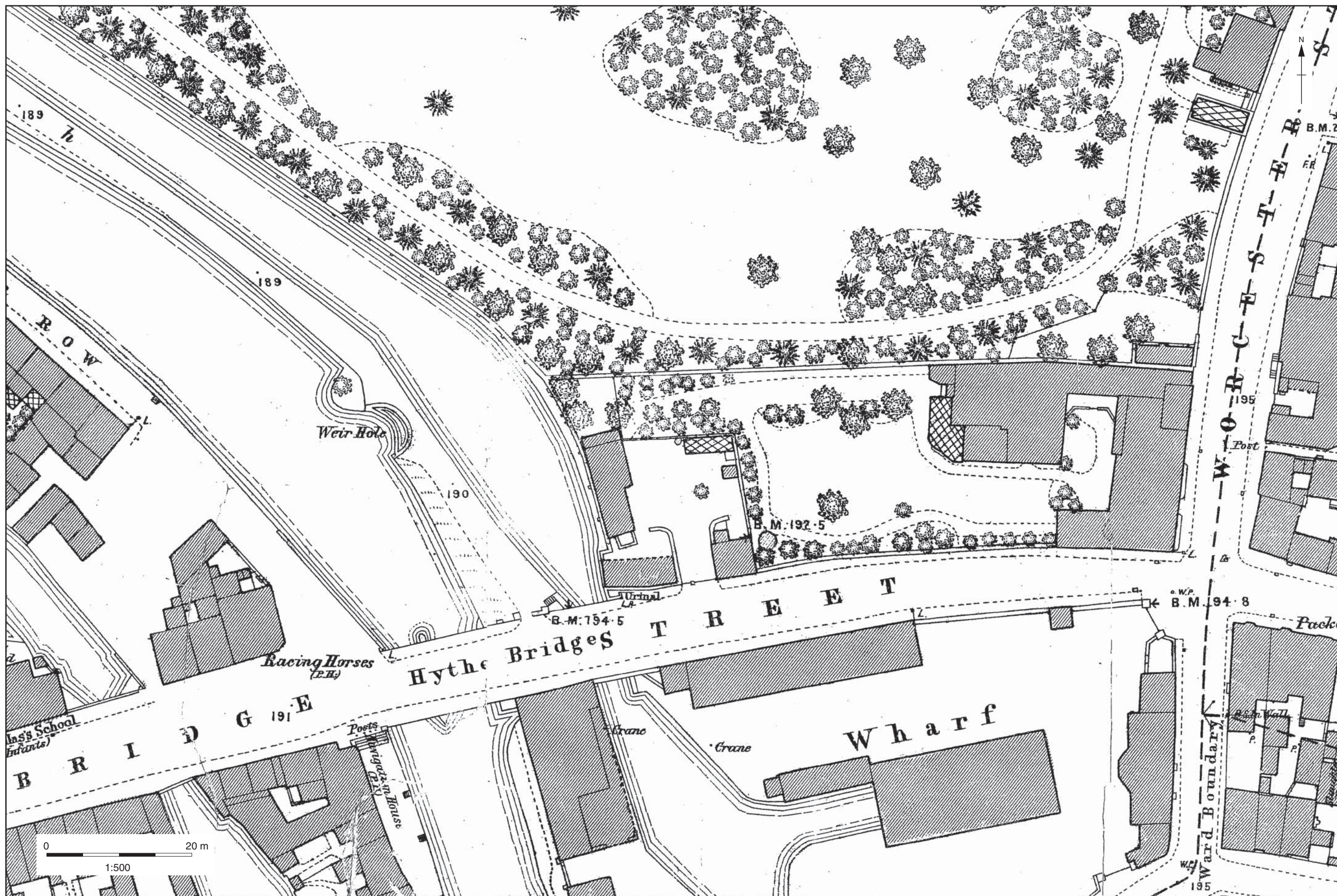


Figure 9b: 1st Edition Ordnance Survey, 1:500 (northern area), 1878



Figure 10: Ordnance Survey, 1:2500, revised 1900



Figure 11: Ordnance Survey, 1:2500, revised 1921

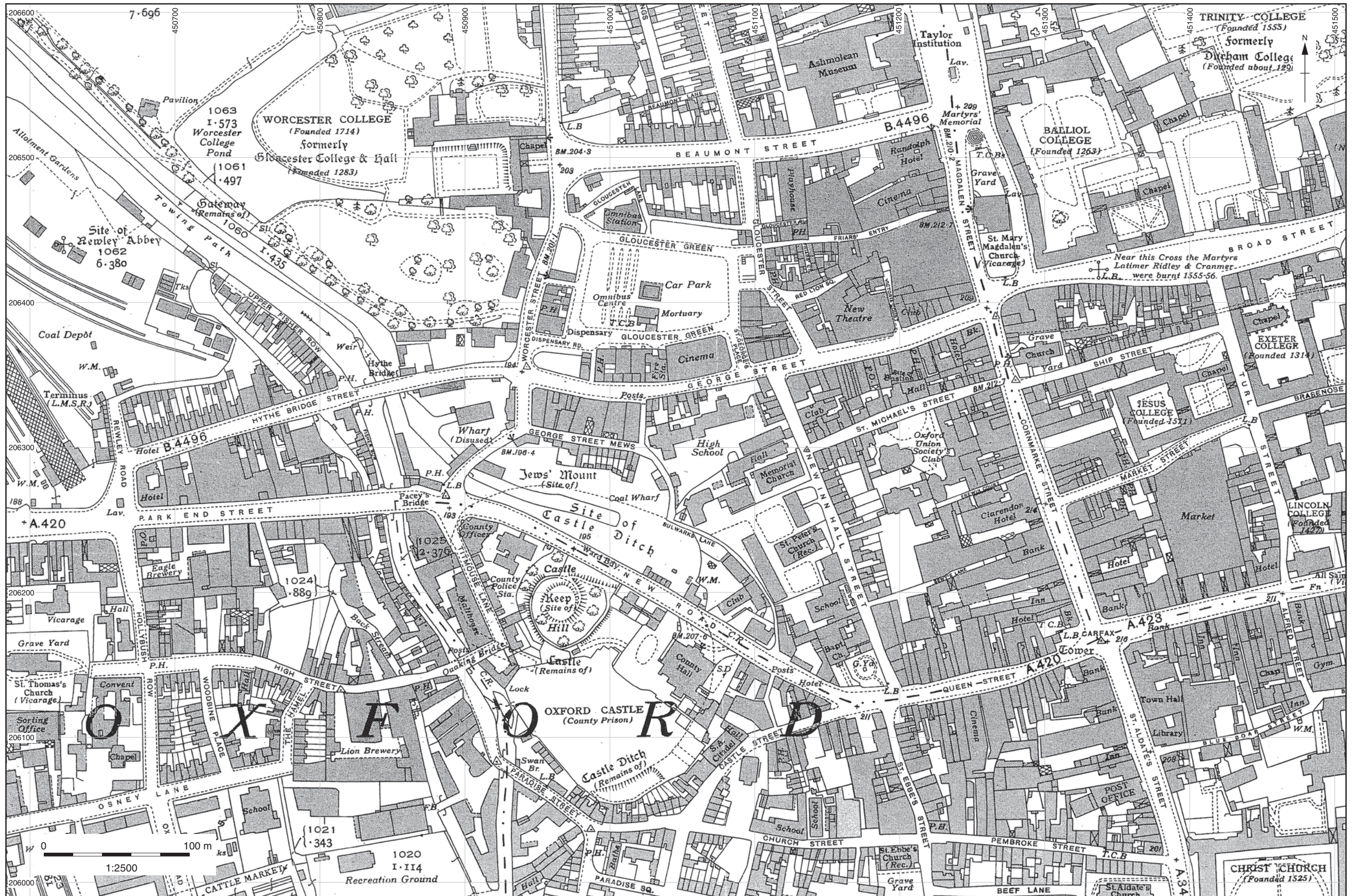


Figure 12: Ordnance Survey, 1:2500, revised 1939



Figure 13: Ordnance Survey, 1:2500, revised 1958

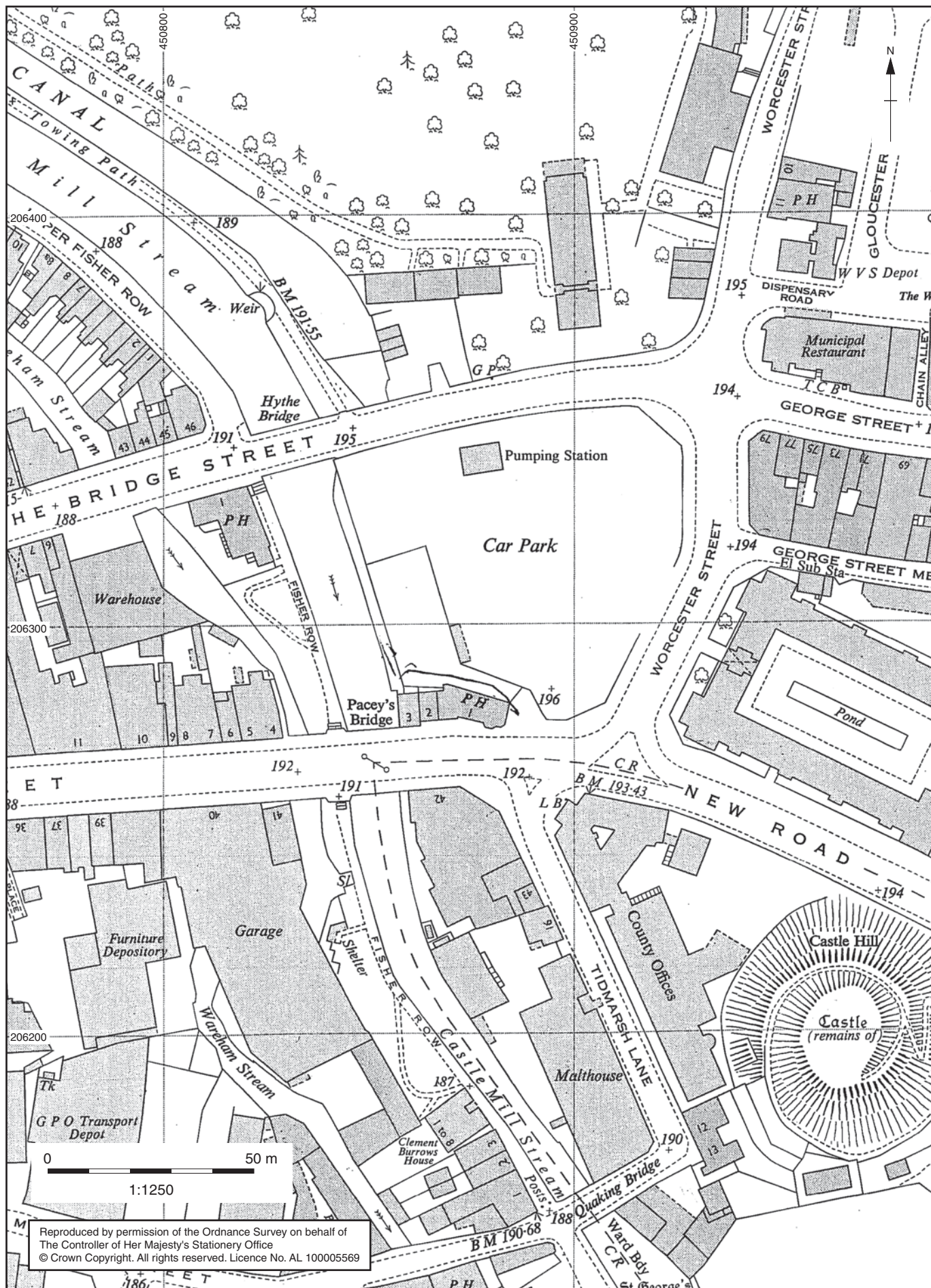


Figure 14: Ordnance Survey, 1:1250, revised 1969

Copied from an Engraved Map in the Bodleian Library Dated 1750

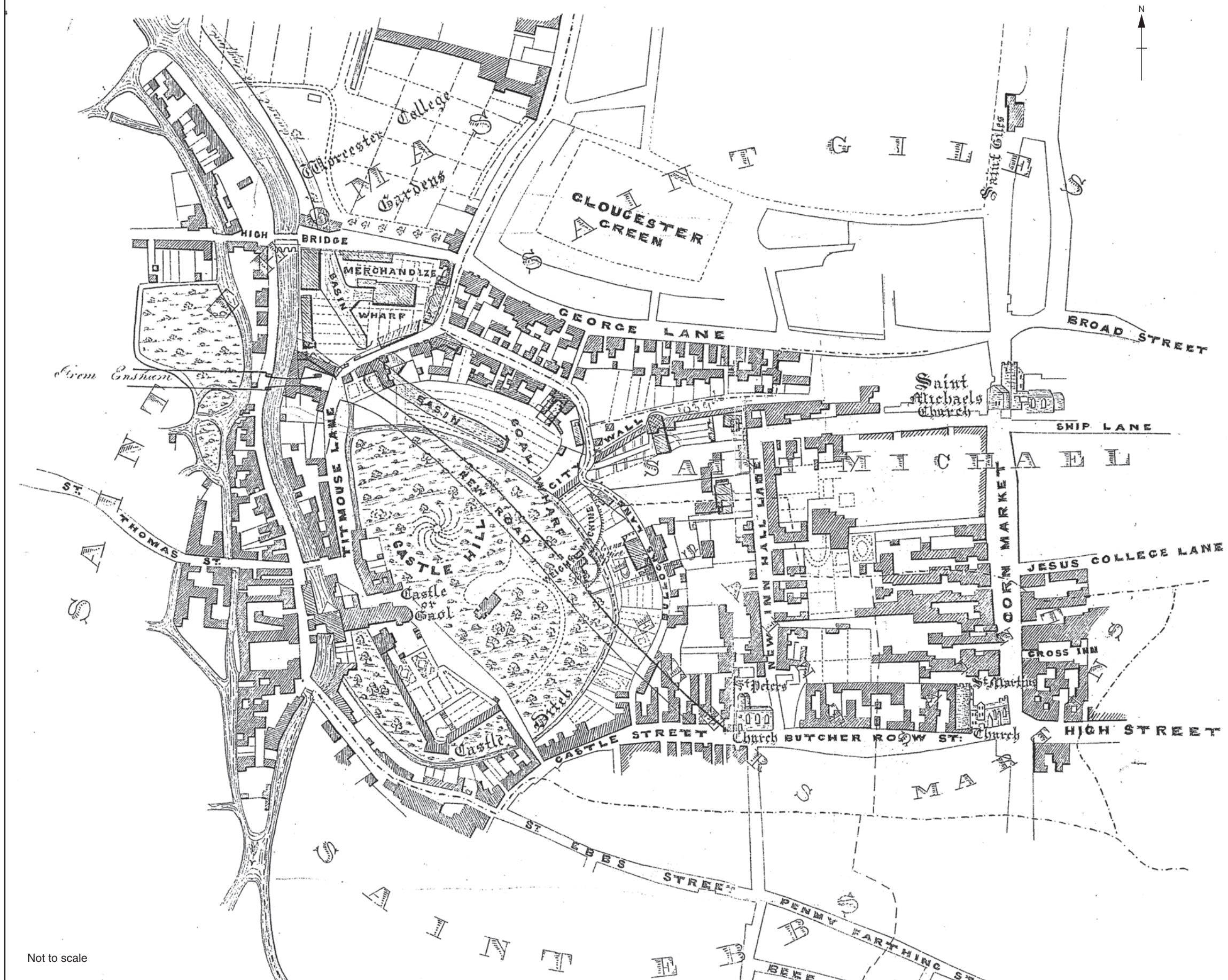


Figure 15: Plan of Oxford Canal Basin, 1838, located on Taylor map of 1750 (British Waterways Archive, Gloucester)



Figure 16a: Layout and occupancy of Coal Wharf site before acquisition by Canal Company (1852, but probably based on an earlier plan; *Warwickshire Record Office*)

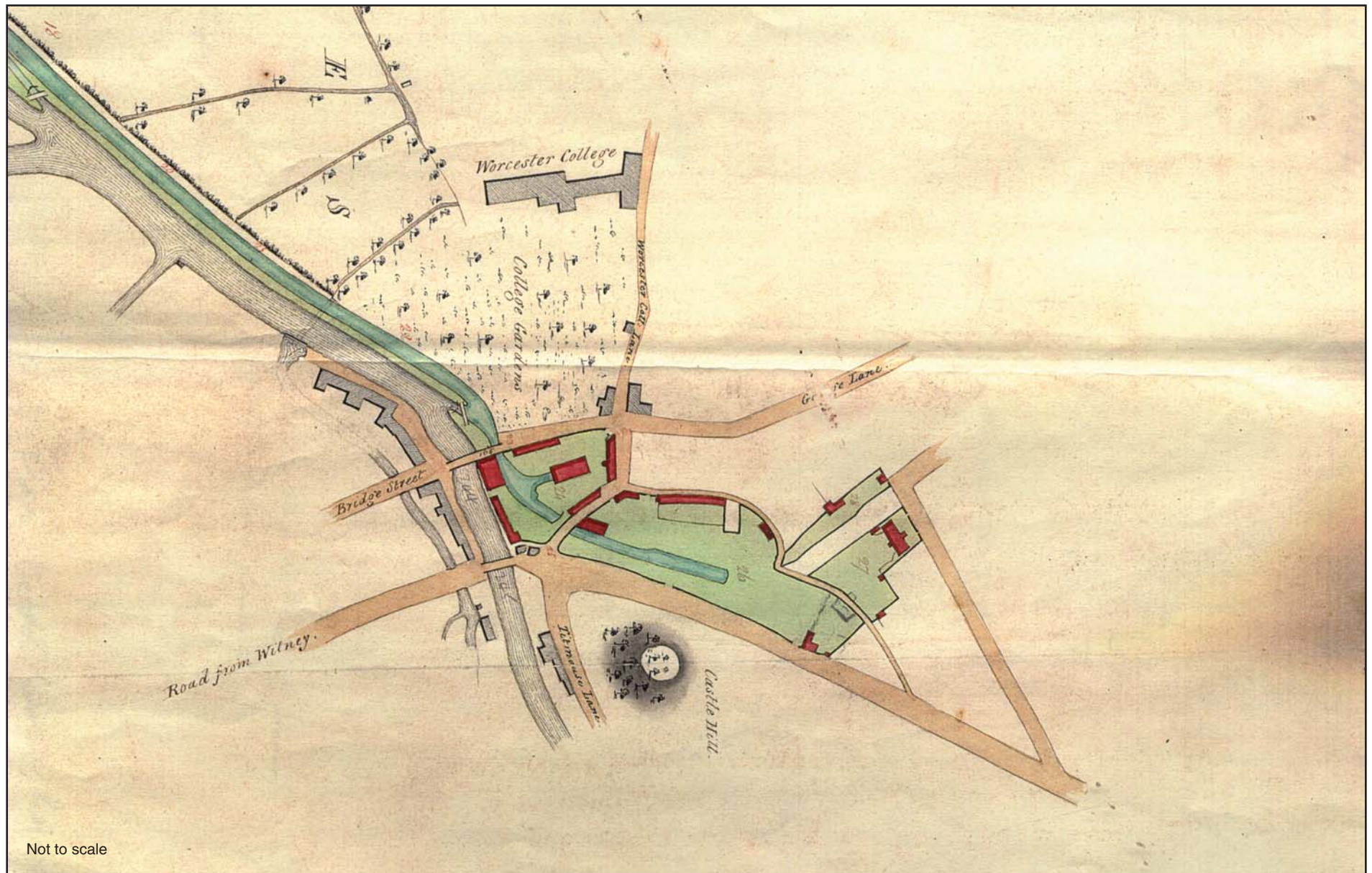


Figure 16b: An early 19th - century survey of the Canal Wharf and adjacent property: *British Waterways*

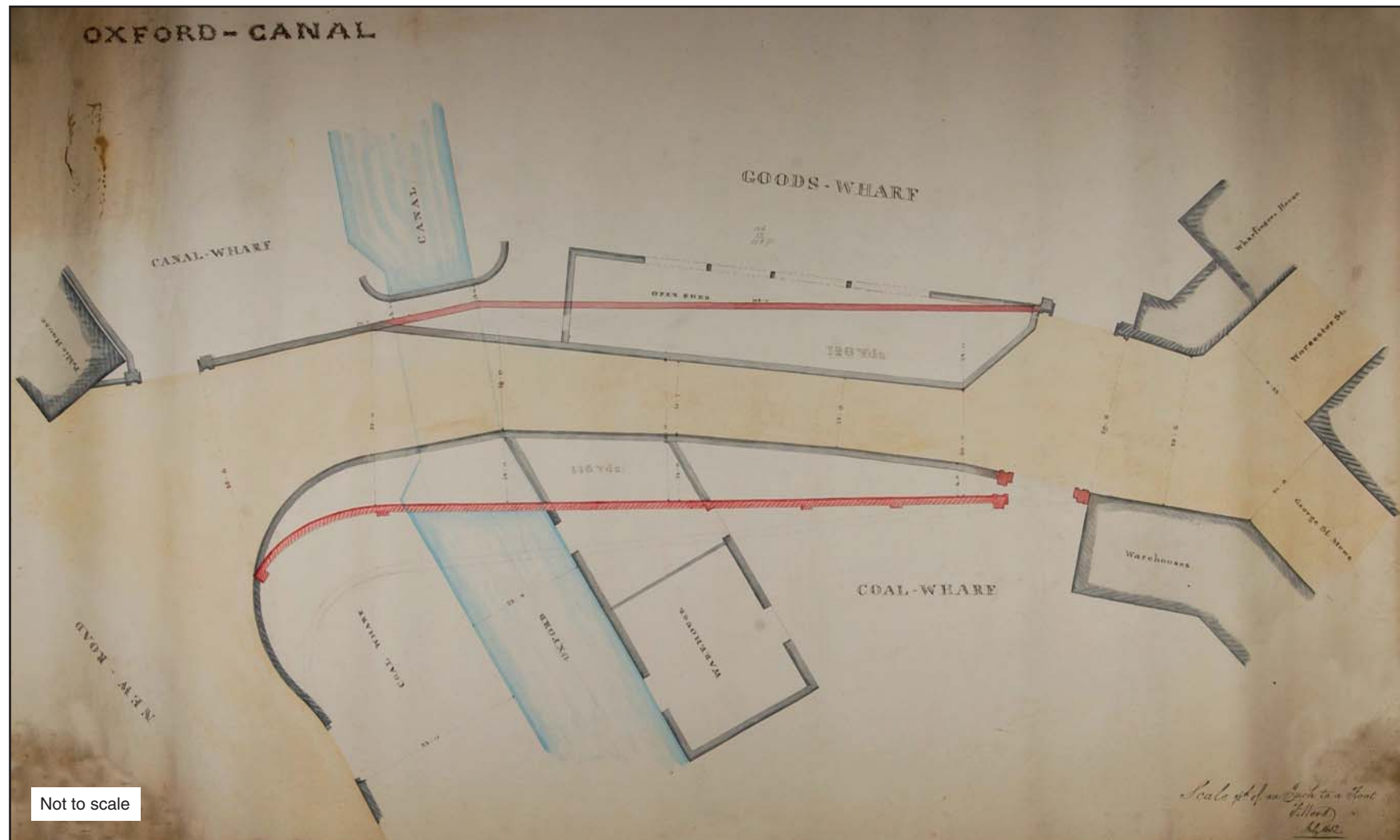


Figure 17: Proposal to widen Worcester Street and canal bridge between coal wharf and goods wharf, 1852 (Warwickshire Record Office)

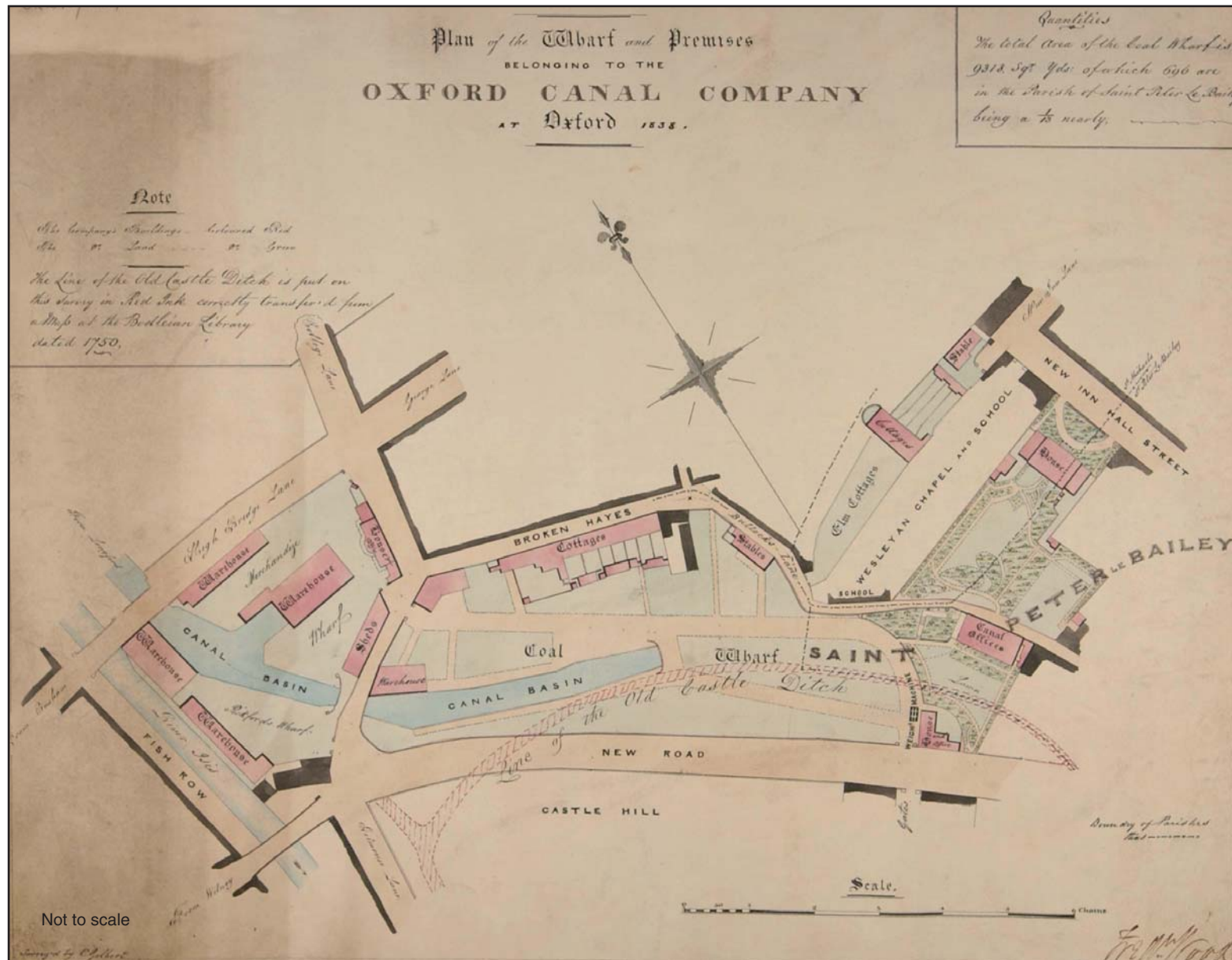


Figure 18: Oxford Canal Company Wharf and Premises, 1838 (Warwickshire Record Office)

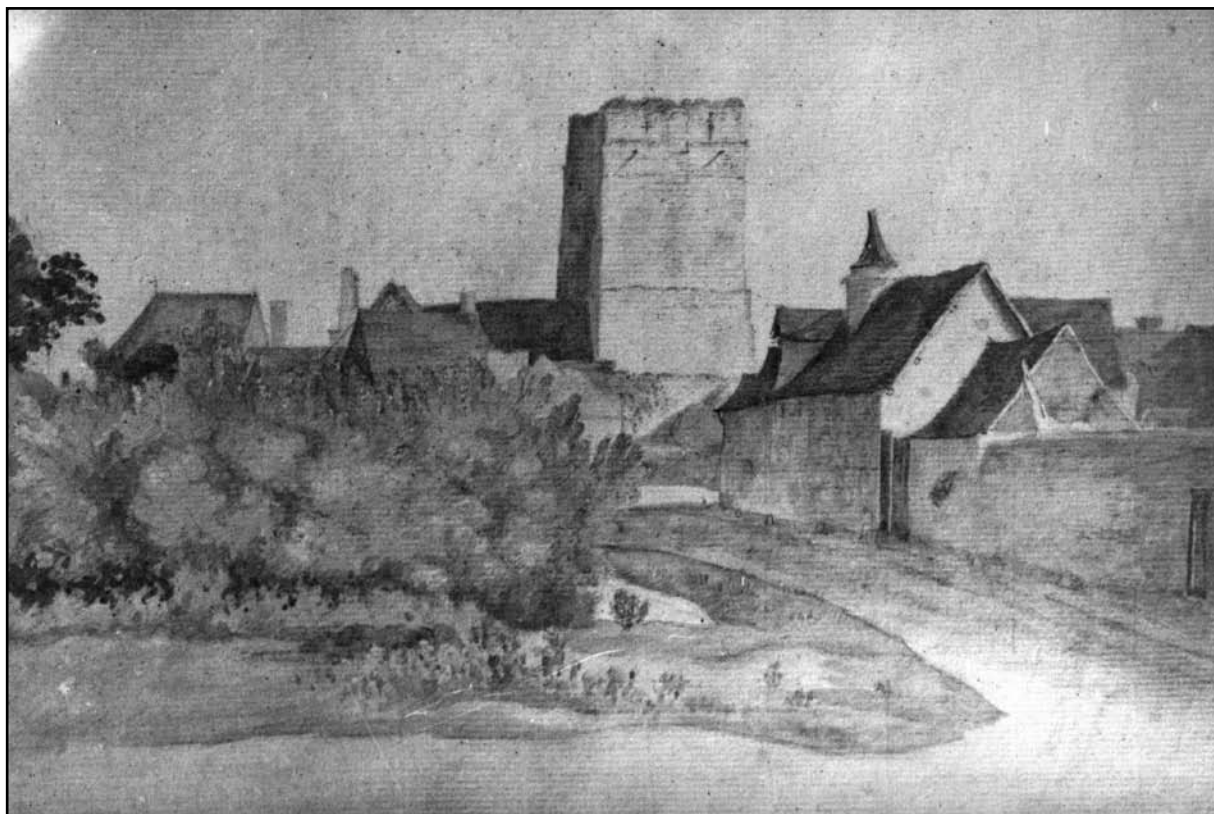


Figure 19a: View along Tidmarsh Lane, late 18th century, watercolour by J. Malchair

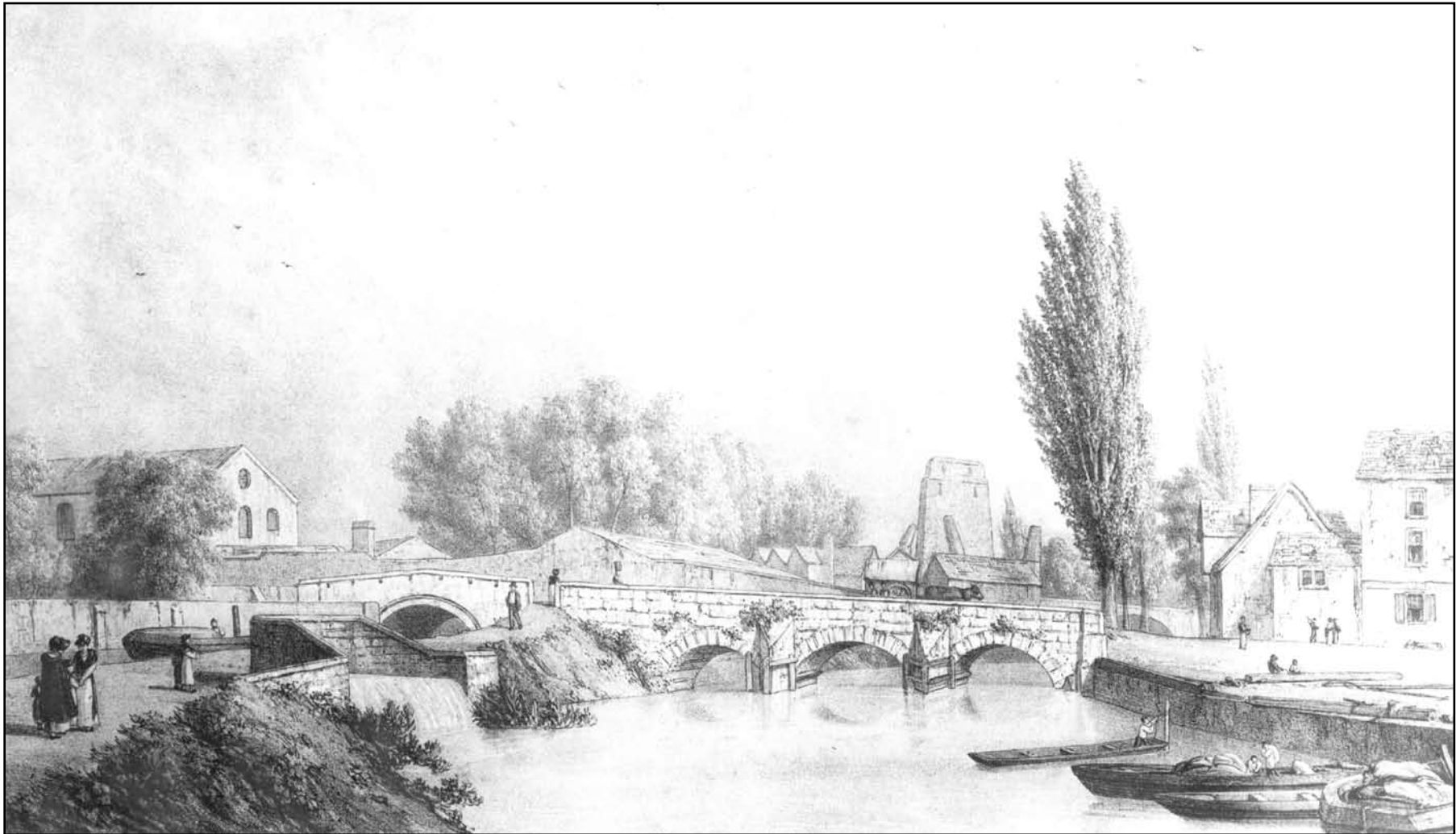


Figure 19b: Hythe Bridge Street crossing the canal and Castle Mill Stream, viewed from the north; drawing, William Westall 1822
(Centre for Oxfordshire Studies: Oxfordshire Photographic Archive)



Figure 20: Weir, canal to Mill Stream north of Hythe Bridge, 1895-1905 (*Oxfordshire Photographic Archive*). The weir was built before 1822 to replace the earlier flash lock in this position.



Figure 21: Oxford Canal Company Basin, Coal Wharf looking east from Worcester Street, 1901 (*Oxfordshire Photographic Archive*)

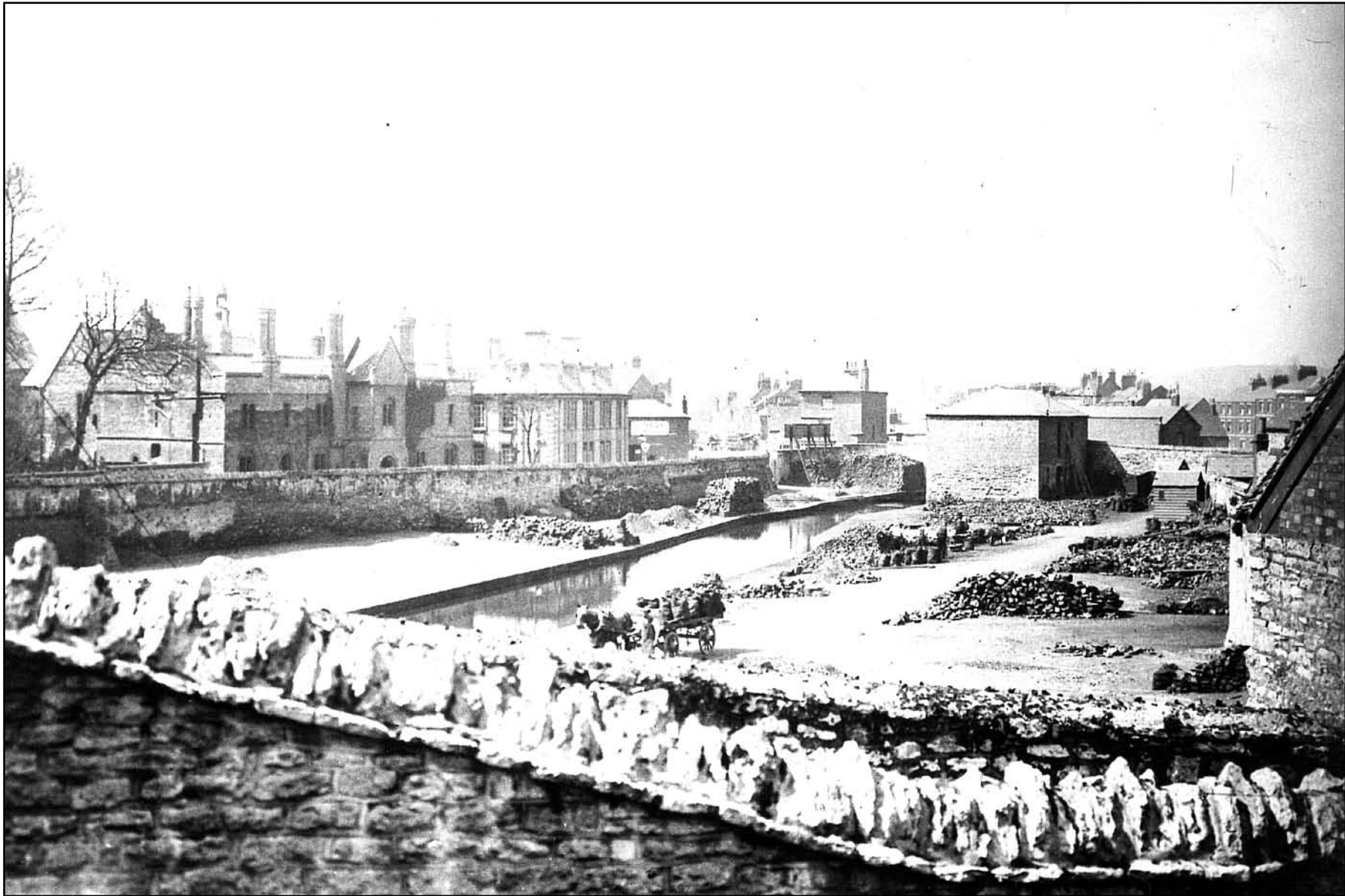


Figure 22: Coal Wharf and New Road looking west, c.1900 (*Oxfordshire Photographic Archive*)

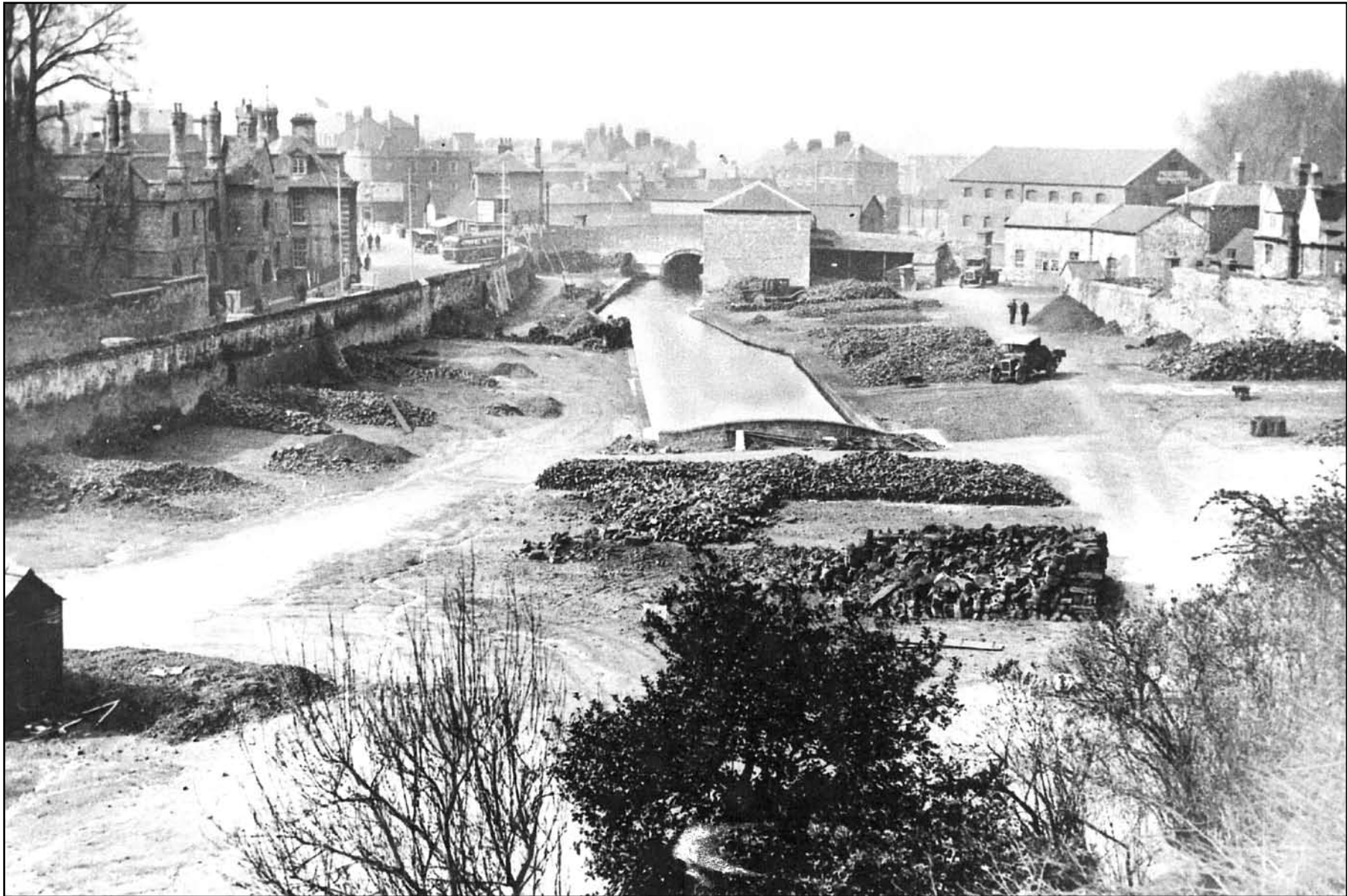


Figure 23: Coal Wharf and New Road looking west, c.1920 (*Oxfordshire Photographic Archive*)

Figure 23

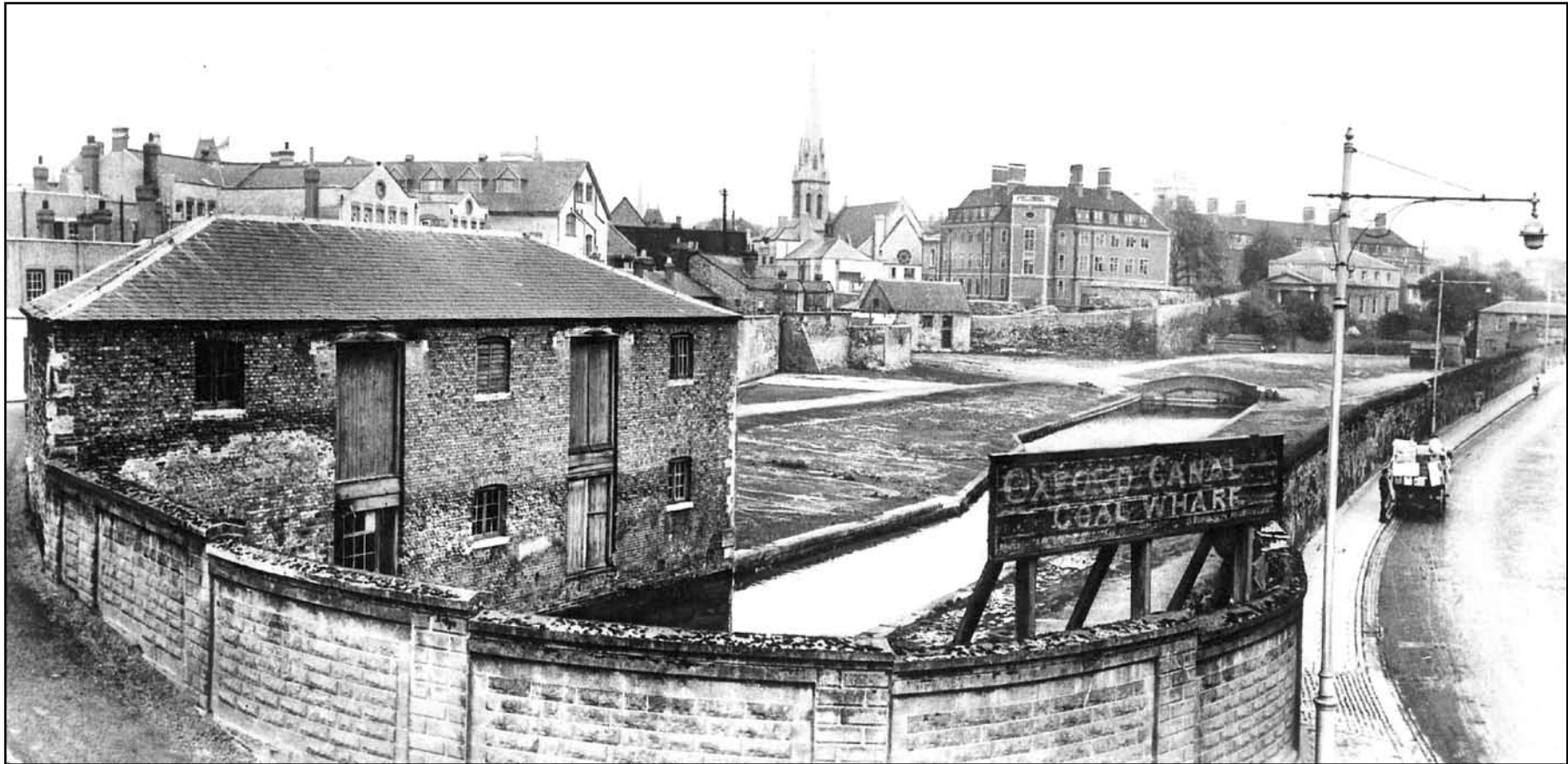


Figure 24: Coal Wharf looking east from the corner of New Road and Worcester Street, c.1920 (*Oxfordshire Photographic Archive*)



Figure 25: South side of Goods Wharf, along Castle Mill Stream, c.1890 (*Oxfordshire Photographic Archive*)



Figure 26: Goods Wharf and warehouses, from beneath Bridge 244 c.1940
(Bodleian Library, Minn Collection)



Figure 27: Coal Wharf, canal basin and Municipal Restaurant, 1939-45
(Bodleian Library, Minn Collection)



Figure 28: Goods Warehouse looking east, with the rear of Wharfinger's House and Office, September 1945
(Bodleian Library, Minn Collection)

Figure 28



Figure 29: Goods Warehouse from southeast, just prior to demolition in 1955 (*Oxfordshire Photographic Archive*)



Figure 30: Basin and goods warehouse prior to demolition and infilling, 1955 (*Oxfordshire Photographic Archive*)

Figure 30



Figure 31: Bridge 244 on Hythe Bridge Street from the east, 1955, with canal partially infilled with demolition rubble
(*Oxfordshire Photographic Archive*)



Figure 32: Warehouse adjoining Bridge 245 below Worcester Street, looking east from the Goods Wharf, 1955. This warehouse appears to have been built between 1900 and 1921. Queen's Arms Public House and gate piers on the right (*Oxfordshire Photographic Archive*)

Figure 32



Figure 33: Bridge 245, looking from the Coal Yard into the Goods Yard, 1955
(*Oxfordshire Photographic Archive*)



Figure 34: Looking northwest through Bridge 245 across the drained basin of the Goods Wharf to Bridge 244, 1955 (*Oxfordshire Photographic Archive*)

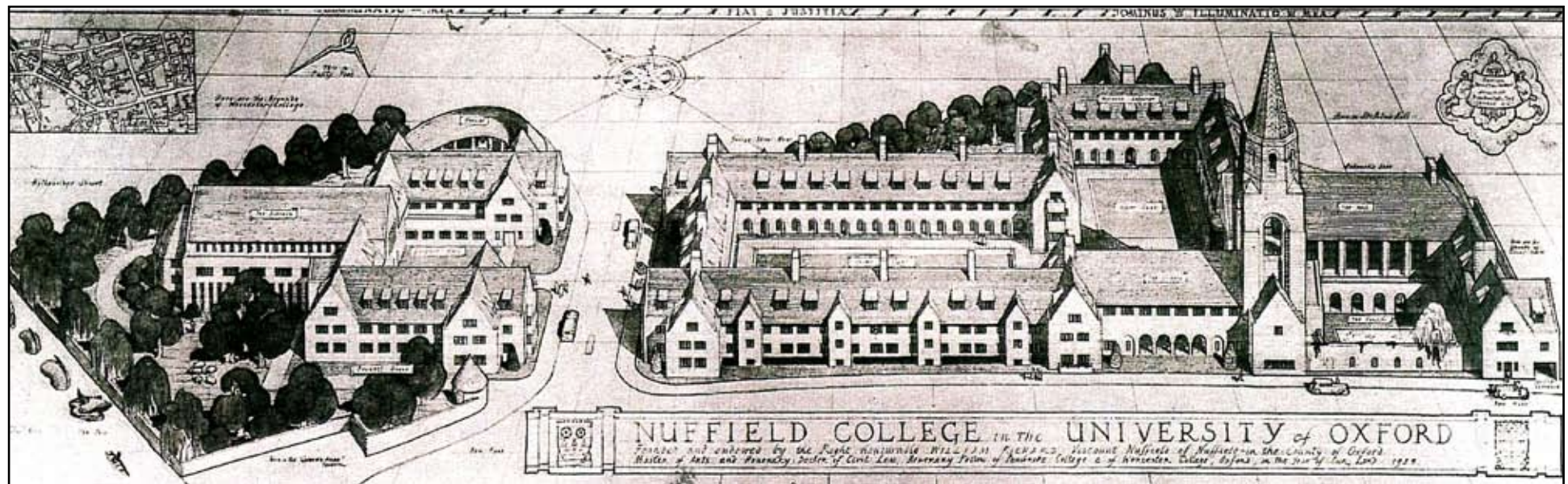


Figure 45: Nuffield College, Harrison's second design of 1939 (after Colvin)



Figure 35: Building Nuffield College on the Coal Wharf site, 1950s. The Goods Warehouse was still standing at that time
(Bodleian Library, Minn Collection)

Figure 35



Figure 36: George Street Mews, late 19th-century drawing (*Bodleian Library, Minn Collection*)



Figure 37: Rear of houses in George Street Mews, south side, photograph of 1920 (*Bodleian Library, Minn Collection*)

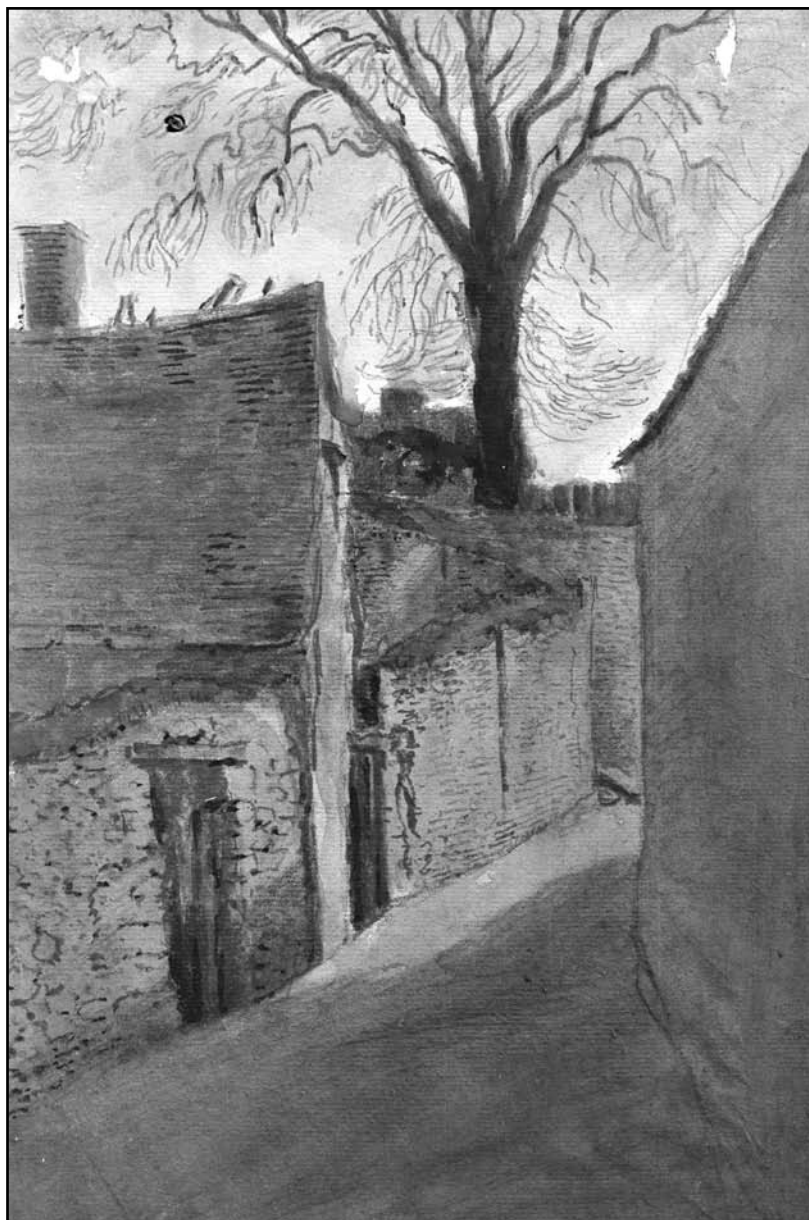


Figure 38: Bulwarks Lane, drawing by John Malchair, late 18th century (*Bodleian Library, Minn Collection*)



Figure 39: Old St Peter's School on the corner of New Road and Tidmarsh Lane, February 1911 (*Bodleian Library, Minn Collection*)



Figure 40: The Militia Drill Hall (site of Macclesfield House), from the corner of New Road and Worcester Street, with St George's Tower, February 1911 (*Bodleian Library, Minn Collection*)



Figure 41: County Offices, New Road, and the Coal Wharf, from the west, ?1930s (*Bodleian Library, Minn Collection*)

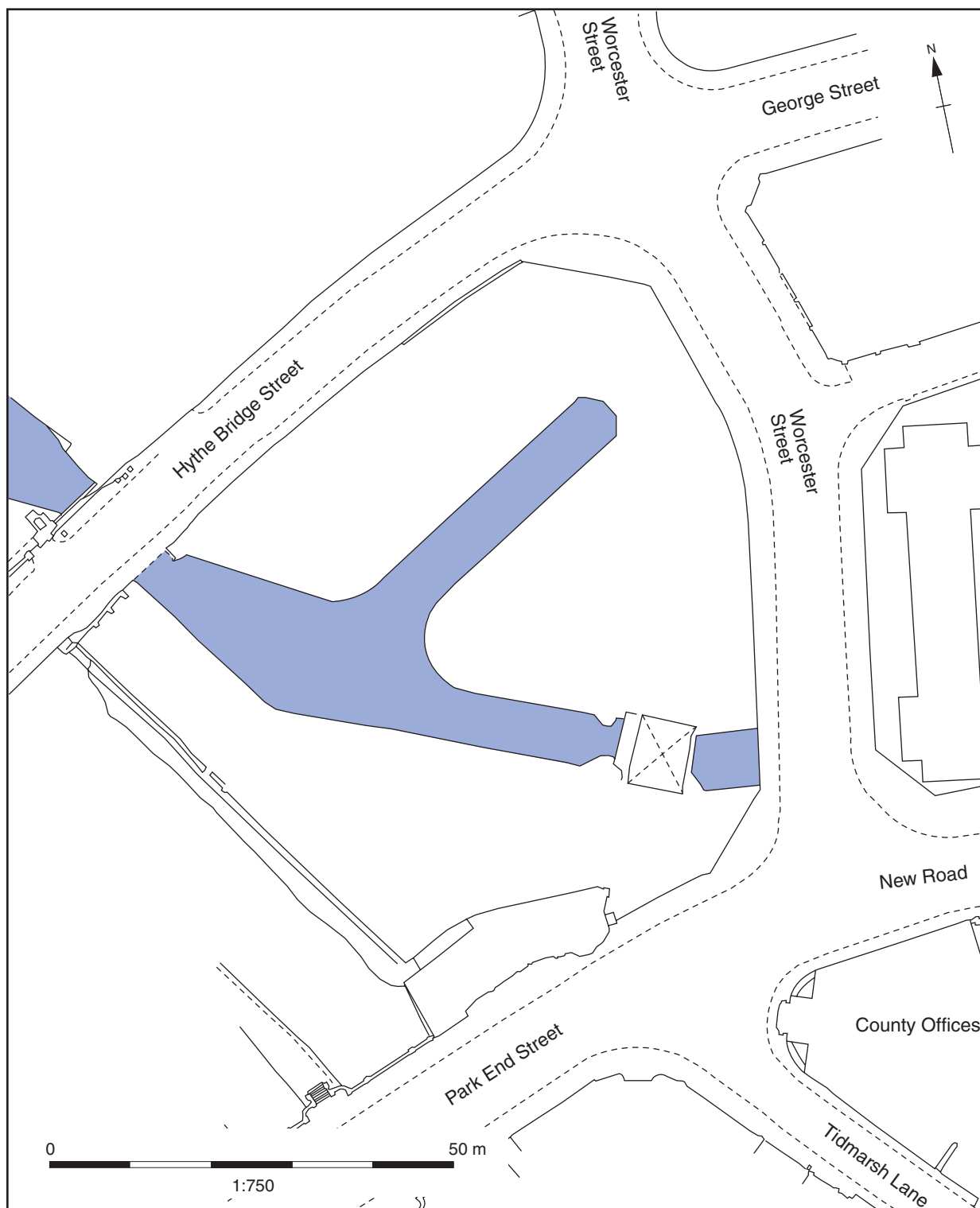


Figure 42: Correlation of Oxford Canal Company Basin below Worcester Street Car Park to present road layout and buildings (Courtesy of Hugh Jaeger and FOXCAN)

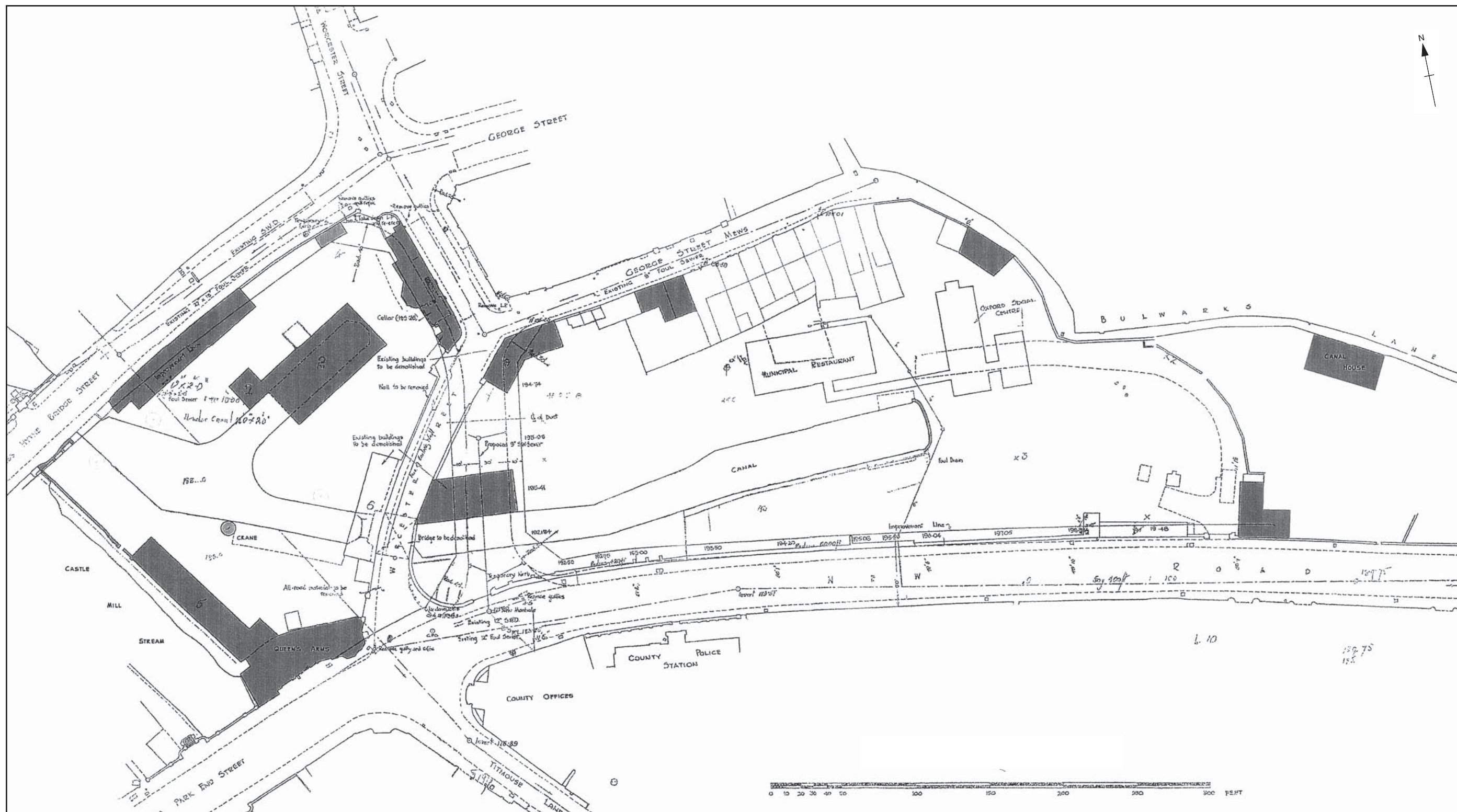


Figure 43: Buildings in and around Oxford Canal Terminus (Goods Wharf and Coal Wharf) before demolitions of 1940s/1950s; original plan prepared for Nuffield College by 1951, redrawn by Hugh Jaeger, FOXCAN

LOSS OF A BUILDING

To the Editor of "The Oxford Times"

Sir.—No one has bemoaned the loss of one of Oxford's finest buildings. A great brick and stone structure standing on noble arches has been swept away to form a car park!

The building was situated between Park End Street and Hythe Bridge Street just opposite Nuffield College. That it was not a university building, that it was of brick, and that its purpose has ceased, presumably were the reasons for the demolition. But what fine proportion and noble form were embodied in it.

One feels that the threatened loss of so great an amenity ought to have been referred to people or bodies likely to feel the importance of the matter. As no mention seems to have been made from any quarter either before or after the fateful deed of destruction, one can only presume one's view is solitary; that most people do

not mind or that the aesthetic qualities of the building were less real than imaginary. My view is that Oxford has suffered a major aesthetic loss. I am sure there must be a few who are sad about it. — Yours faithfully,

THOMAS RAYSON.

29, Beaumont Street,
Oxford.

Figure 44: Letter to the *Oxford Times* from Thomas Rayson, 1955, lamenting demolition of the Goods Warehouse

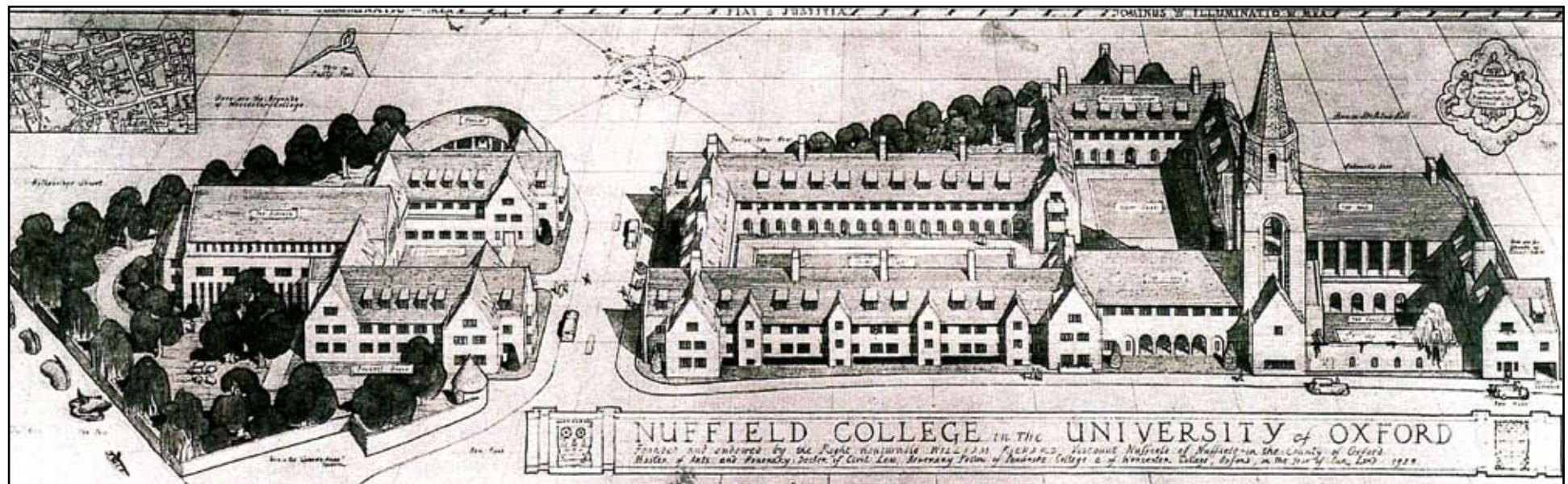


Figure 45: Nuffield College, Harrison's second design of 1939 (after Colvin)



Figure 46: Worcester Street Carpark and surrounding area survey

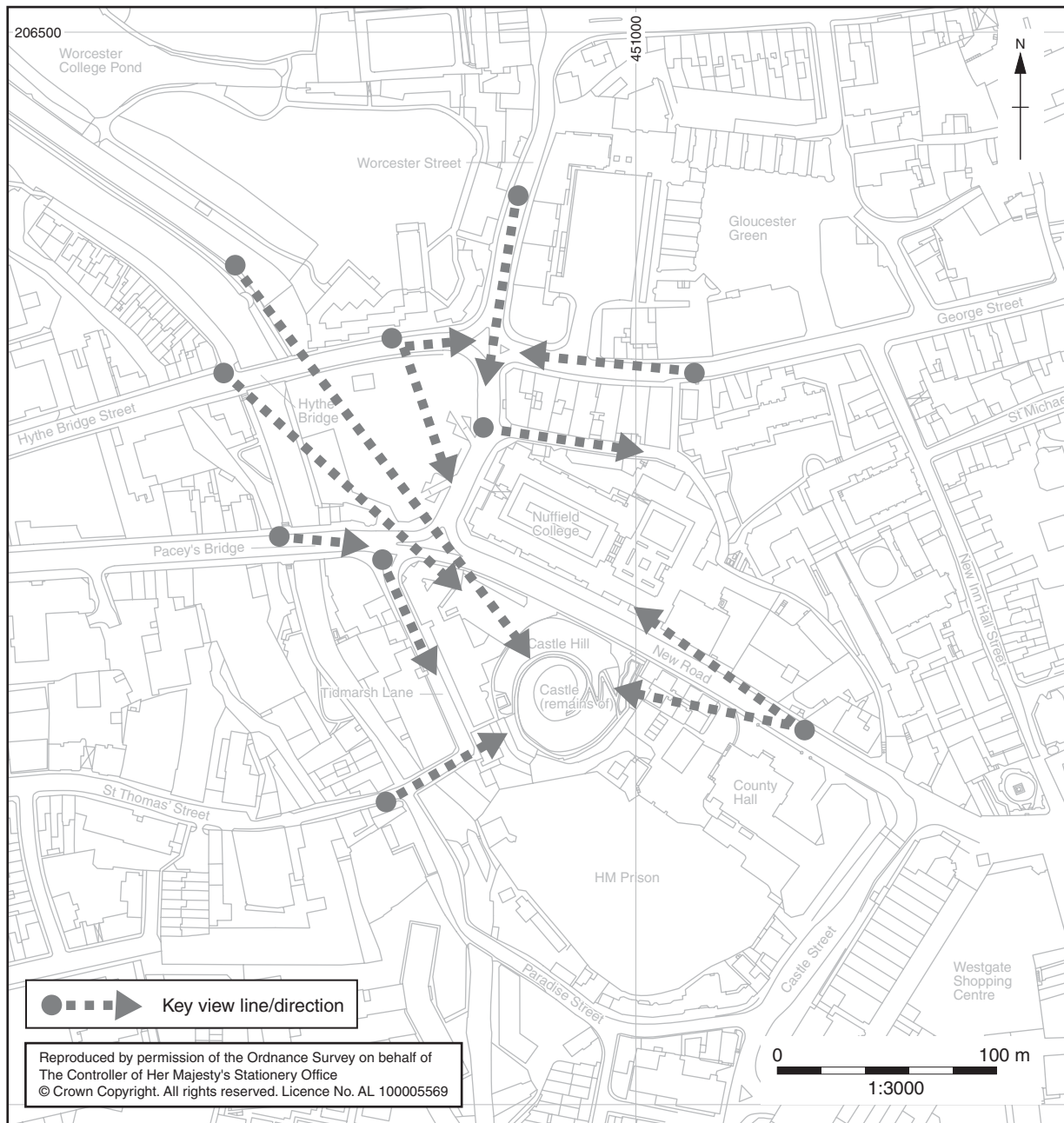


Figure 47: Study Area - key view lines



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