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Magdalen College, Winter Common Room

Archaeological Watching Brief Report

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Summary

Oxford Archaeology was commissioned by Robert Langley the Surveyor at Magdalen College, Oxford to undertake an archaeological watching brief during works associated with the Winter Common Room Project. The watching brief initially focused upon excavations for a new kitchen drain, but also observed ground reductions within the northern part of the Maintenance Yard, the northern ground floor area of the Chaplains III East Range, and within rooms and corridors on the ground floor in the south-east corner of the southern range of the Great Quad.

The works identified the unremarkable remains of disparate lengths of limestone foundations immediately beneath the existing floors, as well as the uppermost courses of the foundations to extant walls. None of the structures encountered are likely to be related to the putative infirmary building of the medieval Hospital of St John, as previous archaeological works had identified these at levels between 56.00m and 56.60m OD, whilst these more recent discoveries were at higher levels between 56.92m and 57.51m OD.

The internal remains probably relate to previous structural divisions within the southern range of the Great Quad and the Chaplains III East Range. Their undiagnostic construction combined with the lack of any associated datable artefactual evidence (no associated floor or occupation deposits were encountered), prevents a more accurate date estimate than late-15th century - 20th century. However, the RCHME phased college plan of 1939 would suggest those in the south range of the Great Quad (labelled 'Senior Common Rooms') probably pre-date the illustrated 18th century partitioning. Those in the Chaplains III East Range probably relate to the illustrated later 19th or 20th century partitioning. The foundations to the extant outer walls date to the 15th century in the case of the former, and the 17th century for the latter.

Acknowledgements

Oxford Archaeology would like to thank Robert Langley, Surveyor at Magdalen College, Oxford for commissioning this project and Magdalen College for funding the work. Thanks are also extended to David Radford who monitored the work on behalf of Oxford City Council.

The project was managed for Oxford Archaeology by Ben Ford. The fieldwork was undertaken by Chris Richardson. Thanks are also extended to the teams of OA staff that cleaned and packaged the finds under the management of Leigh Allen and prepared the archive under the management of Nicola Scott.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Scope of work

- 1.1.1 Oxford Archaeology (OA) was commissioned by Robert Langley, Surveyor, Magdalen College, Oxford, to undertake an archaeological watching brief associated with the development and reconfiguration of the existing Winter Common Room and Kitchen facilities at Magdalen College, Oxford.
- 1.1.2 These works, although not conditioned, were associated with Planning Permission (Ref: 18/03281/FUL) as a consequence of the archaeological results of the watching brief on the geotechnical test pits (OA, 2019b). A brief was not set by the Local Planning Authority, however discussions between David Radford and Magdalen College agreed an appropriate archaeological response, and a Written Scheme of Investigation for an archaeological watching brief (OA, 2019a) was approved by OCC. This document reports on the results of that work.
- 1.1.3 A separate commission of OA's Buildings Department by the College related to the recording of the above ground structures resulting from the Listed Building Consent (Ref. 18/03282/LBC). This work was subject to a separate WSI (OA, 2019c).

1.2 Location, topography and geology

- 1.2.1 The proposed works were situated in the northern end of the Maintenance Yard (which has gated access onto the High Street), located in the south west corner of the historic core of Magdalen College. This area is part of the wider Winter Common Room redevelopment scheme, which incorporates alterations within the immediately adjacent historic structures of South Range of the Cloister (north) and the Chaplain's III East Range (west), as well as the modern kitchens to the east.
- 1.2.2 The college lies within modern Oxford, on the north side of High Street, to the west of Magdalen Bridge and the River Cherwell and east of Longwall Street, National Grid Reference (NGR) SP 5210 0616 (Fig 1). Topographically the college sits in a position between the edge of low-lying ground that formed the Cherwell's natural floodplain and the eastern edge of the gravel promontory, upon which medieval Oxford developed. The site itself sits c 20m from the current western bank of the River Cherwell, a position that would have been liable to seasonal flooding but would not have been permanently wet.
- 1.2.3 The site currently occupies relatively level ground which slopes down slightly to the east, at approximately 60m OD. The underlying geology is First Terrace River Gravel and Oxford Clay (BGS, 2020), probably overlain by alluvial silts.

1.3 Archaeological and historical background and previous works

- 1.3.1 The following is summary of the historical development of the site:
- 1.3.2 Lying to the north of a principal routeway into the eastern side of the Saxon burh, and the later East Gate of the walled medieval town, the site is within the vicinity of an extramural burial ground belonging to Oxford's 12th and 13th century Jewish community. At the earliest, this cemetery would have been in use from 1140 when

Jews arrived in England at the invitation of King Stephen, until Henry III acquired the land in 1231 and granted the land for the re-founding of the Hospital of St. John the Baptist.

- 1.3.3 During 1987 when Magdalen College rebuilt and reconfigured its kitchens significant archaeological remains that had been part of the Hospital of St John the Baptist were encountered (Durham, 1991). Evidence included substantial remains of the eastern end of the Infirmary and an adjacent hall located in the south-east corner (these remains and their conjectured extent are shown on Fig.3).
- 1.3.4 In 1457 the hospital was suppressed and formed part of the land granted to Magdalen College. The college was founded on the site in 1458 by William Waynflete, Bishop of Winchester and Lord Chancellor (RCHME 1939). Waynflete demolished the buildings of the hospital in 1467, except for the chapel (which forms part of the High Street Range) and part of the hall which eventually became a college kitchen (OA 2009). At this time work also began on the wall, now known as Longwall, which circled the whole of Magdalen College. From 1474 works began on the Cloisters (known as The Great Quad), with their chapel, hall and library, and were completed by 1484 (OA 2009).
- 1.3.5 Works started on the construction of The Great Tower in 1492 and were completed in 1509 (RCHME 1939), with the bells and clocks installed in 1505. It is also during this period that the completion of a set of buildings to the east of the tower, now known as the Chaplain's III East Range, was completed to connect the tower with existing buildings. During the 17th and 18th century these buildings were redeveloped with the northern most limits of this range being a 17th century addition to the earlier 16th century building (RCHME 1939). The redevelopment of this range and dates of the college buildings are shown on Figure 3.
- 1.3.6 Many of these buildings have been altered several times since their construction. In 1822 the north range of the Great Quad was in a poor state of repair and was subsequently knocked down and rebuilt. During the early 1900s renovations of the buildings at Magdalen College reverted to a more medieval character.

Previous Archaeological Works

- 1.3.7 Although the site falls within the suggested area of the medieval Jewish cemetery no human remains have been discovered in this area during modern construction works.
- 1.3.8 The site is located inside the northern half of the suggested footprint of a large stone-built building interpreted as the Infirmary of the medieval Hospital of St John (Fig. 3). The archaeological remains of the Infirmary as well as extant medieval fabric within existing college buildings belonging to the hospital were discovered during archaeological work in 1987 (Durham, 1991). Durham's report indicates that the internal floors in the eastern part of the Infirmary building were encountered at c 56.30m aOD (ibid. Fig. 6), whereas the medieval kitchen floors were encountered at c 56.60m aOD. Medieval floors relating to the hall are suggested to lie at 56m aOD (ibid.).
- 1.3.9 In 2008 an archaeological watching brief in the Music Store and Linen Room within the Cloister's southern range (OA, 2009) indicated the survival of archaeological remains

of a stone wall following the alignment of the earlier medieval infirmary (perhaps an internal wall). This was encountered at a depth of 0.40m bgl. or 56.90m aOD.

- 1.3.10 During March 2019 OA undertook a watching brief on three trial pits that formed the initial site investigation works, the following is an extract from the report summary (OA, April 2019):
- 1.3.11 “The evidence from the trial pits strongly suggests that the truncation from the construction of the Maintenance Department in the late 20th century has removed all significant archaeology within the northern area of the Yard to a horizontal depth of between 0.63-0.68m b.g.l or 56.95 - 57.06m OD. Much deeper truncation, to at least 1.5m b.g.l was seen from the construction of the foundations for those buildings on the east side of the yard.
- 1.3.12 Below this level construction horizons consisting of building debris and ground-raising deposits associated with the building ranges on the north side (15th century) and west side (17th century) of Maintenance Yard survived, although they appear relatively homogenous in nature and of some, but limited significance.
- 1.3.13 Details of the below ground foundations for both the Maintenance Yard’s historic flanking ranges were revealed. The 15th century construction showed massive, stepped limestone foundations which should be considered to be present along this elevation, at least in this SE corner (nearest to the Cherwell where the ground is likely to be the most unstable).
- 1.3.14 More curious was the 17th century range on the west side which appeared to reuse an earlier medieval wall. This wall, 103, extends well above the levels of the medieval Infirmary floors recorded by Durham in the 1980s and would suggest that, if medieval 103 is a surviving element of a former upstanding wall, located internally to the postulated Infirmary. If this is the same structure as that observed in the Music Storeroom (Structure 6, OA, 2009) it would suggest a major structural partition within the Infirmary. It is notable that wall 103 is on the same alignment and position as the eastern wall of the range of buildings that currently form the west side to Maintenance Yard and perhaps suggests some previously unknown upstanding survival of medieval fabric within the College layout in this area.”
- 1.3.15 In 2019 Oxford Archaeology completed the first phase of this watching brief which involved the excavation of three test pits ahead of the digging of foundations for the proposed new Stores and Butlers Office. These trial pits demonstrated that “truncation from the construction of the Maintenance Department in the late 20th century had removed all significant archaeology within the northern area of the Yard to a horizontal depth of between 0.63-0.68m b.g.l or 56.95 - 57.06m OD” (OA, 2019b).
- 1.3.16 The first phase of watching brief also noted construction horizons “associated with the building ranges on the north side (15th century) and west side (17th century) of Maintenance Yard” and a stepped foundation for the 15th century Maintenance Yard’s historic ranges (OA, 2019b).
- 1.3.17 The final observation from the first phase of watching brief was that the 17th century range on the west side appeared to reuse an earlier medieval wall, which suggests

that, “if medieval, [it] is a surviving element of a former upstanding wall, located internally to the projected Infirmary” (OA, 2019b).

1.4 Impact of the development

- 1.4.1 As a consequence of the archaeological results of the watching brief on the geotechnical test pits a number of changes were made to the original positions of the proposed piles and to the depth of their connecting foundation beams.
- 1.4.2 All five piles were moved away from their original positions where they were likely to coincide with the projected extent of the foundations of the extant historic buildings to the north and west of the Maintenance Yard. The “*Pali-radice*” piling system was chosen for the site to minimize any potential impacts upon significant archaeological levels. This system can install a pile through any type of material obstruction that may be encountered. It therefore does not need any lead-holes excavated to clear away obstructions prior to piling and the positions of piles do not need to be moved or probed if obstructions are encountered during installation. As a result, the only impact upon the full archaeological sequence is restricted to the diameter of each pile at each location.
- 1.4.3 The ground beams were redesigned to impact only 0.60m or less below ground level, which effectively removed their impact upon the significant archaeological horizon at between 0.63-0.68m bgl or 56.95 - 57.06m OD.
- 1.4.4 The formation level of the ground beams is 56.995m OD which is 55mm lower than the highest level at which archaeological deposits were observed in the WB (OA, 2019a, Section 2.1.3 and Figure 3).
- 1.4.5 A single remaining impact was highlighted at pre-construction stage. This was from a new kitchen drain that ran from the inside of the Cloisters southern range, below the new-build in the north of the Maintenance Yard and into an already existing manhole.
- 1.4.6 Construction works inside the Chaplain’s III East Range, and the southern range of the Cloister revealed bonded stonework below the floors, these required archaeological monitoring and recording.

2 WATCHING BRIEF AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

2.1 Aims

2.1.1 The general aims of the archaeological mitigation and intermittent watching brief were to minimise the impact upon the archaeological resource at the site, and where there was an unavoidable resultant impact, to excavate, sample and record the archaeological remains with the aim to determine and understand the nature, function and character of those remains within their cultural and environmental setting. Other general aims included:

- i. To determine or confirm the approximate date or date range of any remains, by means of artefactual or other evidence;
- ii. determine and confirm the character of any remains present;
- iii. determine or estimate the date range of any remains from artefacts or otherwise;
- iv. establish the ecofactual and environmental potential of archaeological deposits within the site and to take samples where appropriate;
- v. to generate an accessible and useable archive which will allow future research to be undertaken if appropriate;
- vi. to disseminate the results of the work in a format and manner proportionate to the significance of the findings.

2.2 Specific aims and objectives

2.2.1 The specific aims and objectives of the watching brief were:

- i. To seek to avoid any unnecessary loss of significant archaeology;
- ii. ensure that where there is an unavoidable impact on archaeological remains that an adequate excavation is conducted, and an adequate record is produced;
- iii. to identify any structural remains, and occupation horizons from the medieval Hospital of St John, that would add to the current body of knowledge of those structures;
- iv. to record and leave any human remains that may be revealed *in-situ* (if possible) and if not then to excavate these to the standards set out in the Appendices.

2.2.2 The programme of archaeological mitigation was conducted within the general research parameters and objectives defined by “Solent-Thames Research Framework for the Historic Environment: Resource Assessments and Research Agendas” (Hey and Hind 2014).

2.3 Methodology

2.3.1 Modern overburden was removed by hand or a small mechanical excavator to formation levels for the various foundations and the new kitchen drain. An intermittent watching brief was maintained on these works between 16th October and 19th December 2019.

2.3.2 All archaeological remains that were encountered were excavated/examined and recorded stratigraphically in accordance with the WSI (OA 2019a).

2.3.3 Spoil was monitored to recover artefacts.

3 RESULTS

3.1 Introduction and presentation of results

3.1.1 The results of the watching brief are presented below and include a description of the archaeological remains encountered. Contexts description and inventory can be found in Appendix A. The single artefact that was retained is reported on in Appendix B.

3.2 General soils and ground conditions

3.2.1 The natural geology was not reached in any of the excavation areas during the watching brief. Mostly the excavations encountered a levelling deposit overlain by a concrete slab.

3.2.2 Ground conditions throughout the watching brief were good, and the site remained dry throughout. Archaeological remains, where present, were easy to identify.

3.3 General distribution of archaeological deposits

3.3.1 Archaeological remains of former stone, and stone and brick, structures were identified in the Chaplains III East Range, the Satellite Kitchen, the passage east of the Winter Common Room and the passage between the Chaplain's III East Range and the Satellite Kitchen. Homogenous humic soils were observed in the Maintenance Yard.

3.4 The Maintenance Yard (Figs 2 and 3)

3.4.1 The earliest and only archaeological deposits within the trench for the new kitchen drain route, within the Maintenance Yard, were characterised by homogeneous humic soils. These were truncated by various modern service routes and overlain by a modern overburden deposit.

3.5 Chaplains III East Range (Fig 2, Plates 1, 2 and 3)

3.5.1 The excavations in the Chaplains III East Range comprised the removal of the concrete slab and excavation of the footprints of proposed foundations adjacent to the northern and eastern walls of the range, in the room north of the Ante-Room. The excavations revealed the remains of several foundations for previous internal walls as well as the foundations of some of the extant external walls. These were all overlain by a stony rubble backfill/levelling deposit and a concrete slab.

3.5.2 Wall 400 (Fig. 2, Plate 1) was a foundation three courses high, two courses of west facing dressed limestone blocks with a single course of unfrogged red brick on top. The wall measured a total of 2.70m by 0.35m by 0.40m and was bonded with a yellowish white mortar. It was encountered 0.37m below ground level (bgl) at a height of 57.30m aOD.

3.5.3 Structure 401 (Fig. 2, Plate 2) is the offset foundation for the existing north wall of the Chaplain's III East Range. Only the south side was exposed and so it is not possible to give exact dimensions, but the exposed five courses of masonry measured 3m east – west and was offset by 0.15m from the south face of the upstanding wall. It was constructed from roughly faced limestone blocks, bonded with yellowish white mortar. It was encountered at a height of 57.30m aOD.

- 3.5.4 Foundation 402 was exposed at the eastern end of foundation 401 (Fig. 2, Plate 2) but was only visible in plan at the base of the trench at a height of 56.92m aOD. It measured a total of 0.50m x 0.40m and was aligned roughly north – south. It was constructed using roughly squared limestone blocks bonded with mortar and is suspected to be part of the foundations for the standing building.
- 3.5.5 Wall 403 (Fig 2, Plate 3) was a WNW – ESE aligned wall made using faced and squared limestone blocks bonded with a white mortar. Only a single course was visible at a height of 57.32m aOD and recorded in two segments with the western segment slightly offset to the south of the eastern segment. Wall 403 abuts the upstanding east wall of the range and therefore is very likely to be part of a previous internal division.
- 3.5.6 The reduction of wall 403 also produced the only artefact from the watching brief in the form of a piece of architectural stone, identified as part of a windowsill or possibly door frame or fireplace. It could not be conclusively dated but it is likely to be late-medieval or post-medieval, falling within the main building phases of Magdalen College (see Appendix B).

3.6 Satellite Kitchen (Figs. 2 and 3, Plate 4)

- 3.6.1 The drainage run within the Satellite Kitchen exposed wall foundation 404 (Figs. 2 and 3, Plate 4). The north-south aligned structure was built using roughly squared limestone blocks with a yellow lime mortar and measured 2.10m in length, 0.35m in width and survived to a height of 0.28m (two courses). It was also faced on its western side.
- 3.6.2 Foundation 404 was exposed below the concrete slab, 0.20m bgl at a height of 57.19m aOD. This foundation crosses the line of the projected infirmary footprint (Fig. 3) and so is unlikely to be related to that structure if the projection is accurate; therefore, it is more likely to be a previous internal division.

3.7 Passage East of Winter Common Room (Figs. 2 and 3, Plates 5 and 6)

- 3.7.1 There were two foundations (walls 405 and 406) exposed within the passage east of the Winter Common Room (Figs. 2 and 3, Plates 5 and 6).
- 3.7.2 Foundation 405 was aligned E-W and constructed using squared limestone blocks, bricks, and a yellow mortar. It had two faces, north and south, and measured 2.07m in length by 0.46m in width and 0.24m in height, surviving immediately below the floor slab, at a height of 57.49m aOD; however, a scar in the plaster work suggests that part of it had survived to a greater height and was only reduced quite recently. The foundation also butts against the upstanding north – south walls. Figure 3 also shows that it is close to the projected line of the infirmary footprint, although observations regarding its relationship and association with extant features strongly suggests that this cannot be a remnant of that structure and is probably an old internal division of the passage.
- 3.7.3 The second foundation exposed in this passage was wall 406 (Figs. 2 and 3, Plate 6). This was aligned east – west and made from squared limestone blocks faced on the north and south sides, with a yellow mortar. It measured 1.05m in length, 1.23m in width and 0.15m in height. It was located directly below the concrete floor at a height

of 57.51m aOD It is quite clear that this is the remnant foundation of the south wall of the passage which had a doorway inserted through it.

3.8 Passage North of Chaplain's III East Range (Figs 2 and 3, Plates 7 and 8)

3.8.1 Within the passage north of the Chaplain's III east range, a single foundation (wall 407) was uncovered (Figs 2 and 3, Plates 7 and 8) immediately below the concrete slab, at a height of 57.55m aOD. This north-south aligned foundation was made from roughly squared and faced limestone blocks with a white mortar. It measured 1.50m in length, 0.90m in width and 0.24m in height. The foundation is the remnants of a buttress that still survives from the first-floor level (Plate 8), which had a doorway put through it to create a passageway along the south side of the Satellite Kitchen's south wall.

3.9 Finds summary

3.9.1 Only a single piece of worked stone from structure 403 was retrieved during the watching brief. A report on this artefact is included Appendix B below.

4 DISCUSSION

4.1 Reliability of field investigation

4.1.1 Ground conditions remained dry throughout the watching brief. The archaeological remains were easily identified within the recent levelling deposits under the concrete floors. Therefore, the results of this watching brief are reliable.

4.2 Watching brief objectives and results

4.2.1 The watching brief identified several remnants of structures that were encountered within the impact depths of the proposed works and these were all recorded prior to their reduction. The reduction of structures at risk from the development was restricted to as few courses as necessary to enable the works to proceed, only structure 404 was completely removed.

4.2.2 The complete lack of dating material from all of the remnants makes it difficult to ascertain specific dates for some of the exposed archaeology, mainly the internal divisions but the foundations of still extant structures such as 406 and 407 can be reliably dated as they form part of the external south wall of the cloistral ranges, which were built in the 15th century.

4.2.3 Although two structures 404 and 405 were noted as interacting with the projected footprint of the infirmary, it seems quite clear that neither of them is likely to be a part of that building.

4.2.4 During the works no human remains were observed. There were no environmentally significant deposits encountered and therefore no samples were taken.

4.3 Interpretation

4.3.1 Structural elements present within the site can be associated with phases of construction or redevelopment of the college based on the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments England dated plan of Magdalen College (1939,72 and reproduced on Figure 3). However, without any distinct dating evidence attributing the archaeological remains to a particular period is difficult.

4.3.2 Within the Chaplain's III East Range, foundations 400 and 403 appeared to be on the same alignment as the suggested footprint of the medieval Infirmary, although without any further evidence it is difficult to ascribe them to that phase of construction. However, it should be noted that during the archaeological investigations in 1987 the medieval floors relating to the hospital were recorded at depths between 56m to 56.60m aOD (Durham 1991) and foundations 400 and 403 were recorded at depths between 57.30m and 57.32m aOD. Thus, the level of which these walls were encountered suggests they are much later in date and perhaps relate to the original phase of constructions of the Chaplains III East Range during the late 15th and early 16th centuries.

4.3.3 Structure 401 and probably 402, are the offset foundation to an extant north wall which is part of a 17th century addition to the Chaplain's III Range (Fig.3, RCHME 1939). The remaining structures identified within the Chaplain's III East Range were

from previous internal divisions, perhaps contemporary with the building's original construction during the late 15th and early 16th centuries or added during the 17th or 18th century redevelopments and then later demolished.

4.3.4 Wall foundations 404 and 405 were also internal divisions within the proposed Satellite Kitchen and the passage east of the Winter Common Room, respectively. Whilst these structures are projected along and over the line of the medieval infirmary's north wall, they are on different alignment to Durham's projection. It is also evident that within this area of the college the internal nature of the building was subjected to redevelopment during the 18th century and it is most likely that walls 404 and 405 relate to the 18th century redevelopment (Fig.3).

4.3.5 Foundation 406 and buttress foundation 407 were both part of the external south wall of the southern cloister range of the Great Quad, which was constructed between 1474 and 1484. Both walls were modified at some point during either the 17th or 18th centuries as part of the redevelopment of the college for new access routes (Fig.3).

4.4 Significance

4.4.1 The archaeological findings of the watching brief make a limited contribution to understanding the changing use of internal space from the 15th century to the 19th/20th century within the Chaplain's III East Range and the southern range of the Great Quad.

APPENDIX A DESCRIPTIONS AND CONTEXT INVENTORY

Context Inventory – whole watching brief						
General description						
Excavations contained several remnants of foundation surviving below a levelling deposit which was overlain by a concrete slab.					Avg. depth (m)	0.50
					Finds	Date
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
400	STR	0.35	0.40	N-S stone foundation for brick wall in Chaplains III East Range	-	-
401	STR	-	0.15	Offset foundation for extant E-W wall in Chaplains III East Range	-	-
402	STR	0.40	-	Possible buttress foundation, N-S in Chaplains III East Range	-	-
403	STR	0.36	0.20	E-W wall in Chaplains III East Range	-	-
404	STR	0.35	0.28	N-S wall in Satellite Kitchen	-	-
405	STR	0.46	0.24	E-W wall foundation in Passage East of Winter Common Room	-	-
406	STR	1.23	0.15	E-W wall foundation in Passage East of Winter Common Room	-	-
407	STR	0.90	0.24	N-S buttress foundation north of Chaplains III East Range	-	-

APPENDIX B FINDS

B.1 Stone by Julian Munby

- B.1.1 A single block of flat-based limestone was recovered from structure 403 (max length 15 ins and height 7 ins - 394 x 178 mm).
- B.1.2 It has a large chamfer terminating in a splayed jamb, and a further rebate with a broken moulding at the 'top' of the chamfer (but not a groove for glass). It is either part of a windowsill or the head of a door/fireplace.
- B.1.3 It is not possible to determine its age without any more moulding detail (e.g. if the broken moulding were an ovolo it would be 17th century), but it is likely to be late-medieval or post-medieval, falling within the main building phases of Magdalen College.
- B.1.4 The block has been retained at Janus House.

APPENDIX C BIBLIOGRAPHY

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APPENDIX D**SITE SUMMARY DETAILS / OASIS REPORT FORM**

Site name:	Magdalen College Winter Common Room
Site code:	OXMWCR19
Grid Reference	SP 5210 0616
Type:	Watching Brief
Date and duration:	16/10/19 – 19/12/19
Location of archive:	The archive is currently held at Oxford Archaeology, Janus House, Osney Mead, Oxford, OX2 0ES and will be deposited with Oxfordshire County Museum Services in due course, under the following accession number: OXCMS 2019.37.
Summary of Results:	<p>Oxford Archaeology was commissioned by Robert Langley the Surveyor at Magdalen College, Oxford to undertake an archaeological watching brief during works associated with the Winter Common Room Project. The watching brief initially focused upon excavations for a new kitchen drain, but also observed ground reductions within the northern part of the Maintenance Yard, the northern ground floor area of the Chaplains III East Range, and within rooms and corridors on the ground floor in the south-east corner of the southern range of the Great Quad.</p> <p>The works identified the unremarkable remains of disparate lengths of limestone foundations immediately beneath the existing floors, as well as the uppermost courses of the foundations to extant walls. None of the structures encountered are likely to be related to the putative infirmary building of the medieval Hospital of St John, as previous archaeological works had identified these at levels between 56.00m and 56.60m OD, whilst these more recent discoveries were at higher levels between 56.92m and 57.51m OD.</p> <p>The internal remains probably relate to previous structural divisions within the southern range of the Great Quad and the Chaplains III East Range. Their undiagnostic construction combined with the lack of any associated datable artefactual evidence (no associated floor or occupation deposits were encountered), prevents a more accurate date estimate than late-15th century - 20th century. However, the RCHME phased college plan of 1939 would suggest those in the south range of the Great Quad (labelled 'Senior Common Rooms') probably pre-date the illustrated 18th century partitioning. Those in the Chaplains III East Range probably relate to the illustrated later 19th or 20th century partitioning. The foundations to the extant outer walls date to the 15th century in the case of the former, and the 17th century for the latter.</p>

Project Details

OASIS Number	
Project Name	

Start of Fieldwork		End of Fieldwork	
Previous Work		Future Work	

Project Reference Codes

Site Code		Planning App. No.	
HER Number		Related Numbers	

Prompt	
Development Type	
Place in Planning Process	Choose an item.

Techniques used (tick all that apply)

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aerial Photography – interpretation | <input type="checkbox"/> Grab-sampling | <input type="checkbox"/> Remote Operated Vehicle Survey |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aerial Photography - new | <input type="checkbox"/> Gravity-core | <input type="checkbox"/> Sample Trenches |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Annotated Sketch | <input type="checkbox"/> Laser Scanning | <input type="checkbox"/> Survey/Recording of Fabric/Structure |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Augering | <input type="checkbox"/> Measured Survey | <input type="checkbox"/> Targeted Trenches |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dendrochronological Survey | <input type="checkbox"/> Metal Detectors | <input type="checkbox"/> Test Pits |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Documentary Search | <input type="checkbox"/> Phosphate Survey | <input type="checkbox"/> Topographic Survey |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Environmental Sampling | <input type="checkbox"/> Photogrammetric Survey | <input type="checkbox"/> Vibro-core |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fieldwalking | <input type="checkbox"/> Photographic Survey | <input type="checkbox"/> Visual Inspection (Initial Site Visit) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Geophysical Survey | <input type="checkbox"/> Rectified Photography | <input type="checkbox"/> Watching Brief |

Monument	Period
	Choose an item.
	Choose an item.
	Choose an item.

Object	Period
	Choose an item.
	Choose an item.
	Choose an item.

Insert more lines as appropriate.

Project Location

County		Address (including Postcode)
District		
Parish		
HER office		
Size of Study Area		
National Grid Ref		

Project Originators

Organisation	
Project Brief Originator	
Project Design Originator	
Project Manager	
Project Supervisor	

Project Archives

	Location	ID
Physical Archive (Finds)		
Digital Archive		
Paper Archive		

Physical Contents	Present?	Digital files associated with Finds	Paperwork associated with Finds
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Ceramics	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Environmental	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Worked Bone	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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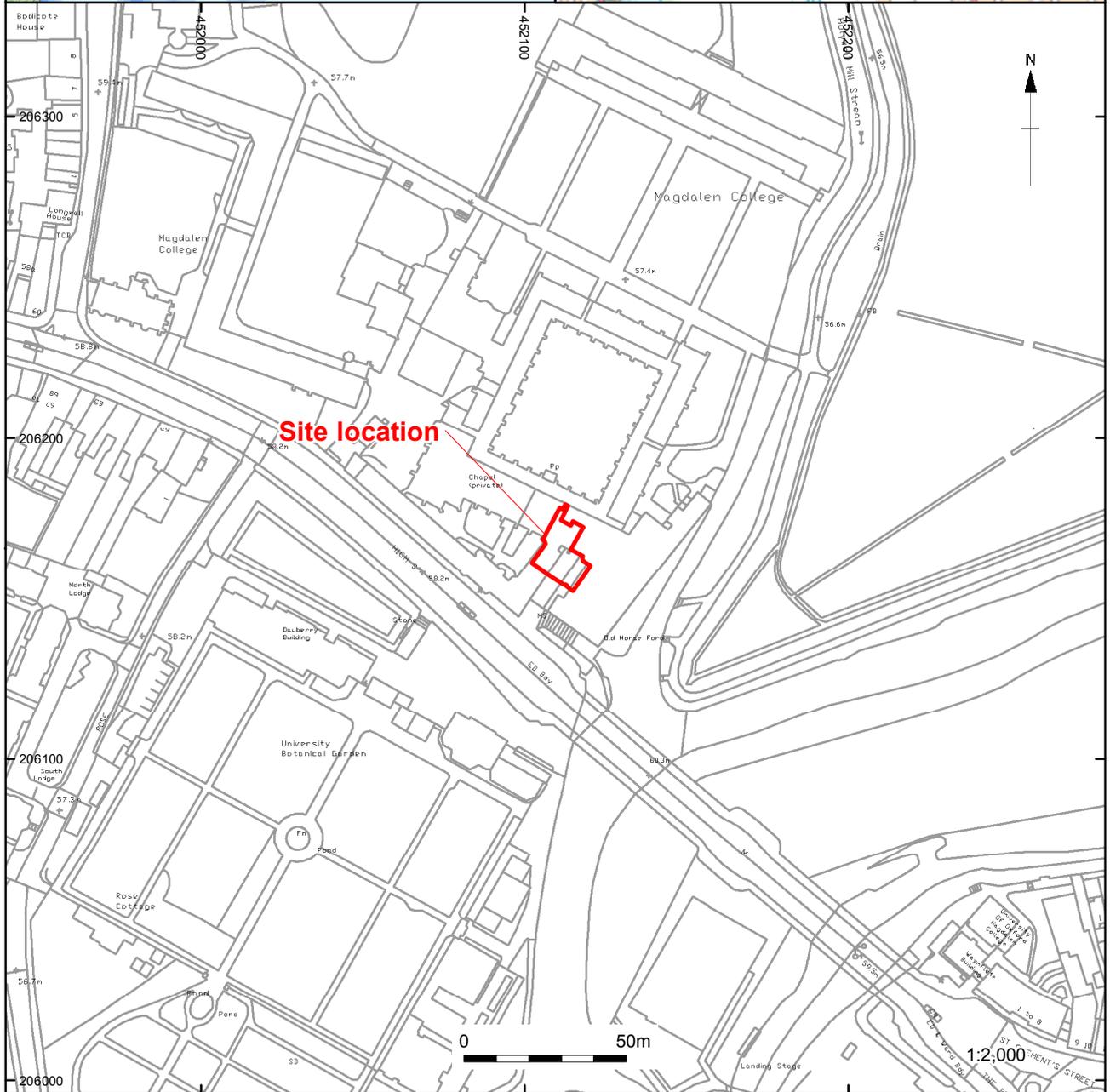
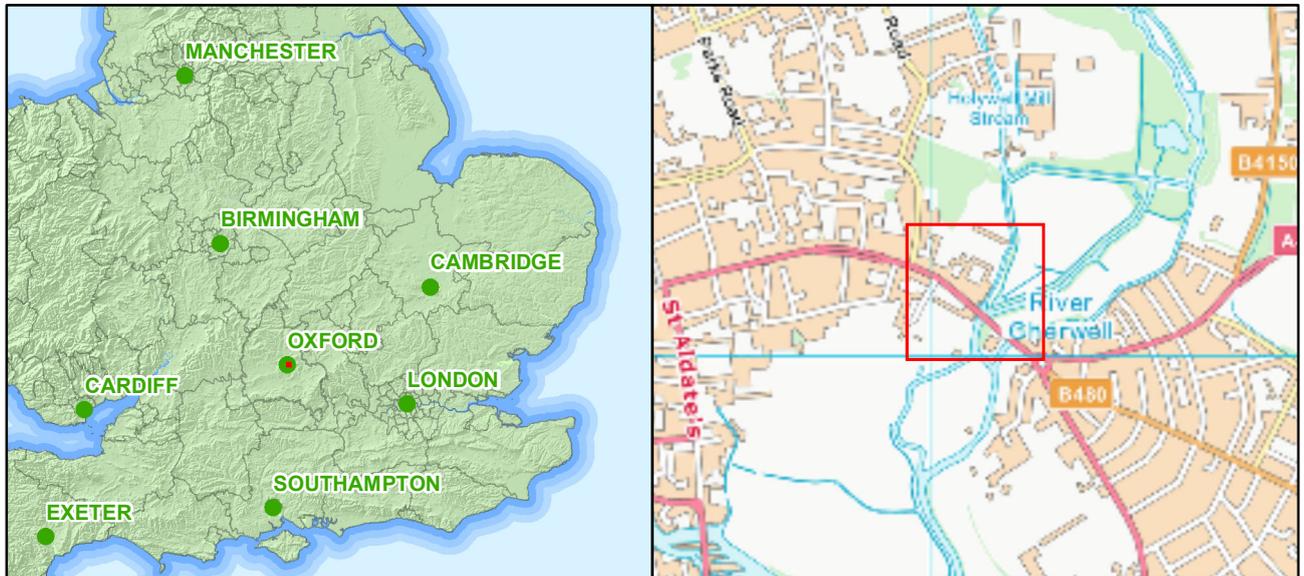
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GIS	<input type="checkbox"/>
Geophysics	<input type="checkbox"/>
Images (Digital photos)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Illustrations (Figures/Plates)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Moving Image	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Text	<input type="checkbox"/>
Virtual Reality	<input type="checkbox"/>

Paper Media

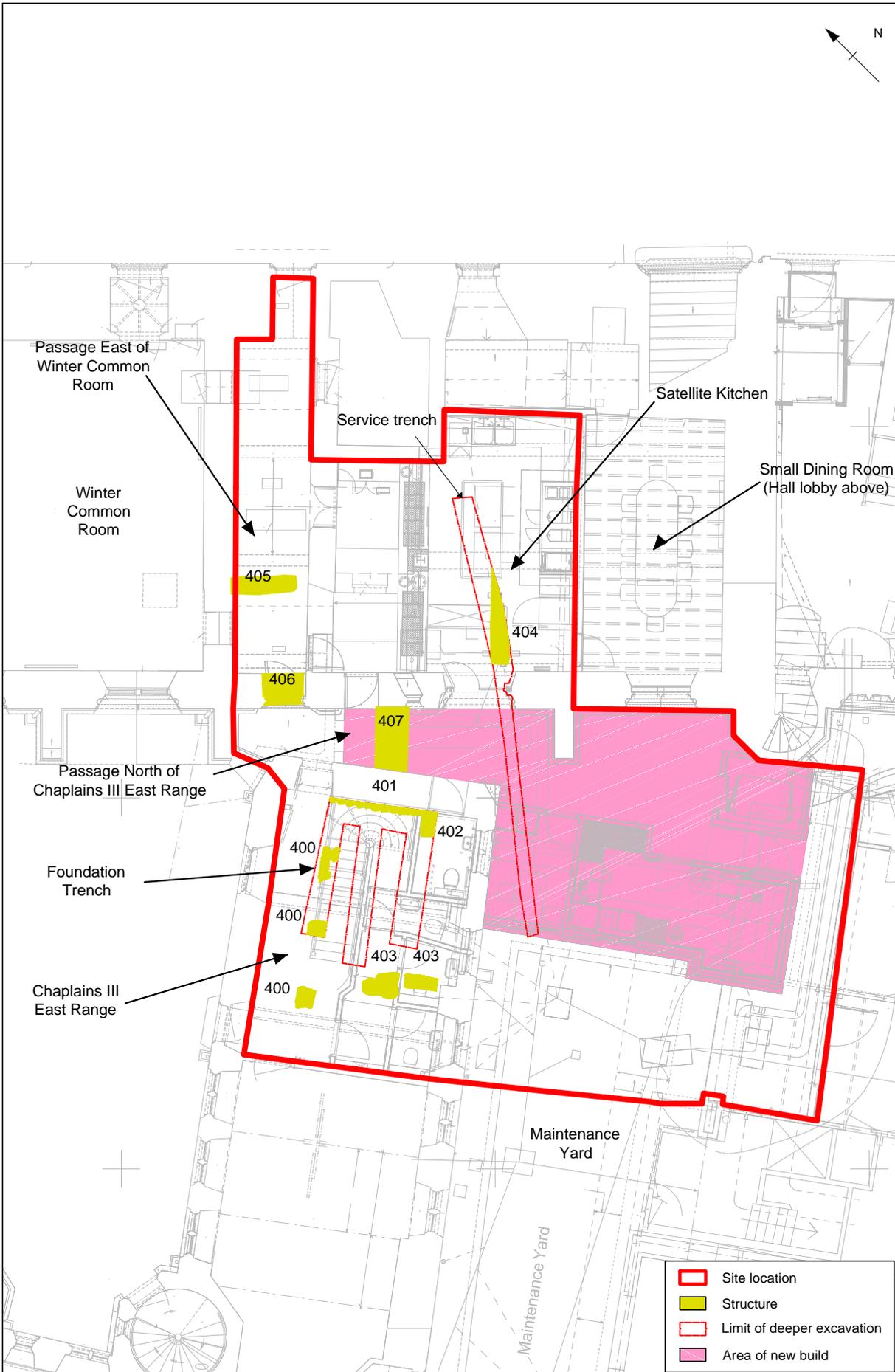
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Diary	<input type="checkbox"/>
Drawing	<input type="checkbox"/>
Manuscript	<input type="checkbox"/>
Map	<input type="checkbox"/>
Matrices	<input type="checkbox"/>
Microfiche	<input type="checkbox"/>
Miscellaneous	<input type="checkbox"/>
Research/Notes	<input type="checkbox"/>
Photos (negatives/prints/slides)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Plans	<input type="checkbox"/>
Report	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sections	<input type="checkbox"/>
Survey	<input type="checkbox"/>

Further Comments



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Figure 1: Site location



X:\Oxford_Magdalen College Winter Common Room\10\Geomatics\02 CAD\OXMWCR19_2020-06-16.dwg (Figure 2 A4 portrait) *OXMWCRWB*geomatics* 07 Oct 2020

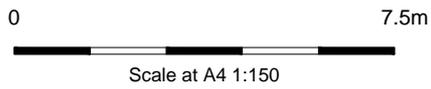
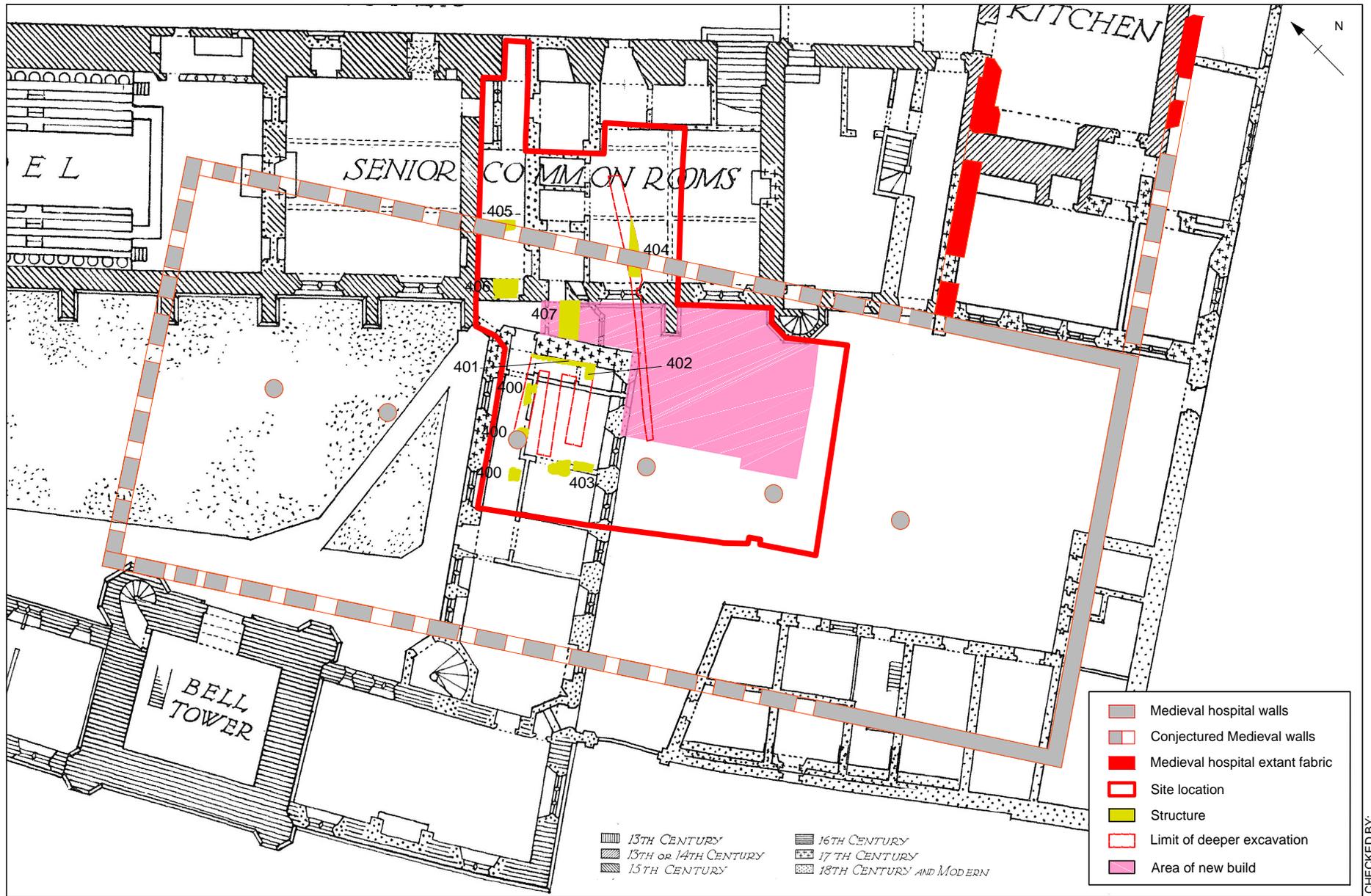


Figure 2: Plan showing archaeology found

CHECKED BY:



0 10m
Scale at A4 1:250

Figure 3: RCHME dated plan of Magdalen College (1939) with projected 13th Century hospital footprint

CHECKED BY:



Plate 1: Wall 400, looking north



Plate 2: Wall foundations 401 and 402, looking east



Plate 3: Wall 403, looking east



Plate 4: Wall 404, looking north



Plate 5: Wall 405, looking west



Plate 6: Wall foundation 406, looking south



Plate 7: Butters foundation 407, looking west



Plate 8: Butters 407 surviving from 1st floor level



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