

16 WOOD ST WALLINGFORD: WATCHING BRIEF

OASU 608 892

On 17 July 1992 the Oxford Archaeological Unit carried out a watching brief for Building Design Services of Reading at 16 Wood Street Wallingford.

Service trenches were dug for a water pipe and electricity cable to supply a renovated brick building at the eastern side of the property facing a yard.

Archaeological Background

Wood St probably lies near the centre of the late Saxon *burh* of Wallingford. On the site of the former cattle market immediately S of 16 Wood St occupation surfaces and St Neots-type ware have been recorded (OAU Newsletter Mar 1990).

The Service Trench

The service trench was 0.30m in width and from 0.75m to 0.92m in depth. It ran E-W from Wood St across the yard and splitting to enter the building in 3 different locations. The trenches totalled 29m in length. No archaeological features were seen within the trench.

The stratigraphic deposits were fairly uniform throughout the trench and a representative sample section was recorded which is summarized in table 1.

There was no sign of the undisturbed subsoil in the trench.

Table 1.

Layer	Depth	Description	Interpretation
1/1	0.07m	Concrete surface	Yard surface
1/2	0.21m	Soil and rubble	Make-up for yard
1/3	0.28m	Dark grey brown sandy silt loam 10%-15% gravel	Garden soil?
1/4	0.18m	Friable mid grey brown sandy silt loam 5-10% gravel	Garden soil?
1/5	0.18m+	Friable mid brown sandy silt loam 5-10% gravel	Garden soil?
Total depth	0.92m		

NB: Layers presented in stratigraphic sequence ie: 1 overlies 2, 2 overlies 3 etc.

FINDS: The pottery was examined by Brian Durham (OAU).

There was not much pottery evident in the spoil heap except for red tile. A small piece of slag and 2 pottery sherds were recovered from the spoil which are probable late medieval in date. Layer 1/4 produced a small cu alloy pin. Four sherds were recovered from 1/5, the earliest layer exposed. Three of these sherds were c.13th century in date and the remaining rim sherd was late Saxon St Neots-type ware.

Building

The area adjacent to the W side of the renovated building was much disturbed with building rubble (including irregular clunch blocks) probably associated with the original construction of the brick building. The brick foundations were constructed on an earlier chalk clunch foundation which was on the same alignment. The clunch wall was first encountered 0.50m below the present ground surface and the bottom appeared to be 0.87m below the present surface. It was not possible to investigate the clunch wall further due to the service pipes.