

# **OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCE ASSESSMENT 2011**

## **ANGLO-SAXON AND VIKING**

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### Abbreviations

LAA	Oxford Local Authority Area
OHER	Oxfordshire Historic Environment Record
RCHM 1939	An Inventory of the Historical Monuments in the City of Oxford, Royal Commission on Historical Monuments, England, HMSO, London.
UAD	Urban Archaeological Database (Event Number unless otherwise stated)
VCH ii	The Victoria History of the County of Oxford Volume 2 (ed. W. Page), 1907, The Victoria History of the Counties of England.
VCH iii	The Victoria History of the County of Oxford Volume 3: The University of Oxford (eds H. E. Salter and M. D. Lobel), 1954, The Victoria History of the Counties of England.
VCH iv	A History of the County of Oxford, Volume 4, The City of Oxford (ed. A. Crossley), 1979, The Victoria History of the Counties of England.
VCH iv (Berks)	A History of the County of Berkshire: Volume 4 William Page and P.H. Ditchfield (eds) 1924
VCH v A	History of the County of Oxford: Volume 5 - Bullingdon hundred (ed. M. D. Lobel), 1957, The Victoria History of the Counties of England.

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## Introduction

This report forms part of the archaeological resource assessment stage of the Oxford Archaeological Plan. The assessment is intended to inform archaeological resource management within the planning and development control process as well as aid investigation and academic research. Throughout these reports the 'city' will refer to the area covered by the Urban Archaeological Database (UAD) while the Local Authority Area (LAA) will be used for sites beyond the historic centre.

The Oxford Resource Assessment is designed to complement the county and regional level Saxon period resource assessments produced as part of the Solent Thames Research Frameworks (Crawford and Dodd 2007; Crawford and Allen 2010). The Saxon archaeology of Oxfordshire and Oxford has been the subject of a series of overviews since the first attempt at a synthesis by E.M. Jope in the 1950s (Jope 1956), more recent overviews are provided by Hassall (1986) Blair (1994), Dodd, (ed, 2003), Hamerow (1999) and Blair (2000) A recent sub regional overview is provided by the *Thames Through Time: The Early Historical Period* Volume (Booth *et al*, 2007). In addition to these works, the grey literature archive of unpublished reports, the County Journal *Oxoniensia*, the Oxfordshire Historic Environment Record (OHER) and the Oxford Urban Archaeological Database (UAD) have been consulted to provide the evidence base for this assessment.

### Chronology

At Dorchester early Anglo-Saxon burials containing chip-carved belt fittings and weapons have previously been interpreted as possibly indicating the settlement of *foederati* (early Anglo-Saxon mercenaries) employed in support a local Romano-British tribal leader (Hawkes 1986). Subsequently the interpretation of these finds as evidence of a coherent military grouping has been questioned and a less prescriptive model of contact and influence between British and migrant Saxon communities has been proposed (Blair 1988: 6). The wider evidence from the county indicates that although incoming settlers, utilising both Roman and Saxon material culture, maintained some existing settlement locations they constructed their own buildings and enclosures disregarding the existing Roman structures (Crawford and Dodd 2007: 1).

Settlement in this period is overwhelmingly rural in character and it is not until the 7<sup>th</sup> century is there clear evidence for the emergence of a distinct elite, in the form of rich barrow burials such as the Taplow barrow identified in South Buckinghamshire.

Later texts record the names of early tribal, kinship groupings or federation in Oxfordshire (e.g. the 9<sup>th</sup> century Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, the West Saxon Genealogical Regnal List and Bede's *Ecclesiastical History* finished in the 730s). A group referred to as the *Gewisse*, later as the West Saxons appear to be located in the Upper Thames Valley area in the 6<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> century. To the south of them the in central Oxfordshire the *Horningas* are recorded. Archaeological evidence suggests that the people of southern Oxfordshire were south Saxon in their material culture, but had trading links further a-field with Kent, while the northern and western part of the county had closer affiliations with the Anglian regions. By the 7<sup>th</sup> century the Mercian kingdom had established control over northern Oxfordshire as far as Thame. Neighbouring Berkshire passed in and out of Mercian control and the Oxford area was frequently a significant border zone (Dodd ed. 2003: 12). Despite frequent attempts to gain control over North Oxfordshire by the West Saxons it remained under the control of the Mercian kingdom until the mid 9<sup>th</sup> century when the dynasty began to falter and the polity was subdivided. Berkshire became part of the West Saxon kingdom while Oxfordshire remained with the central Mercian tribe (Stenton 1936: 108).

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Early Saxon pottery forms and characteristic grubenhaus structures allow for the identification of early Saxon rural settlement sites, but the absence of easily datable middle Saxon pottery makes identifying remains from this transition period problematic and dating relies heavily on other artefact typologies. Of particular note is Tania Dickinson's work on saucer brooches which remain important to dating fifth, sixth- and seventh-century burials and settlements in the Thames Valley (Dickinson 1976). The datable pottery evidence increases substantially for the late Saxon period as wares imported from notable regional industries, such as St Neot's ware, become apparent. However a number of popular wares have a long period of use, often making precise dating difficult (see *Material culture*). Some radiocarbon dates have provided evidence for mid to late Saxon features, but caution is required as some of the dates have proved problematic often contradicting other physical and documentary evidence (see *St John's henge mass grave* below).

It has been suggested that a Mercian bridgehead fortress may have been established at Oxford during the latter part of King Offa's reign (AD 757-796) but as yet this is only fragmentary evidence for a pre-burh settlement (Durham 1977: 177-8; 1984b: 85-6; Haslam 1987). Evidence that Offa's successor Coenwulf may have had personal connections with Oxfordshire is noted by Blair (1994: 55). St Frideswide's minster is thought to have been established by the 8<sup>th</sup> century under Mercian rule and this may have been an enclosed site or formed part of a larger fortified river crossing (*Ibid.*: 42).

By the middle of the 9<sup>th</sup> century there is documentary evidence to suggest that the settlement would have fallen under the sphere of influence of Wessex, although at a local level it may have remained under the control of a Mercian lord. The *burh* was certainly in existence by the early 10<sup>th</sup> century when it is recorded in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle and Burghal Hidage. A foundation under Alfred (871-899) or his son Edward the Elder (899-925) remains possible (Dodd ed. 2003: 13). There is some coin evidence that the town existed before Alfred's death, but the interpretation of this is evidence has been subject to considerable debate (See Blair 1994: 100-101; Haslam 2010).

Documentary evidence and the density of archaeological remains from the town dating to the 10<sup>th</sup> century indicates that before the Conquest Oxford had become a place of more than local importance. National assemblies had been held in 1018, 1036, and 1065, and the number of moneyers who had worked in Oxford under Edward the Confessor indicates a considerable population of traders (See *Coins* below).

Although there are many unanswered questions for the development of the Oxford area during the Saxon period, several broad phases of activity and evolution can be suggested from the archaeological evidence:

- Late 4<sup>th</sup> century - Early 5<sup>th</sup> century: Oxford Roman pottery industry collapses but some limited reuse of Roman wares noted at settlement sites south east of Oxford. The relationship between early Saxon burials and Roman sites is poorly understood, but there potential for such relationships to exist in North and East Oxford.
- 5<sup>th</sup>- 6<sup>th</sup> century - evidence for dispersed rural settlement on the Corallian Ridge and 2<sup>nd</sup> Gravel Terrace. Possible sub-Roman activity at Binsey enclosure.
- Radio-carbon evidence for the presence of a mid-late Saxon Thames River crossing (Durham 1984b).
- A single 7<sup>th</sup> century radiocarbon date for burial at Christ Church suggesting an antecedent to the later recorded religious institution of St Frideswide's (or its earlier foundation).

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- A limited distribution of mid-late Saxon pottery on the southern part of the gravel terrace (e.g. 8<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> century Ipswich ware) and further radio-carbon evidence for burials of 9<sup>th</sup> century date at St Frideswide's suggest the minster at least was established by this point.
  - A pre 'street grid' settlement of some kind is indicated by a number of features, including a large ditch and hearth/post holes, post built structure sealed by the 'primary' street metalling that is associated with the laying out of a primary burh.
  - The foundation of a primary burh and its subsequent enlargement, the phasing and character of which is still subject to considerable debate.
  - Evidence for a well established 10<sup>th</sup> century burh, including defences, cellar pits, coins and a thin spread of St Neots ware sherds across the LAA.
  - Place name evidence, isolated finds, grave goods and a mass grave, along with documentary evidence, indicating a 10<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> century Scandinavian presence.
  - Limited arefactual and documentary evidence for the presence of open field systems by the 11<sup>th</sup> century

#### Notable sites

Archaeological investigations since the start of the 20<sup>th</sup> century have revealed some significant sites:

##### *Early-middle Saxon*

- Radcliffe Infirmary site- rural settlement (excavation)
- Oxford Science Park- rural settlement (excavation)
- Peers School- rural settlement (excavation)
- Stephen's Road, Headington- furnished burial (watching brief)
- Miscellaneous finds from North Oxford suggesting burials (Stray finds).
- Thames Crossing (St Aldates) (excavations)
- Binsey Enclosure- Sub Roman enclosure? (trial trenching)

##### *Late Saxon*

- Church Street – pre burh features and street grid (excavation)
- Thames Crossing (St Aldates) (excavations)
- Cornmarket Street – urban settlement (excavation)
- Lincoln and Queens College – urban settlement (excavations)
- Castle precinct – Saxon rampart and wall (consolidated structure and excavation)
- All Saints Church- urban settlement and late Saxon church (excavation)
- 4A Merton Street- assemblage of late Saxon pottery and occupation in south-east quadrant (excavation)
- Logic Lane- sizable assemblage of St Neots ware.
- 24a St Michael's Street and New College- burh ditch and rampart (excavation)
- St Michael at the Northgate –burh ditch and standing structure (excavation and building recording)
- St Georges Tower (standing structure)
- St Martin's Tower, Carfax (Listing notes possible Saxon fabric in the 14<sup>th</sup> century tower).

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### The nature of the evidence base

There have been numerous archaeological investigations in Oxford that have produced Late Saxon evidence ranging from residual artefacts to substantial evidence for urban settlement, cemeteries and for the late Saxon burghal defences (Appendix 1: Saxon Site Gazetteer). The gazetteer covers only those sites that have been excavated since the start of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, chance finds and pre 19<sup>th</sup> century records have been recorded as find spots as that information is frequently less accurate (Figure 2).

The most substantial evidence for middle Saxon activity in the city comes from St Aldates where several investigations since the 1970s (79-80 St Aldates; 2a Speedwell Street; Linacre College; 89 St Aldates; the BT Tunnel) have recorded evidence for flax retting and land reclamation as well as possible evidence for a Saxon causeway or fording point across the Thames (Durham 1984b). The presence of waterlogged timbers at a number of these sites has enabled radiocarbon dating to be undertaken. Small amounts of middle-late Saxon pottery, although rare in the region have also been recovered.

A number of early Saxon rural settlement or burial sites have been observed or excavated within the LAA at Barton, Littlemore, Headington and on the 2<sup>nd</sup> gravel terrace north of the later burh. This could be considered a sizable group given the size of the LAA, but only the Oxford Science Park site at Littlemore has so far involved significant open area excavation of an extensive settlement site. These sites can be seen as part of a broader pattern of well studied sites along the upper Thames. A small collection of early Saxon stray finds have also been recovered from the LAA.

As with other Saxon burhs that have developed into modern towns much of the surviving late Saxon evidence has come from deeper features (sunken buildings, cellar pits, rubbish pits or wells) that have survived below or between later similar developments. Nevertheless extensive late Saxon urban deposits have been excavated, producing detailed information about the evolution of cellar pit forms and their spatial relationships with property boundaries (e.g. Clarendon Hotel, Cornmarket Street), assemblages of bone (e.g. Church Street), leather (e.g. St Aldates), pottery (e.g. The Hamel; Lincoln College; All Souls College), burials (St Frideswide's; St John's College), and also a number of significant stray finds (coins, architectural fragments etc). A number of standing Late Saxon structures also survive in the City (St Michael's tower, St Georges tower and the consolidated stretch of Saxon town wall at the Castle precinct: see *Material culture*). The availability documentary evidence for the later Saxon period has been extensively studied. The history of archaeological excavation in Oxford will be dealt with in a separate report.

#### *Scientific dating*

Scientific dating in the form of radiocarbon dating or dendro-chronology has both been used to good effect in the city. Evidence from burials at Christ Church suggests a mid to late Saxon cemetery attached to St Frideswide's minster from the 7<sup>th</sup> century through to the 11<sup>th</sup> century (See *Christian era burials: St Frideswide's*). Burials from near St Georges Tower, St Aldates church and All Saints church have also been radio carbon dates. The mass grave in St John's henge ditch has produced a large number of radiocarbon dates for the Late Saxon period, although the spread of dates was disappointing given the likelihood that the mass grave was the result of a single event (see *St John's Henge mass grave*). At the Radcliffe Infirmary site a pit contained a discrete concentration of bones of neonatal pigs producing a late Saxon radio-carbon date. More late Saxon dates were obtained from a fence post and charred grain from early later below All Saints Church. Elsewhere the north-west

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ditch of an oval enclosure at Binsey produced a radio carbon date from the Roman-Sub Roman period.

Excavations along St Aldates at the Trill Mill Stream afforded the opportunity for dendro-chronological dating with six samples taken providing a date in the second quarter of the 10<sup>th</sup> century for the timber structure there (Wilkinson 2003b: 99; See *Management of river channels* below). Some thermo-luminescence (TL) dating has also provided evidence of a Saxon origin (Durham 1984b: 79). At 79-81 St Aldates, for example, TL dating indicated an 8<sup>th</sup> century date for the pottery while radio carbon dating of the wattle fences produced a 9<sup>th</sup> century date (Hassall 1972: 145).

#### Documentary evidence

Oxford is featured in a number of late Saxon documents. A detailed examination of the available documentary record for Anglo-Saxon Oxford is outside the scope of this report, but a selection of significant records are briefly summarised below:

##### *Anglo Saxon Chronicle and Burghal Hidage*

The town of Oxford is recorded in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicles* for the year AD911-912, the first time the town is mentioned in documentary sources. It is also recorded in the *Burghal Hidage* (c.AD914-919) an Anglo-Saxon document which provides a list of towns or *burghs* built or fortified to provide protection from Viking attacks. The St Brice's Day massacre of 1002 is also recorded in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicles*, the record probably written within 20 years of that date (Swanton 2000: 134-5).

##### *Charters and leases*

Both Berkshire and Oxfordshire are well represented in surviving Anglo-Saxon charters, particularly the cartularies of the early minsters. Three late Saxon charters confirm the presence of St Frideswide's by 1002 (Cartulary of the Monastery of St Frideswide's), St Ebbe's Church before 1005 (Eynsham Cartulary) and St Martin's Church before 1032 (Chronicles of Abingdon) (Dodd ed. 2003: 41).

A lease of Great Tew provides an example of those attending an Oxfordshire court of 1050-2, including Bishop Ulf of Dorchester, Earl Leofric of Mercia with his household troops, the abbots of Abingdon and Eynsham, thirteen thegns, the Portreeve of Oxford, the earl's reeve and all the 'townsmen' (Blair 1994: 107). For a discussion of early charter evidence and the possible presence of 'urban manors' see Blair (*ibid.*: 151-2). The village of Headington is also notable for being recorded as a royal hundredal manor. Aethelred II issued a charter at Headington in 1004 (*ibid.*: 108).

##### *The Domesday Book 1086*

The entry for Oxford is long and exceptional (see *Norman Resource Assessment* for more details). It states that of the 721 houses that stood within and without its walls, 478 were ruins although the reasons for this remain unclear. The houses mentioned appear to exclude properties in the town recorded as associated with other estates (e.g. the Berkshire manor of Streatley and the king's manor of Steventon) indicating that the survey cannot be regarded as an exhaustive survey. A detailed analysis of the Domesday record is provided by the Victoria County History, which suggests that only properties that contributed tax to the upkeep of the town wall were listed (Salzman 1939: 373-95), see also Munby (2003a: 50-51) and Blair (1994: 155-9). For a wider discussion regarding high-status residents in late Saxon towns see Holt (2000, 81-2).

##### *11<sup>th</sup> -13<sup>th</sup> century charters and chronicles*

The St Brice's Day massacre is also separately recorded in a charter granted by Aethelred to St Frideswide's dated 7<sup>th</sup> December 1004 (Blair 1994, 168; Whitelock, 1979, 591; Swanton 2000, 135). The events of the massacre were also recorded by writers in the medieval period including William of Malmesbury in the 12<sup>th</sup> century (Keynes 2007) and John of Wallingford in the 13<sup>th</sup> century (Stevenson 1854). The

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legend of St Frideswide is also recorded in sources post dating the institutions 12<sup>th</sup> re-foundation as an Augustinian priory. The story was recorded by William of Malmesbury and John of Worcester amongst others (Dodd ed.2003: 17-18; Blair 1994: 52-54).

#### *Place name evidence*

The potential for place name evidence to provide information about Anglo-Saxon Oxford is beyond the scope of this study (See *Norman Resource Assessment* for place name evidence for villages). However notable selected references include the suggestion that Cuddesdon to the east of the city derives from 'Cutha's hill' and Cutteslowe to the north from 'Cutha's burial mound'. There is a reference to Cuthwine in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicles (Sturdy 2004: 23). There is a suggestion that the name Thornbiri associated with the oval enclosure at Binsey could translate to 'thorn-grown fortress' (Blair 1988a: 18).

Around 1007, Oxfordshire was divided into 24 hundreds, though some of these had been amalgamated by the time of Domesday. Hundred meeting places focused on open, upland sites, often centred on barrows (Blair 1994: 108). Such sites include Shotteslawwa ('*Sceot's barrow*') the hundredal meeting place for Headington.

The earliest form of Oxford comes from the Anglo Saxon Chronicles when it was referred to as *oxena ford*. It was first translated as meaning 'a fording place for oxen' in 1150 by Florence of Worcester and is generally thought to be an accurate translation (Gelling 1954: 19). There has been much debate as to the location of the ford with several theories suggested such as Hinksey Ferry (Salter) and Grandpont (Blair, 1994). See also Dodd, (2003) and Sturdy (2004) for further discussion of the ford location. Grandpont remains the most widely accepted likely location for the ford.

#### *Standing masonry structures*

Masonry buildings were almost entirely limited to ecclesiastical or defensive structures in this period. Two examples of extant likely 11<sup>th</sup> century architecture survive in the city. St Michael in the North Gate tower is datable to the period 1010-1060 (Durham 2003: 152) and St George's Tower within the castle precinct is now thought to be pre-conquest in origin (Norton 2006: 12). Both towers appear to have shared military and religious functions relating to the entrances through the burh defences. Also of note is a section of the stone core of the Late Saxon town wall (or stone revetted rampart) on display within the Castle precinct (visible in an embrasure below the current Carluccio's restaurant).

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## The landscape

### Inheritance

Despite the departure of the Roman system of government in the 5<sup>th</sup> century it is unlikely that the population disappeared *en masse* from the countryside and the rural life of Roman Britain likely continued with some overlap into the Saxon period albeit with a reduction in the population. Although the fate of the Oxford pottery industry in the late 4<sup>th</sup> and early 5<sup>th</sup> century is poorly understood, there is evidence for the re-use of Roman wares at early Saxon sites south-east of the city on the Corallian Ridge, notably at the Oxford Science Park (See *Material culture* below). Stray finds of Saxon typology have been recovered from the 2<sup>nd</sup> gravel terrace to the north of the later burh, these finds have been recovered from areas that have also produced Roman burials, but the character and extent of any cemeteries remains unknown and no direct relationship between late Roman and early Saxon burials can be demonstrated.

At the start of the Saxon period, the existing Roman framework of routeways may still have been in use, perhaps consisting of the north-south route from Dorchester to Alchester with a second possible north-south route across the 2<sup>nd</sup> gravel terrace and floodplain from the West Midlands via Oxford and on to Winchester and Southampton. That this second route became more important over time is indicated by the development of the later causeway crossing at Grandpont (Peberdy 2010: 50). A divergence in this route just north of Oxford at St Giles' Church occurs by the medieval period at least with the eastern arm continuing onto Banbury and the western arm to Woodstock and Stratford-upon-Avon (Blair 1994: 36). Two east-west routes with possible Roman origins have been suggested, the first passed through the city from the main Dorchester Road probably utilising the later crossing point at Hythe Bridge while a second passed to the south of the city utilising the later Abingdon Road fording point. An arrangement of pre burh north-south and east-west routeways across the gravel, predating the formation of the burh, are discussed by Blair (1988b).

### Land use

#### *Evidence for early pastoralism*

Pollen analysis from Minchery Farm, Littlemore, indicates an open landscape characterised by large expanses of grass with some woodland during the Roman period (Unit 3) and it is likely that this landscape was maintained into the Saxon period (Parker 1996: 136). Early Saxon sites commonly produce evidence for weaving and limited bone assemblages indicating low level mixed farming (See *Material culture* below). At Oxford Science Park the main livestock kept was cattle, which were slaughtered as adults suggesting their main role was for milk production, breeding, traction and manure and then subsequently for meat and leather. No evidence was found for a surplus of wool being generated for trade, although weaving combs and spindle whorls were recovered. Pigs were kept on the site, as were domestic fowl, geese, and horses. No evidence for field ditches or enclosures was recorded, but the site had been extensively ploughed in later times.

#### *Early arable farming*

As noted above the extent to which arable land under Roman administration reverted to grassland is not clear. Evidence from the 5<sup>th</sup> century is lacking. At Littlemore the Oxford Science Park excavation of a 6<sup>th</sup>-early 7<sup>th</sup> century rural settlement produced disappointing samples of charred plant remains, although cereal species appropriate to the Anglo-Saxon period were noted. It was not possible to determine whether these cereals were grown or brought in, but the excavator noted the light soils nearby and favoured the former option (Moore 2001b: 219).

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The extent of farming in the early and middle Saxon periods is poorly understood. There is evidence that during the Middle-Late Saxon period wheat, barley, oats and rye were grown across the region, with no particular specialization apparent anywhere. Wheat and barley were common in middle Saxon towns, oats were preferred in the late Saxon period however, while rye remained an unimportant crop. Legumes, fruit and vegetables are invariably under represented on Saxon sites (Green 1994: 85-6).

#### *Late Saxon open fields and meadows*

Examination of the alluvial sequences of the Thames Floodplain has produced evidence indicating an intensification of agriculture during the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> centuries, suggesting the development of open fields during this time (Robinson and Lambrick 1984: 813; Robinson 1992; 2001; Hooke 1988:124-31,135-6; Blair 1994: 126-8).

Environmental samples from Oxford provide evidence for crops, diet and domestic activity for the Late Saxon period (See Dodd ed. 2003: 46), but physical evidence for the development of open field systems across the LAA remains fragmentary.

Previous in the 1930's HE Salter argued that the streets on the north side of the High Street followed the boundaries of open-field furlongs. This has not been demonstrated by subsequent investigations, however there is some indication that ridge and furrow was present on the second gravel terrace before the construction of the burh rampart. For example at St Michaels Street excavations recorded a possible headland that followed a similar alignment to the northern ramparts (Wilkinson 2003a: 148). Investigations at New College suggested that cultivation in the area ceased for a short period before the defences were constructed. The excavator suggests that the ramparts employed the existing headland bank as part of the defences (Booth 1995: 220). Recent excavations under the Norman castle motte have also revealed some cultivation soils containing 11<sup>th</sup> century pottery (Norton 2006: 11). The soils overlay the postholes of a timber hall demonstrating the semi agricultural character of the urban zone and the ebbs and flows of Late Saxon urban development in this area.

Elsewhere 'lower plough soils' associated with ridge and furrow were excavated at St Anne's College on Woodstock Road producing small amounts of late Saxon to 14<sup>th</sup> century pottery (Parsons and Durham 1991) whilst at Barton 11<sup>th</sup> century sherds were recovered from the base of a furrow (Gray-Jones 2002). Documentary evidence from a Charter Boundary also indicates the presence of strips and furlongs in Cowley in 1004, mentioning *ofranfurlange* and *hwet furlanges heafde* 'wheat furlongs head' (Blair 1994: 128).

Port Meadow has been reserved for use by the burgesses of the town since Domesday at least. It is first mentioned in 1185 as *Portmanehiet* referring to a pasture outside the wall (Gelling 1953: 22).

#### *Late Saxon stock and fowl*

Faunal remains testify to the importance of meat in the urban diet, but the comparatively small assemblages recovered in Oxford, and also the presence of likely specialised assemblages suggestive of butchers waste, make generalisation about the relative importance of sheep, cattle and pigs problematic (Dodd ed. 2003: 45). Wilson has noted that beef and mutton were probably purchased from outlying markets because of the limits of pasturage in the town (Wilson 1983: 69). Significant quantities of pig and pigeon bones have noted at a couple of sites and evidence for domestic fowl and eggs suggest that people were also raising animals and birds within the town itself. At 11-18 Queen Street an exceptional quantity of pig and pigeon bones were noted, pig bones were also found in abundance at All Saints Church. At the Clarendon Hotel site on Cornmarket heavy staining of a 10<sup>th</sup> century or earlier gravel surface suggested animal were being kept (Booth *et al.* 2007; Dodd

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ed. 2003: 44-6). At the Radcliffe Infirmary site a pit contained a discrete concentration of bones of neonatal pigs hinting at porcine husbandry (Braybrooke 2010, 17). The bones producing a radio-carbon date of 890-1020 cal AD (95% probability, SUERC-29160; 1090 ±30). For further discussion see Wilson (2003) and Dodd (ed. 2003: 45).

#### *Late Saxon plant remains*

Evidence for free threshing cereals has been recorded at several locations in the Late Saxon Town. At Lincoln College the exceptional quality of the evidence provided a unique opportunity to study the Saxon diet as the burning of the buildings resulted in better than usual preservation of the grain deposits (Pelling 2002: 271). The samples also produced a rich variety of other legume and fruit remains. The evidence from Lincoln College and elsewhere in the city (notably All Saints Church) indicate localised large scale storage of free threshing wheat and barley perhaps for baking or malting purposes (*ibid.*).

At 113-119 High Street charred plant remains from 10<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> century deposits indicated high concentrations of grain and weed seeds. Here cereal grain, primarily of free-threshing types such as rivet or bread-type wheat were recorded from the samples taken suggesting hand-milling, malting and the burning of straw may have been carried out on site during the late Saxon period (Robinson 2000: 434).

Sites investigated at St Aldates have produced evidence for cereal bran, cornucukle seeds, blackberries, apples, plums or damsons and summer savoury while small quantities of charred grain and chaff from free threshing wheat were also recorded (Robinson 2003: 371). In Queen Street the charred plant remains from the New Inn Court comprised mostly apple or pear pips whilst the adjacent 11-12 Queen Street site samples preserved quantities of bread wheat, barley and some rye although not in sufficient quantities to indicate threshing on site (Robinson 1983: 69). Further environmental evidence is forthcoming from the recent extensive Castle redevelopment excavations and Westgate Centre evaluations (Norton 2006; Smith 2008b).

#### *Woodland*

Woodland provided an important resource for timber, forage, charcoal and hunting. Unfortunately the patterns of woodland management and timber supply for Oxford and its surrounding villages in this period are poorly understood. By the late Saxon period the royal forest of Shotover and Stowood occupied a substantial area of land east of the Cherwell, stretching westerward across to Shotover Hill, with a hunting lodge or Royal palace located within the wood at Headington (Lobel 1957: 275). At this time the forest likely extended for at least fifteen square miles over Shotover and Stowood, and included the village of Marston to the west (Oxford Archaeology 2001: 4). The 'demesne forest' of Shotover is mentioned in the Domesday Book and a pollen core from Shotover Hill has indicated that post Roman regeneration of the woodland dates to the late Saxon period (Day 1989; Blair 1994).

The forest and its relationship with the city has not been the subject of detailed study. In the mid 10<sup>th</sup> century buildings at St Aldates were built from oak timber derived from trees that were over 300 years old when felled. However the trees appeared to derive from different woodlands (Hillam and Miles 2003: 390).

#### *Rivers, brooks and the floodplain*

The available environmental evidence suggests that by the end of the Roman period a series of islands had been created within the reed swamp covering much of the floodplain to the south of St Aldates (Dodd ed. 2003: 14). The data suggests a reduction of alluviation in the early Saxon period was followed by a reversal of this trend, with alluviation and sedimentation in the mid-late Saxon period (Robinson 2007). There is evidence for a crossing or series of crossings on or close to the line

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of St Aldates in the mid Saxon period perhaps replacing an earlier fording point (*ibid.*: 15). Evidence for artificial improvement to the Thames through the augmentation and creation of new channels is discussed in more detail below (See *The river network*).

Evidence for land reclamation and channel management in the form of wattle fencing and possible clay dumps along St Aldates in the Saxon period has been recorded on a number of sites. A detailed summary is provided in Dodd (ed. 2003). Sedimentation and alluviation was evident against the wattle revetted channels and oak pile bridge constructed at St Aldates sometime between AD 660-900 (Robinson in Dodd ed. 2003). At one site pottery evidence suggested a date of the 8<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> century for the wattle fencing whilst three radiocarbon dates from one fence produced a mid 9<sup>th</sup> century date (Durham 1984b; Blair 1994: 91).

The wattle fencing may have had a number of functions, trapping silt to protect the causeway or reinforcing channels to allow channel side activities and aid drainage of reclaimed land. At 79-80 St Aldates a series of wattle fences were inserted short distances apart and leading down the slope of the bank possibly with the purpose of trapping silt and preventing erosion thus strengthening the causeway (Durham 1977: 182). Land reclamation for settlement purposes has also been recorded at Osney and St Thomas's parish from the late Saxon period onwards.

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## Early rural settlement

The Upper Thames Valley has produced a number of well excavated early Anglo-Saxon rural settlement sites supported by good environmental evidence. Evidence suggests that early Saxon settlement was significantly less intensive than 4<sup>th</sup> century Roman activity with a notable cluster of activity around Oxford (Dodd 2010: 18). Significant excavations of early Saxon rural settlements have been undertaken to the north at Yarnton (Hey 2004) and to the south at Abingdon and Radley (Miles ed. 1986). The evidence from Oxford can be seen as part of this wider pattern of settlement along the Upper Thames. Within the LAA there is evidence for both orientation on earlier prehistoric monumental landscapes (E.g. at the Radcliffe Infirmary site), orientation of softer brick earths and sands perhaps related to Grubenhause forms (E.g. at the Oxford Science Park and Radcliffe Infirmary sites) and limited evidence for re-use of Roman material culture (E.g. Oxford Science Park), if not direct continuity of land holdings or land use (Figure 3).

### Littlemore

Over ten sunken featured buildings (SFBs) were excavated at the southern edge of the LAA at Oxford Science Park in 1999 (OHER 16299; Moore, 2001b, 163). The pottery assemblage included a significant numbers of reused Roman vessels as well as a 6<sup>th</sup> -7<sup>th</sup> century vessels (See *Pottery* below), with the presence of decorated pottery pointing to a main phase of occupation in the 6<sup>th</sup> century with only limited activity in the early 7<sup>th</sup> century (Moore 2001b: 218). The similarity of the pottery to that recovered from nearby Barton Court Farm (Miles ed. 1986) and Radley Barrow Hills (Chambers and McAdam 2007) excavated settlement sites has led to the suggestion that these formed a single large dispersed settlement (Blinkhorn 2001b, 40). The site did not carry on much beyond the early 7<sup>th</sup> century at the latest (noting the difficulty of identifying 7<sup>th</sup> century pottery). Based on the assumption that Sunken Featured Buildings had an approximate 20-25 year life span, perhaps 3-5 SFBs at the Science Park site may have been in use at any one time (Moore 2001b: 219). The chronology from the Science Park indicates a shorter period of activity than nearby comparable sites at Abingdon or Eynsham.

Further evidence for dispersed settlement at Littlemore was recorded in 2009 at Peers School where a sunken-featured building containing pottery of both early Saxon and Roman date was recorded. Other finds were sparse but included a fragment of possible pin-beater, charred botanical remains and some animal bones. A nearby pit was probably associated with the building, but there were no other indications of further settlement (pers. comm. M Alexander; Cotswold Archaeology, forthcoming).

### Headington-Barton

A single 'grubenhause' (Sunken Featured Building) was recorded at from Barton in 1931 during the construction for the Northern Bypass and appeared to be associated with an inhumation (Salzman 1939: 365).

### Radcliffe Infirmary

Recent archaeological investigations at the Radcliffe Infirmary site have revealed some of the earliest Saxon evidence in the vicinity of the later town (Braybrooke 2010; UAD1761). The evaluation revealed one early to middle Saxon feature thought to be a sunken feature building (SFB) with evidence to suggest it had been destroyed by fire (*ibid.*: 13). The backfill of the feature produced a stamped 6<sup>th</sup> century sherd. A possible well and a pit containing loom weight fragments were also recovered along with pottery suggesting occupation in the 6<sup>th</sup> century. The settlement appears to have chosen a Late Neolithic-Early Bronze Age Barrow Cemetery, known from 12<sup>th</sup>

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century documents to be partially extant in the Saxon period, as a focus for settlement. The relationship between this short lived settlement and the nearby Late Saxon settlement at Walton remains unclear. Despite previous recorded observation of possible Saxon burials at the Radcliffe site (UAD118; 728) no evidence for a cemetery was recovered from the excavated area. Sturdy had previously proposed an early settlement focus north of the later burh, based on the recovery of stray finds from this area (Sturdy 2004: 23).

#### *Central Oxford*

Evidence of early Saxon activity in central Oxford has been recorded at several sites. including at the Postmasters' Hall excavation at 4a Merton Street, where two sherds of decorated early Saxon pottery were recovered (Blinkhorn 2003). Elsewhere a ditch at St Ebbe's produced three similar stamped sherds (Mellor 1989, 198). Sherds of 5<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> century pottery were recovered from 113-119 High Street (Walker 2000). The Postmasters' Hall site also produced small groups of other re-deposited hand-built early-middle Saxon material. Finds of organic tempered early/middle Saxon sherds have also been noted during excavations in the cloister of St Frideswide's church (Mellor 1988, 34; Gaz 23), at the Classics Centre excavation at 65-67 St Giles (Blinkhorn 2008) and at the recent Oxford Castle excavation (Blinkhorn 2006; Poore, Norton and Dodd 2009: 3). Isolated finds of early to middle Saxon pottery have been recorded outside the area of the later burh at Magdalen College (UAD 301; 321) and Osney Abbey (UAD 724).

There is a suggestion that a group of burials orientated north-south noted during the construction of Pembroke College Chapel in the 17<sup>th</sup> century could be from a pagan inhumation cemetery in central Oxford, but there is no further evidence for such a site (Dodd ed. 2003: 18).

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## Urban settlement

Of the important late Anglo-Saxon settlements in the region, Oxford and Winchester, have been subject to the most detailed research and excavation and both have yielded significant finds demonstrating the relative wealth of late Anglo-Saxon urban dwellers.

### Archaeological evidence for pre-burh settlement

As noted above only small amount of early Saxon pottery has been recovered from the site of the later burh. Evidence for middle Saxon activity is also limited. There is evidence for a river crossing at St Aldate's in the 7<sup>th</sup> century (See *Transport and communications* below) and an inhumation at Christ Church has produced a 7<sup>th</sup> century radio-carbon date adding weight to the argument for the existence of a religious foundation in this location at that time (See *Ceremony, ritual and religion* below). A number of large undated ditches have been observed that could potentially relate to an early bounded Minster or trading settlement (See Dodd ed. 2003). The most substantial pre-burh feature recorded to date was a 3m wide north-south ditch excavated in the vicinity of Church Street prior to the development of the Westgate Centre. The ditch pre-dated the earliest street surface of the burh and contained grass tempered and hard sandy wares of Saxon type and St Neots type, several pits were also dated to this phase (Hassall *et al* 1989: 90-93; Dodd ed. 2003: 17).

Elsewhere at No 8 Queen Street a hearth and area of burning cut by three postholes lay below a 'primary burh' street surface (Dodd ed. 2003: 17 & Gaz 84). Excavations at the castle between 1999-2005 revealed evidence for a partially preserved post-built structure which was demolished before a metalled street was constructed over it. Assuming that the metalling dates to the construction of the burh then the structure is one of the earliest known Oxford buildings (Poore *et al.* 2009: 3). The residual pottery from the site included sherds of Stamford ware datable to the mid-8<sup>th</sup> to early 10<sup>th</sup> century. Other 8<sup>th</sup>- 9<sup>th</sup> century evidence from the city includes a small amount of residual Ipswich Ware recovered from the Sackler Library excavation in Beaumont Street (Blinkhorn 2001a) and from the nearby Ashmolean extension excavation (Blinkhorn 2009b) and also a coin dated to Offa's reign, found near the Martyrs Memorial in St Giles (UAD 689).

### Evidence for the foundation of the burh

As noted above the town is first mentioned in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle entry under the year 911-12. The existence of a burh at Oxford is also registered in the Burghal Hidage, a memorandum of the reign of Edward the Elder, currently believed to be dated to 914-19 (Figure 4). The Burghal defences and the grid plan street layout are commonly thought to have been built by Alfred or more likely his son and successor Edward the Elder in the early 10<sup>th</sup> century, but it remains possible that the settlement predates this and it is in fact a Mercian foundation (Blair 1994: 111). For a summary of planned burhs see Dodd (ed. 2003: 20). Haslam has recently proposed an alternative model for the early foundation of the burh in the 9<sup>th</sup> century (2010).

### Archaeological evidence for settlement from the 10<sup>th</sup> century

Archaeological investigations have produced good evidence for the emergence of substantial settlement activity in the 10<sup>th</sup> century which developed a distinct urban character by the 11<sup>th</sup> century, if not before. A population of several thousand by the 11<sup>th</sup> century is suggested by Jope (1952-53). There is good evidence for the layout of late urban houses, which were typically set in fairly generous enclosures with back yards or gardens used for raising pigs and hens and for dumping rubbish in pits. A dense distribution of houses along commercial frontages has been recorded, these often associated with distinct urban cellar pit forms. There is also evidence for more

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unusual examples of elaborate un-celled buildings in the western part of the town (Jope 1952-53: 99). There is less evidence for peripheral or suburban activity of for other kinds of commercial or specialised buildings. It has been suggested that the early focus of the primary burh may have been west of Cornmarket, however further work is required to confirm this theory. The crossroads at Carfax remains the obvious focal point for early settlement. To the east of Cornmarket sites away from the principal streets appear to develop in the 11<sup>th</sup> century. For example excavations at Lincoln College (set well back from the High Street) and Logic Lane (again off the High Street) have produced early 11<sup>th</sup> century pottery, dominated by St Neots and Cotswold type fabrics, whereas investigations at New Inn Court off New Inn Hall Street in the western part of the central area have recorded 10<sup>th</sup> cent Late Saxon Oxford ware and little St Neots ware (Blinkhorn 2002: 237).

Cellar pits are known at Oxford Castle, Queen's Street, the High Street, Lincoln College (to the north of the High Street) and Cornmarket Street. They were lined with wattle and daub or with walls constructed from planks and posts, and ranged in size from a few meters square to substantial rooms comparable to later medieval undercrofts. Regarding cellar pits of late 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> century date three broad types are noted by Blair 1) simple sunken floors of the earlier grubenhaus tradition 2) deeper squarer urban forms 3) 11<sup>th</sup> century rectangular cellared building with timber walls (Blair 1994: 163).

The Clarendon Hotel site on Cornmarket has provided the clearest insight into the general arrangement of cellar pits and boundaries. Here at least four plots measuring 10m-12m wide and extending 65 m-70 m back from the street line were revealed, each plot fronted by a cellar pit with further structures to the rear (Jope, 1958, 7). At Cornmarket the cellars and clusters of rubbish pits stretched back 20m from the street frontage. The street frontage properties were detached but space was fully utilised and the evidence suggests that the Saxon street was narrower than the later street by around 2.5m-3m (*ibid.*: 5).

The distinctive late Saxon cellar pits recorded across the city are paralleled in towns such as York, Thetford, Chester, London and Wallingford and represent perhaps the earliest post Roman building specifically designed for an urban setting (Dodd ed. 2003, 40-1; Poore *et al.* 2009: 6). The location of the pits next to streets and the character of associated rubbish pits with mixed refuse (rather than primary sewage) is suggestive of a storage function related to commerce (*ibid.*). At the Oxford Castle excavation large pits were located to the rear of the cellar pits and used for general refuse rather than specifically cess, a similar pattern was noted as likely at Queen's College (Norton and Mumford 2010)

Whilst there is substantial evidence for domestic activity recorded along the principal street frontages the lack of datable evidence and the scale of later truncation has proved a significant problem. The evidence has been shaped by the pattern of development led excavation, leaving zones of the town that have been understudied, for example few excavations have been carried out along the length of the High Street or along the northern side of Queen Street, whilst investigations along Cornmarket were largely undertaken as salvage recording operations and were therefore limited in their scope. Other urban features included a possible central drain which may have been laid down the High Street prior to the later Norman conduit known as 'The Kennel' (Dodd ed. 2003: 258-67).

#### *Cornmarket*

As noted above in 1954 excavations at the former Cornmarket Hotel recorded extensive late Saxon activity along the street frontage and below the modern street (Jope 1958). Although only limited recording could be carried out, a series of 11<sup>th</sup> century pits and cellars were found irregularly distributed along the Saxon frontage, their distribution indicated detached structures rather than a long range with limited

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development to the rear of the plots until the late 11<sup>th</sup> century. The site also recorded some evidence of late Saxon metal working in the eastern part of the site (*ibid.*: 72).

A series of small excavations at 13-21 Cornmarket opposite the former Hotel site were carried out between 1959-1962 and in 1965 and although the results were limited due to a lack of dating evidence, several features including pits and possible post holes of a 10<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> century date were recorded (Sturdy and Munby 1985: 53). Evidence of late Saxon activity had previously been reported in the area in 1935 when the 19<sup>th</sup> century buildings were demolished and quantities of pottery including crucibles and a chalk spindle whorl were recovered (UAD 158).

Excavations at 55-58 Cornmarket in 1962 similarly produced limited datable evidence but significantly more features were recorded enabling a rough phase plan to be proposed (Sturdy and Munby 1985: 66). The earliest features comprised of a number of pits on the street frontage including a sunken featured building tentatively dated to the 10<sup>th</sup> century by several residual sherds only. By the 11<sup>th</sup> century activity appeared to have intensified at the site with a substantial cellar pit and a number of further pits inserted to the rear. Excavation in 1970 at 44-46 Cornmarket recorded at least seven Saxon pits along the street frontage and the northern part of the site where modern truncation was less significant (Hassall 1971b: 33). A number of pits were recorded within the street itself confirming a shift of alignment. Several pits beneath the northern property boundary between No. 43 and 44 suggest the boundary was not in place until the 12<sup>th</sup> century or later (*ibid.*: 33).

#### *St Aldates (within the burh)*

The evidence for domestic activity in this area is currently limited, perhaps restricted by the presence of St Frideswide's to the east and a speculative Saxon cemetery to the west at St Aldate's Church (see *Christian era burials* below). A small quantity of Saxon sherds were recorded during excavations at the Town Hall on St Aldates in 1894 (UAD 148). Excavations within Christ Church Cathedral Garden in the 1960s recorded further evidence for occupation including pits, post holes, kilns and ovens dating to the 11<sup>th</sup> century indicating domestic occupation north of the monastic precinct with possible industrial activity represented by the kilns (Sturdy 1963). This early activity was then overlain with a 12<sup>th</sup> century boundary wall for the later monastic precinct with a new road on the outer side presumably replacing the intramural boundary road to the south (Blair 1988: 236). More recently, a single 11<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> century pit was recorded during a watching brief at Blue Boar Quad, Christ Church on Blue Boar Street (Fitzsimons 2009: 42).

Evidence from 89 St Aldates just outside the Southgate indicated that the Trill Mill Stream channel may have run parallel to the burh's defences. The fill of the channel suggested that it was cut around the 9<sup>th</sup> century perhaps as part of a defensive network with the original cut sealed by 10<sup>th</sup> century marsh deposits (Durham 1986b: 104).

#### *Queen Street and Castle Street*

There is some evidence at the east end of the street for gravel surfacing that might relate to a late Saxon market area near the Carfax end. Excavations at 7-8 Queen Street in 1985 recorded a backfilled early 11<sup>th</sup> century cellar, with later 11<sup>th</sup> floors over. The wider features pointed to a late Saxon street frontage, cut into earlier gravelled surfaces, possibly from a market area (Durham 1986a). Excavations at 4 Queen Street in 1986 recorded series of late Saxon and post-Norman gravelled and metalled surfaces from roads and perhaps market surface, the earliest dating from the 10<sup>th</sup> century. At that date the street frontage lay further south. Evidence for encroachment onto the earlier market area came from an 11<sup>th</sup> century well (Collard 1986).

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Excavations carried out between 1968 and 1980 at 11-18 Queen Street recorded a series of late Saxon structural remains in the form of post holes and stake holes (Halpin 1983). Possible late Saxon pits with pottery dating to the 10<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> century were recorded along the Queen Street frontage and the Pembroke Street frontage suggesting both roads were in existence by the late Saxon period. The absence of archaeological evidence until the early 13<sup>th</sup> century suggesting the site may have lain vacant for some time and used for cultivation or gardening (*ibid.*: 50).

Excavations in 1960 recorded several domestic structures and associated features on the corner of Queen Street and St Ebbe's (Sturdy and Munby 1985: 80). The earliest features comprised of a 10<sup>th</sup> century pit with a wattle matted base, a single 11<sup>th</sup> century cellar pit that may have extended some way into Queen Street with a second possible cellar pit fronting onto St Ebbe's and two sunken featured buildings on Queen Street (*ibid.*). Other features included several rubbish, cess pits and a possible well. Later excavations on the same site in 1997 recorded a number of late Saxon pits across the site but no further contemporary structures (Freke 1998: 7). Late Saxon pottery including St Neots ware and Late Saxon Oxford Ware was recovered from the site but has not been published (Mellor 1998: App 1). Excavations in nearby Bonn Square within the former graveyard of St Peter-le-Bailey Church recorded only small quantities of late Saxon pottery (Blinkhorn 2009a).

Excavations along Castle Street between 1970 and 1971 recorded a single pre 11<sup>th</sup> century pit along with an undated north-south aligned ditch that could have been a continuation of the pre street grid ditch noted at Church Street (Hassall *et al* 1989: 115). Quantities of daub and roof tiles were recorded across the site indicating structures may have been present by the 11<sup>th</sup> century although no structural evidence survived. A line of five pits were recorded along the east-west parish boundary and may represent the earliest boundary evidence from the site.

#### *South of Castle Street*

Excavations at Church Street in 1967 recorded pit digging indicating an intensification of settlement activity in the 11<sup>th</sup> century. No evidence for property boundaries were indicated by the pit distribution. An absence of pit digging along the street frontage was taken to imply the presence of structures but the only physical evidence was a single stone lined oven (Hassall *et al.* 1989: 93). A lack of regional imports and unexceptional small finds suggest that the area was not a wealthy part of the town (*ibid.*: 96).

Deep sections cut across Church Street (UAD 224) and Castle Street (UAD 225) during the St Ebbes redevelopment indicated that they were first laid out prior to the 11<sup>th</sup> century and the lowest street level (Surface 8) at both sites appeared similar, although Church Street included a greater proportion of 'inferior gravel'.

#### *Land to the north of Queen Street*

Some Late Saxon pottery and possible features were recorded during excavations at Frewin Hall in the 1970s and again in 1993 although the first distinct structures did not appear until after the Conquest (Blair and Flude 1978: 119; Nenck, Margeson and Hurley 1994). A salvage excavation in 1979 at 20-24 New Inn Hall Street recorded late Saxon street surfaces beneath the present street and evidence of a possible pit containing pottery and a copper coin (anon 1979). The report suggests that again tenements do not appear to have been laid out in this location until the medieval period.

#### *The west end (the later castle precinct)*

Whilst the Domesday Book does not refer to the clearance of houses to make way for the construction of the castle in 1071 the archaeological record indicates that there was extensive settlement in this area. The documented construction of the castle in 1071 provides a useful *terminus ante quem* for Saxon evidence beneath

Norman structures. Extensive development in the area since the 18<sup>th</sup> century has produced almost fifty archaeological recognition events recorded in the UAD for the castle area alone. The undated or non Saxon events (28 of the 47 events) will not be discussed here (see *Norman, Medieval and Post Medieval Resource Assessments* for evidence for the Castle itself) and see the *Burh defences* section for evidence of the Saxon defences.

Sites	Summary	Source
Nuffield College, 1940s (UAD 141) Oxford Castle Mound, 1952 (UAD 155)	10th century occupation 3 SFBS, pits, pottery	Jope 1952-53
Church of St Budoc, 1969 (UAD 220) Castle Defences, 1970 (UAD 226) Oxford Castle, 1965 (UAD 289) Castle Mound, 1972 (UAD 323)	10th century occupation 1 SFB, pits Pottery Inhumation (undated)	Hassall 1976
County Hall, 1975 (UAD 577)	Negative – no archaeological impact	OAU 1996
Bulwarks Lane, 1980 (UAD 286)	Pits and postholes 9th-10th century pottery	Durham and Halpin 1983
Round Tower, 1986 (UAD 614)	Negative – no archaeological impact	OAU 1996
St Peter's College, 1987 (UAD 586)	Negative – modern disturbance	UAD
Tidmarsh Lane, 1994 (UAD 378)	No Saxon features	
Oxford Castle, 1999 (UAD 412) Oxford Castle, 2002 (UAD 1613)	7 cellar pits, timber hall Pits and postholes	Booth and Hiller 1999 Norton 2006

**Table 1: Summary of excavations at the Castle site**

The presence of domestic settlement below the Norman precinct was first demonstrated in the 1940s by Jope (1952-3). Excavations at Canal Wharf and the castle indicated the presence of Saxon occupation as far as the edges of the gravel terrace in the early 11<sup>th</sup> century (*ibid.*: 80; UAD 141; UAD 155). Although the excavations at Canal Wharf (later Nuffield College) were never fully published, several pits containing late Saxon pottery were recorded (*ibid.*, 79). Later excavations at the Castle Mound in 1952 revealed more evidence for pre Norman occupation including three hearths dated to the late 10<sup>th</sup> or early 11<sup>th</sup> century. A significant amount of late Saxon pottery was recovered (including St Neots Ware) also evidence for burnt daub (*ibid.*: 81). Three possible occupation layers were recorded at the castle site that might be indicative of sunken featured buildings (*ibid.*: 99). These early occupation levels were overlain by 30cm of deposit t over which the castle was then constructed (*ibid.*: 81). Jope suggests that this 30cm build up indicated a period of abandonment or dereliction, perhaps contemporary with the Conquest, prior to the construction of the castle.

Further excavations at the Castle were undertaken between 1965-1973 (Hassall 1976). To the north-west of the castle a badly disturbed inhumation of a possible Saxon date was recorded. More significant evidence of Saxon occupation was recorded to the east of the Castle (*ibid.*: 242). Here the evidence suggested the developed of a late Saxon street frontage with a single sunken featured building and several pits. Recovered pottery suggested a mid to late 10<sup>th</sup> century date for this activity (*ibid.*: 248). The alignment of the sunken structure and possible associated pits suggested that the street was a continuation of Queen Street across the castle site although it was uncertain whether this settlement lay within or without the primary burh defences (*ibid.*: 254).

Excavations at Bulwarks Lane in 1980 revealed further late Saxon settlement, significantly, in an area previously thought to have been occupied by the burh

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defences (Durham and Halpin 1983: 30). The extent of the excavation was limited but several pits and post holes were recorded with recovered pottery of 9<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> century date.

A major series of excavations carried out between 1999 and 2005 during the redevelopment of the Oxford Prison revealed well preserved occupation evidence (Booth and Hiller 1999; Norton 2006; Mumford 2008; Poore, Norton and Dodd 2009; Norton and Dodd forthcoming). The evidence demonstrates the presence of a well populated late Saxon western quarter. A row of structures fronted a probable road, with cellar pits and associated refuse, cess pits and quarry pits located either side of the road. Seven flat bottomed vertically sided cellar pits were excavated, some with associated beam slots, post holes and lime or chalk surfaces and daub suggesting a daub lining for the pits. The refuse pits located near the cellar pits contained environmental evidence indicative of mixed refuse rather than primary sewage. In addition the most complete structure consisted of the western end of a large hall, with an annexe and loft to the west, the annex measuring 5m by 5m (*ibid.*: 11). The burh rampart was examined and appears to have been built around pre-existing settlement, it was also found to contain 'dung rich' turves perhaps indicating pastureland in the near vicinity at the time of construction (Poore, Norton and Dodd 2009: 3). It is possible that a significant estate centred on St Georges Tower, perhaps a royal residence or an official residence, influenced the subsequent location of the Norman castle (*ibid.*).

#### *High Street*

The High Street appears to have been substantially developed by the late Saxon period (Dodd ed. 2003, 37), Evidence from the west end of the High Street comes primarily in the form of domestic pits noted at 13 High Street (UAD 54) and 126 High Street (UAD 262) (Poore *et al.* 2006, 215). A salvage excavations at Brasenose College in 1959-60 prior to the construction of new buildings north of 19-23 High Street revealed 'Cellar pits' associated with 11th century pottery (Case and Sturdy 1960).

The most extensive evidence for Saxon domestic occupation on High Street comes from archaeological investigations at All Saints Church where at least six phases of activity were identified prior to the construction of the current church (Hassall 1974b: 55). The earliest phase comprised a charred grain layer radio carbon dated to cal AD 880-1150 overlying natural. A number of postholes and stake holes were also recorded perhaps indicate the presence of a farmstead on the site in the Saxon period (*ibid.*: 55). The charred grain layer was sealed by a layer of loam mixed with charcoal, clay and grit which was suggested to be the remains of burnt daub (Dodd ed. 2003: 210). Pottery evidence was predominately local shell tempered fabrics with a single find of Stamford ware. A second major phase of activity comprised of a property boundary laid out at right angles to the road. A series of post holes were later replaced by a wattle fence that had been burnt in situ. Samples taken from the best preserved section of the fence provided a radio carbon date of cal AD 900-1220 (*ibid.*: 216). Pottery evidence from this phase marked a substantial increase in St Neots ware. The next major phase saw the construction of a substantial timber lined cellar to the west of the property boundary. Here a series of at least four cellar floors were identified indicating an extended period of use before the cellar walls were dismantled and the pit backfilled (*ibid.*: 219). Dating evidence in the form of a coin from Edward the Confessor minted between 1042 and 1044 was recorded in the upper fill of the pit providing a *terminus ante quem* for the backfilling of the cellar. As well as St Neots ware a number of other imported fabrics were identified in this later phase including wares from Northern France and the Rhineland. The next phase may represent the transition from domestic occupation to the foundation of the church.

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Excavations at 113-119 High Street recorded evidence of domestic activity comprising three 10<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> century cellars fronting onto the High Street and street surfacing (Walker 2000: 381). One cellar contained several earth-fast timber uprights, at least one of which still rested on its padstone with walls constructed of timber wattle planks (*ibid.*: 392). As with Cornmarket the evidence suggests a shift in property boundaries sometime between the construction of the cellar pits and the later medieval tenement boundaries (*ibid.*: 437).

Excavations at the site of the Angel Inn on the south side of High Street, during the construction of the Examination Schools in the 1870s, recorded a number of pits containing Saxon pottery and a coin along with evidence of the Saxon street surfaces along the High Street (UAD No 159). The excavations also revealed an 11<sup>th</sup> century tomb slab and a ring of twisted gold wire, perhaps of Scandinavian origin (see *Scandinavian evidence* below). The pits were originally thought to have been dwellings but were later re-interpreted as cellar pits (Jope 1958, 10). Excavations at Logic Lane in 1960 revealed evidence of Saxon occupation (Radcliffe 1961-2: 45). Here several pits, beam slots and post holes were recorded. Two postholes may reflect a Saxon boundary line while later features indicate a re-organisation of the boundaries in this area following the construction of Kybald Street in the 12<sup>th</sup> century (*Ibid.*: 52).

An 1998 evaluation in the Provost's Garden, Queen's College, recorded a gravel surface, pit and posthole with 10<sup>th</sup> century pottery and an associated quantity of slag (Cook 1999). A subsequent excavation to the east prior to the redevelopment of the college Kitchen revealed six 10<sup>th</sup> or 11<sup>th</sup> -century waste or cess pits, one containing an Æthelred II (978-1016) silver cut halfpenny in its upper fill (in circulation from 997-1003). The pits were most likely lay within tenements extending back from the High Street (Allen 2010: 199).

#### *Land to the south of the High Street plots*

Excavations at No 4A Merton Street, 140m south of the high Street and east of the postulated primary burn, recorded an occupation site dating to 11<sup>th</sup> century, indicated by a large (for the town) assemblage of re-deposited St Neots ware. (Poore *et al.* 2006).

#### *Land to the north of the High Street plots*

Archaeological investigations at Lincoln College on Turl Street to the north of All Saints Church, have recorded evidence of 11<sup>th</sup> century occupation and a substantial pottery assemblage (Kamesh *et al.* 2002: 199). The primary phase of activity on site dated to the early to mid 11<sup>th</sup> century and comprises two timber structures represented by a series of postholes and several associated pits. A possible soil horizon of dark charcoal rich soil was also recorded beneath the structures (*ibid.*, 203). The second phase of activity comprises a series of large pits dating to the mid to late 11<sup>th</sup> century with a later phase of building activity that terminates with evidence of burning. The site was subsequently not developed until the 15<sup>th</sup> century with evidence of large extraction and rubbish pits occupying much of the site during the interval (*ibid.*: 205).

Excavations at All Souls College in 1991 to the east of the proposed primary burh recorded evidence of Saxon activity in the form of a substantial cellar like pit fronting onto Catte Street, itself known to date to the Saxon period (Oxford Archaeological Unit 1993: 13). More recent investigations in 2001 at the Codrington Library, All Souls, revealed evidence of at least nine pits containing domestic waste including pottery evidence dating to the 9<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> century although no evidence for structures were recorded (Entwhistle and Gray Jones 2004: 54). Excavations at St Peter in the East in 1967 recorded evidence of a 10<sup>th</sup> century occupation level underlying the later

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structural remains for the church, but there are no detailed site records for this important recorded observation (Sturdy 1972: 245).

### Crafts, trade and Industry

Evidence for crafts, trades and Industry in the early-middle Saxon period comes largely from a small number of objects associated with textile working and grave goods suggesting the limited production and exchange of some luxury goods (See *Material culture* below).

The investment of resources into the creation of a causeway or bridge across the Thames Floodplain in the middle Saxon period could be suggestive of a developing trade economy whilst the possibility that the name 'Eastwyke' could be place name evidence for a possible trading 'wic' at Eastwyke Farm has previously been considered, although such an interpretation is no longer favoured and the name may be more appropriately understood as 'wich' rather than 'wick' or 'wyke' (pers. comm. J Bair).

By the early 11<sup>th</sup> century there is evidence for a dynamic trading and mercantile community at Oxford (Booth *et al.* 2007: Ch 6). Buildings close to the street frontages may have been the workshops and stalls of traders. Traded goods found in the town suggest the presence of fishmongers and perhaps wine merchants. Oxford was a mint, with moneyers associated trades of gold and silver. There is evidence for, shoe making, butchery, horn and bone working, metalworking and textile production, although the distinction between domestic and commercial production is not always clear.

For a discussion on trade in the Upper Thames area see Booth *et al.* (2007: 359-364). For a discussion of long distance trade in stone objects see Dodd (ed. 2003: 44).

#### *Early Saxon textile working*

Spindle whorls of bone, clay and stone are recorded at Oxford, as are loom-weights, needles, smoothers or rubbers, flax heckles and wool combs (Booth *et al.* 2007: 344). There is a suggestion that a pit recorded during the Radcliffe Infirmary excavation in 2009, containing Saxon pottery, ceramic loom-weights, animal bone, ash and charcoal, could have been a loom weight kiln (Braybrooke 2010: 17). However it was noted that burnt layers have also been recorded elsewhere at the site (*ibid.*; Sturdy 2004). Generally there is insufficient evidence to demonstrate that the management of sheep or weaving in the locality was undertaken for any purpose other than for local domestic use.

#### *Late Saxon textile working*

Two clay loom-weights came from a 10<sup>th</sup> century pit at 23-26 Queen Street (UAD 291), a bun shaped loomweight from Carfax (UAD 682), spindle whorls have also been recorded from 13-18 Queen Street (UAD 287), Church Street (UAD 210), 18-20 Cornmarket (UAD 158), 79-80 St Aldates (UAD 227) a mid 11<sup>th</sup> century layer at 55-58 Cornmarket (UAD 4) and possibly also at the Examination Schools site (UAD 159). Lead waste from 10<sup>th</sup> century layers and subsequent finds associated with cloth working were recovered from All Saints Church (UAD 272; Dodd ed. 2003: 42).

Several post Roman clay rings were recovered from the area around the Headington reservoir in 1876 (OHER 3629), information on the circumstances of the finds is scant however and they are described as possible amphora supports, net sinkers or pot boilers by Salzman (1939: 356). The finds are currently on display as 9<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> century loom weights in Oxford Museum.

#### *Carpentry*

Evidence from Oxford indicates that oak was the preferred timber for major structural work from at least the mid Saxon period onwards, being used for the lacing timbers

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of the burh rampart, channel revetments, bridge piles and cellar linings (Booth *et al.* 2007: 358; Dodd ed. 2003: 46). Finds from late Saxon pits at Logic Lane include nails, iron clamps for joining pieces of wood and frames of a possible trowel perhaps debris from building or carpentry work. A probably saw and two wooden pegs found at St Aldates could also relate to carpentry (Dodd ed. 2003: fig 6.1).

#### *Mills and fish*

The Domesday book notes a mill within the town, a mill belonging to Robert d'Oilly and two mills belonging to Sawold close to the wall (Darby and Campbell 1971: 229). These may be associated with the Castle Mill and mills on the Trill Mill stream mentioned in 12<sup>th</sup> century documents (Munby 2003b: 86). No clear archaeological evidence for these mills has been found however. Evidence for a possible mill leat in use in the 8<sup>th</sup> century has been found at the Trill Mill Stream and a possible waterwheel paddle has been recovered (Booth *et al.* 2007: Fig 6.24). Large amounts of cleaned grain from the Castle excavations and the Westgate Evaluations could suggest pre conquest milling nearby (Norton 2006: 33-4) Blair notes that many of the mills recorded in Domesday and charter boundaries may have earlier origins (Blair 1994: 63). Blackfriars mill is probably one of the two mills held by Ealdorman Athelmar and granted to Eynsham Abbey in 1005 and 1013 (Crossley 1979: 329).

Faunal evidence from excavations of late Anglo-Saxon Oxford indicate the importance of fish in the diet at this time. The Domesday survey records that the County had a large numbers of water mills and fish weirs, with eels and salmon caught in abundance on the Thames. The probable location of some of the major fish-weirs on the Thames has been posited by John Blair, though no archaeological evidence has yet been found (Blair 1994: 124; Blair 2007). Late Saxon Oxford had access to a variety of freshwater and marine resources including eel, herring, pike, cod, flatfish, salmon, chub, oyster and mussel (Booth *et al.* 2007: 341). Lead weights used as net sinkers were recovered from St Aldates (Allen and Durham 2003: 278). (See *Material culture* below).

#### *Hunting and trapping*

Evidence for red and roe deer, harebarnacke goose, partridge, woodcock, lapwing, snipe have been recovered from Late Saxon Oxford sites along with bones of a peregrine falcon, one of the most prestigious hunting birds. Hares, cats and foxes were skinned for fur and arrowheads recovered from St Aldate's may be hunting weapons (Booth *et al.* 2007: 340-1).

#### *Quarries*

The Great Oolite Stone used for the Late Saxon tower of St Michael's at the Northgate church is likely to have come from local quarries at Burford and Taynton (Blair 1994: 122). Excavations at Barracks Lane in east Oxford in 2005 revealed some evidence of possible quarrying during the Late Saxon period. Several sherds of 11<sup>th</sup> century pottery including two sherds of Cotswold ware (OXAC) and one of North-East Wiltshire (OXBF) and Medieval Oxford (OXY) were recovered from the upper fills of several quarry pits (Tannahill and Diez 2005: 196).

Headington parish was an important source of local stone since at least the 14th century furthermore a 'fulan pitte' (abandoned pit) is mentioned in Ethelred's Charter of 1004 (MSS: 1. BL Cotton Vitell. E. xv, 5r (s. xiii; damaged).

#### *Markets*

Evidence for growing markets in the later Anglo-Saxon period, as well as routes for accessing these markets, is provided by a number of 'port' names in Oxfordshire. Akeman Street and former Roman roads across Boars Hill and Otmoor, for example, were termed 'port-way' and 'port-street' at various times, and Oxford's Port Meadow hints at the destination of some of these routes (Blair 1994: 121). Gravel spreads identified in excavations towards the eastern end of Queen Street have been

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suggested as evidence for a market prefiguring the latter narrowing of the street (Durham 1986; Collard 1986; See above).

#### *Leather and woollen goods*

Evidence for late Saxon flax retting and leatherwork was recorded in excavations on St Aldates where a significant amount of flax seeds were recovered from a shallow wattle fenced gully dated to the 9<sup>th</sup> century through radio carbon dating as well as fragments of 9<sup>th</sup> century leather footwear nearby (Hassall 1972: 145). That flax retting was being carried out in wattle lined gullies and in channels and implies the manufacture of linen cloth (Dodd ed. 2003: 42). Leather shoes, straps and cutting scraps were found at 79-80 St Aldates and more shoes in slightly later 10<sup>th</sup> century silts at 89-91 St Aldates. Large quantities of manufacturing off-cuts were found in similar conditions at 56-60 St Aldates (*ibid.*).

#### *Butchery and horn-working*

Butchery waste was found in cellar pit fills at 113-119 High Street, indicative of commercial butchery (Walker 2000: 438). Further evidence of butchers waste was recovered from mid 10<sup>th</sup>-mid 11<sup>th</sup> dump in river channels at St Aldates. An overview of the late Saxon faunal remains from St Aldates excavations noted that some veal and good quality mutton was available, suggesting the presence of a luxury market in the town at this time (Armour-Chelu in Dodd ed. 2003: 358). Elsewhere evidence for horn-working has recorded at 44-46 Cornmarket, where four sawn cattle horn cores were found in a cellar pit backfill (Hassall 1971: 30-1; Marples 1971)

#### *Baking*

Ovens have been recorded in several locations in Oxford, at the St Ebbe's excavations in 1969-74 several ovens were recorded dating from the Late Saxon to Post Norman period. At 31-34 Church Street an oven was noted although no evidence to suggest its purpose was recorded (Hassall 1989: 94).

Further possible ovens or kilns have been recorded at Christ Church (UAD 185; Sturdy 1961-62) and at All Saints Church (Durham 2003b).

#### *Brewing*

As noted above evidence from Lincoln College (Pelling 2002: 271) and elsewhere in the city, notably All Saints Church (Dodd ed. 2003: 46) indicate localised large scale storage of barley perhaps for baking or malting purposes. At 113-119 High Street charred plant remains from 10<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> century deposits indicated high concentrations of grain and weed seeds. Here cereal grain, primarily of free-threshing types such as rivet or bread-type wheat were recorded from the samples taken suggesting malting may have been carried out on site during the late Saxon period (Robinson 2000: 434).

#### *Metal working and other craft working*

At the Clarendon Hotel, Cornmarket, evidence for late Saxon bronze working was recorded in the form of several crucibles and fragments of slag (Jope and Pantin 1958: 72). A single stone mould for casting silver ingots was also recorded at the base of a well. Such ingots are well known among Viking Age hoards and may be influenced by Scandinavian design (Dodd ed. 2003: 43). Jope also mentions a further late Saxon crucible from under the castle mound (1956: 244).

A cellar at 116 High Street, produced ironworking debris along with a possible mould or crucible for copper alloy working. A substantial assemblage of smithing hearth bottoms were also recorded at 113-119 High Street (Walker 2000: 388). Further crucible fragments have been found at the Examination Schools, Radcliffe Square, 18-20 Cornmarket, St Michaels Church and Oxford Castle (Dodd ed. 2003: 43). A lead lump and copper alloy casting debris was found in a pit at 4 Queen Street (*ibid.*). Molten lead traces were recorded in the upper fills of a cellar at 55-58 Cornmarket

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(*ibid.*: 43). The excavations at All Saints Church in the 1970s recorded evidence from the pre Conquest phases including a copper alloy ansate brooch, fragments of a copper alloy strip and a rod of uncertain purpose and several pieces of copper waste (Goodall 2003: 315).

Small amounts of slag associated with Late Saxon deposits have been recorded at 43-44 Cornmarket (Hassall, 1971b, 33), Queens College (Cook 1998: 12; Smith, 1998: 28) the Castle (UAD 289 Hassall 1976) and at St Aldates (Durham, 1977, 152). Evidence for Late Saxon metalworking was also noted at Lincoln College (Kamash 2002: 278)

Other evidence for craft working includes bone and antler from 79-80 St Aldates (Durham 1977; 1984) and a knife form used for craft working found in a pit at 33-35 Queen Street (UAD 53; Durham 1989b). Assemblages of worked bone objects from St Aldates including a skates, toggle, pin and bodkin are illustrated in Durham (1977: 161; Fig 37; Armour-Chelu in Dodd ed. 2003: 282).

## The suburbs

Documentary evidence for late Saxon suburban settlement is provided by the Domesday Survey which references intra and extra mural properties. Suburban settlement has been confirmed by archaeological investigation south of the walls along St Aldates. The status of the settlement noted in the eastern part of the burh, at St Peters in the East and Queens College, remains a topic of debate as the date of the inclusion of this area within a defended perimeter remains to be established. Some suburban settlement may also have developed to the west of the burh, but there is currently no firm pre-conquest archaeological evidence. To the north features containing 11<sup>th</sup> century pottery have been identified to the north of St Giles, however these may relate to outlying post-conquest farms close to Woodstock and Banbury Roads [This is dealt with in the Norman Chapter]. The manor of Haliwelle (Holywell) to the north-east of the burh is first mentioned in Domesday and refers to a well close to the Church of St Cross (Gelling 1953: 21). It is unclear whether the manor was rural or suburban in character.

### St Aldates'

Archaeological investigations along St Aldates south of St Frideswide's have produced evidence for substantial activity in the middle to late Saxon period, (Table 2).

Site	Evidence	Source
Christ Church, 1954 (UAD 164)	Pottery watercourse	Sturdy 1961-62
89-91 St Aldates, 1982 (UAD 340)	Wattle fencing Features	Durham 1983
89 St Aldates, 1985 (UAD 345)	Building? Artefactual evidence	Durham 1986
83 St Aldates, 1971 (UAD 240)	No Saxon evidence	Durham 1977
79-80 St Aldates, 1971 (UAD 227) Linacre College, 1971 (UAD 242) 2a Speedwell Street, 1971 (UAD 241)	Wattle fencing hearths Structural footings	Durham 1977
65 St Aldates, 1979-82 (UAD 290)	Fording point Wattle fencing Structural evidence	Durham 1984
Police Station, 1987 (UAD 1536) Land adjacent to the police station, 1986 (UAD 346)	Timber revetment watercourse Occupation layer	Durham 1988
56-60 St Aldates, 1988 (UAD 349)	Timber revetment Occupation evidence	Durham 1989
33 St Aldates, 1984 (UAD 1547)	Stone causeway	Durham 1984
BT Tunnel, 1991 (UAD 355)	Watercourse Fording point	Campbell and Durham 1992
Head of the River PH, 1994 (UAD 369)	Watercourse Occupation layer	OAU 1995

**Table 2: Archaeological investigations at St Aldates**

Excavations at 79-80 St Aldates noted a layer of alluvium above the natural gravel indicating wet, marshland conditions in the Late Saxon period (Robinson 1977: 175). Several other sites in the area have produced similar evidence (Durham 1983). A dramatic build up of silt during the Late Saxon period may be related to the formation of a clay bank that was demonstrated to extend for some 40m from 79-80 St Aldates and was dated to the late 8<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> century (Durham 1977: 101). Three radio carbon dates from the alluvium overlying the clay provide a *terminus ante quem* to the 9<sup>th</sup> century AD (Durham 1984b: 79). The bank was cut by a gully lined with wattle fencing on a north-south alignment and a line of collapsed fencing was recorded to

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the west of the site. Although there was no clear evidence to indicate the bank was man-made, it was suggested that it was deliberately dumped to form a causeway with the gully forming a roadside ditch (Durham 1977: 176). At 79-80 St Aldates large quantities of flax seeds from this phase indicated flax retting was carried out in the area in the 8<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> century but there was no evidence of occupation at this time. In the mid 10<sup>th</sup> century a thin layer of clean sand and gravel was laid down and was overlain by an apparent interior floor surface providing the first evidence for occupation in the St Aldates area (Durham 1977: 184). A single east-west aligned timber slot with a stake hole at either end was inserted through the ash floor layer. Furthermore a series of buildings founded on timber piles and fronting onto the road at 89 St Aldates, were initially dated to the 12<sup>th</sup> century but were later re-assessed as 10<sup>th</sup> century structures (Durham 1987a: 92).

Archaeological investigations at the BT Tunnel site on St Aldates in 1991 recorded further evidence of the blue clay bank overlain with a layer of cobbles (Dodd ed. 2003: 123). The clay may be part of the proposed Late Saxon causeway. It was suggested that the cobbles are part of a middle Saxon trackway cut by large timber piles. Tentative dating for this ford comes from radiocarbon dating of a single plank from the cobbled surface to AD 577-619 (Campbell 2003: 121). At 33 St Aldates two timbers were recorded predating the stone causeway (Durham 1984b, 81). At 65 St Aldates a river channel containing stone paving was again recorded suggesting a ford associated with pottery of 10<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> century date (UAD 290; Durham 1984b: 65).

Wattle fencing was also recorded at 89-91 St Aldates along with a gravel path running parallel to the marsh, revetted with wattle fencing (Durham 1983). It was suggested that the fencing in the peat were used to trap fish or for harvesting reeds. A second phase of activity comprised a pit cut into the clay bank lined with burnt stone and filled with clay. The pit was interpreted as an oven built into the causeway although its exact function – whether domestic or industrial – is uncertain. A series of wattle fences were recorded on an east-west alignment along with several un-jointed timbers and stake holes. Three radiocarbon samples for the timbers indicated a mid 9<sup>th</sup> century date although thermo-luminescence (TL) dating produced an earlier date range (Durham 1977: 178). The wattle fences inserted down the slope of the bank were closely spaced suggesting they may have been frequently replaced as they rotted. At 89 St Aldates the 10<sup>th</sup> century features included a cob wall footing, two post settings and several floor layers, a yard surface and timber settings (Durham 1977: 101). The excavator suggested that this phase of activity utilised the plan of the earlier buildings.

Excavations at the Police Station site on St Aldates in 1987 recorded evidence of a substantial timber revetment along the edge of the channel later used to mark the rear of tenement plots (Durham 1988: 86). While at 56-60 St Aldates on the west side of the road, a number of early hurdle waterfronts with 10<sup>th</sup> century material were located. One deposit appeared to be built against an island of alluvium, conjectured as the Saxon south bank, isolated by an artificial flood channel. In front of these features was a long log revetment, possibly associated with Grand Pont (Durham 1989a: 54).

It is thought that the Trill Mill Stream comprised of a pair of mill-leats on either side of the Grandpont, by the 11<sup>th</sup> century, however the channel is likely to be a reworking of a prehistoric channel. An in-filled channel, thought to be the proto-Trill Mill Stream, was identified at 89 St Aldates and estimated to be up to 50m wide (Durham 1986b). Part of this channel seemed to have been cut away in the 9<sup>th</sup> century to create a watercourse with an up cast of a similar composition to the clay bank recorded at 79-80 St Aldates (*ibid.*). Changes to the flow of the river were indicated in the 10<sup>th</sup> century when a layer of flooded marshland deposits were recorded across the

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channel. A gravel path with stone revetting was thought to form part of the Late Saxon causeway (*ibid.*).

The Trill Mill channel has subsequently been encountered further west at Brewer Street (Oxford Archaeology forthcoming) and at Westgate Car Park (Champness 2008: 159). To the east excavations in the garden of Christ Church in 1954 recorded evidence of a stream on an east-west alignment that may have been a precursor to the Trill Mill Stream. The evidence from this site indicated that the stream was allowed to silt up or was purposefully re-directed in the 11<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> century when a floor surface was recorded overlaying this section of it (Sturdy 1961-62: 25).

#### The eastern suburb or extension

The disparity between the allocation in the Burghal Hidage and the area enclosed by the later 13<sup>th</sup> century walls, the coherent rectilinear pattern of the central street grid and the evidence for a returning southward defensive wall recorded at the Clarendon Quadrangle, have been cited as evidence for the existence of a primary burh. With an eastern suburb subsequently incorporated within extended defences sometime before the Conquest. Against this theory it has been noted that the primary street surfaces, rampart construction and settlement density noted in both central and eastern parts of the town are similar in character (Poore, Norton and Dodd 2009). An extension to the burh in the early 11<sup>th</sup> century has been proposed (See Munby in Dodd ed. 2003: 24-5), a radically alternative scheme proposing a late 9<sup>th</sup> century foundation for the burh and early 10<sup>th</sup> century extension has been proposed by Haslam (2010). The Late Saxon sites located east of the projected line of the primary burh have been summarised above (see *Urban settlement: High Street*).

#### St Giles'

To date there is no firm evidence for pre-conquest settlement outside the Northgate. There is however unprecedented evidence for Late Saxon activity at the northern end of St Giles in the form of a mass grave of over 34 individuals, excavated in 2008 at the site of the new Kendrew Quad, St Johns College (Wallis 2010: 31). The circumstances of the inhumations, e.g. disorganised deposition with no consistent positioning of the remains, coupled with the improvised use of a Neolithic henge ditch suggests a single event mass burial, although the radio-carbon dates produced for sampled burials have provided an unexpectedly wide spread of dates from 710-1013 AD. The demographic profile of the all male individuals and skeletal evidence for violent deaths caused by weapons suggest either a massacre of male residents of fighting age or a war band whose battle line had been broken (Falys in Wallis 2010: 35). The location of the grave in an extant prehistoric monument, is also significant, as if the remains were inhabitants from the town it might be expected that they would be interned within the burh on consecrated ground. The burials are discussed further below (see *Scandinavian evidence* below).

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## The emergence of Late Saxon villages

Several late Saxon villages and hamlets are located within the LAA, these are described below. Little archaeological fieldwork has been undertaken in the historic cores of these villages.

### Binsey

Although Binsey is not mentioned until after Domesday it is likely that it was regarded as a holy site by the end of the 11<sup>th</sup> century at least with ties to St Frideswide's (Blair 1988a: 4). A swine herders hut in a wood at Binsey is recorded in a 12<sup>th</sup> century recounting of the St Frideswide's Legend (Blair 1988b: 53-4). Excavations carried out in 1987 on the enclosure surrounding St Mary's Church indicated that it was potentially established in the Iron Age or Roman period but was subsequently provided with a revetted rampart in the early-middle Saxon period (Blair, 1988a, 3). Radiocarbon dating from several animal bone fragments recovered from the ditch fills gave dates of 80-530 cal AD and 900-1220 cal (*ibid.*: 15). A silver penny or sceattea of secondary type (c710-60) is recorded from Binsey (*ibid.*: 81 Fig 52).

### *Wolvercote and Cutteslowe*

Wolvercote is first mentioned in Domesday as *Vlfgarcote* and probably refers to a personal name meaning 'Wulfgar's Cottage' (Gelling, 1953, 34). Cutteslowe is first mentioned in 1004 when St Frideswide's held two hides (c.240 acres) there. A later medieval assize roll refers to two murders '*sub hoga de Cutteslowe*' or 'by or near the how [mound, tumulus] of Cutteslowe' in the 13<sup>th</sup> century. *The Sheriff subsequently flatenned the mound to stop it being used as a loitering place for criminals* (Cam 1935). A single double ended bone implement of possible Late Saxon date was recorded at Wolvercote in 1825 but little more is known about this find (OHER 1661).

### Seacourt, formerly Berkshire

Seacourt is first mentioned in AD 955 when King Eadwig granted the manor to Abingdon Abbey, by the 10<sup>th</sup> century the manor was attached to Cumnor manor (Page 1924: 421).

### Walton Manor

Walton is mentioned in the Domesday Survey. A number of finds including pottery, tile, bone and a quern fragment were recorded to the rear of 75 Walton Street providing the first indication of Late Saxon settlement, further investigation revealed a possible midden dump and a pit (Inskeep 1998: 43).

### Osney and St Thomas's

Osney appears to be a personal name first mentioned in 1004 and is thought to mean 'Osa's Island' (Gelling 1953: 22).

It has been suggested, however, that some settlement already existed in the area of the later St Thomas's in the late Saxon to Norman period (Dodd ed. 2003: 62). Extramural properties are mentioned in this area in the Domesday book and an estate centred on Osney island is mentioned in the will of Archbishop Alfric at the start of the 11<sup>th</sup> century (Palmer 1980: 137). St Thomas' Street was probably the ancient approach road to the western end of Oxford. There is currently no archaeological evidence for settlement of this date. The excavated evidence from St Thomas' indicates that significant settlement activity in dates from the late 12<sup>th</sup>-early 13<sup>th</sup> century (Norton *et al.* 2006, 386; Moore, 2006: 394).

### Church Cowley and Temple Cowley

Cowley is mentioned in 1004 in the Charter of St Frideswide's as *Coulea* although there are a number of variations in spellings. The meaning is generally taken to be a

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personal name referring to 'Cufa's wood or clearing' (Gelling 1953: 28). Saxo-Norman pottery has been recovered from the site of the later manor house at Temple Cowley (Muir and Newell 1999).

#### Headington (and Barton)

Headington is first mentioned in 1004 in a Charter of King Ethelred as *Hedenandun* and is thought to refer to a personal name referring to 'Hedena's settlement' (Gelling 1953: 30). The Domesday Book of 1086 records that "*Rex tenet Hedintone*" or "the King holds Headington". A Church Tax is also referred to in the book (Morris 1978). Ethelred's charter to St. Frideswide's in 1004 was witnessed '*in villa regia quae vocatur Hedindona*' that translates as "in the royal residence which is called Headington" (Lobel 1957). The manor of Headington is believed to have extended over a substantial area including what is now the historic centre of Oxford, and would have lain within the Late Saxon Forest of Shotover and Stowood. Lobel mentions a reference to a possible nursery for the royal children at Headington. It is also possible that the holding was a hunting lodge related to the forest of Shotover. Whatever its purpose, it seems to have fallen into disuse when Henry I made Woodstock the favourite royal residence in the county, and in his daughter's time the manor was alienated from the Crown.

To date no significant Saxon finds have been recovered from the historic core of Headington. A middle Saxon inhumation burial from Stephens Road is discussed below (*Early Saxon inhumations*).

#### Iffley

Iffley is first mentioned in 1004 in St Frideswide's Cartulary as *Gifetelea* and many variations have been used since then complicating any translation of the name, however Ekwall has suggested the first element may be an ancient word for 'plover' or a similar bird (Ekwall in Gelling 1953: 33). Isolated early Saxon artefacts have been recovered near the village at Iffley Lock (OHER 6258) and a brooch at Iffley turn that has been suggested as evidence for a burial (OHER 3655).

#### *Littlemore*

Littlemore is not mentioned at Domesday. There was no ancient parish of Littlemore: the township was divided at an early date between the parishes of Iffley and St. Mary the Virgin, Oxford, the smaller part belonging to Iffley and the larger to St. Mary's. The connexion with St. Mary's is thought to date from pre-Norman times and that with Iffley from the 12th century (VCH v, 206-214).

Within the historic core a quantity of St Neots type ware was recovered from the Ashurst Clinic site, Sandford Road, Littlemore, indicating 10<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> century activity in this area (Mellor 1996). Post holes and pits associated with 11<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> pottery were noted at Oxford Science Park outside the historic core of the hamlet, the density of which suggested settlement in the Saxo-Norman period (Grundon 1999; Moore 2001b).

#### St Clements Parish

A small settlement on the banks of the river was originally known as *Bruggeset* suggesting a bridge settlement and may be related to the settlement of a Danish garrison in the early 11<sup>th</sup> century (See *Scandinavian evidence* below; Blair 1994: 161). A manor is first mentioned in St Frideswide's charter of 1004 when three hides beyond Cherwell Bridge were granted to the minster, dropping to two hides by 1166 (Lobel 1957: 260). Some 11<sup>th</sup> century pottery was recorded during a watching brief at 1-2 Cowley Place in 2000 (UAD 494). More recent archaeological investigations at Magdalen College School in 2007 recorded a few residual sherds of early to

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middle Saxon pottery (Norton 2009:181). This area close to the bridge crossing was located within Cowley parish during the medieval and post medieval period.

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## Transport and communications

### The river network

During the Roman period it is unclear whether the Thames played a significant role in the transportation of goods, the available evidence does point to such use. However reduced alluviation in the early Saxon period and extensive channel management by the Late Saxon period indicate that between the 5<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> century the Upper Thames opened up as gateway for trade and exchange (Blair 2010: 28). By the Late Saxon period one of the Thames channels may have been 'canalised' to facilitate a bypass channel, but investigations to date have failed to identify evidence for landing stages, river side depots or dumped cargoes. Recent excavations in Oxford have noted clear evidence for the control and channelling of the river (*ibid.*: Dodd ed. 2003: 18). For discussion of canalisation of the upper Thames near Oxford in the Late Saxon period see Blair (2007).

Evidence for control and navigation of the river channels is frequently circumstantial, relying on distribution patterns of pottery and coinage. It has been argued that the increased use of water mills in the late 10<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> century meant an increased focus on improving and maintaining channels (Booth *et al.* 2007: 325).

### *St Aldates Crossing*

As noted above a series of archaeological investigations along St Aldates since 1967 have provided a wealth of information on the character of the Thames Crossing in this area with the evidence suggesting that a causeway was established here by the Mercian period, if not before (Durham 1977: 1984; Dodd ed. 2003). By the 9<sup>th</sup> century the series of alluvial islands between the braided channels of the Thames had certainly been exploited as a river crossing, with evidence that one island had been artificially raised and a timber bridge constructed. Unfortunately the radio carbon date from one of the bridges oak piles produced a broad range of AD660-900 (Dodd ed. 2003:14-16). A later ford of 10<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> century date has also been identified. The banks of the river channels were retained with timber and wattle structures. Evidence of water management in the form of land reclamation and bank stabilisation has been recorded at several sites along with evidence for industrial activities such as flax retting close to the Thames channels (Dodd ed. 2003: 12).

### *Magdalen Bridge*

The earliest reference to a crossing point on the River Cherwell at Magdalen Bridge dates to 1004 (Jaine 1971: 59).

### *Management of river channels*

Archaeological investigation has indicated that some of the potentially artificial 10<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> century channels (E.g. Trill Mill, Castle Mill, Shire Lake, Minster Ditch etc.) may have originated as natural or proto channels. Environmental evidence recovered from the Trill Mill Stream at St Aldates in 1982 recorded a sequence of activity from the pre Iron Age to medieval period (Robinson 2003). Waterlogged conditions in the Iron Age were followed by alluviation and subsequently there is evidence for the re-establishment of the channel in the middle Saxon period. By the late Saxon period, the Trill Mill Stream had become firmly established with numerous ditches and gullies interstratified with sediments attesting to human activity (*ibid.*: 371).

A recent section of the Trill Mill Stream at the Westgate centre car park in 2007, revealed a possible Late Devensian channel perhaps 50m wide. Whilst scientific dating has yet to be carried out, the deposits reflect an evolution from one large channel to multiple incised channels (Champness 2008: 159). A second, smaller channel some 30m in width was later naturally incised into the Devensian channel cutting to a greater depth than the previous channel. Although dating is again limited, this channel appears to have been in existence from the late Bronze Age until

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the late Saxon period and is thought to have been a precursor to the artificially cut Trill Mill Stream (*ibid.*: 160).

Documentary evidence has also contributed to an understanding of the management of river channels. Blair notes that the increased volume of traffic of the Thames between Oxford and Wallingford is demonstrated by a request from the men of Oxford to cut a navigation channel across the meadow between Abingdon and Culham, later known as the Swift Ditch, undertaken between 1052 and 1065, and noted in the Abbey Chronicles (Blair 1994: 121; Blair 2007: 266-8).

#### The road network

Oxford appears to have developed around a junction of important routeways ([Figure 3](#)), it has been suggested that Woodstock Road may have its origins in the Roman period. The orientation of the Woodstock Road links Oxford with the land of the *Hwicce* whilst the Banbury Road orientates towards the Mercian kingdom (Blair 1994: 36). The two roads now meet at the head of St Giles', however Blair has suggested that the Banbury Road has been diverted to converge with the Woodstock Road at some point before the investment in a substantial river crossing at St Aldates by at least the 10<sup>th</sup> century. The projected original path of the Banbury Road can be inferred as respecting the still extant Large Neolithic Henge at St John's College, running along Parks Road, traversing along Catte Street and fording the river at Christ Church Meadow placing the route outside the earliest phase of burghal defences (Blair 1994: 88-9 Fig 55; Blair 1988: 223-4, Fig 90). A well built but undated paved area was observed briefly in 1863 (UAD 298) at a depth of 4.8m to the south of Christ Church Meadow on a similar alignment to the Saxon Shidyrd Street (Conradi 1864: 219). Blair suggests that this evidence was stratigraphically similar to the St Aldates crossing and may therefore reasonably be considered a contemporary Saxon ford (Blair 1988: 229). A possible east-west routes across the gravel terrace from Wytham to Shotover via Binsey and Headington is also discussed by Blair (1988: 223). The antiquity of the east-west route through the town along Queen Street and High Street is questionable as the dramatic southward curve at the eastern end of the High Street towards the crossing at Magdalen Bridge points to a drastic realignment when the town was laid out. An earlier route closer to the edge of the gravel terrace is hypothesised by Blair (1988: 222-3, Fig 90).

#### *The street grid*

Archaeological investigations within the city have recorded the presence or absence of Saxon street surfaces at over 57 locations, providing a fairly reliable street map focussing on the main thoroughfares of Cornmarket-St Aldate's and Queen Street-High Street (See Appendix 2: Saxon Street Network). A planned street layout is suggested by the rectilinear morphology of streets in the central area and the observation of apparently robustly constructed primary metalling of irregular limestone cobbles, and heavily compacted small stones and coarse gravel (Figure 1). The primary street surfaces are distinct and noticeable different from subsequent poorer quality surfaces. Away from the main axial street primary surfacing has been noted at Church Street, Turl Street and Catte Street (located outside the postulated primary burh). At present the evidence for primary metalling is biased towards the northern half of the burh (For an up to date map of the known Late Saxon Road see Poore, Norton and Dodd 2010: Fig 4).

At New Inn Hall Street excavations in 1979 (UAD 40) recorded an area of closely packed cobbling interpreted as the original Saxon street surface while at Turl Street the original road surface appears to have been laid out on a slightly different alignment prior to the extension of All Saints Church (UAD 52). Evidence of metalled street surfaces on Catte Street, traditionally thought to be outside the Saxon burh was recorded by Cleary (Cleary 1974-1980).

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The evidence from recorded observations along both sides of Cornmarket indicate a narrower street some 2.5-3m east of the present location (Jope and Pantin 1958: 7). As noted above excavations of Late Saxon features on Queen Street indicated a width comparable to the present day, with some encroachment was recorded on the southern side at 44 Queen Street (Durham 1990: 82). The evidence of possible market surfaces at No. 4 and 7-8 Queen Street indicate the east-west route was the primary alignment in the late Saxon period. Substantial sections through Church Street and Castle Street near Queen Street were cut during excavations in advance of construction of the Westgate Centre in 1970-1972. Both streets appear to be late Saxon in origin (Hassall 1971a: 8). However the southerly section of Castle Street is later in origin as it overlies the 13<sup>th</sup> century barbican. Excavations under the Castle Mound recorded a possible 10<sup>th</sup> century ragstone metalled surface that may have formed the end of the High Street-Queen Street line before it was diverted around the Castle (Norton 2006: 11). The Castle Precinct excavation noted a metalled surface of a street, identical to the primary streets identified at Church Street and Castle Street but unlike these it was not regularly resurfaced, perhaps representing a minor route in the town (Poore *et al*, 2009, 6). Elsewhere Kybald Street appears to date to the Norman period with earlier Saxon features clearly visible below the street surface. (Radcliffe 1961-2: 48).

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## Ceremony, ritual and religion

### Early Saxon inhumations

The regional resource assessment notes that because Oxfordshire has been particularly well served by modern excavations, some county inhumation cemeteries (Abingdon, Berinsfield) have a national importance in defining and interpreting early Anglo-Saxon furnished inhumation ritual (Crawford and Allen 2010). To date, no comparable cemeteries have been excavated in the Oxford LAA. Stay finds and small scale excavations and watching briefs have recorded evidence for likely cemeteries on the Summertown Radley terrace in north Oxford and at Headington on the Corallian Ridge. A small number of isolated burials have demonstrated unusual characteristics.

#### *Oxford Science Park, Littlemore*

At the Oxford Science Park excavation, Littlemore, a young adult (possibly female) was buried in a pit dated by Saxon pottery within the settlement, in itself an unusual occurrence as burials were normally placed away from such settlements. The pit had partially silted up before burial and although the condition of the body was very poor it appeared to be in a crouched position (Jackman 2001: 52).

#### *Stephens Road, Headington*

In 2002 a watching brief at Stephen's Road, Headington, recorded a likely 6<sup>th</sup> century inhumation burial of a middle aged female accompanied by a range of grave goods comprising of two copper alloy brooches, a copper alloy pin, a necklace of amber beads, bronze needle, an iron knife and a second unidentified iron object (Witkin 2003). The woman was buried with a copper alloy brooch in the centre of her forehead, a copper alloy needle on her right side, an amber necklace on the right upper body, an iron knife on her pelvis, a copper alloy disc brooch on her right shoulder and an unidentified iron object beneath her back (*ibid.*, 2). The excavator noted that manner of burial was unusual in that in this region a common pattern is for the two brooches to be located with inhumation, one placed on each shoulder, with a necklace of beads strung between them. No parallels for the Stephen's Road burial are recorded in this country however a broadly contemporary mosaic in Ravenna, Italy, depicts a female wearing a scarf around her head with a brooch attached (Owen-Crocker in Witkin 2003).

A possible comparable burial site was recorded on the Corallian Ridge six miles east of Oxford at Wheatley in the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Salzman 1939: 348). Here several graves containing spear-heads, a shield boss and a bone comb were noted by labourers. Subsequent excavations by Ashmolean Museum staff recorded a total of 46 inhumations including one particularly rich grave containing a necklace of amber beads and associated Iron Age and Roman artefacts while a second grave contained a string of amber, paste and crystal beads and two large gilt bronze saucer brooches (*ibid.*).

#### *Barton*

An unaccompanied burial was also reportedly found in the bottom of a grubenhaus encountered in 1931, between Headington and Barton (OHER 3802). Hamerow has argued, based on wider regional examples, that some of the material found deposited within sunken-featured buildings may represent some form of ritual or structured deposit (Hamerow 1999: 27).

A disturbed crouched inhumation, probably an adult female was recorded during a watching brief at Bernwood First School, Barton in 2002. The body was found in a feature containing medium/large burnt stone and a few burnt fragments of animal bone. A Roman date was favoured, however an Anglo-Saxon date could not be ruled out (Moore 2002).

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### *Rose Hill/Iffley*

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century an S-form bronze brooch, terminating in bird's heads and set with garnets was recorded on Rose Hill, thought to be Early to Middle Saxon based on its typology and suggested to be indicative of a burial but little more is known about this site (OHER 3655).

### *North Oxford*

Stray finds suggesting the presence of cemeteries have been recorded in the vicinity of Park Town and Crick Road in north Oxford, the later site producing a spearhead and two shield bosses from the late 5<sup>th</sup> into the 6<sup>th</sup> century (Salzman 1939). The presence of other undated and Roman burials in the area has led to the suggestion that there may be a scatter of mixed Roman and Saxon graves here (Dickinson 1976: 115, Oxford II; Voll II, 189). Further burials of late 5<sup>th</sup>-to early 6<sup>th</sup> century date have been found further to the north in Summertown (Dickinson 1976, Vol II, Nos 116-17, Oxford III and IV).

A more significant body of evidence comes from the area around the Radcliffe Infirmary site where recent excavations have recorded evidence for four Neolithic-Bronze Age barrows and 6<sup>th</sup> century Saxon settlement evidence (Braybrooke 2010). Documentary evidence from the 12<sup>th</sup> century refers to the area as the 'croft of the three barrows' suggesting that barrows were either still extant or were within folk memory (*ibid.*: 7). Two inhumations recorded during the construction of the Infirmary c1770, are thought to be Saxon, one associated with a silver or tinned iron 'plate' perhaps a shield boss (Sturdy 2004: 23). In 1938 a bone heddle stick (thread-picker) was found in a layer of ashes at considerable depth in the northern part of the site (Anon, 1938, 168) and in 1957 a further three skeletons were found in the northern part of the site (UAD 764). The recovery of Saxon finds from the Radcliffe Infirmary site has previously led to the suggestion that the barrows referred to in the 12<sup>th</sup> century could be Saxon in origin (Dickinson 1976). If the Saxon burials noted above at the Radcliffe Infirmary were of early Saxon date they are likely to have been high status graves and may have formed a focus for other burials within a family or kinship group (Welch 1992: 72 and 76).

### *Pembroke College*

A large number of north-south oriented inhumations, uncovered during work at Pembroke Chapel, were reported in 1732 but little else is known (Dodd ed. 2003: 18). The orientation of these inhumations would have been consistent with an early Saxon (i.e. pre Christian) cemetery.

### Saxon cremations

Evidence for Anglo-Saxon cremation rites within the LAA is limited to a single 5<sup>th</sup> century cremation urn found at Osney, west of the city centre, now in the Ashmolean museum (Dodd ed. 2003: 12; Salter and Lobel 1939: 346).

### Christian era burials

The process of transition from non-churchyard to churchyard burial is poorly understood. Potentially unenclosed churchyard burial may have preceded burial within a churchyard, however this is yet to be demonstrated.

### *Charcoal burials*

The county has produced a number of late Saxon burials associated with spreads of charcoal, suggesting a regional concentration of this rite that includes examples from Oxford at Christ Church (Scull 1988: 33), St Aldate's Church (Tyler 2001: 62) and All Saints Church (Dodd ed. 2003:237). For an overview of the evidence for these burials see White (1988:25) and Dodd (ed. 2003:240)

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### *St Frideswide's*

A mid to late Saxon cemetery centred at the western edge of the later St Frideswide's Precinct is suggested by a series of recorded burials. Evidence for human remains was first noted in the area in the 19<sup>th</sup> century during the construction of the Meadow Buildings where several skulls were recorded at a depth of around 4.5m (Conradi 1864: 220). In 1962 five inhumations were recorded within the northeast chapels of the Cathedral, but no close dating was recovered (UAD 200; Sturdy 1988: 91).

In 1972 two skeletons were recorded during construction work in Tom Quad (Hassall, 1973, 270), both were placed on a bed of charcoal, and a radio carbon date of cal AD 680-1160 was obtained from the second grave (*ibid.*: 271). In 1985 a further seven complete and thirteen partial inhumations were recorded during excavations at Christ Church cloister (Scull 1988). Five of these inhumations were radio carbon dated. Four produced a broadly similar date range in the 9<sup>th</sup> century. One produced a date of cal AD 660-890 suggesting that the cemetery may have been in use since the middle Saxon period (Scull 1988, 61). In 1998 a further 37 east west inhumations in sub-rectangular graves were recorded during excavations in Christ Church Cathedral graveyard ranging in date from the 7<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> century (Boyle 2001). One individual was accompanied by a copper alloy belt buckle and a number of graves had stone linings, one had stone 'ear muffs' placed around the head. The assemblage was noticeable for the predominance of males with only three females. Samples from three inhumations were radio carbon dated producing a date range of between AD 640-980 (*ibid.*: 351). Of particular note was a clear 7<sup>th</sup> century radio-carbon date for one of the burials, this date currently stands out from the other available evidence from this site and points to an earlier origin for this religious community that previously suggested.

The group of male burials from Christ Church Cathedral Graveyard may be members of a late community of priests at St Frideswide's (Booth *et al.* 2007: 198). Further evidence that the cemetery extended further east than the current Christ Church boundary was found in 2007 during excavations at the Corpus Christi bastion (Bashford 2007).

Site	Context Number	Cal date range (95% confidence)
Cathedral Graveyard (Boyle, 2001)	402	cal AD 620-690
Cathedral Graveyard (Boyle, 2001)	418	cal AD 690-960
Cathedral Graveyard (Boyle, 2001)	277	cal AD 780-990
Cloister (Scull, 1988)	F96	cal AD 770-990
Cloister (Scull, 1988)	F119	cal AD 770-990
Cloister (Scull, 1988)	F123	cal AD 770-990
Tom Quad (Hassall, 1973)	Grave 2	cal AD 680-1160

**Table 3: Summary of radiocarbon dating results for human remains at St Frideswide's**

### *St Aldate's Church*

The first reference to St Aldates church does not appear until the mid 12<sup>th</sup> century, however the discovery of eight charcoal inhumations similar to those recorded at St Frideswide's and a 10<sup>th</sup> century cross shaft suggest a Late Saxon antecedent (Tyler 2001: 369, 386). The earliest evidence from the site was a Saxon occupation surface within the main body of the church but no definitive dating was retrieved and due to the level of truncation it was impossible to tell whether this related to an early church or domestic activity (*ibid.*).

A Late Saxon gold finger ring of six plated rods was found with an inhumation in a stone coffin in 1890 in St Aldates opposite the gateway to Christ Church (Graham-Campbel 1988: 263). The location suggests that it was located on the eastern edge

of St Aldates Churchyard. Two further undated east-west burials were recorded near the entrance of Pembroke College, south of the church (anon 1960:134)

Site	Context Number	Cal date range (95% confidence)
St Aldates	846	cal AD 780-990
St Aldates	835	cal AD 690-940
St Aldates	855	cal AD 880-1000

**Table 4: Summary of radiocarbon dating results from St Aldates Church**

*All Saints Church*

Burials associated with the pre Conquest graveyard of All Saints church were excavated in 1973. Sixteen burials were identified from the excavation area, two of which were subject to radio carbon dating producing a date of cal AD 980-1270 and 1010-1290 (Hassall 1974b; Dodd ed. 2003: 221).

*St John's Henge mass grave*

An excavation in 2008 discovered a mass grave of Late Saxon date placed within the silted up ditch of a Late Neolithic henge, located between St Giles and Parks Road to the north of the burh. A minimum of 34 well built adult male and two juvenile bodies were recovered, apparently stripped of clothing save a single buckle, and bearing wounds indicating that they suffered from violent deaths, apparently from one episode. It is possible that they are victims of the St Brice's Day massacre. However the radiocarbon dates produced a surprising large spread of dates considering the physical evidence for the grave suggested a single event. Isotope analysis of the bones has suggested that the men may consumed more fish than the local norm and may therefore be Scandinavian in origin, although one individual may have been from the Mediterranean area (Wallis 2010; Pollard *et al.* forthcoming).

*Other late burials*

Excavations at the Castle in 1966-67 recorded a single badly disturbed inhumation to the north of St George's Tower, thought to predate the castle foundation (Hassall, 1976: 242). Recent excavation on the south side of St George's tower have subsequently identified two burials cut into the Saxon rampart that were carbon dated to between 949 and 1028AD (Poore, Norton, Dodd 2009: 5).

Individual inhumations recorded within the city are thought to have some Scandinavian associations including a possible warrior burial in the River Thames at Magdalen Bridge recovered in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century (UAD 313) and a single inhumation recovered from a depth of 5m beneath Butcher's Row on Queen Street in 1907 (UAD 693). See *Scandinavian evidence* below for more details.

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## Religious foundations

Archaeological and documentary evidence points to the foundation of early monastic sites at St Frideswide's and perhaps Binsey. These are two of only a small number of possible early foundations in the county, along with Thornbury, Abingdon and Dorchester (Blair 1988a; Blair 1988b; Biddle, Lambrick and Myres 1968). A number of late Saxon church (and potentially minster) foundations are suggested by documentary and archaeological evidence.

### Binsey

Blair has discussed the possibility that the oval enclosure recorded at Binsey, the subsequent church and holly well could relate to an early monastic foundation. (Blair 1988a; Blair 1994: 67). The limited archaeological evidence from Binsey is summarised above.

### St Frideswide's

No contemporary records of the early life of the minster survive, however its earliest history is recorded by William of Malmesbury in the early 12<sup>th</sup> century (*ibid.*: 107). Malmesbury's account has been demonstrated to be a summary of older material which formed the basis of an early 12<sup>th</sup> century Vita (short account of a person's life) known as 'Life A'. During c1140-70 Life A was re-written in a more elaborate version 'Life B', probably by the scholar and Prior of St Frideswide's Master Robert of Cricklade (Blair 1987). Blair suggests that the Lives may include elements of genuine tradition, pointing towards the foundation of a minster in the early 8<sup>th</sup> century with Frideswde, the daughter of a Mercian king, appointed as its first head. As noted above one burial from the site has produced a late 7<sup>th</sup> century radio-carbon date. Life A says that Frideswide was buried in the south side of St Mary's Church, Oxford. Life B adds that King Aethelred enlarged the church after 1002 in such a way as to make the burial central (Blair 1987: 71). Blair also notes the existence of a French cult of St Frideswide observed in a small village named Bomy in the Pas-de-Calais (*ibid.*: 119).

St Frideswide's minster was apparently given to Abingdon Abbey in the early 11<sup>th</sup> century, re-founded as a house of canons in 1049 and finally reformed as an Augustinian priory in c1120 (Blair 1988: 226). A charter of Aethelred II's in 1004 mentions making reparation for the burning down of St Frideswide's church in 1002, an event linked to the St Brice's Day massacre of the Danes who had taken shelter in the church by the king and his supporters. A reference is made to St Fideswide in a 'List of Saints' resting places from the early 11<sup>th</sup> century (Blair 1988: 226). Three canons of St Frideswide's are subsequently mentioned in the Domesday survey. The character of the early minster is uncertain, tradition refers to it as a nunnery but it appears unlikely that a religious order founded in the Middle to Late Saxon period would have been exclusively female but rather a mixture of men and women.

A foundation charter for the later Augustinian priory does not appear until 1122 by Henry I at which time the priory took possession of, or had confirmed the ownership of, at least ten churches in and around Oxford (Page 1907: 97). The minster was also granted a yearly fair to be held both within and without the wall, presumably referring to St Aldates.

At the Conquest, the precinct was probably entirely contained within the town wall to the south east corner bounded by an intramural road to the south and possibly the east as well. Life B records that Aethelred II extended the perimeter of the basilica when he rebuilt the church in the 11<sup>th</sup> century (Blair 1988b: 231). An inhumation burial of possible 10<sup>th</sup> century date at Corpus Christi College, along with foundations identified below Corpus Christi bastion and re-deposited charnel noted east of the current St Frideswide's precinct all point to a remodelling of the institutions eastern boundary some time after the 10<sup>th</sup> century (Bashford, 2007; Dodd ed. 2003: 198).

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Settlement evidence dating to the 11<sup>th</sup> century located along the northern edge of the cathedral garden indicates the extent of monastic occupation to the north (UAD 185; Sturdy 1961-2) while the 1122 charter indicates that the minster was enclosed by intramural roads to the south and/or east by this time (Blair 1988b: 236).

Several archaeological investigations in and around St Frideswide's have provided information about the post Conquest minster, but no structural remains of the Anglo-Saxon minster have been identified. Understanding the early minster is complicated by the disturbance caused by the substantial reworking of the site since the 12<sup>th</sup> century, however it is conjectured that the original minster was located to the north of the present cathedral with the shrine in the east end of the minster (For a detailed overview see Blair 1988b). The most compelling archaeological evidence for the presence of a minster comes from the extensive burials recorded at the site (See *Christian era burials* above; Dodd ed. 2003: 18). Significant investigations were undertaken by Sturdy in 1962/3 (Sturdy 1988), by Scull in 1985 who excavated part of the late Saxon cemetery (Scull 1985) and by Boyle and Cook (2001).

#### Abingdon Abbey

A tradition records that the abbey was founded in the late 7<sup>th</sup> century by *Cissa*, King of the West Saxons. The abbey was destroyed by the Danes in the early 10<sup>th</sup> century and was not re-founded until later in the century (Ditchfield and Page 1907: 51; Kelly, 2000-1; Hudson 2002; Hudson 2007). The abbey owned large tracts of land within Oxford as well as along St Aldates (Blair 1996: 160, Fig 92).

#### Church foundations

##### *All Saints Church*

The first reference to All Saints dates to 1122 when it was granted to St Frideswide's on the priory's foundation. However excavations in 1973 recorded evidence for a church on site since the 11<sup>th</sup> century at least (Cooper 1979: 370). The medieval church survived until 1699 when it collapsed and was replaced with the current church (Hassall 1974b: 54).

The conversion of the church into a college library in 1973 involved the insertion of an underground reading room and limited archaeological investigations were undertaken within the church identifying six phases of Saxon domestic occupation (see *Urban settlement High Street* above) followed by at least four church phases dating from the late Saxon to the medieval period.

The fourth identified phase of activity saw the construction of a stone built structure with deep foundations. It is possible that this structure was an early church on the site but the inclusion of a later furnace on the western side pointed to a domestic or industrial function (Hassall 1974b: 55). This stone structure then appears to have been converted into a small church through the possible lengthening of the chancel followed by the demolition of a small ancillary building and the creation of a cemetery. As noted above sixteen burials were identified from the excavation area, two of which were subject to radio carbon dating producing a date of cal AD 980-1270 and 1010-1290 (Dodd ed. 2003: 221).

##### *St Aldates Church*

St Aldates Church is first recorded in the 12<sup>th</sup> century but the excavation of later Saxon inhumations at the site indicate an earlier foundation for the church (Crossley 1979: 373). A watching brief carried out in 1999 recorded a number of Saxon inhumations as well as providing a detailed historical and architectural development for St Aldates Church from the 12<sup>th</sup> century up to the 19<sup>th</sup> century when the last major alterations were carried out (Tyler 2001). Norman style architectural elements have been recorded *ex situ* but nothing of this date remains in the visible structure of the current church (*ibid.*: 371). Recording also took place in a small area outside the

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church where a total of 19 inhumations were recorded, eight of which were charcoal floor burials similar to those of 9<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> century date recorded at St Frideswide's (See above).

#### *St Ebbe's Church*

St Ebbe's Church is known to have been in existence by the early 11<sup>th</sup> century as it is mentioned in the foundation charter for the Benedictine Eynsham Abbey founded in 1005 by Aethelmar with whom it remained until the Dissolution (Page 1907: 65). The 11<sup>th</sup> century church appeared to be located in a curia consisting of a block of 13 houses and a church (Parsons 2004:1). An archaeological investigation was carried out in 2004 on the foundations below the parish rooms to the south of the church (Moore 2004: 422). The evidence suggests that an earlier church may have existed slightly to the north of the present church where a number of 11<sup>th</sup> century features including a cellar pit were recorded. No burials earlier than the 12<sup>th</sup> century were noted leading the excavator to suggest that the early church had no burial rights, these being reserved for St Frideswide's or St Aldates. By the 12<sup>th</sup> century St Ebbe's had its own churchyard which was later extended and continued in use until the 20<sup>th</sup> century (*ibid.*). Several sherds of early to middle Saxon pottery were also recorded from the site dating to the 5<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> AD.

#### *St Martin's Church*

St Martin's Church is first recorded in 1032 when it was granted to Abingdon Abbey by King Cnut with whom it remained until the Dissolution when it passed to the king (Crossley 1979: 384). Artefacts recorded at the site of the church in 1896 included four silver coins, some pottery and a metal disc along with several carved stones thought to be a possible tomb stones (UAD 34; Hurst 1899).

#### *St Mary Magdalen Church*

The church is first mentioned in 1127 when it was confirmed to St George in the Castle but it was probably already in existence by the Conquest when it is thought that Robert D'Oilly first granted it to St George's (Crossley 1979: 387). In 1149 it passed with St George's to Osney Abbey with whom it remained until the Dissolution.

#### *Church of St Mary the Virgin*

The church is first recorded in 1086 and is probably a Saxon foundation. St Mary's included part of the township of Littlemore and at some point in the early 13<sup>th</sup> century fell under the auspices of Oriel College becoming their college church (Crossley 1979: 390).

#### *St Michael at the North Gate*

The church dates to the late Saxon period at least. The west tower is late 11<sup>th</sup> century while the main church is slightly later in date. It was well established by 1086 when it held property in the town. The church was among those granted to St Frideswide's in 1122 (Crossley 1979: 394). It has been suggested that St Michael's may have been a Saxon Minster church also as several priests are recorded serving it (Blair 1988b: 225).

St Michael's has been subject to several archaeological investigations since the 1970s; the 11<sup>th</sup> century tower is the earliest part of the church and probably formed part of the Saxon North Gate into the town (Durham 2003: 153). If a church was attached to the tower then it was replaced in the late Saxon to Norman period when the city defences were diverted to make way for a larger church space. The present church is 15<sup>th</sup> century.

#### *St George at the Castle*

It has been suggested that the surviving stone tower of the Chapel of St George at the Castle predates the Norman foundation of the castle and that the site marks the West Gate of the Saxon burh as well as a Saxon church. Two burials radio carbon

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dated to between 949 and 1028 were found cut into the late Saxon burh rampart on the southern side of St Georges Tower, appearing to support the idea that the Church of St George in the Castle, founded by Robert d'Oilly in 1074 has an earlier Late Saxon antecedent (Poore, Norton, Dodd 2010: 6). A pre-conquest date for St George's tower is now considered increasingly possible, although the large size of the tower is unparalleled in contemporary Late Anglo-Saxon architecture in England. (Blair 1999; 2001). Renn has suggested that the tower might be Late Saxon because it is mis-aligned on the chapel and crypt and because the Norman motte would appear to diminish its defensive function by blocking its view over Oxford (Renn, 1994: 179-81). Blair has noted that the tower nevertheless appears to be the product of Norman influence or even a Norman master mason operating in the town prior to the Conquest (Blair cited in Poore, Norton and Dodd 2010: 5-6).

*St Peter in the East*

There is some archaeological evidence to suggest that St Peter in the East is pre conquest, excavations at St Peter in the East in 1967 reported a stone church overlying a 10<sup>th</sup> century timber church. Unfortunately there are no detailed records of this observation (Sturdy 1972). The church has also been highlighted as a possible Minster (Blair, 1988) and appears exceptional in terms of land holdings (Dodd ed. 2003: 41; Haslam 2010: 28-33).

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## Warfare and defences

### Pre-burh defences

There is no conclusive evidence for a pre-burh defended enclosure, but a number of substantial ditches have been identified on various alignments which are worth noting. Excavations at Church Street between 1968-1972 recorded a north-south aligned V shaped ditch underlying later 10<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> century layers. Residual sherds of 7<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> century grass tempered wares were recovered from the upper fills of the ditch (Hassall 1971a: 3). It was suggested by the excavator that the ditch may have formed part of an early defended enclosure associated with pre-burh settlement at St Aldates. Further north at George Street a 12m wide north-south ditch was recorded beneath the later 12<sup>th</sup> century City Wall and interpreted as an early town ditch. Re-deposited sherds of 12<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> century pottery confirmed that it predated the 13<sup>th</sup> century defences (Durham *et al.* 1983: 18-9).

In the southern half of the town excavations at Corpus Christi Front Quad in 1972 recorded a substantial feature that may have been either a natural or artificial ditch more than 4m deep, but the limited extent of the excavations as well as the lack of dating evidence meant no reasonable conclusions could be drawn (Hassall 1973: 274). The presence of substantial ditches below later structures has also been inferred from subsidence at St Frideswide's (Sturdy 1988: 90) and St Mary's Church (Jackson 1897: 82-2). These observations remain unconfirmed.

### Burh defences

The Burghal Hidage records thirty three fortified places in the kingdom of Wessex and the taxes (calculated as hides) that were assigned to their maintenance. Although the system of burhs are largely attributed to King Alfred as a defence network against the Vikings, it is thought that the Burghal Hidage dates to around 911-914 based on comparisons between it and other sources. The burh may therefore have been laid out by Alfred's son, Edward the Elder. The hidation for Oxford is estimated at 1400 hides indicating a population within the burh sufficient to sustain 1400 men for garrison duty. This also equates to a defensive circuit of approximately 1800m (Baines 1984). It has been suggested that when the city was first founded it comprised two rectangular fields taken directly out of the royal estate of Headington with the boundary between the two running on a north-south alignment down Catte Street and therefore accounting for the kink in the defences at this point (Salter in Hunter and Jope 1951: 31). Blair has suggested that Oxford may have been founded (with primary defences and street plan) as a Mercian town by the daughter of King Alfred, Aetherflaed, Lady of the Mercians, in the late 9<sup>th</sup> century (Blair 1994: 101) An alternative model has recently been proposed by Haslam who suggests that the original Burh dates to the late 870's and that the eastern extension is essentially a second burh added in the early 10<sup>th</sup> century (Haslam 2010).

### *Extent of the defences*

The model for the burh extending in at least two phases eastwards (and possibly westwards) rests on a number of observations 1) That the area cited in the Burghal Hidage is too small to relate to the area of the extended Burh 2) That the morphology of the central street grid points to a more rectangular or sub rectangular core 3) that the break of slope to the west of New Inn Hall Street would form a natural western line 4) that the returning wall heading south, excavated at the Clarendon Building in 1899 is difficult to explain unless there was a defensive line here. Nevertheless the existence of a primary fortified burh has proved difficult to reconcile with the excavated evidence, notably 1) the consistency of the construction of the rampart within the central and hypothesised east and western extension 2) the consistency of appearance of the primary street surfaces in these three areas (Poore *et al.* 2009: 5).

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If there was an extension to the burh by the Conquest, the eastern extension must have been incorporated within the defences as the Church of St Peter in the East was documented as intramural at Domesday as were a number of other relevant properties (Hunter and Jope 1951: 31).

Based on the extent of the defences recorded in the Burghal Hidage the primary defences would have surrounded a central planned sub rectilinear street layout of Cornmarket, High Street, Queen Street and St Aldates meeting at the central point of Carfax. That the northern line ran on an east-west alignment along St Michael's Street and Ship Street as far as the present Clarendon Building seems likely and has been recorded in a number of excavations (see below). The most likely hypothesis is that the eastern defences then followed a line south along Catte Street and Magpie Lane down to the eastern edge of St Frideswide's Priory. The southern line of defences may have then continued along as yet unidentified line south of St Frideswide's towards the Southgate and towards St Ebbe's Street, then either turning north at St Ebbe's to run parallel with New Inn Hall Street to rejoin the northern line at St Michael's Street or alternatively the identified western line running to the site of the later St Georges Tower is part of primary circuit.

The burh rampart was subsequent re-enforced with stone in the Late Saxon period. The circuit was reinforced in the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> century, broadly following the line of the extended burh with an extension added around the graveyard of St Michael at the Northgate.

The Saxon burghal defences had four gates, two are convincingly established - St Michaels at the North Gate on Cornmarket and St Michaels at the South Gate on St Aldates. The location of the Westgate is more speculative, perhaps located near the location of St George's Tower or slightly to the south of castle aligned approximately with the principal east-west road. The Eastgate is theoretically easier to establish, the two possible locations are both on the High Street near St Mary's Church then subsequently further east where Merton Street joins the High Street.

Three possible primary boundary lines have been suggested for the western line of the Saxon defences (Figure 4: West Boundary A). One hypothesis is based on the concept of a square burh with the Westgate situated at St Peter le Bailey Church at the end of Queen Street (Crossley 1979: 300) but several excavations along this line failed to identify any evidence of the Saxon defences. This combined with the knowledge that St Peters Church and St Ebbe's Church, both on this projected boundary, were Saxon in origin would suggest this line is now unlikely.

A second historic hypothesis took into account the known line of the 13th century city beneath the Westgate Centre and took a more westerly route from Church Street through Canal Wharf rejoining the northern line to the rear of the Wesley Memorial Chapel (Figure 4: West Boundary B). However excavations at Canal Wharf in the 1940s and at Bulwarks Lane in 1980 have also shown that occupation evidence was present in this area from the 9th to 10th century which would suggest these two boundaries are unlikely.

The third hypothesis includes almost the entire extent of the later castle precinct as far as Paradise Street in the primary area (Figure 4: West Boundary C). The presence of a substantial ditch predating the 13th century defences at 40 George Street would indicate that the west boundary may have extended at least this far also suggesting that the first two projections are unlikely (Durham *et al.* 1983: 19). The Castle Excavations have demonstrated the presence of a rampart enclosing the west end by the late 10<sup>th</sup> century (Poore *et al.* 2009).

#### *Construction*

The Saxon Rampart has been observed in a number of investigations, the key exposures being at St Michael's St, New College and at the Castle. Archaeological

investigation has indicated at least two phases development with Oxford's defences in the Saxon to medieval period, most conclusively demonstrated at 24a St Michaels Street (Wilkinson 2003a)

- Phase I: Tentatively dated to the 10<sup>th</sup> century this phase would appear to be the primary stage of defensive construction and included a timber revetted rampart and ditch approximately 7.65m wide on an east-west alignment (Wilkinson, 2003, 141). Inside the rampart was a build up of alluvial clay sufficient to de-stabilise the rampart followed by a road providing access to the defences (*ibid.*: 147).
- Phase II: At some point in the 10<sup>th</sup> century the rampart was then refaced in stone (*ibid.*: 147)

#### *The western line*

A possible early alignment of a defensive ditch c12m wide and on a north-south alignment was recorded to the rear of 40 George Street (UAD 282) but on-site constraints made full investigation impossible (Durham *et al.* 1983: 19). If this ditch did form part of the Saxon defences then it would suggest that the settlement underneath the castle was beyond the western defences and was likely an early suburb and subsequently enclosed (*ibid.*: 35).

Recent investigations at Oxford Castle have noted important evidence of the Saxon rampart defences (Norton 2006). A large earthen bank or rampart, up to 15m wide, was observed in at least three locations along the southern part of the castle excavation. Constructed upon de-turfed natural gravel the character of the rampart was similar to sections previously encountered at St Michael's Street, Ship Street and New College. The primary deposit consisted of dung rich turf lines between dumps of soil. A ragstone retaining wall of at least two phases had been constricted against the southern face of the bank, similar to that seen at Ship Street. The wall was faced on its southern side and had a rubble core, a section has been preserved on public display below Carluccio's Restaurant (Poore *et al.* 2009: 3). The rampart at Oxford is similar in construction to those observed at Wallingford, although at Wallingford the subsequent stone wall was placed at the crest of the rampart (*ibid.*: 5)

Site	UAD	Evidence	Source
Canal Wharf, 1940s	141	Deep gully – possible ditch	Jope 1952-3
Bulwarks Lane	286	Negative evidence – occupation	Durham and Halpin 1983
Nuffield College, 1988	348	Possible ditch	Durham 1989c: 53
Oxford Castle, 2003	??	ditch and rampart	Norton 2006

**Table 5: Archaeological investigations for the western part of the burh**

#### *The northern line*

Jope notes that investigations on the canal-wharf site (later Nuffield College) recorded two late Saxon pits on the line of the extrapolation of the later 13<sup>th</sup> century defences (Jope 1952; 1956: 242). Further east at St Michael at the North Gate the original line of the rampart was located running south of and parallel to the tower of St Michael. The defensive line was later extended, perhaps in the 12<sup>th</sup> century, 14m further north to accommodate a larger church (Durham *et al.* 1983: 17). A turf bank c1.45m high built directly onto natural gravel was recorded in the graveyard on an east-west alignment. The northern edge of the turf bank had subsequently been cut by a rubble wall comprising large stone blocks on its exterior face built to strengthen the defences. The tower of the church has been subject to a detailed building survey and has been assessed to have a construction date in the early 11<sup>th</sup> century (Durham 2003: 152).

Excavations at 24a St Michael's Street in 1985 remain the best revealed example of the ditch and rampart and a reconstruction of the defences suggest that there was an

extramural ditch approximately 3.8m wide with a berm approximately 6m wide in front of the revetment wall. The rampart itself was between 7-13m wide comprising the earth bank and revetment. This was bordered by an intramural metalled road providing access to the defences (Wilkinson 2003a:140). In all the Saxon burh would have been bordered by a defensive system some 50-60m wide. Soil samples taken from beneath the rampart indicated that as recently as 7-10 years before the defences were built the area was in use for cultivation (Wilkinson 2003a: 141).

The earliest phase of the defences was tentatively dated to the early 10<sup>th</sup> century based on the stratigraphic sequence and comprised the primary earth bank or rampart on an east-west alignment. The north face of the bank was then revetted with a timber fence. A drainage trench was constructed along the inner line of the rampart providing an indication of an intra-mural road. Courses of stone facing for the rampart were observed on its north side but could not be closely dated.

Archaeological investigations into the Saxon defences at New College have been carried out since the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The best preserved section of the 13<sup>th</sup> century city wall survives within New College and is likely to have preserved early deposits to a greater degree than elsewhere along the line. Excavations in 1949 to the rear of 21 Longwall Street recorded evidence of a Saxon gully some 2.1m deep and over 3m wide, this gully was later re-interpreted as the Saxon defensive ditch by Durham and Halpin following a new excavation in the same area in 1980 (Durham *et al.* 1983: 25).

Excavations at New College in 1993 recorded further evidence for an earthwork rampart pre-dating the current wall (Booth 1995: 205). The excavations recorded the foundations of the City Wall, and noted a substantial earthen bank c.4.9m wide and 0.8m high. No dating evidence was recorded but the bank predated the wall foundations in the stratigraphic sequence and it is suggested that it formed the 10<sup>th</sup> century Saxon rampart (*ibid.*: 216). Environmental samples were taken from the buried soil beneath the rampart (Robinson 1995: 220). Evidence for cultivation and ploughing was recorded in the lower part of the soil profile with molluscan evidence consistent with Saxon plough soils. The upper part of the profile however was stone free and may represent grassland conditions for perhaps a decade before the rampart was constructed, similar to that recorded at 24a St Michael's Street (*ibid.*). More recently, archaeological investigations at the College in 2008 again recorded evidence of a Saxon bank at 62.66OD some 40m to the east of the 1993 investigation (Williams 2008: 13). A small amount of 10<sup>th</sup> century pottery was recorded associated with the bank. A possible turf facing of the Saxon rampart was also recorded in 1987, but no further information is available (anon 1987).

Site	UAD	Evidence	Source
40 George Street, 1977	283	City Ditch (c2m wide)	Durham and Halpin 1983
24a St Michael's Street, 1985	6	Substantial ditch c3.8m wide Rampart 7-13m wide Timber revetment, later stone Intramural metalled road	Durham and Halpin 1983
St Michaels Street	29	Rampart	Durham 1976: 54-6
St Michael at the North Gate, 1972	23	Early rampart Turf bank c1.45m high Rubble wall 11th century tower	Durham and Halpin 1983
Broad Street, 1986	44	Possible 11th century wall	Durham 1987b
27 Broad Street, 1913	1301	Rampart undated	Maning 1914
Exeter College	199	Possible Ditch	Case and Sturdy 1963: 91
Hertford College, 1980	285	City Wall?	Durham and Halpin 1983

New College, 1993	303	Bank	Booth 1995 : 205-24
New College, 1987	497	Rampart	Anon 1987
21 Longwall Street, 1979	284	Possible ditch	Durham and Halpin 1983
New College, 1949	149	Possible ditch	Hunter and Jope 1951 : 28-41
New College, 2008	1734	Turf rampart	Williams 2008

**Table 6: Archaeological evidence for the northern part of the burh**

*The eastern line*

The eastern line of the proposed primary or extended burh has not been clearly identified. A number of relevant investigations are listed below.

Site	UAD	Evidence	Source
Clarendon Quadrangle		Undated stone wall	Munby 2003
Merton College, 1962	195	Saxon Bank (Eastern extension)	Case & Sturdy 1963: 91
Merton College, 1971	268	Negative evidence	Anon1972: 239
Oriel College, 1994	373	Negative evidence (for primary line)	Hardy 1995
Corpus Christi College, 1972	255	Substantial ditch (c4m deep)	Hassall 1973

**Table 7: Archaeological evidence for the eastern part of the burh**

A crucial observation was made (and photographed) in 1899 at the Clarendon Quadrangle where A bastion of the 13<sup>th</sup> century wall was found to have an undated south-eastern returning wall coming of it, as well as a later north-eastern 13<sup>th</sup> century line. The site archive has been reviewed by Munby (2003b: 172-183).

*The southern line*

The southern line of the defences is poorly understood. Between 2007 and 2008 trial trenching was undertaken in Old Greyfriars Street as part of the Westgate Centre evaluation. One trench recorded an east west aligned feature with clay primary fills, through which four timber stakes had been driven. The stakes were overlain by a series of possibly water lain clay rich deposits. The feature was overlain by a clay silt likely to represent 12<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> century land reclamatrion. The feature could therefore represent an early channel or ditch, potentially related to the burh defences or a channel linking the later castle moat to the Trill Mill stream (pers. comm. B Durham; Bashford 2008: 18-9). Further east a test pit in 1973 at Pembroke College, north of Brewer Street, identified a possible turf rampart underlying the medieval stone wall, however the results were not conclusive (Hassall 1974a: 23). Excavations on the line of the 13<sup>th</sup> century wall at Littlegate in failed to identify Saxon remains under the wall which was constructed over an earlier tenement plot. Hassall suggested that the Trill Mill channel located further to the south may have been considered sufficient protection or that a defensive might be located north of the stream on an as yet undetected alignment (Hassall 1972: 141-3, note 51). Excavations between Brewer Street and Rose Place in 2011 failed to identify any trace of a defensive ditch or Saxon rampart between the 13<sup>th</sup> century wall and the Trill Mill channel (pers comm. D Radford).

Further east at St Frideswide's, a model of the original monastic church in relation to the defences is suggested by Blair (1988a: Fig 94) with a single aisled church located under the northern part of the later cathedral and a primary turf rampart and intra mural street running through the southern end of the cathedral cloister and curving northward to the east of the cathedral. Archaeological investigations have yet to record any evidence for a rampart in this location. Burials and a large 12<sup>th</sup> century pit have been recorded in the central and northern parts of the cloister. Blair suggests

that the relief of the gravel terrace down to the River channel below, was more distinct in the late Saxon period and has subsequently be substantial changed by dumping and levelling. Sturdy has proposed an earlier model which proposed that the burh defences were located further north on an east west alignment just to the south of the St Aldates Church (Blair 1989: Fig 93). To the west of St Frideswide Precinct a recent excavation at the Corpus Christi Music Room revealed parts of a large late 11th-century feature, apparently a large east-west ditch, that may be associated with either the primary burh or its proposed eastward extension. The ditch truncated the legs of an inhumation, presumably part of St Fideswides cemetery, that was associated with 10<sup>th</sup> century pottery (Bashford 2007; Bashford 2010).

The Anglo-Saxon precinct of St Frideswides was subsequently extended to the south in the 12<sup>th</sup> century. A writ of Henry I allowed the cannons of St Frideswide to enclose 'the road next to the wall and the wall of Oxford itself', a licence to enclose the road is confirmed in the early 12<sup>th</sup> century foundation charter (dated before 1123) for the Augustinian Priory at St Frideswides.

Site	UAD	Evidence	Source
Pembroke College, 1973	324	Turf rampart	Hassall 1974a
Corpus Christi College, 1981	336	No evidence	Durham 1982
St Frideswide's Cloister, 1985	296	Cemetery evidence	Scull 1988
Cathedral Garden	200	Possible burh ditch	Sturdy 1988
Merton College, 1986	583	No evidence	Durham 1983-7: 7
Corpus Christi Music Room 2007-8	1714	Late 11 <sup>th</sup> century ditch cutting 10 <sup>th</sup> ? century burial	Bashford 2007;2010

**Table 8: Archaeological evidence for the southern part of the burh**

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## Scandinavian evidence

### Documentary and place name evidence

Danes, or Vikings, first began to appear in England in the 8<sup>th</sup> century. First in the form of raiding parties but later with more organised invasions and subsequent settlement. The Anglo Saxon Chronicles contain frequent references to them. By the late 9<sup>th</sup> century the Vikings had succeeded in subduing the Mercian kingdom, installing a king under their control. The area around Oxford at this time was still within the Mercian kingdom and thus in theory under Scandinavian administration (Blair 1994: 93). If the formation of a defended burh dates to the 9<sup>th</sup> or 10<sup>th</sup> century then this may reflect a shift of power towards Wessex and Anglo Saxon control. Subsequently Viking incursions in the late 10<sup>th</sup> century led to rising tensions between the Saxons and Danish settlers. In 1002 King Aethelred ordered Danish communities within his jurisdiction to be purged, resulting in Oxford with the St Brice's Day Massacre. The massacre is recorded in a charter granted by Aethelred to St Frideswide's dated 7<sup>th</sup> December 1004 which records that when the Danish residents sought refuge in St Frideswide's minster the towns people responded by burning the minster (Blair 1994: 168). Documentary accounts suggest that Oxford was later sacked by the Danish army in 1009 and much of the town was destroyed in retaliation for the massacre (Crossley 1979: 300). Various phases of Scandinavian influence and control can therefore be postulated, but such shifts in political authority and ethnic composition are difficult to register in the archaeological record.

### *Bridge settlement at St Clements?*

A small settlement on the east bank of the Cherwell River, later the parish of St Clements, was originally referred to as *brycg-gesett* perhaps meaning bridge settlement (Blair 1994: 161). Perhaps a settlement established by a Danish garrison in the early 11<sup>th</sup> century. Notably the dedication to St Clements', first recorded in the 1120's, is a dedication associated with an early pope, whose supporting cult is notably concentrated in Denmark (Blair 1994: 170; see *St Clements Parish*).

### Archaeological evidence

Evidence for Scandinavian influence relies on inferred cultural and ethnic affinities derived from distinct burial rites or artefacts that display distinctive Scandinavian designs or craftwork (Richards 2009: 266). In contrast there is probably little distinction between the structural remains of the Saxons and the Scandinavian, although it has been suggested that town buildings with semi-sunken cellars providing space for storage emulate designs found in Danish towns (*ibid.*: 267).

Dredging work near Magdalen Bridge in 1884 revealed a number of artefacts as well as disarticulated human and horse remains (UAD 313). Among the artefacts there were two brass-inlaid stirrups, a simpler stirrup, a horseshoe, some iron shears and a spur. The inlaid stirrups display Anglo-Scandinavian artwork of late 10<sup>th</sup> or early 11<sup>th</sup> century character. The grave has been interpreted as potentially that of an elaborate late Viking burial (Blair and Crawford 1997; Blair 1994:169-70, Fig 98). The impressive decorated stirrups are currently on display in the Ashmolean Museum.

In 2008 a mass grave of at least 34 inhumations was recorded inserted into the ditch of a large Neolithic henge, situated near St Giles at St John's College (see *St John's Henge mass grave* above). The bodies were those of well built males who had suffered fatal blows characteristic of individual acts of violence and had apparently been stripped of belongings before being dumped in the henge ditch. One burial was associated with a single iron buckle. The mass grave may be related to the St Brice's Day Massacre of Scandinavian residents in 1002 and this possibility is discussed by the excavator, but the radio-carbon dating of sample burials was not conclusive, producing a surprisingly wide range of dates contradicting the physical evidence of a

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single burial event. Isotope analysis has indicated that the group as a whole ate more fish as adults and on balance had more affinity with Danish rather than Anglo-Saxon populations in terms of diet (Pollard *et al.* 2010: 77).

### Material culture

#### *Metalwork*

To date, several rings of twisted metal have been recorded in the City and are thought to be of a Scandinavian design (Blair 1994:168). Examples have been recorded at the Examination Schools, High Street, in the 1870s (UAD 159) and at Butcher's Row, Queen Street in the 19<sup>th</sup> century (UAD 693) where the ring was discovered in association with articulated human remains (Hurst, 1892, 50). A gold finger ring of six plated rods was found with an inhumation in a stone coffin in 1890 in St Aldates opposite the gateway to Christ Church (Graham-Campbell 1988: 163). The location suggests that it was located on the eastern edge of St Aldates Churchyard, and the high status ring may reflect a Scandinavian influence (Dodd ed. 2003: 19).

A single stone mould for casting silver ingots was also recorded at the base of a late Saxon well at the Cornmarket Hotel site. The form of the ingots forged from the mould was similar to that recorded in Viking hoards (Jope 1958: 72).

#### *Whetstones*

Four whetstones of Eidsborg schist, a Norwegian import, were found in a cellar pit backfills at 113-119 High Street (Walker 2000: 425) and at 23-26 Queen Street (Dodd ed. 2003: 44). Also the presence of a grindstone fragment in a cellar pit fill the High Street is of interest as grindstone and crank technology was imported from Scandinavia (Roe 2000: 425).

#### *Pottery*

There is a suggestion that St Neots type ware may have been favoured by Danelaw immigrants as the production centres fell within the Danelaw (Mellor 1994a: 60). An explanation for the low distribution of this fabric across the county is that its occurrence represents small short-lived settlements or military encampments (*ibid*). Definite links between this fabric and Danish settlement has yet to be proved however and more detailed research is required to assess the potential for mapping the distribution of Danish settlement through pottery. To date two of the largest assemblages of St Neots ware have been recorded in the postulated eastern extension of the burh, e.g. 4A Merton Street and Logic Lane (Mellor 1994b: 56), although a sizable assemblage was also recovered further west at 113-119 High Street (Timby and Underwood-Keevill 2000: 411).

#### *Leather*

Leather shoes exhibiting Saxo-Norman (Scandinavian-Norman) characteristics of late 11<sup>th</sup>- mid 12<sup>th</sup> century date were recovered from the bailey ditch during excavations at the castle (Mould 2006: 109).

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## Material culture and faunal remains

### Pottery

#### *Evolution of typological series*

Excavations in 1939 at the Bodleian Extension produced the first comprehensive typological sequence for Saxon to medieval pottery in Oxfordshire (Bruce-Mitford and Jope 1940). Subsequent syntheses of Saxon and medieval pottery in Oxford were largely based on comparing the Bodleian corpus with sequences recorded at two other sites in the city with reliable dating evidence; the Castle site (Jope, 1952-53) and St John's College (Jope and Jope 1950). At the Castle pottery from below the Mound had a *terminus ante quem* of c.1070 while at a St John's College assemblage from a well was dated by a 12<sup>th</sup> century coin. The evidence from St Aldates in the 1970s was later used to enhance and confirm the sequence of fabrics (Haldon and Mellor 1977: 139). Mellor's synthesis of middle and late Saxon to post medieval pottery published in 1994 remains the most comprehensive typology of local fabrics. A summary of Saxon pottery from excavations within the LAA is provided below (Table 9).

#### *Summary of pottery types*

Pottery sequences are difficult to identify for the early Saxon period because until the 8<sup>th</sup> century local handmade types were produced with no real variation in form and content. Locally produced fabrics are characterised in terms of their fabric composition and the technology used to produce them. Dating middle Saxon sites also remains problematical because of the absence of a distinctive ceramic tradition in the County (Mellor 1994b: 36-7). The early to middle Saxon period is largely characterised by local pottery fabrics with rare examples of more widely distributed wares. Early Saxon wares may also have persisted into the Late Saxon period, for example at Christ Church grass tempered pottery was recovered in association with 10<sup>th</sup> century forms (Mellor 1988: 38).

Between the 5<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> centuries local clay's tempered with sand or organic material used to make handmade pots. There are differences of opinion about the significance of early Saxon fabric traditions in the region, Blinkhorn has suggested that sand tempering and organic tempering are contemporary but indicative of different social/cultural traditions. The majority view, however, is that the earliest Saxon pottery in the region (usually late 5<sup>th</sup> century onwards) tends to be sand-tempered, while organic-tempered fabrics make an appearance a little later in the 6<sup>th</sup> century (pers. comm. P Booth). It is clear, however, that the two traditions are not completely separate, and some mixed sand and organic tempered vessels are found. In the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> century small amounts of more widely traded wares appear. Ipswich ware become the most commonly used wares in London's wic, but evidence for this ware in Oxford is very limited and non sufficient to demonstrate regular trade links. Ipswich ware, of 8<sup>th</sup>-mid 9<sup>th</sup> century date, is the only regionally imported ware recorded in Oxfordshire (Mellor 1988: 36). The ware has by far the widest distribution of any native pottery type in this period, has only been recovered from a small number of local Upper Thames Valley sites e.g. Eynsham Abbey (Blinkhorn and Jeffries 2003), Yarnton (Blinkhorn, 2004) and the Sackler Library and Ashmolean Museum extension sites at Oxford (Blinkhorn 2001a; Blinkhorn 2009b).

By the middle to late Saxon period there are three major ceramic traditions that are commonly recorded (fabrics OXB, OXAC and OXBF) and the earliest, fabric OXB may be present by the late 8<sup>th</sup> century (Mellor 1994b: 37). An absence of handmade pottery at Oxford and nearby Yarnton and Eynsham in the 8<sup>th</sup> century could point to a hiatus in the use of hand made pottery in the region at this time (Blinkhorn 2001a: 44; Mellor 1994b: 37). A shelly limestone tradition (fabric OXB) is common in the 10<sup>th</sup> (just before the appearance of St Neots ware) into the early 11<sup>th</sup> century. Cotswold-

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type ware (OXAC) begins to occur in quantity in Oxford around the middle 11<sup>th</sup> when St Neots ware is in decline.

At the end of the 10<sup>th</sup> century there is evidence for a change in pottery supply to Oxford with the appearance of St Neots Ware from the north in the Danelaw. Moderate amounts of St Neots Ware have been found across the city and small amounts in surrounding villages. Mellor notes that the impact of Scandinavian settlement appears to have acted as a catalyst for commercial enterprise, perhaps reflected by the appearance of the ware. St Neots ware usage increased significantly in the first half of the 11<sup>th</sup> century subsequently falling out of use in the middle of the 11<sup>th</sup> century. Evidence for even more distant importation comes from Stamford and Thetford ware of late 9<sup>th</sup>-early 10<sup>th</sup> century date (E.g. Oxford Castle). Mellor has suggested that the coincidence of St Neots wares in Oxford with the introduction of Oxford Shelly ware may indicate that local potters were quickly influenced by the new imported pottery (Mellor 1994b; Blinkhorn 2002: 237).

Between the 10<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> century jars used for storage comprised the bulk of vessels. By the 10<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> there is a regional character to pottery production, with hand built Oxfordshire shelly wares and later wheel made jars. The expansion of production correlates with a growing population in the burh and the evidence points to the distribution of this pottery by water along the Thames. Continental imports in late 10<sup>th</sup> and early 11<sup>th</sup> century Oxford are rare. Small amounts of pottery from France, Germany and the Low Counties suggest limited trading exchange sourced through the Mercian and Wessex ports of Southampton and London. Regional imports included Michelmersh type vessels from Winchester in the Wessex heartland.

The presence of 11<sup>th</sup> century Flemish Greyware storage jars at Merton Street, St Ebbe's and Cornmarket indicate that Oxford was important enough to attract trade from other trading centres such as London by this time (Blinkhorn 2006: 266). Other late Saxon wares, like Thetford ware, have been recovered in small quantities from Merton Street (Blinkhorn 2003), Lincoln College (Blinkhorn 2002: 233), St Hilda's College (Blinkhorn 2005) and Oxford Castle (Blinkhorn, 2006). Its general scarcity suggests that Oxford may be located at the western edge of its distribution (Blinkhorn 2006: 266).

#### *Roman re-use*

Excavations at the Oxford Science Park produced a distinct pattern of reworked Roman sherds within the settlement from both the plough-soils and the sunken featured buildings (Moore 2001b: 167). Although the fabric types were common for Oxfordshire, being primarily local forms from the Fry's Hill/Blackbird Leys area, the vessel forms were unusual in their complete absence of jars (Booth 2001: 186). The distribution of the assemblage is also interesting with a high concentration within the sunken featured buildings or the directly associated pit features and suggest the continued use of Roman pottery in the early Saxon period, the absence of jars indicating a selective process for re-use (*ibid.*: 188). The reuse is of carefully selected material, almost certainly gathered as fragments rather the re-use of whole vessels. A similar phenomenon is also seen at Barrow hills, Radley and at Sutton Courtenay, where a high proportion of the Roman sherds are shaped for secondary use (pers. comm. P Booth). The continued use of Roman wares into the Saxon period, has been recorded further a-field (e.g. West Stow), however it is not a universal phenomenon and there is no clear indication why this practice was preferred at some sites and not others. The Science Park assemblage is nevertheless an 'important addition' to the list of sites with evidence of this widespread phenomenon' (*ibid.*: 189).

#### *Early Saxon fabrics*

Early to middle Saxon pottery is rare in Oxford and is largely confined to residual sherds, for example Magdalen College (Mellor 1991: 49), Magdalen College School

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(Cotter 2008: 9) and Boreham's Yard (Whittingham 2003: 403). The distribution of grass tempered pottery in the vicinity of the later town is summarised above, along with references to the few stamped 6<sup>th</sup> century sherds that have been recovered.

The most substantial early Saxon pottery assemblages from the LAA comes from the Oxford Science Park excavations where a total of 953 sherds were recorded from the small settlement of sunken featured buildings (OHER 16299; Blinkhorn 2001a: 189). The assemblage primarily comprised 6<sup>th</sup> century sherds although there may also have been some 7<sup>th</sup> century undecorated wares and were typical of larger Saxon assemblages from sites such as Radley Barrow Hills and Barton Court Farm (*ibid.*: 192).

#### *Middle-Late Saxon*

The only evidence for 8<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> century Ipswich ware from the city comes from the Sackler Library excavation in Beaumont Street, where four sherds were recorded (Blinkhorn 2001: 43-4). Elsewhere small quantities of pottery characterised as middle Saxon have been recorded at 113-119 High Street, here one sherd of re-deposited Saxon shelly ware (OXCM) dating between 6<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> centuries was recovered from the fill of a cellar post-hole along with two residual sherds of Saxon ware (OXCR) of similar date range (Timby and Underwood-Keevill 2000: 410-1). Excavations at 79-80 St Aldates produced a sherd possible middle Saxon date along with sherds of two possible late 8<sup>th</sup>-early 9<sup>th</sup> century wheel thrown black wares perhaps of continental origin (Haldon and Mellor 1977: 132, 138).

#### *Late Saxon*

Mellor identifies three major Late Saxon ceramic traditions that are clearly evident by the 9<sup>th</sup> century (OXB, OXAC and OXBF). A fourth is evident by the early 10<sup>th</sup> century (OXR) (Mellor 1994b: 37). Late Anglo-Saxon urban Oxford pottery, like Winchester, has been well studied and has produced relatively well defined dating sequences. The predominant pottery fabric in the Oxford area in the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> centuries was shelly limestone fabric B (OXB), largely consisting of functional cooking or storage vessels (Mellor, 1994b). During the later 10<sup>th</sup> and the first half of the 11<sup>th</sup> century St Neots ware (OXR) was introduced, comprised of cooking pots, dishes, jars and lamps. Regional pottery fabrics such as St Neots ware and Stamford ware have also been recorded in a number of excavations in the city. Recent work at the Oxford Castle redevelopment has led to a reassessment of the date range for the local OXY fabric, demonstrating that it predates the construction of the 11<sup>th</sup> century castle (Poore, Norton and Dodd 2010: 3).

Excavations carried out during work beneath the Radcliffe Camera in 1910 (UAD 128) recorded several late Saxon pitchers, cooking pots and crucibles (Bruce-Mitford and Jope, 1940, 46). Archaeological investigations at the Hamel in St Thomas' revealed quantities of residual Saxo-Norman pottery that provided useful information on dating, contributing to the existing typological framework, the earliest stratified deposits were dated to the 12<sup>th</sup> century (Palmer 1980; Mellor 1994b: 53).

One of the largest assemblages of Late Saxon pottery recovered too date comes from investigations at Lincoln College between 1997-2000. The late Saxon and Saxo-Norman assemblage was domestic in character and included pots displaying scorching, soot marks with charred and lime scaled interiors indicative of repeated use for cooking (Blinkhorn 2002). For a discussion of how these pots were used see Booth *et al* (2007: 202).

At Logic Lane a recovered assemblage of late Saxon St Neots ware was unusual in terms of quantity and type, comprising a substantial number of sherds representing cooking pots, dishes and round bowls (Mellor 1994b: 56). From a single pit 511 sherds of St Neots ware were recovered with just 14 sherds of other wares including a fragment of imported Normandy type ware (*ibid.*: 60). Investigations at 113-119

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High Street also recovered a large amount of St Neots ware (1573 sherds) (Timby and Underwood-Keevill 2000: 411). The main concentrations came from the cellar infills, here the relatively low levels of the handmade wares (OXB and OXAC) indicated a strong preference by the inhabitants of this site for more sophisticated wheel thrown pottery (*ibid*, 413). A sizable assemblage (90 sherds) of St Neots ware was also recovered from excavations at 4A Merton Street (Blinkhorn 2003). Investigations at the Codrington Library, All Souls College in 2001 (UAD 1647) recorded a fairly substantial Saxon pottery assemblage including Oxford shelly ware, St Neots ware and a substantial amount of Cotswold type ware (Blinkhorn 2004: 16). A single sherd of Pingsdorf ware (11<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> century) was also recorded, only the third example so far recorded in the town, this find suggests Oxford was important enough to be attracting European trade in the Norman period (*ibid*.: 17).

The presence of possible Flemish storage jars in the late Saxon pottery assemblage from the Postmasters Hall site in Merton Street, St Ebbe's and Cornmarket (Blinkhorn 2003; Hassall *et al.* 1989: 201) is of interest as such imports are rare, although well known in the ports of Eastern England, such as Norwich, Ipswich and London. A small amount of Stamford Ware has also been recovered from the town. Two sherds of red-painted Stamford ware were recovered from the Oxford Castle excavations. The site also produced the a small assemblage of Thetford Ware, previously noted only in small numbers at Lincoln College, Merton College and St Ebbe's (Blinkhorn 2006).

Outside of the burh at the site of the later Rewley Abbey, excavations recovered quantities of late Saxon pottery fabrics (102 sherds comprising of fabrics OXR; OXAC; OXBF, and MISC) dominated by handmade coarse-ware cooking pots, jars and some bowls (Cotter 2007: 35). The remainder of the pre Abbey pottery dates to the post Conquest phase and is dominated by Late Saxon to Medieval Oxford type ware (OXY) (See note above). The process of land reclamation in this area raises the possibility that the Late Saxon material was re-deposited during land reclamation in the 12<sup>th</sup> century.

#### *Other ceramic finds*

Early Saxon finds include fragments from at least two different loom-weights recovered from a rubbish pit and make up layer at the Radcliffe Infirmary site. Although badly degraded the weights appeared to be annular and apparently unfired (Blackmore 2010: 38). It was suggested that the associated evidence was indicative of a possible loom-weight kiln (Braybrooke 2010: 17 See above *Crafts, trade and Industry* for more details). Ceramic finds from the Oxford Science Park includes five ceramic spindle whorls from two of the SFBs and two gaming counters made from cut down Roman pottery sherds (Moore 2001: 202).

Other late Saxon loom-weights have been recorded at Carfax in 1931 (Bruce-Mitford and Jope 1940) and several clay rings recovered from the area of Headington Reservoir in 1876 (Salzman 1939: 356; see *Crafts, trade and Industry* above for more details). A late Saxon spindle whorl from St Aldates is published in Durham (1977: 132, 153, Fig 33)

Other Late Saxon finds include a ceramic crucible, indicative of bronze working was recorded during excavations on Cornmarket (see *Metal working* above for more details). A rare Late Saxon floor tile was recovered from Christ Church in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, originally thought to be medieval in origin it appears to be pre Conquest and was probably associated with St Frideswide's (Biddle and Biddle 1988: 263).

#### Metalwork

A small assemblage of early Saxon iron work, including a small iron spearhead, knife a horseshoe as well as a copper alloy brooch pin was recovered from the Oxford Science Park site (Moore 2001b; 202). Small numbers of early Saxon metal artefacts

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have been recovered as stray finds from the LAA, including a spearhead and two shield bosses from Crick Road (Salzman 1939: 371). A notable stray find is the bronze S shaped brooch set with garnets and probably a Frankish import of the 6<sup>th</sup> century (*ibid.*, 315), which was recovered from near the Thames at Iffley and is currently in the British Museum. Another notable find was recovered during the construction of the Royalist defences near St Giles Church in north Oxford, an 5<sup>th</sup> century ornamental gold disc or 'bracteate' (Salzman 1939: 355). Further notable metalwork was recovered with a burial at Stephens Road, Headington (See above).

The later Saxon town has produced a wider array of artefacts. For Equal-armed brooches recorded at Oxford See Dodd ed. 2003: fig 6.17.1). Horseshoes have been found at the Thames Crossing in Oxford (Goodall 1977: fig 29; Allen and Durham 2003: 318) and a prick spur of late Saxon date was from All Saints Church where a simple iron buckle two keys, a buckle strap slide, six whittle tang knife fragments and two horseshoe fragments were also found (Ellis 2003: fig 6.19; Booth *et al.* 2007: 345; Goodall, 2003, 318). A silver clothes fastening hook was recovered from the Trill Mill Stream (*ibid.*: 345) and buckles have been found in association with burials at Christ Church and in the St John's mass grave (Wallis 2010; 139).

Further stray finds from the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century include a gold ring of elaborately plaited rods thought to be 10<sup>th</sup> century was found at St Aldates (Campbell 1988; 263) while a second was recorded at Butchers Row, Queen Street (Salzman, 1939, 356). It was suggested that this style was similar to those recorded in Viking hoards (*ibid.*). More mundane items include an iron spur recorded on Queen Street c1850 (OHER 3555) and a bronze key from the University Museum in 1869 (OHER 3672). Further notable metalwork was recovered in association with human remains near Magdalen Bridge.

### Coins

Coin evidence rapidly diminishes in the 5<sup>th</sup> century with the departure of Roman influences, not returning until the later Saxon period. Early coin evidence in the LAA is sparse. A sceatta (Silver Penny) of secondary type (c710-60) was recovered from Binsey (Blair 1994; 2006: 81, Fig 52). The mass production of such coins (although relatively rare compared to later issues) may coincide or pre-figure the development of a trade economy, this question has been the subject of considerable debate (Blair 1984: 81).

A number of mints were established across the kingdom by Alfred of Wessex and a mint is likely at Oxford. Two silver pennies by a moneyer named Bernwald may indicate an Oxford mint in the 9<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> centuries, one bears the name Alfred and the place name OHSNA/FORDA the other Edward the Elder (Lyon 1976: Fig X; Blair 1994: 100-101) although there has been some debate over whether the coin was Scandinavian. Viking imitations with the corruption *Orsnaforda* are recorded, it is now generally agreed that they date to 890-900 AD (*ibid.*: 26) and may indicate a late 9<sup>th</sup> century foundation for the city.

The identification of a Saxon mint site at Oxford is problematic due to the limited identifiable archaeological evidence (Dolley 1976: 361). The equipment required for a mint would be similar to that used in the metal working industry and may appear as such in the archaeological record. Under Edward the Confessor, at least 7 moneyers are known to have worked simultaneously in Oxford. The number seems to have fallen to 3 by the later years of William I (Catalogue of Anglo-Norman Coins in the British Museum). But a similar fall in the number of contemporaneous moneyers has been observed in the case of other towns, and the fall at Oxford, though compatible with the decay of the borough, is not evidence of it. Silver pennies of Athelstan (924-39) were also minted in Oxford (Blair 1994: 152-3). It is likely that coins were minted in Oxford from Alfred's time until the conquest (*ibid.*: 152). An incomplete silver coin

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of Edward the Confessor was recorded at the All Saints Church site minted between 1042-44 (Lyon 2003: 312). A single coin from Aethelred II in circulation between 997-1003 was recorded during excavations at Queen's College along with 10<sup>th</sup> century pottery (Allen 2010: 199). Excavations at Lincoln College between 1997 and 2000 recovered a silver coin dated to 972/3 and 975 from a pit, identified as an Edgar Reform Small Cross minted at Tamworth and the moneyer is Deowulf (Allen 2002).

## Bone

### *Early Middle Saxon*

A significant domestic assemblage of bone was recovered from the 6<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> century settlement site excavated at Oxford Science Park. Cattle bones dominated the assemblage with body part representation indicating that some animals were brought to the site on the hoof with the presence of immature animals suggested as evidence of inhabitants husbanding their own animals (Ingrem, in Moore 2001: 52-64). The absence of evidence for the slaughter of young cattle and the proportion of adult bones suggested that most of the beef eaten came from cattle kept primarily for their secondary products (milk, leather, breeding stock, traction and manure). Either calves were disposed of off site or adult cattle at the end of their working life were imported into the site. Sheep and goat were present. Tooth wear suggests that the sheep were slaughtered in their first or third years implying that prime lamb and mutton was being eaten, with no evidence to suggest wool was produced in sufficient quantities to produce a surplus for trade. Pigs were slaughtered when immature. At least one adult horse was present in the assemblage. Domestic fowl and geese were kept. Worked bone implements from the Oxford Science Park included a partial weaving comb and two bone pins from an SFB (Moore 2001: 202).

Other bone finds from the LAA include a bone heddle stick recovered from the Radcliffe Infirmary site (UAD 118).

### *Late Saxon*

With a few exceptions the animal bone assemblages from Late Saxon Oxford are relatively small. These are discussed in Dodd (ed. 2003: 44) and an attempt to map bone distribution in the city is made by Wilson (2003, 362). The largest assemblage to date was recovered from 10<sup>th</sup> -11<sup>th</sup> century pits at Church Street (Wilson 1989). Smaller assemblages have been recovered from St Aldates (Armour-Chelu 2003), 113-119 High Street (Maltby 2000), 11-18 Queen Street (Wilson 1983), 7-8 Queen Street (Wilson in Dodd ed. 2003), Lincoln College (Charles 2002; Ingrem 2002), Logic Lane (Banks 1961/2), Clarendon Hotel (Jope 1958), 44-46 Cornmarket St (Marples 1971), Oxford Castle (Marples 1976), St Aldates (Marples 1977), Christ Church (Charles 2001), Oxford Castle (Evans 2006) and Queens College (Strid 2010). The size of the bone assemblages contrast with much larger Norman assemblages and this may either reflect lower densities of settlement and meat consumption in the late Saxon period followed by expansion or an inadequate sample.

Late Saxon assemblages reflect the mixed predominance of either cattle or sheep followed by pig. Sheep are generally dominant across the town, reflecting regional urban patterns, for example sites at Church Street, Lincoln College, Oxford Castle, Christ Church and Queens College have produced assemblage dominated by sheep/goat remains (Maltby 2000; Evans 2006; Charles 2001, Charles 2002; Strid 2010). Elsewhere sites where cattle predominate may indicate specialist activity, reflecting the proximity of butchering sites near the principal frontages (Maltby 2000, 433; Dodd ed. 2003: 45; Strid 2010: 206). At 113-119 High Street the late Saxon assemblage comprised primarily of cattle with some sheep/goat and pig, some domestic fowl and with a complete absence of fish, although this may be attributed to inadequate collection methods (Maltby 2000: 428). The bias towards adult cows in

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the 113-119 High Street assemblage may indicate that dairy herds were a major source of the towns meat supply (*ibid.*: 433; Wilson in Hall and Kenward 110-11). At Logic Lane, Cattle were dominant, whilst Sheep and pig were also recorded. Here the animal remains were entirely comprised of domesticated animals with the exception of a single bone that may have come from a wild duck (Banks 1961-2: 64). The low occurrence of wild animals in urban assemblages is a notable and common pattern across the county from the 11<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> century (Robinson and Wilson 1987 note 84).

At New Inn Court the animal bone assemblage was unusual in that it contained a much higher proportion of pig than cattle or sheep/goat (Wilson 1983: 68). Also present in the sample were unusually high quantities of horse, deer and domestic fowl.

#### *Fish and shell*

The absence of fish bones in Late Saxon Assemblages at sites such as Church Street and 113-117 High Street may be a result of recording strategies. Sites undertaken in the last decade have produced a number of small assemblages, dominated by Eel and Herring e.g. Oxford Castle, Queens College and Lincoln College (Norton 2006; Ingreem 2002; Nicholson 2010: 211). Herring were probably imported as pickled fish while the eels are likely to have been fresh and obtained locally (Norton and Mumford 2010). Cockle and Oyster shells are present in a number of late Saxon assemblages e.g. Lincoln College (Campbell 2002: 260-1).

#### Leather

Several fragments of leather shoes, straps and cutting scraps were recovered from the earlier phases of the excavations at 79-80 St Aldates in the early 1970s and were dated to the 8<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> century and illustrated in Thornton (1977: 155-160). More shoes were found in slightly later 10<sup>th</sup> century silts at 89-91 St Aldates and large quantities of manufacturing off-cuts were found in similar conditions at 56-60 St Aldates (Dodd ed. 2003: 42).

#### Glass

An amber coloured glass ring recorded during the construction of the Town Hall in 1894 is thought to be Saxon in date (Salzman, 1939, 303) and a blue glass bead was found in a backfilled posthole of a sunken featured building at Oxford Science Park (Moore 2001: 12).

At All Saints Church on the High Street a number of objects were recovered from 10<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> century levels that appear to be associated with cloth working, these included a glass linen smoother (Dodd ed. 2003: 42, 321-2).

#### Amber

In 2002 a watching brief at Headington recorded a likely 6<sup>th</sup> century inhumation burial of an female accompanied by a range of grave goods including a necklace of amber beads (Witkin 2003).

#### Wood

Other than timbers found at the Thames crossing in St Aldates finds of worked wood are rare in contrast to their widespread use in the period. Part of a rough wooden bowl from 9<sup>th</sup> century silts at St Aldates is a rare survival of a no doubt common object (Henig 1977: 155; Booth *et al.* 2007). For structural timbers see *Carpentry* above.

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## Stone

Standing church buildings with substantial Anglo-Saxon stonework are discussed above (*Standing masonry structures*). In addition to the stone structures that remain there are some notable worked stone finds from the city. From the early Saxon period two possible quartz stone counters were found in a sunken featured building at the Oxford Science Park (Moore 2001:12). From the late Saxon period stone lamp fragments of local limestone are recorded (Dodd ed. 2003: fig 6.3.30). A reused mid/late 10<sup>th</sup> century carved interlace cross-shaft was recovered from St Aldates Church (Booth *et al.* 2007: fig 6.45; Tyler *et al.* 2001: 62, 369) and a fragment of Late Anglo Saxon grave slab was found in Oxford High Street (Ashmolean Museum; Blair 1994, fig 64) while at 117-118 St Aldate's a fragment of limestone with 11<sup>th</sup> century carving was recorded (Jope 1952-3: 109). At Logic Lane, several fragments of stone were recorded from one of the pits including coral rag similar to that used in St Michael's Church tower, shelly limestone and Oolitic limestone (Radcliffe 1961-2: 63).

## Urban Resource Assessment

Site	Early to middle Saxon pottery	OXB Saxon Oxfordshire	OXAC Cotswold ware	OXBF Southwest Oxfordshire	OXR St Neots type ware	Other
Cornmarket Hotel, 1958					Yes	Thetford ware c.900-1150
Logic Lane, 1960					Yes (over 500)	Stamford ware (9th-13th century)
Church Street, 1967	6th-8th century				Yes	Stamford ware
All Saints Church, 1973	Yes				Yes	Stamford ware French ware (8th-11th century)
St Aldates, 1971 (3 sites)		Moderate	Abundant	Moderate	Abundant	Proto St Neots type ware Stamford ware
Holybush Row, 1989			27			
The Hamel, 1975			Yes			
113-119 High Street, 1993	3 (6th-8th century)	60	408	80	1573	113 Stamford ware 66 Abingdon ware
St Thomas' Street, 1994			328		2	
Rewley Abbey, 1994			60	12	4	
Boreham's Yard 1994	2 (undiagnostic)		105	16	4	
Blue Boar Street, 1995		1		1	1	
Beaumont Street, 1995			58	3		
BHS Site, 1997-1998		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Provosts Garden, 1998		7	104	15	61	2 (Stamford ware)
Lincoln College, 2000		13	613	44	755	2 (Thetford)
5-7 Market Street, 2001		32	14		1	
Provosts Garden, 2001			8	1		
Oxford Science	953 (6th century)					

## Urban Resource Assessment

Park, 2001						
Codrington Library, 2001		10	264	48	96	
Oxford Castle, 2003		31	1914	821	925	72 (Stamford ware)
Paradise Street, 2005			27		2	
Westgate Phase 1 and 2, 2008			71	100	2	
Magdalen College School, 2008	2 (c450-850 AD)					
New College, 2008			1		1	
Bonn Square, 2008			28	2	5	
Radcliffe Infirmary, 2009	40 (c450-650 AD)					
Blue Boar Quad, 2009			13	1		
4A Merton Street						

Table 9: Summary of identifiable Saxon pottery

## Legacy

The physical legacy of the Saxon period is preserved in the fabric of the city including religious foundations, the street plan, the line of the defences and the location of the Thames Crossing. In the wider LAA village centres and Open fields were established by this time, although remain poorly understood. The burh was a planned settlement formally laid out with a regular street plan and large internal plots that were later subdivided. The defences comprised an outer ditch, bank and rampart originally in timber with an intramural wall and four gates restricting entry. The Domesday Survey for Oxford is unusually detailed and provides a unique insight into the Saxo-Norman period illustrating land ownership and value before and after the Conquest. Continuity and escalation of settlement and commercial activity is suggested into the post conquest period, despite the upheaval of the Conquest, and reflected in the continuation of cellar pit forms along the principal street frontages.

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### Further resources:

#### Geology

- Geological Conservation Review

*Summary descriptions of site evaluation of geological stratification for the county:*

<http://www.jncc.gov.uk/default.aspx?page=2947>)

- British Geological Survey Online Maps:

[http://maps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyviewer\\_google/googleviewer.html](http://maps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyviewer_google/googleviewer.html)

#### Archaeological Evidence

- Oxford Urban Archaeological Database, Oxford City Council

*A database of archaeological records for the historic city centre area. For a map of the area covered by the UAD see visit:*

<http://www.oxford.gov.uk/PageRender/decP/UrbanArchaeologicalDatabase.htm>

*To search a version of the database visit:*

<http://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/gateway/>

- Oxfordshire Historic Environment Record, Oxfordshire County Council

*A database of archaeological records for the County of Oxfordshire. To search the database visit the Heritage Gateway:*

<http://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/gateway/>

*or Oxfordshire Heritage Search:*

<http://publicapps.oxfordshire.gov.uk/wps/portal/publicapps/applications/heritage>

- Oxford History Centre (formerly the County Records Office)

*Holds large collection of historic maps and historic documents from the medieval period to the present.*

<http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/public-site/oxfordshire-history-centre>

- *Oxoniensia*

*Archaeological and architectural journal for Oxfordshire*

<http://www.oahs.org.uk/oxof.php>

- Archaeology Data Service.

*Holds archive of grey literature by participating archaeological units from c2000 onwards. Also holds complete catalogue of several archaeological journals including Medieval Archaeology as well as complete archive of CBA publications:*

<http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/>.

- Portable Antiquities Scheme

*Voluntary scheme recording archaeological objects recorded by members of the public including those by metal-detector users*

<http://www.finds.org.uk/>

Museum Archives

- The Ashmolean Museum:

<http://www.ashmolean.org/>

Also for ceramics online see the Ashmolean Potweb:

<http://potweb.ashmolean.org/PotChron7g.html>

- The Pitt Rivers Museum:

<http://www.prm.ox.ac.uk/>

- Oxfordshire County Museums:

<http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/public-site/oxfordshire-museum>



## Appendix 1: Saxon Site Gazetteer

### 1. **Cornmarket, Clarendon Hotel. 1954-5. (UAD 1)**

Late Saxon pits, 9 cellars, 5 wells recorded, street frontage appears to be at least 8-10ft east beyond the present building.

Sources: Oxoniensia 23: 1-84

### 2. **Cornmarket Street No. 13-21 and 10-19 Market Street. 1959. (UAD 2)**

Two Late Saxon pits recorded

Sources: Oxoniensia 50

### 3. **Cornmarket No 13-21. 1960 (UAD 3)**

Some Late Saxon pits

Sources: Oxoniensia 50

### 4. **Cornmarket Street No. 55-58. 1962. (UAD 4)**

Evidence of late Saxon occupation occurred along the eastern edge of the site including 24 pits, 1 hut, 25 stakeholes, 7 postholes.

Sources: Oxoniensia 50

### 5. **St Michael's Street. No. 24a. 1985. (UAD 6)**

Saxon Rampart, ditch and palisade

Sources:

Oxoniensia 1996.

### 6. **Queen Street, No. 43-44. (UAD 9)**

Archaeological levels between floor and ground surface included finely laminated clay and gravel floors. These floors were cut away in many places by later pits, but enough survived in both cellars to show that the early buildings went up to the modern frontage and probably extended well in front.

Sources: South Midlands Archaeology 20

### 7. **Jesus College, 1906-8 (UAD 10)**

Some pottery recorded, no further details

Source: UAD

### 8. **New Inn Hall Street. 1968. (UAD 12)**

Some pottery recorded, no further details

Sources: Oxoniensia 37: 239

### 9. **St Michael at the North Gate (UAD 15)**

Building survey indicates Tower of the church was 11th century in origin

Source: UAD

### 10. **St Michael at the North Gate. 1906 (UAD 18)**

Find of ceramic crucible

Source: UAD

### 11. **Cornmarket Street. 1953-54. (UAD 20)**

Observations during drainage installation recorded 2 metal knives, a ceramic lamp and pottery

Sources: Oxoniensia 1954: 118

### 12. **Cornmarket Street. St Michael at the Northgate. 1972-73 (UAD 23)**

The late Saxon remains consisted of a turf rampart with a stone revetment and a ditch, these were abandoned by the 13th century  
Sources: Dodd, A. 2003. Oxford before the University.

### 13. **St Michael at the North Gate. 1904 (UAD 28)**

Section of the City Wall revealed, possibly part of the North Gate, undated

Source: UAD

### 14. **St Michael's Street. 1976. (UAD 29)**

Saxon turf rampart recorded with residual Saxon pottery. Also some wattle and leather of Saxon-Medieval date

Source: UAD

### 15. **Cornmarket Street No. 44-46. 1970 (UAD 31)**

Seven pits were shown to be of late Saxon date and were concentrated along the street frontage and the N side of the site. Late Saxon pottery from the site included three sherds foreign to the Oxford region. As had been observed at Clarendon Hotel site, the late Saxon pits projected forwards into the W side of Cornmarket St. Evidence of late Saxon bone and iron working was recovered.

Sources: Oxoniensia 36

### 16. **Carfax, St Martins Church. 1896 (UAD 34)**

Four Saxon coins, pottery and a disc recorded

Source: UAD

### 17. **New Inn Hall Street. Frewin Hall. 1975. (UAD 38)**

The vaulted cellar of Frewin Hall was identified as the undercroft of an important stone house probably built between 1090 and 1150. Saxon pottery recorded

Source: UAD

### 18. **New Inn Hall Street. No. 20-24. 1979. (UAD 40)**

Saxon pot (St Neot's ware) was recovered from the bottom of this trench, probably from a pit.

Saxon metal street surface

Sources: UAD

### 19. **New Inn Hall Street. Frewin Hall. 1993. (UAD 42)**

Some pottery recorded, no further details

Source: Medieval Archaeology Vol 38

### 20. **Ship Street. The Oxford Story. 1986 (UAD 44)**

Foundations of a bastion was recorded oblique to the City Wall, this may date to the 11th century when the wall was diverted to provide a churchyard for St Michael at the Northgate.

Sources: Dodd, A. 2003. Oxford before the University.

**21. New Inn Hall Street. 1980. (UAD 45)**  
Saxon street surface, consisting of a pebbled surface (rather than the limestone blocks noted elsewhere in the street).

Sources: South Midlands Archaeology 1981.

**22. Turl Street. 1981. (UAD 52)**

Saxon street surface. Possible that street had originally been laid out on a different line and had been realigned westwards after encroachment by All Saints Church.

Source: UAD

**23. Queen Street, No. 33-35. 1988. (UAD 53)**

Saxon pit and well was some pottery evidence

Sources: South Midlands Archaeology 19

**24. High Street, No. 9-15. 1972. (UAD 54)**

Seven pits recorded was quantity of Saxon pottery, daub and a bone pin beater

Sources: Oxoniensia 38: 276

**25. Radcliffe Infirmary. 1938 (UAD 118)**

Find of bone heddlestick of early-middle Saxon date

Source: UAD

**26. St Aldates. No. 117-118. 1937-38 (UAD 121)**

A piece of limestone with 11th century style carving and other 13th century material was found.

Source: UAD

**27. Radcliffe Square. 1910. (UAD 128)**

Late Saxon pitchers, cooking pots and crucibles were found. Late medieval pottery was also recovered including lamps.

Source: UAD

**28. High Street. All Souls College. 1941. (UAD 129)**

Some pottery recorded, no further details

Source: UAD

**29. High Street. Oriel College, Middle Quad. 1941. (UAD 130)**

Some pottery recorded, no further details

Source: UAD

**30. Broad Street. Bodleian Quad. 1941. (UAD 133)**

Some pottery recorded, no further details

Source: UAD

**31. New Road, Nuffield College. 1940s-1950s. (UAD 141)**

Evidence of late Saxon occupation in the form of pits and pottery evidence

Sources: Oxoniensia 13

**32. St Aldate's, Town Hall. 1894 (UAD 148)**

Some pottery recorded, no further details

Source: UAD

**33. Holywell Street, New College. 1949. (UAD 149)**

A small gravel bank constructed against the footing of the wall and a deep gully also recorded. Later re-assessment of this feature

has led to the suggestion that it could have represented part of the late Saxon defences.

Source: UAD

**34. New Road, Castle Mound. 1952. (UAD 155)**

Many undisturbed late Saxon pits were found. No house structures or postholes were found, but daub with wattle marks demonstrated that there had been houses in the area. The pits contained large quantities of pottery. It has been suggested that these buildings lay on the developed street frontage of a road running from modern Bonn Square to Quaking Bridge.

Sources: Oxoniensia 17-18: 77-111

**35. Bulwarks Lane. 1931. (UAD 156)**

Some pottery recorded, no further details

Source: UAD

**36. Logic Lane. 1936. (UAD 157)**

Some pottery recorded, 3 undated skeletons.

No further details

Source: UAD

**37. Cornmarket Street No. 18-20. 1935. (UAD 158)**

Late Saxon pottery was found. Crucibles and a chalk spindle whorl were also recovered.

Source: UAD

**38. High Street. St Mary's Church. 1894. (UAD 160)**

A ceramic lamp, Late Saxon or Early Medieval in date

Source: UAD

**39. St Aldates, Christ Church. 1954-5 (UAD 164)**

Late Saxon pottery and a watercourse probably the original line of the Trill Mill Stream was recorded.

Sources: Oxoniensia 26/27

**40. Iffley Road, Magdalen College School. 1958. (UAD 171)**

Some pottery recorded, no further details

Source: UAD

**41. High Street, Brasenose College. 1959-1960. (UAD 179)**

Several late Saxon cellar pits and Saxon pottery recorded

Sources: Oxoniensia 25: 134

**42. Logic Lane. 1960-61. (UAD 181)**

Post holes and pits from the late Saxon period. Some medieval walls lay above the Saxon layers. Late Saxon pottery, animal bone and objects of metal, stone and bone.

Sources: Oxoniensia 26-27

**43. St Aldates, Christ Church. Cathedral Garden. 1961. (UAD 185)**

Late Saxon occupation layers with postholes, kilns or ovens and pits. Pottery from the 11th, 12th, 14th and 16th century was found.

Sources: Oxoniensia 26/27

**44. Brasenose Lane, 1961. (UAD 187)**

Late Saxon pottery, no further details  
Houses first mentioned here is 1188.  
Sources: Oxoniensia 26/27: 32.

**45. High Street. No. 124. 1961. (UAD 190)**

Evidence: Finds

Pottery from the 11th, 12th and 14th centuries.

Sources: Oxoniensia 26/27: 338

**46. Merton Street. Merton College. New Warden's Lodgings. 1963. (UAD 195)**

The foundation trench contained the footings of the City Wall. Within the wall lay a deposit of soil, possibly a late Saxon bank along the same line as the later wall.

Source: UAD

**47. Broad Street. Exeter College. 1962. (UAD 199)**

No City Wall was found, but to the south a loamy layer might have come from a late Saxon bank.

Sources: Oxoniensia 28

**48. St Aldates, Christ Church. Latin Chapel. 1962-63 (UAD 200)**

Late Saxon cemetery comprising several graves and human remains, radio-carbon dating carried out

Sources: Oxoniensia 26/27

**49. Old Greyfriars Street. Westgate Centre. 1968-1972. (UAD 211)**

Some evidence in the form of pits, wells and pottery was found suggesting occupation of the area before the priory was built. Only one pit suggested late Saxon activity.

Sources: Oxoniensia 25

**50. Queen's Lane. St Peter in the East Church. 1968. (UAD 212)**

A 10th century occupation level, remains of 10th century timber and stone churches and an 11th century church were found. Above this were the west wall, wall benches and floor levels from the 12th century church which has evolved into the present building. A stone coffin containing a burial with an intact shroud and an inserted second burial were found. Medieval tiles were found below the existing floors. They included inlaid tiles with keyed undersides and printed, but unkeyed tiles. In the lowest levels Neolithic flint was found.

Sources: Oxoniensia 34

**51. Church of St Budoc, 1969 (UAD 220)**

Late Saxon rubbish pit with ceramic vessel, no further details

Source: UAD

**52. Church Street. 31-34. Westgate Centre Development. 1970. (UAD 224)**

Late Saxon metal street surface. Saxon pit and pottery evidence

Sources: Oxoniensia 34

**53. Castle Street. Westgate Centre Development. 1970. (UAD 225)**

Late Saxon metal street surface. Saxon pits and postholes and pottery evidence were also recorded

Sources: Oxoniensia 36

**54. New Road, Oxford Castle. 1970-1973. (UAD 226)**

Numerous late Saxon pits, small amounts of late Saxon pottery were found. V shaped ditch recorded. There were also postholes from a late Saxon sunken hut. Above the remains were other late Saxon occupation layers. The features were sealed below a layer of clay, probably from the moat or bailey bank. The alignment of the hut, dated to the 10th century, suggests an east-west street, a continuation of modern High Street and Queen Street. This street would have been realigned when the castle was built. Finds from the trench were late Saxon pottery and a 10th century coin. Late medieval and post medieval pottery, leatherwork and iron objects were recovered from the filling of the moat near the trenches. The sequence of development in the area began with late Saxon occupation along an east west street.

Sources: Oxoniensia 36

**55. St Aldates. No. 79-80. 1970-71. (UAD 227)**

A narrow strip was excavated through 2 m of stratified deposits to the 1st gravel terrace. This was overlain by a layer of alluvium from around 600 bc. Above this was a man-made clay bank, cut into by 2 gullies, one revetted with wattle fencing. This suggested flax retting. Another wattle fence might have marked a boundary. The next layer also contained wattle fences and had timber baulks and a hearth cut into the clay bank. These two layers were quite close in date, late 8th to early 9th centuries. Floors and occupation layers were found above this. Robber trenches, beam slots and post holes dated from the late Saxon period, but might have been from an activity area not a building. Several hearths were found. The first structure on the site was of 11th or 12th century date. textile. It has been suggested that during the late Saxon period the clay bank functioned as a causeway.

Sources: Dodd, A. 2003. Oxford before the University.

**56. Parks Road, University Museum. 1855-60 (UAD 235)**

A bronze key, possibly Saxon and Danish, was recovered.

Sources: Archaeologica Oxoniensis

**57. St Ebbe's Street. Littlegate. 1971. (UAD 239)**

Saxon pit and some pottery recorded

Sources: Oxoniensia 37

**58. Speedwell Street. No 2a. 1971. (UAD 241)**

The middle Saxon clay bank found at 79 St Aldate's was found. Above this was a wattle fence in a layer of alluvium, sealed below further silting.

Sources: Oxoniensia 37

**59. St Aldates, Linacre College. 1971. (UAD 242)**

The middle Saxon clay bank found at 79 St Aldate's was found, and appeared to tail off to the east. Two pits were cut into it, in which were well preserved wood and leather all appear to be early to middle Saxon

Sources: Oxoniensia 37

**60. St Aldates, Christ Church. Tom Quad. 1972 (UAD 252)**

Two skeletons were investigated by archaeologists. The trench for the drain had been taken to the natural gravel. Human bone had been found. The two skeletons were at the bottom of the trench, lying EW, the graves overlying. In each case the uncharred skeletons were lying on a bed of charcoal. Radiocarbon dating of the mainly oak charcoal suggested a 9th century date.

Sources: Oxoniensia 38: 270

**61. St Aldate's, Christ Church. 1972 (UAD 254)**

Two skeletons recorded during construction then subject to salvage excavation. Both lay on a bed of charcoal. Radio carbon dated.

Source: UAD

**62. Merton Street. Corpus Christi College. 1972. (UAD 255)**

A ditch was recorded 4m deep and cut into loam, not gravel. This ditch could have been part of the 10th century defences.

Sources: Oxoniensia 38

**63. Castle Street. No. 1-4. Westgate Centre. 1972. (UAD 256)**

The positions of 96 pits and wells were established, dating from late Saxon through to the post-medieval period. A section through Castle Street was visible in the side of the excavation, showing 16 late Saxon and medieval street surfaces. Pottery from the late Saxon to post medieval was found.

Sources: Oxoniensia 38

**64. St Ebbe's Street. No. 28-31. 1972. (UAD 257)**

Most medieval features had been destroyed by later cellars. One stone lined 14th century pit was partially excavated, producing fragments of a glass vessel.

Sources: Oxoniensia 38

**65. New Inn Court. 1972. (UAD 260)**

Three hollows or post holes were thought of possible prehistoric date. Flint was found

nearby. Late Saxon pits and post holes were found cut into the lower topsoil and the gravel. A group of post holes were arranged in a rectangle of the same proportions as the sunken featured building at the castle.

Sources: Oxoniensia 38

**66. High Street. No. 126. 1972. (UAD 262)**

Late Saxon rubbish pits were found. A building with a semi-basement and partially tiled floor had occupied the site, probably from the 14th century. It appeared to have shops fronting on the street with a hall behind. A tiled floor and hearth were found. Above this a 16th century timber-framed structure had been built. It had shared a stone garderobe with the adjoining property on the east. Timber, including a window, was recovered and painted wall plaster was recorded.

Sources: Oxoniensia 64

**67. High Street. All Saints Church. (UAD 272)**

Six phases of Saxon occupation followed by four medieval phases below the 19th century building rubble. The lowest level had an expensive spread of charred grain suggesting a farmyard. The grain produced a date of c870. Other yard surfaces overlay this. A fixed property boundary, marked by 8 post holes, crossed the site. Charred wattle structures and a wattle fence, dated c970, formed later boundaries. To the west was a pit, probably a cellar (Phase 3). It contained post holes and signs of horizontal wall planks. Later it became a cess pit. In Phase 4 a small rectangular stone building lay close to the street frontage. A furnace had been installed later in the west wall and the building extended. A further building was added to the north (Phase 5). Phase 6 represented the earliest church, a rectangle on the line of the first building. On the north was the cemetery, graves having subsided into the pit. During Phase 7 the church was extended with a north aisle.

Sources: Dodd, A. 2003. Oxford before the University.

**68. 40 George Street. No 40. 1977-8 (UAD 283)**

Possible Saxon burh Ditch recorded below medieval City Wall.

Source: UAD

**69. Bulwarks Lane. No 4. 1980. (UAD 286)**

It has been suggested that an earthen rampart, connected to the burghal defences, ran across that area. At the bottom of the trench an area of apparent turf stripping was seen to the west. An irregular gully and a post-in-trench feature parallel to Bulwarks Lane were found in the east. The latter contained 9th or 10th century sherds. A post hole also cut into the original

topsoil. These levels were dated to the 11th century.

Sources: Oxoniensia 48

**70. Queen Street, No. 13-18 and Pembroke Street No. 35. 1976. (UAD 287)**

Late Saxon pits were found at 13 Queen Street and along the Pembroke Street frontage. A late Saxon ceramic spindle whorl and a few metal objects, including an early post medieval candlestick, were also recovered.

Sources: Oxoniensia 48

**71. Queen Street, No. 11-12. Hinxey Hall. 1980. (UAD 288)**

Late Saxon features and layers were close to the street frontage. Within a sequence of gravel road surfaces a late Saxon sherd was found in one of the lower levels.

Sources: Oxoniensia 48

**72. New Road, Oxford Castle, Macclesfield House 1965-1967. (UAD 289)**

Occupation levels containing pottery, charcoal and a piece of slag were found below the Mound capping. One post hole was found. This activity seems to date from the half century preceding construction of the Castle. In the basement a burial was the only pre-Mound feature, but this was undatable. Most of the area was over the moat, from which plant material was recovered. The late Saxon occupation may have been inside or outside any 11th century defences. It is possible that the Mound stopped at the level of the well chamber when the timber castle was built, but raised before the stone keep was constructed.

Sources: Oxoniensia 41

**73. St Aldates. No. 65. 1979-81 (UAD 290)**

A river channel was discovered. Stone paving was found below the river level, suggesting a ford. Pottery and environmental remains gave a 10th to 11th century date. From the 12th century the channel silted up. During the late 11th and 12th centuries the crossing appears to have been further south. Finds included pottery from the late Saxon onwards, metal objects, glass, wood bone and leather objects and environmental remains.

Sources: Dodd, A. 2003. Oxford before the University.

**74. Queen Street, No. 23-26. 1960. (UAD 291)**

The earliest occupation was late Saxon. Pits, post holes, wells, stake holes, possible cellars and possible sunken featured buildings were found. Above this level were a number of early medieval pits. These did not occur near the street frontage, suggesting this had been built up. The site shows a similar pattern of development to other areas which began to be

occupied in the late Saxon period. The animal bone from the site dated to the late Saxon and early medieval periods. No indication of specialised butchery sites was found.

Sources: UAD

**75. St Aldates, Christ Church. Cathedral Cloister. 1985. (UAD 296)**

Work was carried out prior to construction of a formal garden in the cloister garth, which involved burial of an exposed stone foundation. The earliest layers consisted of gravely loam lying on the natural gravel. In this 14 intercutting burials were found, a few containing nails. No other traces of coffins were seen. Two burials lay on beds of charcoal and another seemed to have been in a stone cist. Further chanel was also found. Above this were early 12th century layers, pits and a gully. Further burials were found.

Sources: Oxoniensia 52

**76. St Aldates, Christ Church Meadow Building. 1863 (UAD 298)**

The work revealed that natural ground level fell sharply in the south of Christ Church and c6 m of made ground were found in places. The line of a river bed was found, crossed by a paved ford. On the north side of the new building, part of a paved terrace with steps leading down were found and a stone drain also passed through the site.

Source: UAD

**77. St Aldate's 1890 (UAD 299)**

Stone coffin recorded. Contained ring of plaited gold rods. Dated to the 11th century based on style

Source: UAD

**78. Holywell Street, New College. 1993. (UAD 303)**

On the south side of the City Wall an earthen bank was discovered which predated the wall. Although only residual Roman pottery was found it is suggested that the bank represents the remains of the late Saxon burghal defences. The City Wall followed its line. A few medieval sherds were recovered, but most pottery was post medieval or modern.

Source: UAD

**79. Jowett Walk. 1993. (UAD 304)**

Some residual Saxon pottery was also found. The site was in use from the late 11th century producing numerous ditches and pits.

Sources: Oxoniensia 60

**80. Magdalen Bridge. 1884 (UAD 313)**

Dredging near the river recovered human and animal remains along with iron spurs, stirrups, a horseshoe and shears. Thought to belong to a Danish burial

Source: UAD

**81. Paradise Square. 1994-1995. (UAD 315)**

The natural gravel on the site sloped down to the south, but no sign of the edge of the Trill Mill channel was seen. The silts were cut by gullies which suggested drainage for raised cultivation beds dated to the 12th and 13th centuries. A single human burial was found, possibly connected to the Friars of the Sack who held the land for a short period in the 13th century. Subsequent layers showed that the area had been used as gardens until well into the post medieval period.

Sources: Oxoniensia 62

**82. Walton Street. 1975 (UAD 318)**

Surface finds recorded from Walton Street include Saxon pottery, oyster shells, tile, metal buckle, iron nails, charcoal and animal bone

Source: UAD

**83. Longwall Street, Magdalen College, Longwall Quad. 1991-1995. (UAD 321)**

Early to Late Saxon pottery recorded

Sources: Oxoniensia 64

**84. New Road, Castle Mound. 1972. (UAD 323)**

Two late Saxon pits, containing a few sherds of pottery, were found behind the wall. These were overlain by a series of early 19th century pits which had destroyed most of the early archaeology.

Sources: Oxoniensia 38: 260

**85. Pembroke College. 1973 (UAD 324)**

Possible Saxon turf rampart recorded in watching brief

Source: UAD

**86. Paradise Street. 1977 (UAD 331)**

Evidence of Saxon occupation

Source: UAD

**87. Catte Street. 1980. (UAD 333)**

Saxon metalled street surface

Sources: South Midlands Archaeology 1981

**88. High Street. 1981-1984. (UAD 337)**

Saxon metalled street surface

Sources: Dodd, A. 2003. Oxford before the University.

**89. St Aldates. No. 89-91. 1982. (UAD 340)**

Deposits suggest that the channel had almost dried up by the Roman period, forming water meadow, but that the water level was artificially raised by the 10th century. The exact dates are unknown. A number of gullies and wattle fences were found in the peat, pointing to fishing or reed gathering in shallow water. A revetted gravel path may have provided access to open water. Above this was an 11th century dump layer which reclaimed the land on which building began in the 12th century. Gullies and pits or wells were found.

Sources: Dodd, A. 2003. Oxford before the University.

**90. Queen Street, No. 7-8. 1985. (UAD 344)**

11th century cellar, Saxon metalled street surface

Sources: Dodd, A. 2003. Oxford before the University.

**91. St Aldates. No. 89. 1985. (UAD 345)**

To the south a Roman surface appeared cut away to create an artificial watercourse, sealed by 10th century marsh. The work dates from the 9th century, and produced blue clay similar to that of the bank found in previous excavations. The Cut may be a defensive ditch on the riverward side of a settlement near the new crossing. Possible traces of a revetted gravel platform from the late Saxon causeway were seen below 12th century street frontage buildings. When the pottery was analysed the stratigraphic record suggested the earliest buildings were late Saxon, preserved by rising water levels and building restarted later in the 12th century.

Sources: Dodd, A. 2003. Oxford before the University.

**92. Nuffield College, 1988 (UAD 348)**

Thick layer of black silt c2.9m deep. Possibly the Saxon Burh Ditch

Source: UAD

**93. St Aldates. No. 55-60. 1988 (UAD 349)**

The north bank had been found at the Police Station on the opposite side of the road. A number of early hurdle waterfronts with 10th century material were located. One appeared to be against an island of alluvium, conjectured as the Saxon south bank, isolated by an artificial flood channel. In front of these features was a long log revetment, possibly associated with Grand Pont. Alluvial accumulations and land reclamation platforms were found.

Sources: Oxoniensia 26/27

**94. St Aldates, BT Tunnel. 1991. (UAD 355)**

Layer of blue clay with a layer of cobbles on its surface. The clay may be part of the causeway proposed from excavations elsewhere. It has been suggested that the cobbles are part of a middle Saxon trackway. It was cut by large timber piles, part of a raft for the Norman bridge or remains of an earlier timber bridge.

Sources: Dodd, A. 2003. Oxford before the University.

**95. High Street. No. 113-119. 1992-4. (UAD 365)**

The earliest phase of major activity was the Late Saxon. Buildings along the High Street frontage were found, but the main occupation was centred on cellared halls around the

middle of the plot. Gravel street surfaces were seen outside No 118.

Sources: Oxoniensia 2000

**96. Holywell Street, New College Mound. 1993. (UAD 367)**

Pottery from the 9th to the 16th century was recovered.

Sources: Oxoniensia 60

**97. St Aldates. Head of the river. 1994. (UAD 369)**

At No 42 the lowest levels contained a sequence of river channels, probably late Saxon, over which dumping had taken place. This was overlain by late 12th century and later floor levels. Above the medieval layers was a probable 17th century stone foundation, truncated by a 19th century cellar. Further south there was also evidence for silted or reclaimed channels. This was probably the Trill Mill Stream.

Sources: Dodd, A. 2003. Oxford before the University.

**98. High Street. No. 105. 1972. (UAD 370)**

Burnt daub and sherd of pottery, possibly Saxon

Sources: Oxoniensia 40

**99. St Cross Road. St Cross College. 1994. (UAD 376)**

Residual late Saxon pottery

Source: UAD

**100. Excavations at Whitehouse Road. 1995 (UAD 384)**

Saxon river channel

Source: UAD

**101. Queen Street, No. 20. British Home Stores. 1996. (UAD 385)**

Pits, postholes, wells and foundations from mainly the 11th - 13th centuries were found, their distribution suggesting possible tenement boundaries. Environmental samples suggested low status domestic activity. Some late Saxon pottery was found.

Source: UAD

**102. The Sackler Library. 1997-9 (UAD 395)**

Some pottery recorded

Source: UAD

**103. Brasenose Lane, Lincoln College. 1997-1999. (UAD 402)**

Below the floor of the wine cellar and bar at about 3 m in depth a number of floor surfaces and occupation deposits from the 10th and 11th centuries were found. The area had been used in the late Saxon period and two houses, represented by post holes and stake holes, were located. Associated with the structures were pits and a possible well. Overlying this phase was a layer of clay and burnt daub with quantities of charcoal.

Source: UAD

**104. High Street, Queens College. 1998. (UAD 407)**

At the southern end a gravel surface, a pit and a posthole with 10th century deposits including slag were found. These finds suggested a yard surface.

Source: UAD

**105. New Road, Oxford Castle. 1999. (UAD 412)**

Late Saxon soil layers were seen in two trenches. Medieval features consisted of a large wall adjacent to the round tower in the south. This may have been a link with the City Wall rather than part of the castle wall.

Source: UAD

**106. Cornmarket 13-21. 2000 (UAD 423)**

10th century pit with pottery and daub

Source: UAD

**107. Brasenose Lane, Exeter College. 1999. (UAD 424)**

No datable finds or features, three sherds of OXY pottery dating to the late Saxon period.

Source: UAD

**108. High Street. No. 113-119. 1991. (UAD 426)**

Trenching was carried out in the small area of garden. The earliest levels consisted of ancient soils on the natural gravel. These were cut by early medieval pits. A number of floor levels were associated with a stone footing from the same period.

Source: UAD

**109. New Inn Hall Street. No. 6-9. 1974. (UAD 460)**

Medieval and late Saxon pits were recorded. The site has been heavily damaged by later cellars.

Source: UAD

**110. New Inn Hall Street. No. 1-7. 1980. (UAD 468)**

Saxon street surface were seen in the sewer connection. Stonework from St Peter-le-Bailey church was seen along the west side. A black deposit of Saxon date was seen. Among the finds was a piece of leather with stitching along its edge. A quantity of human remains were also found. Some recording work was carried out on the buildings themselves.

Source: UAD

**111. Queen Street, No. 4. 1986. (UAD 487)**

About 2 m below the present pavement level were a series of late Saxon and early medieval gravelled, metalled surfaces from roads and markets, the earliest dating from the 10th century. At that date the street frontage lay further south. Evidence for encroachment onto the market area came from an 11th century well connected to a cellar by a short passage.

The partly filled well had been used as a cess pit and yard surfaces had subsided into it.

Source: UAD

**112. Queen Street and St Ebbe's Street. 1997. (UAD 493)**

The earliest archaeological features were two late Saxon pits. These were disturbed by medieval pits and construction of a stone wall, which may have been a property boundary.

Source: UAD

**113. Cowley place. No 1 and Nos 2-3 2000-1 (UAD 494)**

11th century pottery recorded

Source: UAD

**114. Holywell Street, New College. 1987. (UAD 497)**

These cut into red, clay loam, typical of the turf facing of the Saxon rampart. This section was part of the extension of the town and might have been expected to have stone facing from the start.

Source: UAD

**115. St Aldates. St Aldates Church. 1999. (UAD 516)**

Evidence for Saxon occupation came from eight charcoal lined burials and a small area of occupation surface in the nave. A fragment of 10th century carved stone was found in the masonry of the south nave wall.

Sources: Dodd, A. 2003. Oxford before the University.

**116. Abingdon Road. Salter's Boatyard. 2000. (UAD 615)**

At the bottom were two clay layers containing oyster shell and animal bone, which might be Saxon refuse dumping. Above were further clay layers, possibly from land reclamation. Oyster shell and animal bones diagnostic of Saxon period

Source: UAD

**117. High Street. No. 1-3. 1978. (UAD 620)**

Some St Neot's ware pottery was recovered from a pit in the NE corner when foundations were dug.

Source: UAD

**118. Excavations at St John's College. 1975 (UAD 626)**

10th century deposits

Source: UAD

**119. Paradise Street, Castle Mill Stream. 1962. (UAD 643)**

A 10th - 11th century iron spearhead was found in the bank. During pumping for foundation work the layers to the west were exposed. The natural gravel was overlain by 1 m of alluvium sealed below 2 m of modern tipped deposit.

Sources: Oxoniensia 29/30: 192

**120. Carfax. 1931 (UAD 682)**

Saxon loom weight

Source: UAD

**121. Recorded finds at Radcliffe Infirmary. 1770 (UAD 728)**

Three mounds recorded containing human remains, thought to be a Saxon cemetery

Source: UAD

**122. High Street. No. 91. 1979. (UAD 758)**

Saxon street surface

Source: UAD

**123. Recorded finds at St Aldate's. 1883 (UAD 1182)**

11th century iron spur

Source: UAD

**124. Recorded finds at Christ Church. 1887 (UAD 1203)**

11th century copper crucifix

Source: UAD

**125. Recorded finds at Hertford College. 1887 (UAD 1208)**

Saxon vessel

Source: UAD

**126. Excavations at Broad Street No 27. 1913 (UAD 1301)**

Undated turf rampart

Source: UAD

**127. St Aldates. 24-26. Police Station. 1987. (UAD 1536)**

North edge of the 12th century channel was exposed. This had been revetted with stakes and planks, the latter forming a sluice for an outfall ditch.

Sources: Dodd, A. 2003. Oxford before the University.

**128. St Aldate's Street. No 97. 1980 (UAD 1537)**

Possible Saxon-medieval street surface

Source: UAD

**129. St Aldates. No. 33. 1979. (UAD 1547)**

Remains of two piles, possibly from a timber bridge, were found. These were overlain by a stone causeway. Buildings were found right up against it. The stonework was reminiscent of that of the Folly Bridge arches. Observations on the Abingdon Road found similar stonework as far south as Eastwyke. This appears to be the remains of the Grandpont built by d'Oilly.

Sources: Oxoniensia 49: 57-100

**130. Watching brief at University Sports Centre. 2002 (UAD 1605)**

Two gullies containing 10th-11th century pottery

Source: UAD

**131. Recorded observations at St Ebbe's Church. 2004 (UAD 1634)**

Medieval pits dating to late 11th century, one is possibly a cellar pit

Source: UAD

**132. Excavations at All Souls College. 2001 (UAD 1647)**

Late Saxon cellar pit

Source: UAD

**133. Corpus Christi Music Room. 2007 (UAD 1714)**

Mortared stone structure, possibly representing the defensive line of the late Saxon burh and a west-east aligned inhumation possibly associated with an early phase of St Frideswide's priory.

Source: UAD

**134. Archaeological recording at New College Bastion 11. 2008 (UAD 1719)**

Saxon defensive bank recorded

Source: UAD

**135. New College, Bastion 11. 2008 (UAD 1734)**

Traces of Saxon turf rampart

Source: UAD

**136. Magdalen College School. 2008 (UAD 1738)**

Residual early to middle Saxon pottery

**137. Possible medieval floor surface associated with the abbey**

Source: UAD

**138. Electricity Sub station, University Parks, Oxford. 2009 (UAD 1747)**

Fragment of 13th-14th century tile

Source: UAD

**139. Blue Boar Quad, Christ Church. 2007 (UAD 1749)**

Building, possibly 13th century, deposits and pits dating to 13th century. 15th-16th century wall

Source: UAD

**140. Queen Street/St Ebbe's Street, Oxford. 1998 (UAD 1752)**

Late Saxon pits and postholes

Source: UAD

**141. ROQ Evaluation. 2009 (UAD 1761)**

Early to middle Saxon building indicative of 5th-6th century dispersed settlement in the area

Source: UAD

**142. Binsey Meadow. (OHER 6798)**

Limited excavations carried out on oval enclosure thought to be associated with St Mary's Church. The enclosure was probably first created in the Iron Age-Roman period, stone footing or revetment added or maintained at a later date, possibly in the Saxon period. Quantities of burnt daub also recorded. Radio carbon dating from the site produced three broad date ranges – AD 80-530; AD 900-1220; AD 1260-1470. Single potsherd from the 5th-6th century.

Sources: Oxoniensia 53: 3-21

**143. Littlemore. Oxford Science Park. 2001. (OHER 16299)**

6th-7th century Saxon settlement represented by a number of sunken featured buildings.

Large assemblage of pottery

Sources: Oxoniensia 66

**144. Littlemore. Sandford Road. Speedwell School. 2002. (OHER 16966)**

Medieval pottery was recorded on site, possibly as a result of medieval agricultural practices in the general area.

Sources: OHER

**145. Headington. Stephens Road. No. 2. 2003. (OHER 16973)**

Saxon female burial with a number of associated grave goods including several copper alloy artefacts, an amber necklace, an iron knife and an unidentified iron object

Source: OHER

**146. Barracks Lane. 2005. (OHER 26145)**

Evidence: agricultural

11th century quarries or pits excavated in second phase of archaeological evaluation. It is thought that during the late Saxon period the area was agricultural land away from the wooded and marshy areas. Four sherds of late Saxon to medieval pottery recorded.

Sources: OHER

## Appendix 2: Saxon Street Network

Reference	Name	Documentary Evidence	Archaeological Evidence
1	Alfred Street (St Edwards Street?)	1200 (Gelling, 1954)	Norman Evidence for metalled surface recorded during excavations at Christ Church suggesting road was laid down some time in the 12th century. Originally extended down to St Frideswide's Lane but this section closed in later 12th century (REF)
2	Banbury Road	1388 (Gelling, 1954)	Medieval
3	Bear Lane	Late Saxon (Salter)	Saxon?
4	Beef Lane (Beef Hall Lane)	1411 (Gelling, 1954)	Medieval Metalled surface of small limestone cobbles. No dating evidence (Anon, 1976)
5	Blue Boar Street	Built 1532 (Gelling, 1954)	Medieval Possible cobbled surface recorded during borehole survey. No dating evidence (UAD 457)
6	Brasenose Lane (St Mildred's Lane)	1188 (Salter)	Norman 12th century road overlying late Saxon evidence (Sturdy, 1961-62)
7	Brewer's Street (Sleying Lane)	1478 (Gelling, 1954)	Late medieval extramural street
8	Broad Street (Horsemonger Street)	1235 (Gelling, 1954)	Medieval extramural street. Evidence of early road surface at St Mary Magdalen Church at a depth of 1ft (Sturdy, 1963)
9	Bulwarks Lane (Bullocks Lane)	1578 (Agas Map)	Medieval
10	Castle Street	1661 (Gelling, 1954)	Saxon (original alignment) 18 street layers recorded, earliest evidence from 11th century predating the castle (Hassall, 1971; Hassall, Halpin and Mellor, 1989)
11	Catte Street	1210 (Gelling, 1954)	Saxon (originally extramural) Early metalled street surfaces recorded in 1978 and 1980 (UAD 538; Durham, 1981a)
12	Church Street (Friars Street)	1490 (Gelling, 1954)	Saxon 8 layers of street surfaces recorded during excavations in the 1970s. No dating evidence for lowest two layers (Layer 7, 8) but St Neot's pottery recorded from layer 6 (Hassall, 1971; Hassall, Halpin and Mellor, 1989)
13	Cornmarket (North Gate Street)	1445 (Gelling, 1954)	Saxon Metalled surfaces recorded underneath Clarendon Hotel (Jope, 1958)
14	Drapery Lane (off Cornmarket)	1349 (Salter)	Medieval
15	Exeter Lane (between Ship St	Medieval	Medieval Closed in 17th century to when the Bodleian was extended. Early

	and Smithgate)		street surfaces recorded in 19th century excavations at Old Schools Square (Hurst, 1887)
16	Frewen court (Boden's Lane)	12th Century	Medieval
17	George Street (Irishman Street	1251 (Gelling, 1954)	Medieval extra mural street
18	Gloucester Green	1555 (Gelling, 1954)	Medieval
19	The Hamel (St Thomas' parish)	1407 (Gelling, 1954)	Medieval
20	Hare Hall Lane (closed)	1447 (Gelling, 1954)	Medieval
21	High Street (Eastgate Street)	1661 (Gelling, 1954)	Saxon Undated street metalling recorded Anon, 1977; UAD 616; UAD 617; UAD 758) Late Saxon evidence from All Saints Church (Dodd, 2003), 3 gravel street surfaces from 113-119 High Street (Walker and King, 2000) Deep channel, possibly 12th century central road drain recorded in 1981 (Durham, 1982)
22	Hollybush Row (St Thomas' parish)	1772 (Gelling, 1954)	Medieval Medieval street levels recorded during excavations in 1900 (UAD 906)
23	Holywell Street	1772 (Gelling, 1954)	Medieval? Early street surface recorded in 19th century (Hurst, 1887-1914)
24	Hythe Bridge Street	13th century	Medieval Paved way recorded in early 19th century, no dating evidence (UAD 1398)
25	Little Jewry Lane (closed 1545)	1285 (Gelling, 1954)	Norman?
26	Kepeharm Lane (closed 1606)	1325 (Gelling, 1954)	Medieval
27	Kybold Street (closed 1447)	1215 (Gelling, 1954)	Norman Medieval street surface recorded during excavations at Logic Lane, evidence suggests built post 1120/30 (Radcliffe, 1961-62)
28	Littlegate Street	1241 (Gelling, 1954)	Medieval
29	Logic Lane (closed)	1247 (Gelling, 1954)	Norman Medieval street surface recorded during excavations at Logic Lane, evidence suggests built post 1120/30 (Radcliffe, 1961-62)
30	Long wall Street	1772 (Gelling, 1954)	Medieval extra mural street Number of early street surfaces were recorded to a depth of 1.8m, no dating evidence (UAD 510)
31	Magpie Lane (Grove Street)	1230 (Gelling, 1954)	Saxon-Medieval?
32	Market Street	12th century	Saxon? Originally a continuation of St Mildred's Lane, early street surfaces recorded in 1896 but no dating evidence (Hurst,

			1887)
33	Merton Street (St John's Street)	c.1200	Saxon? Early street surfaces recorded in 19th century but no dating evidence (Hurst, 1887)
34	New College Lane (closed)	1661 (Gelling, 1954)	Saxon-Medieval? Early street surfaces recorded in 19th century but no dating evidence (Hurst, 1887)
35	New Inn Hall Street (North Bailey?)	1399 (Gelling, 1954)	Saxon Evidence for late Saxon street surfaces consisting of pebbled surface recorded, dating evidence also noted (UAD 40; Durham, 1981a)
36	Oriel Street (Shidyerd Street)	1210 (Gelling, 1954)	Saxon-Medieval? Medieval street surfaces recorded, presence of cellars had destroyed earlier evidence (UAD 486) Evidence of 12th-13th century street frontage occupation, southern part of the road enclosed by 1365 (Sturdy, 1961-62)
37	Overhee Lane (closed) Between St Aldates and Blackfriars	1190 (Gelling, 1954)	Medieval
38	Paradise Street	1661 (Gelling, 1954)	Medieval? Although not documented in the medieval period a 12th century cobbled surface was recorded there in 1980, possibly part of the friary? (UAD 469)
39	Parks Road	1578 (Agas Map)	Medieval Noted on Agas' map as Beaumont Street
40	Pembroke Street (Pennyfarthing Lane)	1363 (Gelling, 1954)	Medieval
41	Queen Street (Great Bailey)	1260 (Gelling, 1954)	Saxon Dated Late Saxon gravel road surfaces recorded in excavations in the 1980s (Durham, 1981b; Halpin, 1983)
42	Queen's Lane		Saxon-Medieval? Early street surfaces recorded but no dating evidence (Anon, 1971) 15th century tiles recorded associated with probable road surface at a depth of c1m (Hurst, 1887)
43	Rose Lane	1250 (Salter)	Medieval extra mural road
44	St Aldate's Street (Fish Street)	1369 (Gelling, 1954)	Saxon street surface Early street surfaces recorded in several locations without dating evidence (UAD 1537; Saxon stone street surface recorded (Hurst, 1887), further limestone sets recorded in 1980 (UAD 1538) Evidence for late Saxon gravelled and pebbled street surfaces recorded (Durham, 1981a)
45	St Cross Road	medieval	Originally led to the 11th century church

	(Holywell)		and manor but not beyond
46	St Ebbe's Street		Although in an area of Saxon occupation there is no evidence of Saxon or early street surfaces in the area (UAD Mon 730)
47	St Frideswide's Lane (closed)		Saxon? Closed in 16th century when Christ Church was built, evidence of early street surfaces recorded in 1961 (Sturdy, 1961-62)
48	St Giles' Street	1279 (Salter)	Undated early street surface recorded in 1895 (Hurst, 1887)
49	St Michaels Street (Bocardo Lane)	1405 (Gelling, 1954)	Saxon? Possible Saxon street surfaces recorded in 1976 but no reliable dating evidence (UAD 29)
50	St Thomas Street (St Thomas' parish)	12th century	Several recent excavations have recorded development along the street frontage from the 12th century (Cook, 1999; Grundon, 1999; Moore J, 2000; Moore H, 2006)
51	Schools Street (closed 1737)	1275 (Gelling, 1954)	Medieval
52	Ship Street (Somenors Lane)	1385 (Gelling, 1954)	Saxon intra mural road Saxon pottery recorded in early 20th century (UAD 10)
53	Shitbarn Lane (closed 1306)	1290 (Gelling, 1954)	Medieval
54	Shoe Lane (Sewys Lane (partially closed)	1279 (Gelling, 1954)	Medieval
55	Turl Street	1363 (Gelling, 1954)	Saxon Late Saxon and medieval street surfaces recorded indicating slightly different alignment (UAD 52). Early medieval street surfaces also recorded during later watching brief (UAD 552)
56	Worcester Street (Stockwell Street)	1235 (Gelling, 1954)	Medieval street surface on an earlier alignment linking the castle to Beaumont Palace
57	? Closed by 1400	Early medieval	

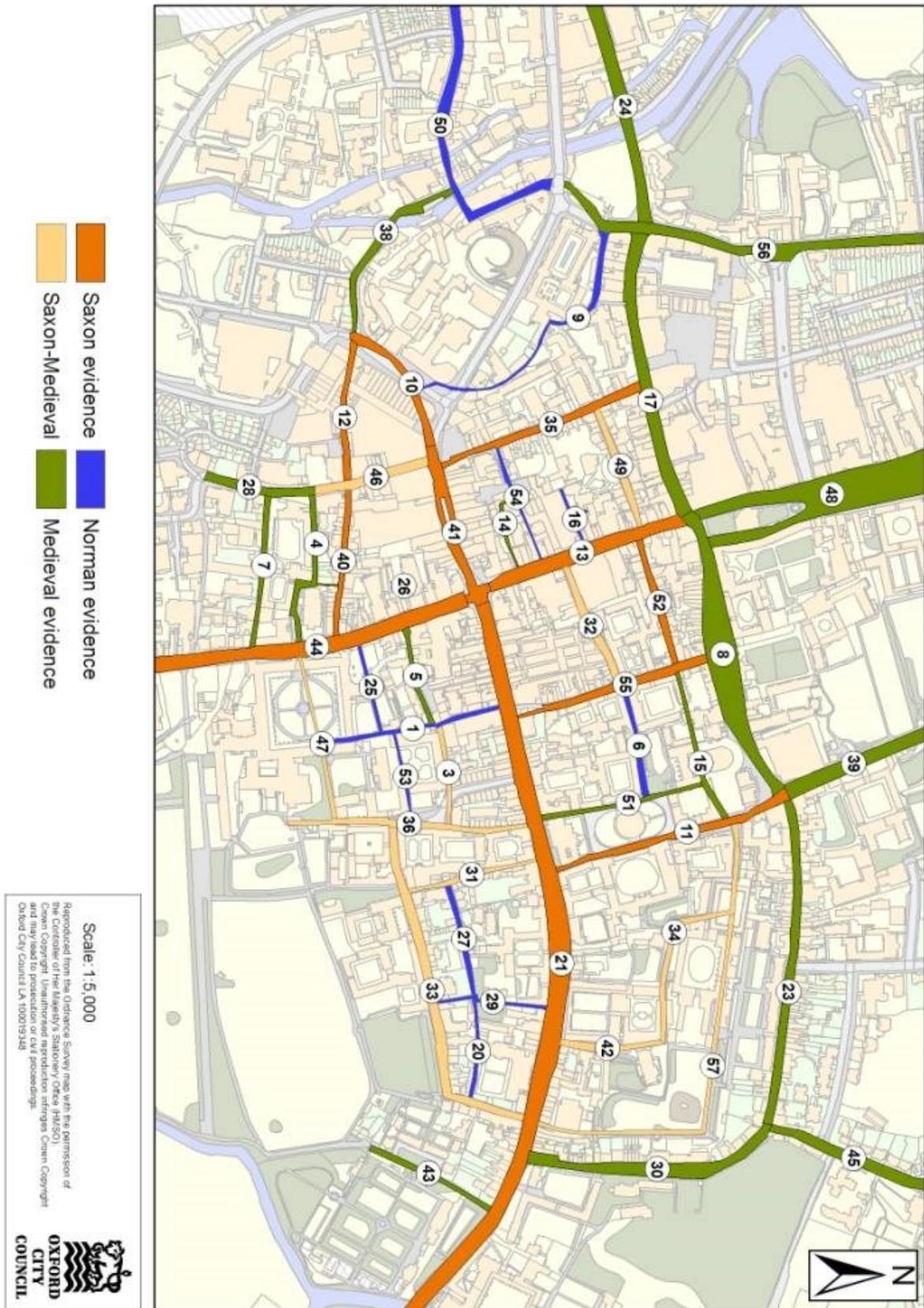


Figure 1: Saxon-Medieval street network

Appendix 3: Figures

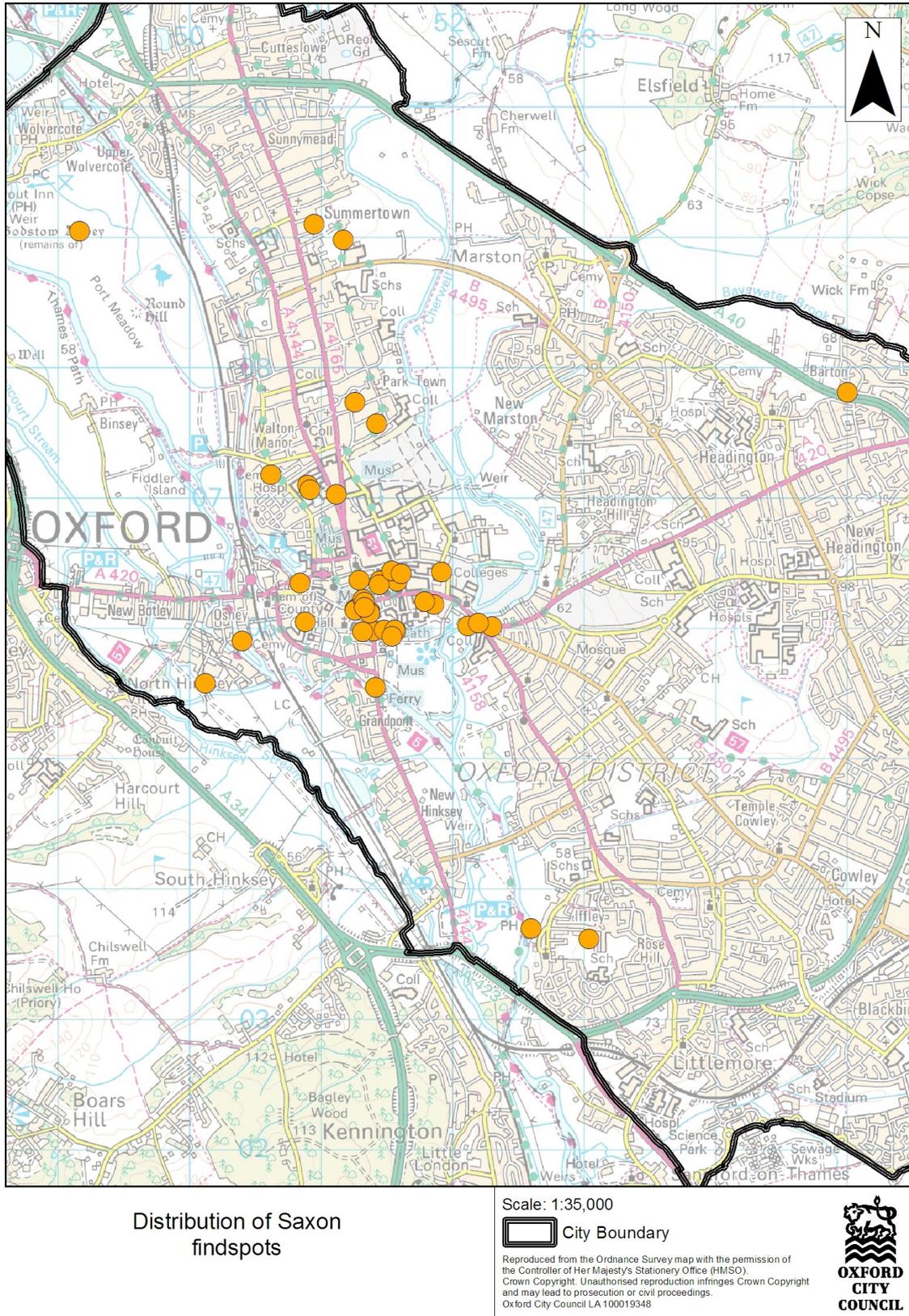


Figure 2: OHER records for Anglo-Saxon period

**OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCE ASSESSMENT- ANGLO-SAXON AND SCANDINAVIAN**

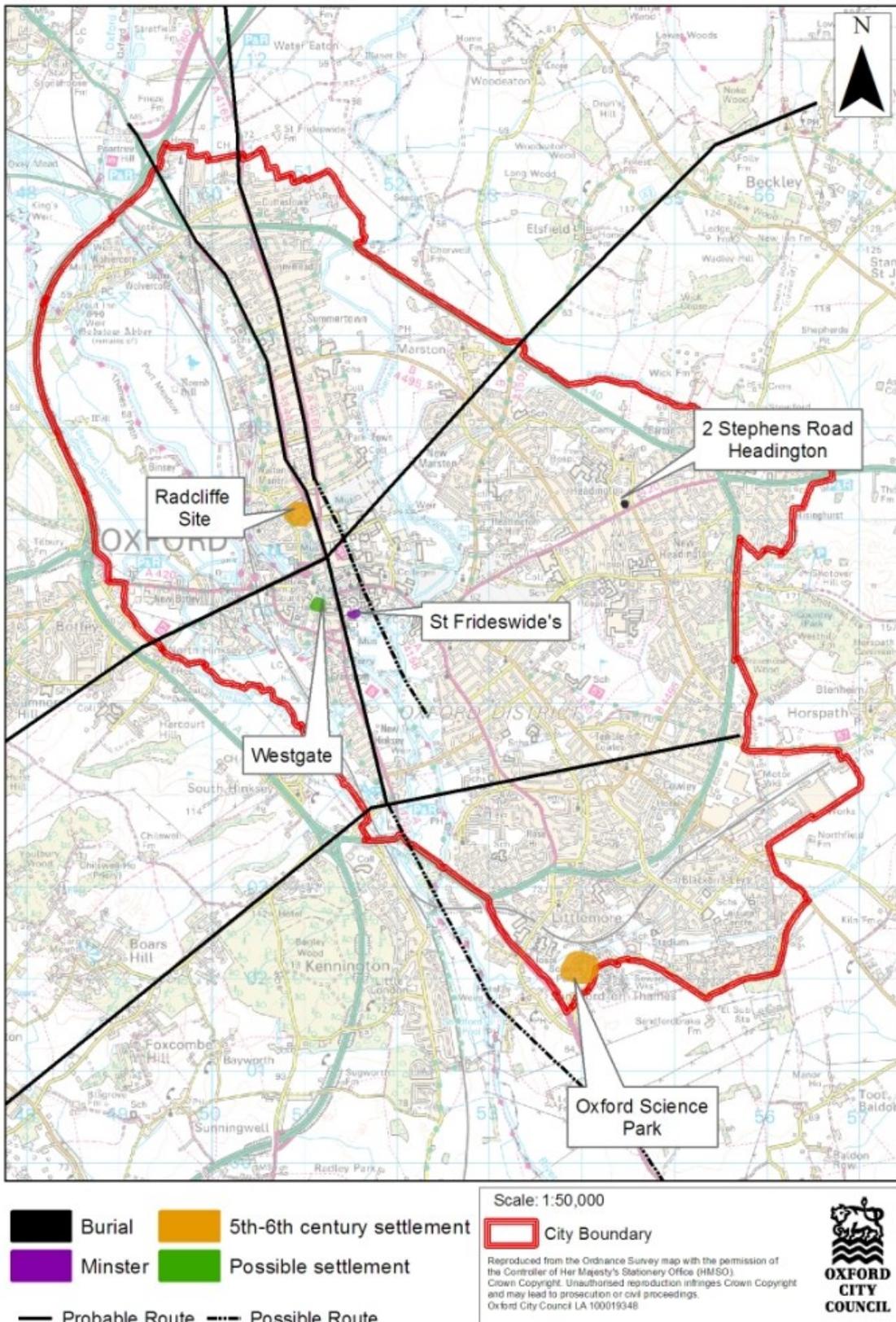


Figure 3: Middle Saxon Activity

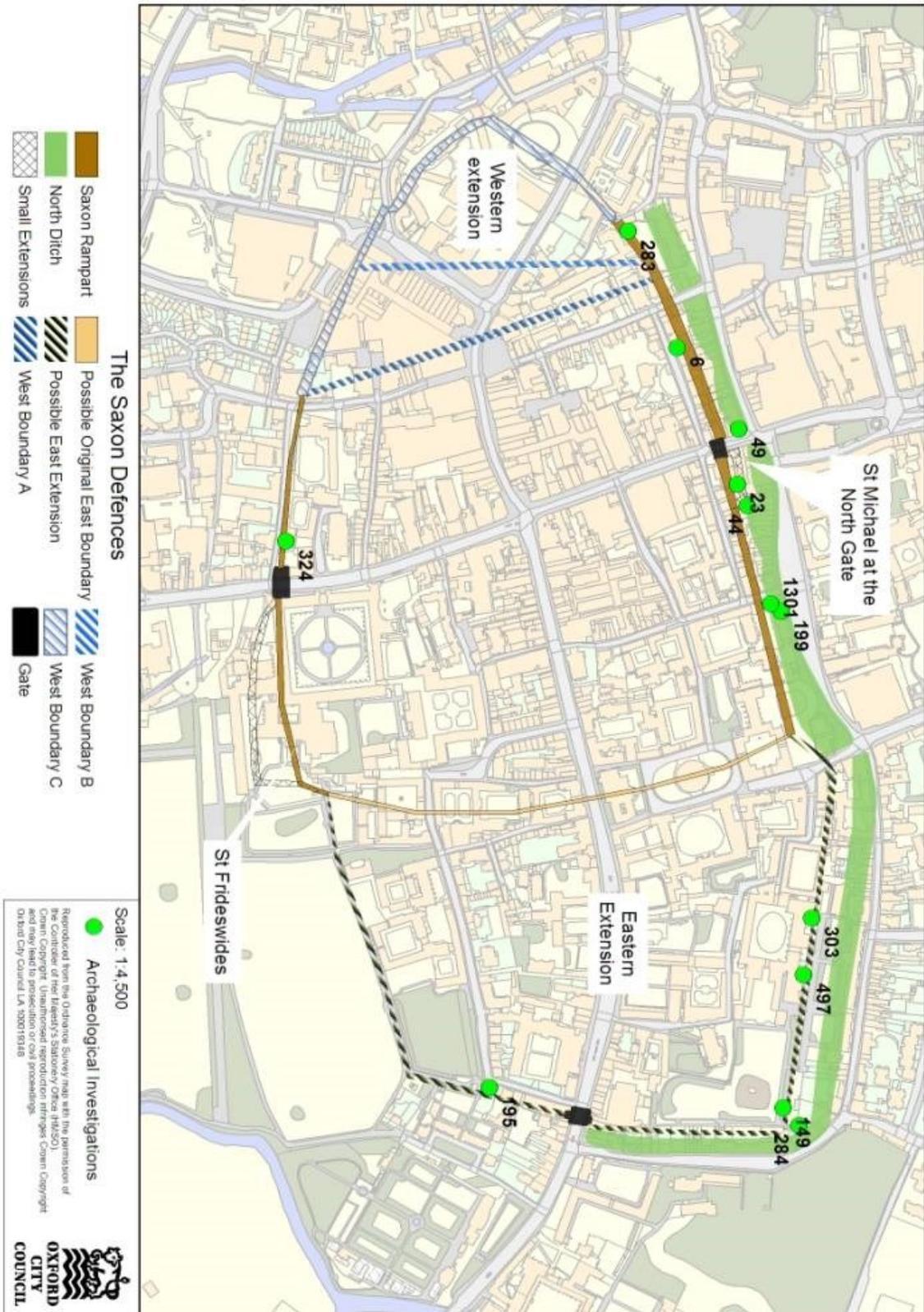


Figure 4: Evidence for the burh defences

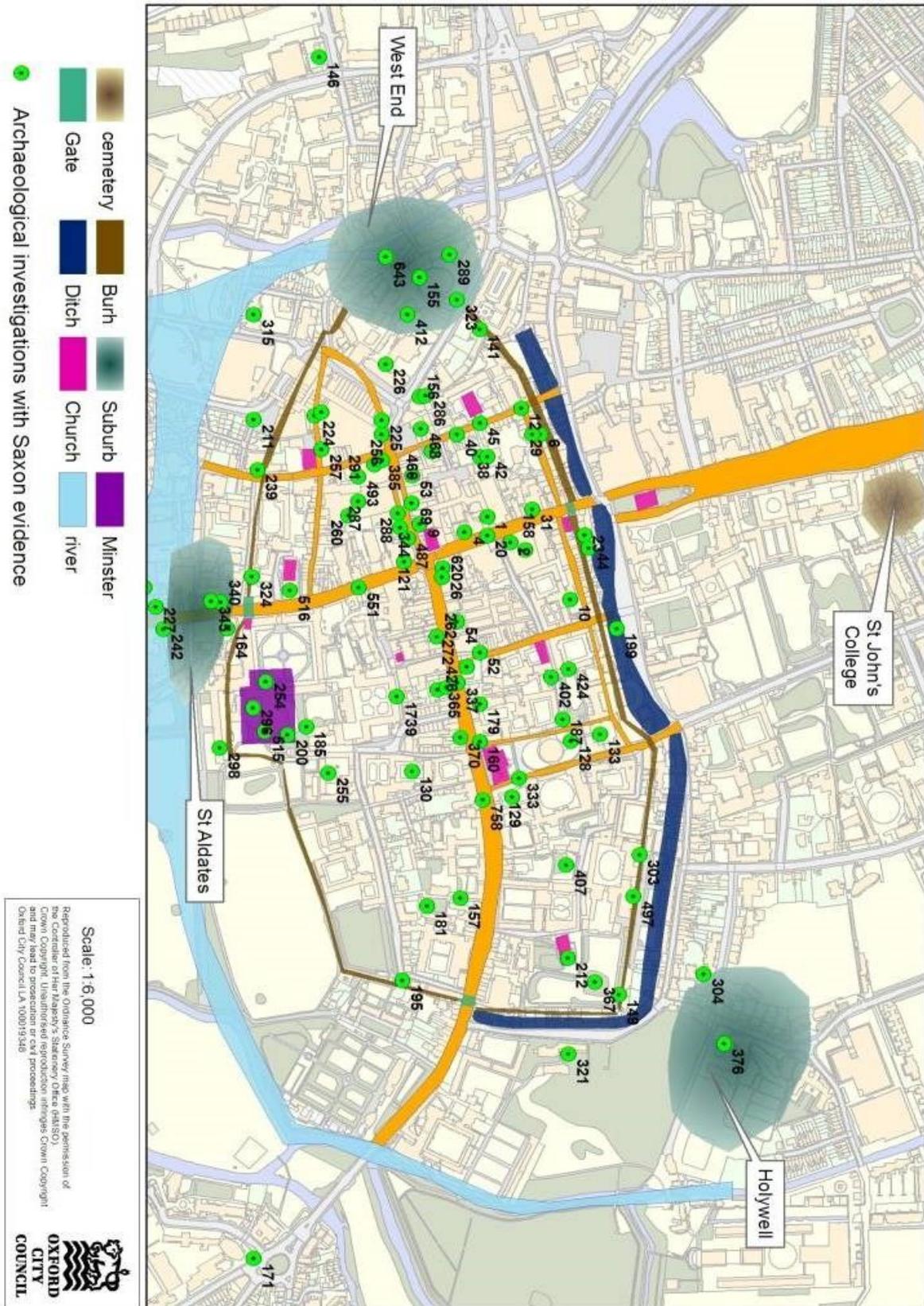


Figure 5: Saxon settlement in Oxford