

STATEMENT OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL INTEREST NO 24

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

Asset/Monument Type: Academic College

Summary: The earliest known college foundation in the city. It was founded in 1249 as Mickel Universtie Hall on the High Street. The current college site was established in the 1330s. The modern extent of the modern college incorporates the original University Hall site and its subsequent extensions west along the High Street frontage. The medieval college was entirely rebuilt in the 17th century.

Location (NGR): SP51730622

Definition: A college is an establishment housing a community of secular clergy sharing a degree of common life less strictly controlled than that within a monastic order. Colleges are normally identified through documentary evidence. Their buildings are usually associated with a parish church (not necessarily of formal collegiate status) although some extra-parochial and academic colleges had their own chapel. Other morphological elements present may include one or more cloisters or quadrangles, ranges of lodgings (either communal or more commonly as separate apartments), a common hall or refectory, service buildings (kitchen, buttery etc), a master or warden's lodging, a guest house, gate houses and sometimes an associated school or bede-house.

Version: 12/2/2012

Key characteristics

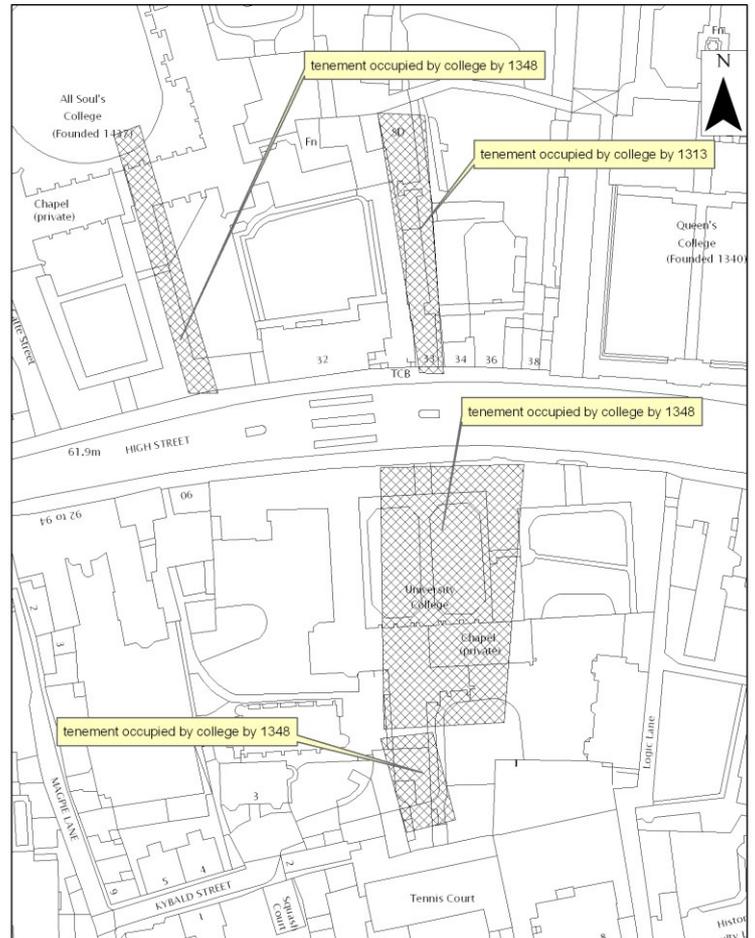
The following criteria (which are not in any order of ranking) are based on the Secretary of State's criteria for assessing Scheduled Monuments. They should not be regarded as definitive, but as an indicative provisional assessment.

1. Period: Does the asset characterise a category or historic period?

Assessment: The college is characteristic of a period higher education from 13th century to the present. Academic colleges are just one of many asset types which characterise the medieval and post-medieval period

Score: Medium

2. Rarity: What is the rarity of the asset in terms of regional and national context?



University College in 1313 and 1348
From Catto, J.I. (ed) 2006, The History of the University of Oxford Volume 1, Map3 & 4.

Scale: 1:901

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Assessment: At a national level The University of Oxford is an institution only directly comparable to the slightly later University of Cambridge. University College is one of only three college foundations dating to the second half of the 13th century (excluding the monastic Durham and Gloucester Colleges). The land holding dating from this time is therefore of particular interest for understanding the development of the college system. The absence of detailed college records from the 13th century means we do not fully understand how the college holdings developed, however the current location was certainly established by the early 14th century (Cato (ed) 2006, Map3).

Score: High

3. Documentation: *To what extent is the significance of the asset enhanced by existing documentation or lack thereof?*

Assessment: The college maintains its own archives containing a wealth of information on the history and structures of the college and its possessions. Further work needs to be done on the scope for college archives to inform archaeological assessment. The last history of University College, by W Carr, was published in 1902. A new one is being produced at the time of writing.

Score: Medium

4. Group Value: *is the value of the asset enhanced by its association with related contemporary monuments or with monuments of different periods?*

Assessment: University College is spatially associated with at least twelve former academic halls, it is located within the Saxon and medieval intramural settlement along the High Street. Bronze Age barrow/s have been located to the west of the college. The college has group association with broadly contemporary 13th colleges and later college institutions through to the present.

Score: High

5. Survival/Condition: *What is the estimated level of above and below ground survival?*

Assessment: The architectural survival of the post-medieval college is good, although the college was completely rebuilt in the 17th century it was not significantly refaced in the 19th century unlike the majority of the other colleges in Oxford. The level of truncation and disturbance across the site needs further assessment. The college has nor been subject to significant modern archaeological investigation.

Score: Medium

6. Fragility/Vulnerability: *susceptibility to change*

Assessment: Vulnerable to small scale works, permitted development and pressure to improve on site facilities.

Score: Medium

7. Diversity: *Does the asset possess a combination of high quality features?*

Assessment: The college comprises three Quads, a Library, a Chapel and a Master's Lodgings, including I Grade 1 and Grade II structures.

Score: High

8. Potential: *Is there a likelihood that currently unrecorded evidence can be anticipated?*

Assessment: The site has significant potential for remains associated with the urban development of Oxford and of the college system, including evidence for diet, status and material culture.

Score: High

Overall score (20/24)

Overall Assessment of Archaeological Interest: High

HERITAGE ASSET DESCRIPTION

University College is located fronting onto the High Street within the proposed eastern extension of the Late Saxon burh. It lies within the eastern part of the medieval walled town.

University College was founded in 1249 as Mickel Universitie Hall by William of Durham to the University of Oxford. The college held several properties for the purposes of study in the city including what is now the north-east corner of Brasenose College from 1253, Drawda Hall on the north side of the High Street from 1255 and Brasenose Hall from 1262. It is uncertain however whether these early properties related to an independent college or whether they formed part of the university's general holdings. The earliest formal arrangements for University College date to 1280 when provisions for four masters were made, possibly based in what is later referred to as Little University Hall on School Street (Darwall-Smith 2005: 10). (See Queen's College above for excavations at Drawda Hall.). The early college was an impoverished establishment which did not acquire any buildings of its own until well into the 14th century.

In the 1330s the college moved to larger premises on the south side of the High Street from Spicer Hall to Ludlow Hall. Two small tenements to the rear of Spicer Hall on Kybald Street were later added and became known as Rose Hall and White Hall. In 1404 further tenements between Ludlow Hall and Logic Lane were also added. The original medieval college was demolished in the 17th century to make way for the current buildings (Darwall-Smith 2005: 23). Oriel College and University College were unusual in getting rid of their medieval buildings in their entirety (Tyack 1998:103)

A building survey in 1998 (UAD 444) recorded the hall and buttery of the college on the site of the medieval Hert Hall while in 2006 a 13th century structure, probably fronting onto the former Kybald Street, was recorded in advance of construction of a new buttery (Teague 2006). A second structure dating to the 17th century is thought to relate to the reconstruction of the college. Investigations at University College in 2006 encountered the remains of a possible mason's workshop active during the re-construction of the college between 1634-1668 prior to the construction of the kitchen between 1668 and 1669 (Teague 2006).

The modern University College comprises two quadrangles and a number of 19th century additions to the rear (LB Ref 9/356F; J; K). The Main or Front Quad is entirely 17th century (LB Ref 9/356C) while the adjacent Radcliffe Quad is 18th century (LB Ref 9/356D). West of the Main Quad are two 19th century additions along the High Street (LB Ref 9/356A; B), and to the east is the 20th century Durham Buildings (LB Ref 9/356E).

Architects:

Front Quad. Richard Maude (mason) 1634

New Building. Sir Charles Barry. 1842

Library. Scott. 1861

Mitchell Building. H W Moore. 1968-71

Durham Building. H W Moore. 1903.

Goodhart Building. R Matthew & Johnson-Mitchell. 1960-61

Images

Panelling, Summer Common Room. 1575 (originally from domestic dwelling on Logic Lane)

Panelling, Chapel. 1665

Stained glass, Chapel. 1641

Academic statements

MPP Class Description

'A sample of nationally important sites should include examples of early medieval establishments of secular priests (if a well-preserved site can be identified), a prebendal or portional college of the 12th or 13th century, later medieval chantry foundations of both high and low status in both urban and rural situations, and possibly several major academic colleges. This last type is of special importance in demonstrating the post-medieval continuity of a tradition restricted to a narrow social and economic context' (English Heritage 1989).

Research agenda

Pre College Research Agenda:

- What was the character and extent of activity in the pre college tenements (including the Inns and Halls)? How were existing structures incorporated into the early college?

The College Research Agenda:

- The desirability of an integrated conservation management plan is noted.
- What can the study of the 13th century post graduate colleges (Balliol College, Merton College, University College) tell us about the evolution of the college system?
- How does the material culture, diet, status of the college vary through time and contrast with contemporary institutions?

Associated Monuments

UAD Monument 123: University College. 13th century

UAD Monument 137: 90 High Street. 17th century

UAD Monument 516: Three Tuns, 89 High Street 17th century

UAD Monument 535: Cok on the Hoop, High Street. 14th century

UAD Monument 571: Parsons Almshouses, Kybald Street. 19th century

UAD Monument 617: Historic buildings, Magpie Lane. East side

UAD Monument 710: High Street. Saxon

UAD Monument 713: Kybald Street. 13th century

UAD Monument 757: Bronze Age Barrows, Logic Lane.

UAD Monument 776: Medieval settlement Salter South East 4

UAD Monument 777: Medieval settlement Salter South East 5

UAD Monument 804: Late Saxon settlement, Eastern suburb

UAD Monument 823: Broadgates, High Street. Former academic hall

UAD Monument 831: Chimney Hall, Kybald Street. Former academic hall

UAD Monument 835: Deep Hall, High Street. Former academic hall

UAD Monument 852: Hare Hall, Logic Lane. Former academic hall

UAD Monument 856: Hert Hall. Former academic hall

UAD Monument 858: Horsemull Hall. Former academic hall

UAD Monument 866: Ludlow Hall. Former academic hall

UAD Monument 881: St Andrew Hall. Former academic hall

UAD Monument 909: Great University Hall. Former academic hall

UAD Monument 910: Little University Hall. Former academic hall

UAD Monument 917: William Hall. Former academic hall

UAD Monument 918: Woodcock Hall. Former academic hall

Associated Events

- *Observations at 89 High Street, 1837 (UAD 1372)*: Delamotte produced a picture of the Three Tuns and Hurst made notes on the detail. The 17th century inn was demolished in 1842 by University College.
- *Observations at the Master's House, 1878 (UAD 1186)*: When foundations were dug for the new house part of an early English jug and a halberd head were found.
- *Observations in University College Kitchen in 1892 (UAD 1385)*: medieval pottery, including jugs, was found.
- *Observations at 88 High Street in 19th century (UAD 1389)*: Taunt photographed the panelling of 88-9 High Street before University College demolished them.
- *University College, RCHME 1939 (UAD 846)*: The walls are of local Oxfordshire stone with dressings and ashlar of the same material; the roofs are slate covered. The foundation of the college is ascribed traditionally to King Alfred, but the earliest historical endowment dates from 1249 when William of Durham gave a sum for the maintenance of ten or more Masters of Arts.
- *Observations, 1940 (UAD 127)*: A stone-built chamber was found under the lawn with a bricked up tunnel leading from its east wall. Some late 18th century china was found at the bottom of the chamber. It was probably a sump pit connected to the Master's residence on the east of the quadrangle.
- *Excavations University College, 1969-70 (UAD 222)*: A stone-lined chamber with a brick vault was found crossing the line of the medieval Kybald Street.
- *Watching Brief 90 High Street, 1981 (UAD 559)*: Trial pits were dug below the floor of the building, which belongs to University College. Two pits were found, one containing 11th and 12th century pottery and the other dated to the 19th century.
- *Building Survey Parson's Almshouses, 1993 (UAD 807)*: The almshouses were built in 1816 and were transferred to University College in 1959. No details of the survey are available.
- *Building Survey at University College in 1998 (UAD 444)*: Originally the Hall was accessed from a porch, behind which was the buttery. The kitchen was reached from the rear door of the Hall. During the 19th century a new buttery was built at the east end of the Hall and a new entrance created. Access to the kitchen was then through the buttery.
- *Evaluation at University College Buttery and Kitchen in 2006 (UAD1687)* Two trenches were excavated by Oxford Archaeology on behalf of University College and consultant Dr R Harris, in advance of the construction of a new buttery and kitchen alterations. This exposed a 13th-century structure overlying an earlier undated feature, and a pit assumed to relate to a property on the former Kybald Street frontage. A second structure is conjectured to relate to the reconstruction of the college 1634-1668.

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