

## STATEMENT OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL INTEREST NO 26

### JESUS COLLEGE

**Asset/Monument Type:** Academic College

**Summary:** Jesus College was founded in the late 16<sup>th</sup> century. It is located on the site of a former medieval academic hall located to the rear of properties fronting onto Cornmarket. Originally comprising a single quadrangle it was eventually extended to its present in the late post-medieval period.

**Location (NGR):** SP51370633

**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

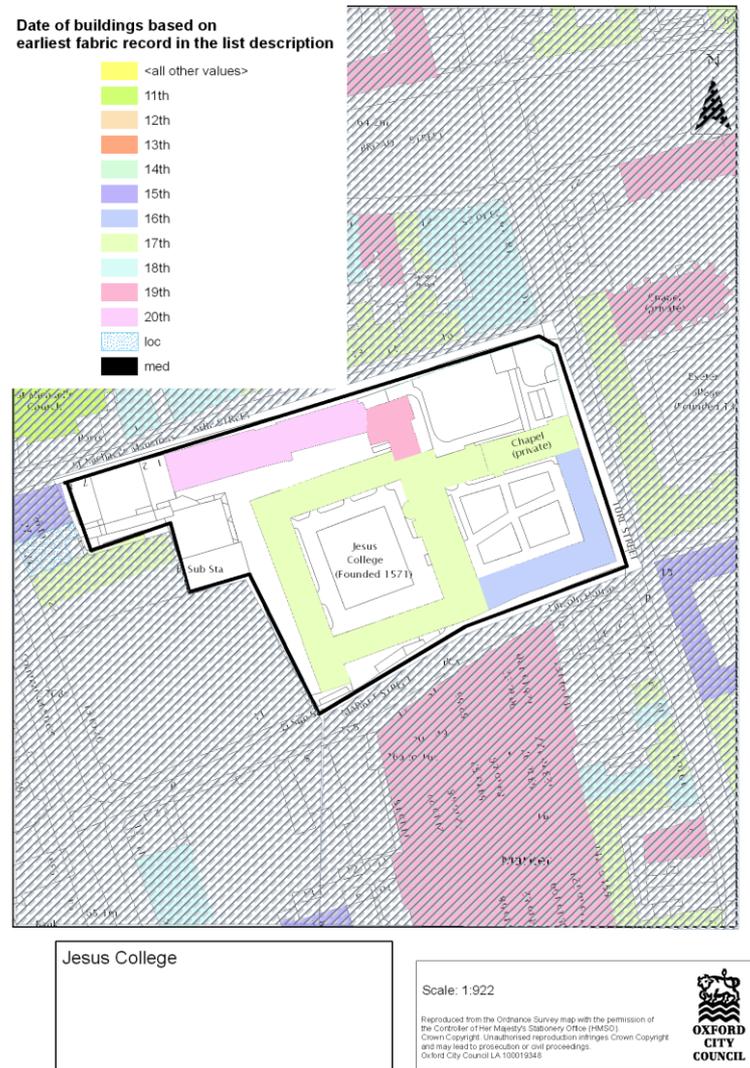
*The following criteria (which are not in any order of ranking) are based on the Secretary of State's criteria for assessing Scheduled Monuments. They should not be regarded as definitive, but as an indicative provisional assessment.*

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

**Assessment:** 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?



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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. Jesus College was one of only three post-medieval college foundations at Oxford.

**Score:** High

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

**Assessment:** The colleges maintain their own archives containing a wealth of information on the history and structure of the college and its possessions

**Score:** High

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

**Assessment:** The College is spatially associated with the *Saxon and medieval intramural settlement* and several *academic halls*

**Score:** High

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

**Assessment:** Like many of the colleges of Oxford, Jesus was substantially altered in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century

**Score:** Medium

6. **Fragility/Vulnerability:** *susceptibility to change*

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:** Jesus College comprises two classical *Quads*, a *Chapel*, a *Principals Lodgings* and a *Hall*. Several *formal gardens* are recorded by Loggan

**Score:** Medium

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

**Assessment:** The archaeological potential at Jesus College is uncertain, one archaeological watching brief at Third Quad recorded modern disturbance to a depth of over 1m (UAD 432). The college is located within the Saxon and medieval intramural settlement to the south of the defensive circuit and is within the rear of the tenements fronting onto Cornmarket

**Score:** Medium

Overall score (19/24)

**Overall Assessment of Archaeological Interest: High**

## HERITAGE ASSET DESCRIPTION

Jesus College is located to the rear of Cornmarket, the main Saxon and medieval thoroughfare. The Saxon and medieval defences pass the college to the north and Ship Street was likely the intramural road giving access to the defences. In the medieval period several academic halls were recorded fronting onto Ship Street and Market Street.

Jesus College was founded in 1571 by Dr Hugh Price, prebendary of Rochester Cathedral and originally provided for a Principal, eight fellows and eight scholars and was primarily intended to promote Welsh attendance at Oxford (Salter & Lobel, 1954, 264). During the Civil War the college was commandeered and used as a garrison. The College was founded on the site of White Hall, a former academic (Allen, 1998, 105). The college comprises two quadrangles on Turl Street, the First Quadrangle dates primarily to the 16<sup>th</sup> century when the

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East and South Ranges were constructed (LB Ref 8/317M; N). The North Range consists of the 17<sup>th</sup> century Chapel (LB Ref 8/317K) and Principal's Lodgings (LB Ref 8/317J) built on the site of the former Lawrence Hall. There is a 19<sup>th</sup> century extension to the Principals Lodgings to the north of the First Quad (LB Ref 8/317P) and the Principal's garden is enclosed by the north wall of the college (LB Ref 8/317Q). The 17<sup>th</sup> century West Range includes the kitchen and buttery (LB Ref 8/317O). The 17<sup>th</sup> century Inner Quadrangle is located to the rear of the First Quad and mainly comprises the scholars rooms (LB Ref 8/317B; C; D; E; F; G). A new block was added to the college at the start of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, replacing the former stables north of the Inner Quad (LB Ref (8/317A).

Few archaeological investigations of note have been undertaken at Jesus College and evidence largely comprises of stray finds including post-medieval pottery and wig curlers (UAD 1417). A number of wall paintings have been recorded within the college dating from the 16<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> centuries (UAD 191; 680).

### **Architects:**

First Quad. Refaced by J & C Buckler. 1854

Inner Quad

New Block. R England. 1905

Old Members Building. J Fryman. 1969-71

### **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 12<sup>th</sup> or 13<sup>th</sup> 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 evidence is there for the pre college academic halls? To what extent were they demolished to make way for the college?
- Is there any evidence for desertion in the post Conquest period as noted at New College?
- What led to the foundation of the college at this site in the centre of town? What were the socio-economic factors that allowed it to be founded here

College research agenda

- The desirability of an integrated conservation management plan is noted.
- How does the material culture, diet, status of the college vary through time and contrast with contemporary institutions?

### **Associated Monuments**

UAD Monument 112: Jesus College. University College

UAD Monument 718: Market Street. 12<sup>th</sup> century

UAD Monument 734: Ship Street. Saxon

UAD Monument 736: Turl Street Saxon

UAD Monument 742: Colesbourne Lane. Saxon?

UAD Monument 789: Medieval settlement Salter North East 1

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UAD Monument 801: Late Saxon settlement North East sector  
UAD Monument 854: Hawk Hall. Former academic hall  
UAD Monument 862: Lawrence Hall. Former academic hall  
UAD Monument 878: Plummer Hall. Former academic hall  
UAD Monument 913: Great White Hall. Former academic hall  
UAD Monument 914: Little White Hall. Former academic hall

### Associated Events

- *Excavations in 1884 (UAD 1188)*: During construction of a new building two glass bottles were found, one a 'pilgrim' bottle
- *Excavations in 1896 (UAD 1417)*: Wig curlers were found in the Quadrangle
- *Observations in 1896 (UAD 1420)*: Foundations, possibly from an old doorway, were found under the present gate and archway, according to Hurst. There was a layer of white stones.
- *Observations in 1906-8 (UAD 10)*: Late Saxon pottery found at a depth of 24ft during the construction of a new building for Jesus College in Ship Street. Several buildings were demolished, some occupied by the Electric Company until a fire in 1905.
- *Observations in 1950 (UAD 1470)*: 17th century key and a 19th century doorknocker were recovered. Under the plaster on one wall was a lead plaque from 1756, denoting church property
- *Jesus College, 1969 (UAD 70)*: The tops of medieval pits were seen in the foundation trenches for concrete ground beams in the new quadrangle of Jesus College. No pottery was recovered
- *Recording 1961 (UAD 191)*: The painting was in a first floor room of one of the Elizabethan ranges. Two periods of work were represented, 16<sup>th</sup> century designs having been whitewashed over and repainted at the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> century.
- *Watching brief in 1999 (UAD 432)*: No archaeological features or finds were seen.
- *Building recording 2003 (UAD 1644)*: 17th century architectural features noted.
- UAD Backlog event Jesus College Lift Pit OA Saxon and med features

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