

STATEMENT OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL INTEREST NO 28

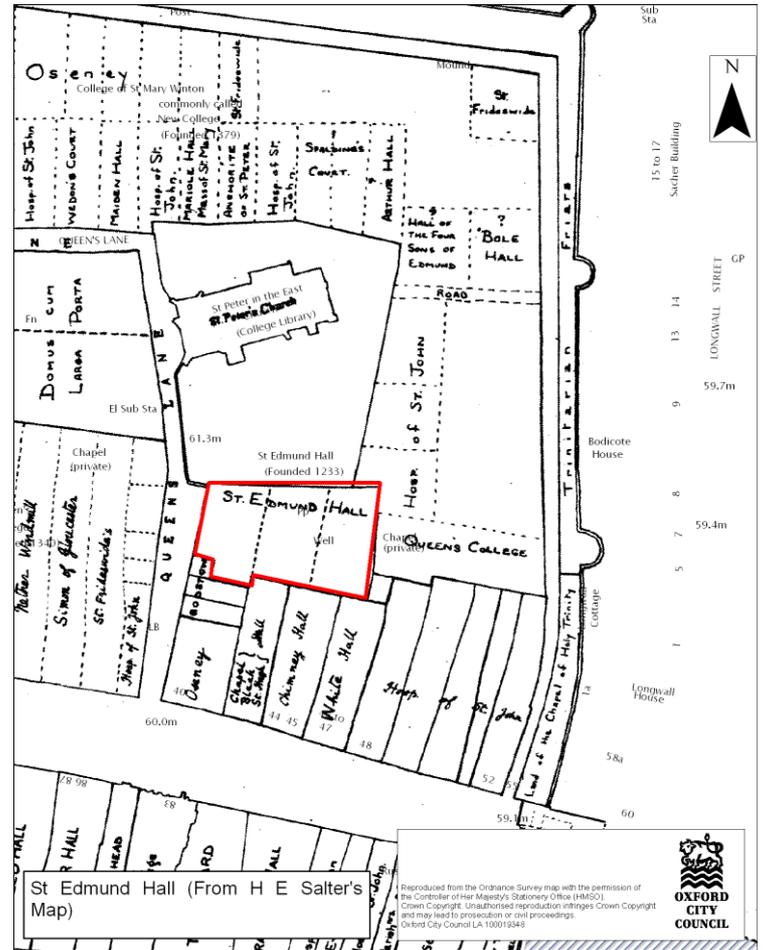
ST EDMUND HALL

Asset/Monument Type: Hall of Residence

Summary: Tradition suggests that the hall was in existence by 1234. In the 16th century it was held for some time by Queen's College and did not achieve full independence until 1952. It achieved college status in 1957.

Location (NGR): SP51870630

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.



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 academic hall is characteristic of a period of higher education in the 13th century to the 20th century. Academic halls 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?

Assessment: St Edmund Hall was one of over 100 academic halls in Oxford, but it was until 1957 the only surviving hall in the University (although it contains no extant structures from the medieval academic hall while such structures from now defunct halls survive elsewhere in the town).

Score: Medium

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

Assessment: The extent of the college archives are not known. The existing archaeological documentation is poor.

Score: Low

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 associated with the Late Saxon eastern suburb or burh extension, the Late Saxon and medieval defences and now incorporated the former medieval church of St Peter in the East as its library (a possible former Saxon Minster).

Score: Medium

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

Assessment: St Edmund Hall has largely post-medieval to modern in fabric although medieval fabric is preserved in the curtilage wall and incorporated church. The extent of below ground deposits relating to early tenements or academic halls is poorly understood.

Score: Medium

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

Assessment: The asset is vulnerable to small scale works and permitted development.

Score: Medium

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

Assessment: St Edmund Hall contains two Quads, a medieval church and medieval perimeter walling.

Score: Medium

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

Assessment: The site has significant potential for currently unrecorded evidence.

Score: High

Overall score (16/24)

Overall Assessment of Archaeological Interest: Medium

HERITAGE ASSET DESCRIPTION

Little is known about the early foundations of this academic hall and it is first mentioned in 1317 in documents from Oseney Abbey although tradition suggests it was in existence by 1234 when St Edmund of Abingdon lectured there (Salter & Lobel. 1954: 319). In the 16th century it was held for some time by Queen's College and did not achieve full independence until 1952 (ibid: 323). The academic hall may have been built on the site of St Edmund of Abingdon's House. He lectured at Oxford in the early 13th century and was canonised in 1248 (Sherwood and Pevsner 1974: 192).

St Edmund's is located on Queens Lane and comprises two quadrangles and the 12th century Church of St Peter in the East (LB Ref 9/387), now the college library (Sherwood & Pevsner. 1974: 192). The former Church is also enclosed by a medieval wall (LB Ref 9/387A). The Front Quad is made up of the 16th century North Range (LB Ref 9/408A), the later 17th century East and West Ranges (LB Ref 9/408B; D). The addition in the 20th century of the South Range replacing buildings to the rear of properties on the High Street finished the quadrangle (LB Ref 9/408C). The Upper Quad to the east was added in the 20th century and includes an east and west range.

RCHME 21. St Edmund Hall stands on the E side of Queen's Lane and immediately S of the churchyard of St Peter-in-the-East. The walls are of local rubble and ashlar and the roofs are covered with slates and tiles. The Hall is thought to stand on the site of a house occupied by Edmund of Abingdon from 1234-40 (RE 828). It was one of the medieval university's Academic Halls, and the actual date of foundation is unknown. College status was only obtained in 1957 (S 891). The principle buildings are mainly late 16th to 18th century in date. The south range of the quadrangle was constructed in the 19th and 20th centuries (RE 1267, 1310). Another block was constructed to the east in 1968-70 (S 891).

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).

The 1680-6 new library and chapel 'ingeniously placed together in a two storey block on the eastern side of the existing quadrangle, with the library (still largely unaltered) over the antechapel. (Tyack 1998: 133-4)

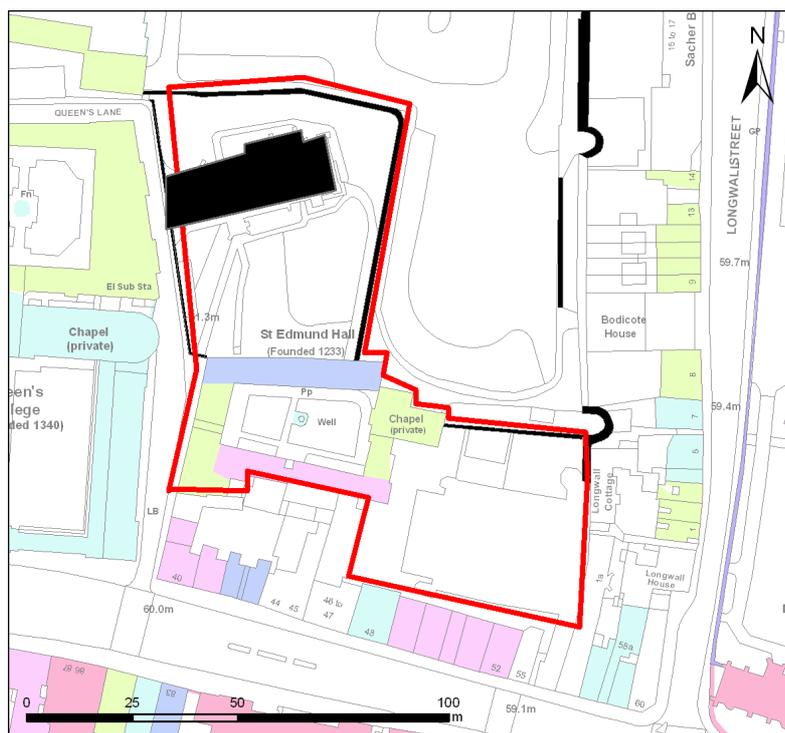
Research agenda

Pre College research agenda:

- What is the character and extent of pre hall remains, can the house of 'St Edmund' be identified?

The hall/college:

- Desirability of integrated Conservation management plan including truncation and deposit potential map noted.



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St Edmund Hall

Buildings by date based on earliest fabric recorded in the list description	Listed Buildings	
	Date (C.)	
	15th	15th
	16th	16th
	17th	17th
	18th	18th
	19th	19th
	20th	20th
	med	med

-
- What can remains tell us about changing patterns of status, wealth, material culture and diet and the evolution of the buildings on the site?

Associated Monuments

UAD Monument 2: Saxon defences (site of). Probable line of former burh defences
UAD Monument 4: City Wall (site of). Former line of City Wall through Corpus Christi
UAD Monument 120: St Edmund Hall (Hall)
UAD Monument 383: Church of St Peter-in-the-East
UAD Monument 424: City Wall Bastion 16
UAD Monument 720: New College Lane
UAD Monument 727: Queen's Lane
UAD Monument 829: Chapel Hall (site of)
UAD Monument 915: White Hall (site of)
UAD Monument 921: Hammer Hall Lane (site of)
UAD Monument 958: St Edmund Hall (College)

Associated Events

- *Excavations, St Peter in the East in 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.
- *Excavations in St Peter-in-the-East Churchyard in 1969-70 (UAD 251)*: In 1969 a trench was dug north of the church tower. Only post-medieval pottery was found. The following year burials were found in a trench 1 m north of St Edmund Hall.
- *RCHME 21 (UAD 828)*: St Edmund Hall stands on the east side of Queen's Lane and immediately south of the churchyard of St Peter-in-the-East. The walls are of local rubble and ashlar and the roofs are covered with slates and tiles.
- *RCHME 38 (UAD 863)*: St Peter in the East stands on the E side of Queen's Lane. The walls are of rubble with local freestone dressings; the roofs are lead covered. The crypt, chancel and nave were built in c1140-50.
- *Excavations at St Edmund Hall in 1927 (UAD 1267)*: A new library was erected on the site of Links or Airey's lodgings. A 17th century ceramic candlestick was found.
- *Excavations at St Edmund Hall in 1934-5 (UAD 1310)*: Work was carried out on the buildings along the S range. Bellarmine jugs from the 16th or 17th century were recovered. In the cellar of the Principal's Lodging part of a polished stone axe was also found
- *Observations at St Edmund Hall in 1887 (UAD 1380)*: Hurst recorded two pieces of worked stone incorporated into the wall of the chapel, near the Principal's Garden
- *Observations at St Peter-in-the-East church in 1890s (UAD 1388)*: Hurst assembled a collection of drawings and photographs of architectural features, including the font.

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