The JESSOP Consultancy

Heritage, Historic Buildings and their Settings

Archaeological Evaluation and Historic Building Recording

Steading Seat, Three Niched Seat, Cold Bath House, Octagon Pool and Cold Bath Terrace, Heythrop Park, Oxfordshire

Report: TJC 120205.02 (FINAL)

November 2012

Cover: View looking south-west across Octagon Bath towards Bath House, 2012.

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SUMMARY OF PROJECT DETAILS

OASIS ID:	thejesso1-131670
TJC Project Code:	TJC 120205
Project Type(s):	Archaeological Field Evaluation; Historic Building Recording
National Grid Reference:	SP 35627 26952 (centered)
Site Area:	0.3ha (approximate)
Parish:	Heythrop
Local Authority:	West Oxfordshire District Council
Client:	PRIVATE
Planning Reference:	Not Applicable
Designation Status:	Grade II* Registered Parkland; Listed Buildings II*, II
HER Record No:	(Oxfordshire) 26065; 26062; 8158; 8162
Museum Accession No:	(Oxfordshire – Standlake Store) TBC; Heythrop House
Prepared by:	Oliver Jessop MIfA; Paul Blinkhorn
Reviewed by:	Karen E Walker MIfA, FSA; Ruth Garner
Date:	November 2012

1 NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The JESSOP Consultancy (TJC) has undertaken a combined programme of historic building recording, archaeological evaluation and topographic survey at Heythrop Park, Oxfordshire. These works are intended to contribute to a management plan for the restoration of three of the garden buildings, comprising Steading Seat, Three Niched Seat and the Cold Bath Building.

Thomas Archer designed the house, known as Heythrop Park, for Charles Talbot, 1st Duke of Shrewsbury between 1706 and 1711. The landscape surrounding the house was reconfigured at this time to comprise formal avenues, carriage drives, extensive parkland and pleasure gardens. To the south-east of the house, a wilderness was laid out (believed to be one of the earliest examples in the country, c.1710), within which was the Cold Bath Terrace and the associated structures that have been investigated in this phase of works.

The Steading Seat is a recessed alcove set in a commanding position with views out from the ha-ha. Evidence for an internal curved seat has been identified, along with a stone foundation and dislodged stone tile that is interpreted as a remnant of a flagstone floor. Graffiti from the early 19th century has been recorded and the base of a brown glazed jug c.1680-1750 in date was recovered from an excavation in the interior.

The Cold Bath Terrace is located at the edge of the former Wilderness, and comprises a walk 2.5-3m in width and c.160m in length. The excavation of three trenches along the terrace has identified the truncated footings for a substantial stone wall which was once a continuous feature along the south-west edge of the walk. Whilst it has been deliberately lowered, its original appearance is likely to have been similar to surviving sections of boundary walling elsewhere at Heythrop, and would have formed a striking landscape feature adding to the division of the gardens from the wider landscape beyond.

The Three Niched Seat (or Nymphaeum) at the north-west end of the terrace walk comprises a flat wall, broken by a large central recess and two side niches forming seats. The central recess forms an open-sided chamber that contains three further niches, presumably intended for statuary, or lanterns. Similar to the Steading Seat, there are cut notches in the plinth indicating the position of a curved bench seat. An excavation at the entrance to the structure has confirmed that the original ground surface was 0.25m lower than today, which would have enabled the external side niches to function as seats.

The Cold Bath Building, with its roughly coursed external walls may have originally been rendered, with wooden frames and metal armatures forming the two circular windows. Internally, it was painted with an orange and red limewash, making a bright and warm room. There is a stone floor with an angled profile that forms a channel for the run-off water from the Octagon Pool. Internal seating, now removed, provided a place to change and the floor with its covering of running water may, have also have functioned as a slipper bath.

The ground surface here also has an irregular wall comprised of rubble and fragments of brick, possibly a crude attempt to form an ornamental rockery in the late 19th to early 20th century. Beneath this feature is the continuation of the ditch at the base of the ha-ha.

The archaeological investigations to the north-east of the Cold Bath Building have partially exposed an Octagon Pool with an elongated shape. This is created from cut ashlar blocks with a chamfered edge defining the rim of the pool, c.0.5m in depth. There is a stream channel to the north-east, which has a series of rock cut steps forming small pools. The outflow to the pool is defined by raised ribs of rockwork that form an ornamental cascade.

Recommendations for future work include improving the settings of each building, to emphasis their historic form and that consideration should be given to restore the Cold Bath Terrace as a formal walk. All further interventions should be archaeologically monitored and as the results are deemed to be Nationally significant, they should be disseminated to a wider audience at the closure of the project.

2 INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND

The JESSOP Consultancy (TJC) has undertaken a combined programme of historic building recording, archaeological evaluation and topographic survey at Heythrop Park, Oxfordshire. These works are intended to contribute to a management plan for the restoration of three of the garden buildings, comprising Steading Seat, Three Niched Seat and the Cold Bath Building. The fieldwork and reporting have been undertaken in accordance a recording brief prepared by Ruth Garner of Natural England (Garner 2012) who is managing an application for Higher Level Stewardship funding to restore the building, and a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) prepared by the JESSOP Consultancy (2012).

AIMS OF THE REPORT

The intention of the archaeological investigations and recording is to provide evidence to aid with the interpretation of the three buildings (Steading Seat, Three Niched Seat and the Cold Bath Building) and their historic setting. This report will consider the presence or absence of original features, and constructional materials, which will then inform and guide the preparation of a schedule of works for repair.

ARCHIVE

The completed archaeological archive comprising site notes, context records, drawings, photographs will be prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Oxfordshire Museums Service which has been identified as the final repository museum. The assemblage of archaeological artefacts will however, be retained at Heythrop House by the Client.

DISSEMINATION

Printed and bound copies of this report will be distributed to the Client, Natural England, English Heritage and the Oxfordshire HER. In addition, a digital copy will be uploaded to the OASIS (Online AccesS to the Index of archaeological investigations) with the reference number: **thejesso1-131670**.

A summary of the results will be submitted to Archaeology South Midlands for inclusion within the yearly round up of excavations in the region. In addition, following consultation,

the results may be submitted for publication within a suitable journal, such as *Medieval Archaeology, Journal of Garden History,* or *Oxonesia* for dissemination to a wider audience.

MONITORING

This Higher Level Stewardship application is being managed by Ruth Garner, South East Historic Environment Specialist, on behalf of Natural England. Technical archaeological guidance has been provided by Dan Bashford of English Heritage, who along with Ruth Garner has monitored the fieldwork and reporting.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Fieldwork was directed by Oliver Jessop MA MIfA, with assistance from Michael McCoy MIfA, with machining undertaken by Liam Shapland of ATGS. This report has been researched and prepared by Oliver Jessop MA MIfA with editing undertaken by Karen E Walker MIfA, FSA.

Kate Felus PhD of Historic Landscapes and John Phibbs of the Debois Landscape Survey Group have provided comments and guidance upon the results of the investigations, and an overview of the whole landscape at Heythrop.

Ruth Garner of Natural England and Dan Basford of English Heritage are thanked for their advice and guidance during the project.

Paul Blinkhorn undertook the analysis of the glazed earthenware.

Helen Lawrence-Beaton has been extremely helpful in provided details about her research into Thomas Archer and for providing historic photographs of the buildings at Heythrop.

John Angus, Phil Helmn of Heythrop Park Resort and their staff are thanked for their help with setting up the fieldwork and for general assistance on site.

Richard Glover has provided base drawings for the project and his patience during the post-excavation phase of the project is gratefully acknowledged.

3 SITE LOCATION AND LAYOUT

HEYTHROP PARK – THE SITE

Heythrop House is located c.29km to the north-west of Oxford and 4km west of Chipping Norton in West Oxfordshire. Surrounding the House (now a hotel) is designed landscape with a principal entrance drive from the village of Enstone, 2km to the south-east (**Figure 1**).

Figure 1
Site Location Plan

The House is located at National Grid Reference (NGR) SP 36394 26435, although the two Sites (A and B) where the archaeological investigations have been undertaken comprise four components (Steading Seat, Three Niched Seat, Cold Bath Terrace, Cold Bath Building and the Octagon Pool), located to the south and south-east of the House within the parkland. The gardens and park are designated Grade II* (**No.1000489**) on the English Heritage Register of Parks and Gardens.

Site A (**Figure 2**) is demarked by a right-angled corner of the stone ha-ha that circumnavigates large sections of the former gardens to the east of the House. Set back from the edge of the ha-ha is a curved stone building, 'Steadings Seat'.

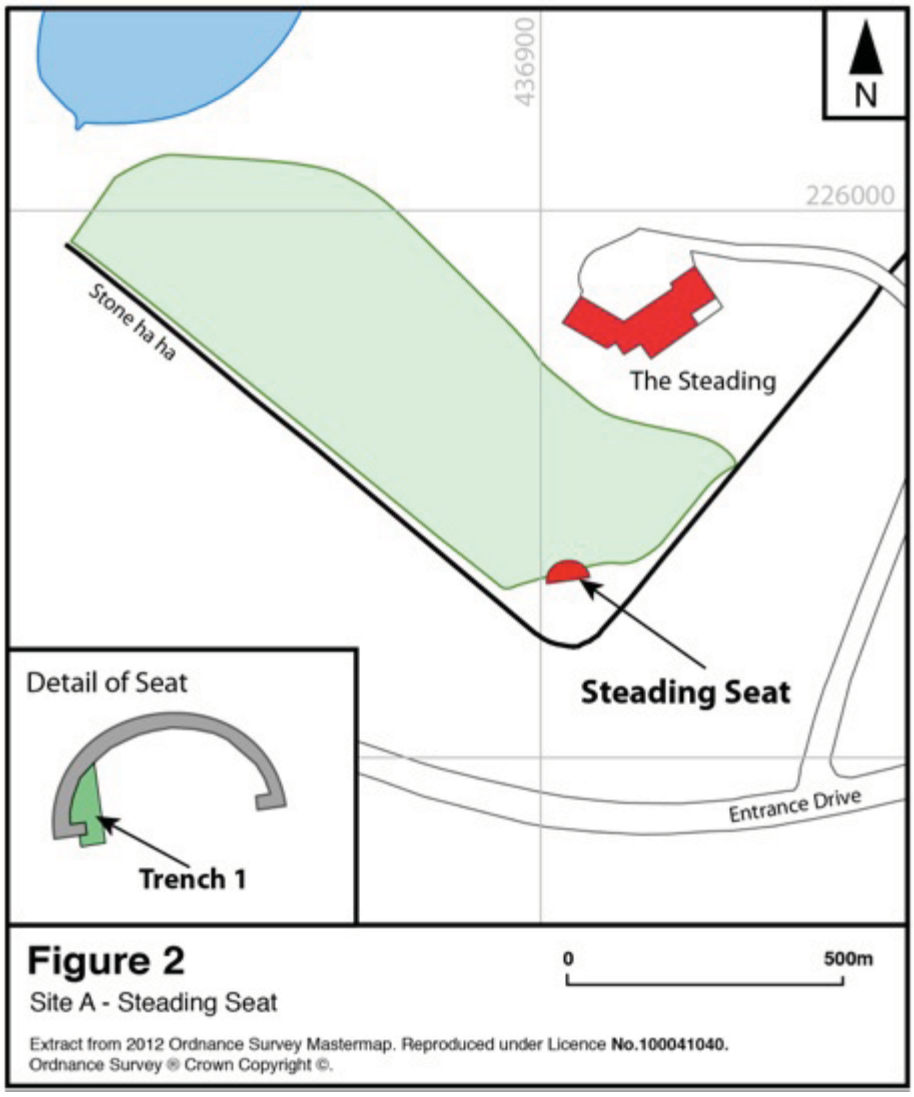

Figure 2
Site A - Steading Seat

Extract from 2012 Ordnance Survey Mastermap. Reproduced under Licence **No.100041040.**
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Site B (**Figure 3**) comprises a former terrace walk along the alignment of the ha-ha, 1km to the north-west of Talbolt Hall. The terrace is within woodland and has a north-west to south-east orientation. It measures approximately 160m in length and is located at the top of a break of slope that falls away to the south-west.

Located at the north-west end of the terrace is a stone structure, 'the Three Niched Seat', which comprises a stone screen with two seating niches on either side of a vaulted alcove. The seat is positioned at the base of a steep slope to the south-west of the house that now largely obscured by later planting.

At the south-east end of the terrace is a second stone structure, in the form of a square building, 'the Cold Bath Building'. This structure is positioned on a slight projection in the terrace, which overlies an open culvert that flows directly through the building. The water is fed from a spring to the north-east and an Octagonal Pool.

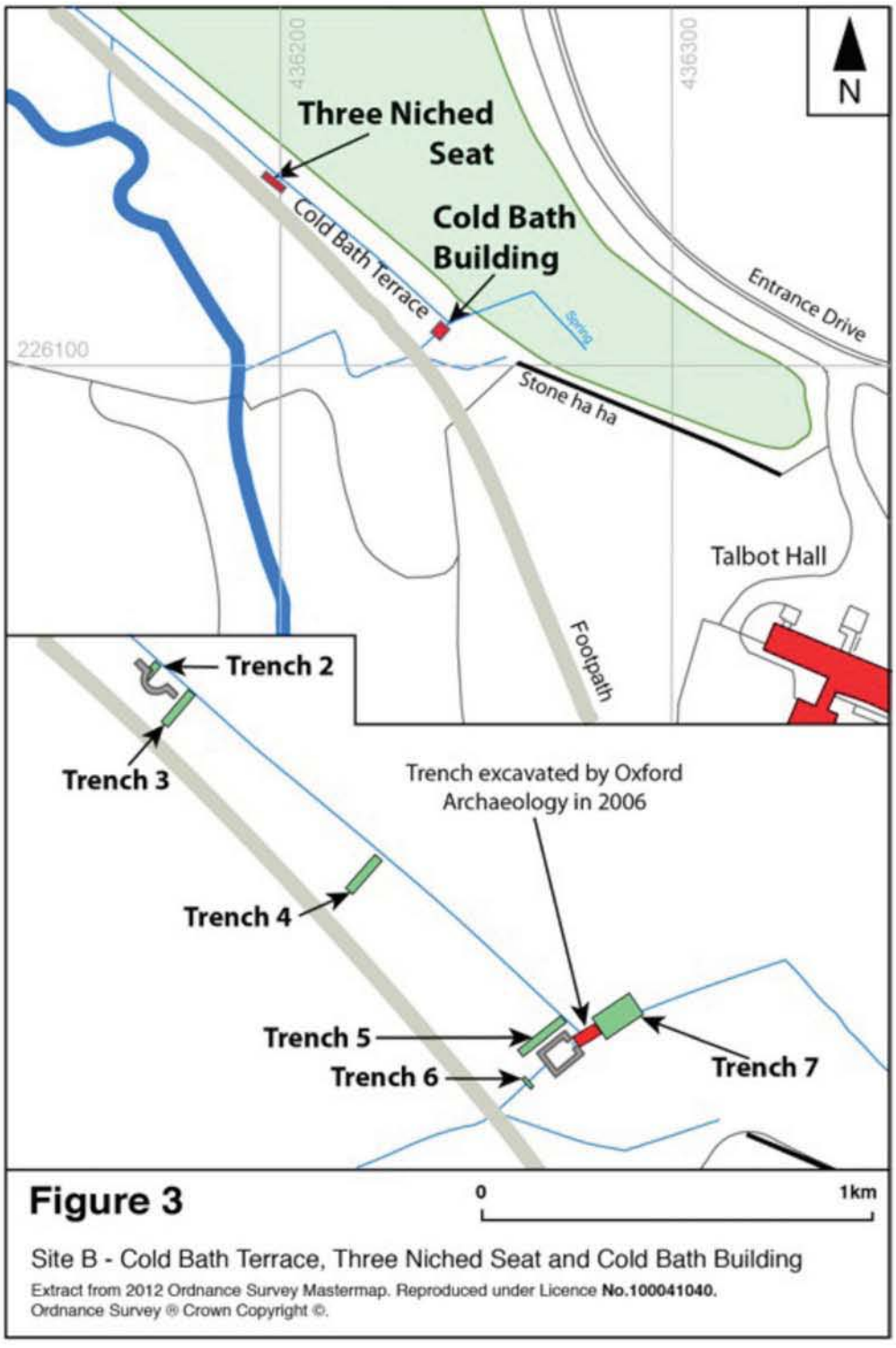

Figure 3

Site B - Cold Bath Terrace, Three Niched Seat and Cold Bath Building

GEOLOGY

The underlying bedrock geology of the western part of Heythrop Park is Chipping Norton Limestone Formation - Ooidal Limestone (BGS digital data 2012). It is a Sedimentary Bedrock formed approximately 164 to 169 million years ago in the Jurassic Period. No superficial deposits are recorded.

4 ARCHITECTURAL HISTORY

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT - SUMMARY

Thomas Archer designed the house, known as Heythrop Park, for Charles Talbot, 1st Duke of Shrewsbury between 1706 and 1711. The landscape surrounding the house was reconfigured following the construction of the house, to comprise formal avenues, carriage drives, an extensive parkland and pleasure gardens. To the south-east of the house, a wilderness was laid out, believed to have been in existence by 1710 (English Heritage Registered Garden entry; Debois 2004), making it one of the earliest examples of a wilderness. Within the Wilderness the Cold Bath Building, Octagon Pool and Three Niched Seat were constructed.

The Three Niched Seat, c.400m from the house, was built as an eye catcher at the base of a slope dropping away from the south-east of the house. The Cold Bath Building and the Octagon Pool or bath, were fed by a spring located further up the hillside.

The gardens were adapted throughout the 19th century, including the layout of formal terraces against the south front of the house, a second walled garden, along with alterations to the ornamental walks and rides.

ANALYSIS OF HISTORIC MAPPING AND PHOTOGRAPHS

There are a series of historic maps that depict the designed landscape at Heythrop, however the focus of this report is upon the Wilderness located to the western side of the South Avenue. Extracts from the historic maps are included as **Appendix 3** and their principal features are described below in conjunction with summary extracts from reports by the Debois Landscape Group (2004, 2009).

The Wilderness is one of the largest garden compartments at Heythrop and can be sub-divided into two sections, west and east, being separated by the South Avenue leading up to the House (**Appendix 3.1, 3.2**). The Wilderness was an ornamental woodland with formal tracks, or rides, most likely with surfaces of sand, gravel, or grass. To the south of the Wilderness was the River Glyme, which winds its way along the base of a shallow valley, which is overlooked by the Cold Bath Terrace and associated buildings. The main approach road from Enstone was historically located to the south-east of the Wilderness, and then branched off to run below the Cold Bath Terrace and up the hillside to the west side of the House, although by the 1880s had been diverted to its present course (compare 1870 sale

plan **Appendix 3.4** and 1st edition OS map **Appendix 3.5**). Prior to the re-routing of the road, the Steading Seat overlooked Little Cow Meadow, an area of pasture within the Parkland that was separated from the pleasure grounds by a stone ha-ha, forming ferme ornée. The ha-ha then continued south-west on either side of the Kitchen Garden along the north edge of Great Cow Meadow where it met the Wilderness and terminated at the Cold Bath Terrace. It was at this point that the Enstone Road ran parallel to the Cold Bath Terrace, which is defined by a solid black line on the maps from 1791 to 1880 (**Appendices 3.2** to **Appendix 3.5**), which is interpreted as a stone boundary wall. The wall would have formed a physical separation from the road and the gardens and, provided a degree of privacy for those using the Octagon Pool and Cold Bath Building.

A detailed examination of the earlier historical mapping for the Wilderness confirms that, there is much detail in regards to the path network, planting and principal garden elements. It is not until the larger scale mapping from the 1870s onwards (**Appendix 3.4**) is produced that the buildings along the Cold Bath Terrace can be individually identified. The Steading Seat is not however depicted on any of the historical mapping; presumably it was partially obscured by the surrounding tree canopy and the cartographers were unable to illustrate it as a feature.

Two historic photographs (**Appendices 3.6, 3.7**) provide further details of the former setting of the Cold Bath Building and the Three Niched Seat. It is suggested that they date to the early 20th century and are the earliest photographs of each structure. The Three Niched Seat is similar to its current appearance, apart from there is no vegetation and the path infront of it is wider. The internal seat has been removed by this date and the ground level appears to have been raised above the tarmac surface identified during the excavations. The second photograph of the Cold Bath Building, clearly defines the extent of the Octagon Pool. The condition of the structure correlates with the excavation and, again like at the Three Niches Seat, the path running along the Cold Bath Terrace appears to be wider than today.

PREVIOUS ARCHAEOLOGICAL WORK AND LANDSCAPE ANALYSIS

Previous archaeological work at Heythrop has included a Conservation and Management Plan that incorporated a historic landscape survey undertaken by the Debois Landscape Group in 2004, which examined all aspects of the designed landscape and produced a phased analysis of its development and assessed its wider historic significance. A follow up

survey and report in 2009, outlined planting proposals and long-term management proposals for the gardens and parkland.

A research article by Helen Lawrence (2010) that explores evidence that Thomas Archer was not only an accomplished architect working in the first half of the 18th century, but also a garden designer, incorporates a section on Heythrop. She examines the role and design of the buildings that are associated with the Cold Bath Terrace and their landscape setting. The stylistic relationships between the buildings, the house and other landscape elements such as the Bridge are also discussed.

The only previous archaeological excavation within the Wilderness at Heythrop was an evaluation undertaken by Oxford Archaeology in November 2006 (OA 2006). This comprised the archaeological cleaning and recording of the stone drainage channel that flowed from the Octagon Pool to the Cold Bath Building. Oxford Archaeology concluded that the original stone culvert under the track had been replaced by modern salt glazed sewer pipe, which appeared to have involved the reconstruction of parts of the stone exit to the culvert.

5 METHODOLOGY

METHODOLOGY

The methodology for the recording, survey and investigation of the garden components identified within **Section 2** of this report, can be divided into the following stages of fieldwork and reporting which are presented within this report.

TOPOGRAPHIC SURVEY

A topographic survey was undertaken to record the setting of each structure. A robotic TST instrument was used which produced a survey grid tied to the Ordnance Survey National Datum.

STANDING BUILDING SURVEY

The three built structures (Steading Seat, Three Niched Seat and the Cold Bath Building) were each recorded in accordance with an English Heritage (2006) Level 2/3 archaeological survey. This comprised a drawn, measured, written and photographic record.

The drawn record included the production of a series of floor plans for each structure, accompanied by structural cross-sections and elevations. Record photography included b/w 35mm and digital images, which were recorded on site location plans and a descriptive register.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATION

Seven archaeological trenches were excavated, using a combination of machine and hand excavation techniques (**Figures 2, 3**). The location of the trenches was agreed following discussions with Dan Bashford of English Heritage and after a detailed examination of ground conditions. The intention of the excavation was to assess the nature of the buried archaeological resource and understand the composition and character of any exposed features, with an emphasis on preservation of structural remains *in situ*.

It should be noted that the final positioning of each trench followed a site assessment after clearance of vegetation to ensure that minimal disturbance was caused to extant trees and mature shrubs. The excavation was undertaken in accordance with the approved WSI (JESSOP Consultancy 2012) and recognised guidelines (IfA 2008a).

6 ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESULTS

INTRODUCTION

This section of the report details the archaeological recording and observations. Each individual observation is described, making reference to relevant plans, drawings and photographs (see **Appendices 4** and **5**).

To assist the overall interpretation of the various landscape components that have been examined during this programme of investigation, each is considered in turn below. Sub-sections comprise a summary of the landscape setting, a description of any structural remains, followed by a description of any associated excavated archaeological deposits.

STEADING SEAT

LANDSCAPE SETTING:

The Steading Seat is positioned at a sharp angle in the ha-ha that forms a promontory overlooking the eastern approach road leading up to the house (**Figure 1**). It is 875m to the south-east of the House and garden terrace. The

ha-ha has a poorly bonded limestone construction, with a shallow ditch at the base (**Appendix 5.10**). The building is set back from the edge of the ha-ha, in the form of a leveled platform covered in rough grass (**Appendix 5.9**). To the rear (the north) is an area of woodland. Here there are a series of mature yew trees positioned immediately behind the building and which may represent a former hedge that would have formed a dark backdrop to the lighter coloured stonework.

STRUCTURAL FABRIC:

The Steading Seat is a stone alcove constructed with a pale yellow/honey coloured limestone (**Appendix 5.1**). The stone blocks have an ashlar finish, although the rear (north) face is only roughly finished (**Appendices 5.3, 5.4**). The walls are a single block thick and have closely bedded joints. The Steading Seat has a semi-circular plan (**Appendix 4.2**), which measures 4.16m in width and a maximum thickness of 2.02m. There are short returns on either side of the entrance, 0.82m in width. The principal elevation has a depressed arched opening measuring 2.64m in width and with a height of 2.5m from ground level to the apex of the vault. There is a sloping coping with a cyma moulded cornice detail (**Appendix 5.1**). Set at either end of the coping and in the center, are square stone pedestals that measure 0.34m x 0.34m x 0.13m in height.

Internally, there is a hemispherical vault formed from three large stone blocks. An ashlar plinth with an offset of 6cm, circumnavigates both the internal and external wall faces of the building (**Appendices 5.1-5.3**). Cut within the upper edge of this plinth, are a series of irregularly spaced square cut-outs or sockets (**Appendix 5.2**), which are interpreted as the former positions of struts and supports for a former seat that followed the rear curve of the building.

Graffiti in the form of incised names on the internal face stones of the building was recorded (**Appendices 5.5, 5.6**). Both full names and initials were noted, a few of which were accompanied by dates; for example 1820/1 and 1812.

There are a few square stone indented repairs and a hard mortar has been used to fill occasional bedding joints, indicating a former period of maintenance.

TRENCH 1: (NGR SP 36900 25954)

This trench was positioned against the west entrance pier (**Appendix 4.3**), and measured 0.05m x 1.6m x 0.25m in depth (**Appendix 5.7**). It was excavated by hand and was orientated north-south.

At the base of the trench, the upper parts of the foundations (**104**) of the entrance pier, (**103**), were exposed at a depth of 0.5-0.15m below ground level (b.g.l.). They comprised a large rough-cut stone block that projected 0.2m from the wall face. Against the curved plinth forming the rear wall of the building was a layer of limestone fragments that were bonded with a lime mortar (**105**). This deposit had been removed in the eastern part of the trench however it is interpreted as a foundation layer from a former floor surface. A loose silty sub-soil covered (**104**) and (**105**), the upper surface of which formed the internal flooring prior to the excavations. Externally, a layer of topsoil (**101**) overlay subsoil (**102**).

During the excavation of (**102**), fragments of late 19th-/early 20th-century bottle glass were recovered, along with an early 18th-century base fragment of a brown glazed jug (see **Section 7**). A small fragment of pale white/yellow sandstone with a smooth face and a large fragment of pale yellow stone floor tile with a smooth surface were also recovered from context (102).

DISCUSSION

The trench exposed the footings of the building (**Appendix 5.8**), which are strikingly similar to those exposed at the base of the north pier of the Three Niched Seat in Trench 2 (**Appendix 5.20**). Although disturbed, fragments of a possible flagstone floor surface were

recovered, although no evidence for this was observed outside the building and it is, therefore, suggested that it was only used internally.

The structural fabric is relatively plain in appearance, however it has close jointing and great skill has been used to set out and cut the three large stones that form the ceiling vault. The construction of this is almost identical to the vaulting of the Three Niched Seat. Another similarity, is in the placing of three square pedestals above the cornice (**Appendix 5.1**), however no scarring, traces of mortar, or fixing holes was noted to indicate that they had been used for finials, or statuary.

Evidence for a curved seat has been recorded (**Appendix 5.2**), with the level of the seat presumably coinciding with, or immediately above, the offset of the plinth.

The investigations have also noted evidence for the use of the building, with a fragment from a ceramic jug and discarded glass bottles. In addition, the carving of graffiti has been noted on the inner facing stones, which is likely to have been cut by visitors to the building, rather than the masons who cut the stone.

THREE NICHED SEAT (NYMPHAEUM)

LANDSCAPE SETTING:

The Three Niched Seat (also called the Nymphaeum) is located c.165m south-west of Heythrop House at the base of a steep slope (**Figure 3, Appendix 4.1**). This area is historically known as the Wilderness and was a wooded area of the garden with walks, interspersed with vistas and features of interest. The Three Niched Seat comprises a stone screen positioned on the edge of a terrace walk – the Cold Bath Terrace – and directly fronts on to a former footpath. It has also been suggested (Lawrence 2010, 57) that the building was visible from the roof of the House and would have appeared as an eye-catcher.

STRUCTURAL FABRIC:

The Three Niched Seat is an ornamental stone screen with a large central alcove and recessed niches on either side that would have originally formed seats (**Appendix 5.11**). The principal façade measures 8.34m in length, with a height of 2.54m at either end, and 2.74m in the center (**Appendix 4.4**). The structure is built with a pale coloured limestone (**Appendix 5.12**), although it is now covered with a layer of green algae. The stone blocks

have an ashlar finish, although the rear (south-west) face is crudely worked (**Appendix 5.16**). The walls forming the central alcove are a single block in thickness, with closely bedded joints, although the rear of the side walls have had a secondary face added over a concrete foundation (**Appendix 5.15**). These side walls have a battered face measuring 1m in thickness at the base, although the original width of these walls was 0.48m. There is a horizontal cornice with a cyma moulded detail which rises to a point above the central arch (**Appendix 5.12**). Above the moulding at equal spacing along the top of the façade, are square stone pedestals that measure 0.5m x 0.5m x 0.09m in height (**Appendices 5.17, 5.18**).

The central alcove is accessed via a large opening, which has a depressed arch measuring 2.5m in width and with a height of 2.4m to the apex of the vault (**Appendix 4.5**). The depth of the alcove to the rear section of the plinth is 2.44m. The interior of the alcove has a hemispherical vault formed from three large stone blocks. An ashlar plinth with an offset of 6cm, circumnavigates both the internal and external wall faces of the building (**Appendix 5.13**). Cut within the upper edge of this plinth, are a series of irregularly spaced square cut-outs or sockets (**Appendix 5.14**), and these are interpreted as the former positions of struts and supports for a former seat that followed the rear curve of the building. At a height of 0.44m above the plinth are three small niches, the central one being larger than the other two.

TRENCH 2: (NGR SP 36209 26213)

This trench was positioned against the north-west pier forming the central alcove (**Appendix 4.6**). The trench measured 0.5m x 1.25m x 0.25m in depth and was orientated north-east to south-west (**Appendix 5.19**). It was excavated by hand.

At the base of the trench, the top of the foundations to the pier supporting the main arched entrance were exposed at a depth of 0.2m b.g.l. It comprised a large rectangular stone (**211**) that was worn and may have acted as a threshold into the building (**Appendix 5.20**). At this level, there was a layer of loose limestone and gravel (**208**) (**209**). This is interpreted as dump of hardcore which underlay a tarmac surface (**207**), only 0.1m b.g.l. (**Appendix 5.19**). Above the tarmac was a deposit of mid-brown silty-clay (**204**), which formed the uppermost surface within the alcove. Externally, however, there was an upper sandy-gravel layer (**205**) that overlay (**204**). This was very compact and appears to be for a hard-standing, presumably laid down to form a path. A layer of loose leaves covered (**205**) and parts of the interior.

No artefactual evidence was recovered from this trench.

DISCUSSION

The design of the Three Niched Seat has many similarities to the construction of the Steading Seat. However, it should be noted that the size of the alcove at the Steading Seat is slightly larger, although it is a much plainer design, which does not include any niches in the rear wall.

The excavation of Trench 2 has confirmed that the ground levels around the building have been raised by c.0.2-0.25m, which if restored would enable the full height of the structure to be re-instated and enable the two side niches to function as seats again. Whilst no floor surface inside the building was observed, the worn foundation (**Appendix 5.20**) that may have acted as a threshold, may in fact represent the former floor level. The secondary insertion of tarmac as a floor above the threshold stone suggests that the route was still in use in the late 19th to early 20th century, as a similar surface has been observed elsewhere in the gardens along the north-east bank of the River Swere in Kite Grove.

COLD BATH TERRACE

LANDSCAPE SETTING:

The Cold Bath Terrace is located to the south-west of Heythrop House at the base of a slope along the edge of the Wilderness (**Figure 1, Appendix 4.1**). It is approximately 3m in width, and the ground falls away to the south-east where it over-looks a wooded valley. There is a modern rock cut drainage ditch along the north-east edge. The terrace forms a link with the Three Niched Seat at the north-west end (**Appendix 5.21**) and the Cold Bath House to the south-east (**Appendix 5.22**). To the north-east of the Cold Bath House the terrace becomes a walk along the top of the ha-ha. The terrace is approximately 160m in length and slopes in the direction of the Three Niched Seat.

TRENCH 3: (NGR SP 36219 26199)

This trench was located across the top of the terrace, approximately 3m south of the Three Niched Seat (**Appendix 4.7**). The trench measured 1.1m x 4.7m x 0.45m in depth and was orientated north-east to south-west (**Appendix 5.23**). It was excavated by machine.

The underlying hill-slope comprises a firm yellow silty-clay (**302**), 0.2m b.g.l in the south-west end of the trench and as the ground rises, was exposed at 0.45m b.g.l. in the central

section of the trench. Cut into (**302**), a stone wall (**305**) was exposed at the break of slope in the south-western half of the trench (**Appendix 5.24**). This wall was 0.85m in width and survived for a height of 0.3m, representing two courses of facing stones. The wall was a dry-stone construction and had been deliberately lowered in height. The wall (**305**) was directly aligned with the south wall of the Three Niched Seat, possibly indicating that they respected one another and may have been contemporary in date.

The north-east edge of the trench was delineated by the modern drainage gully (**302**), which cut through deposit a deposit interpreted as the sub-base to a former path (**306**). Adjacent to this the ground surface formed a low mound (**304**), which comprised the up-cast soil, stone and clay from the excavation of the gully. Beneath (**304**) was a deposit of clinker and ash, which may be the remnants of the tarmac surface exposed in Trench 2, only 7m to the north-west, and which, if so, would have continued along the top of the terrace. The up-cast (**304**) overlay a layer of sandstone and limestone fragments in a sandy matrix, which may be the upper surface of an earlier path, perhaps associated with the wall (**305**).

Three fragments of 20th-century green bottle glass were recovered from above (**305**) (see **Section 7**).

TRENCH 4: (NGR SP 36223 26176)

This trench was located in a central section of the Cold Bath Terrace, approximately mid-way between the Three Niched Seat and The Cold Bath Building (**Appendix 4.8**). The trench measured 1.1m x 4.2m x 0.5m in depth and was orientated north-east to south-west (**Appendix 5.25**). It was excavated by machine.

The sequence of deposits was similar to those in Trench 3, with the underlying hill-slope comprising a firm yellow silty-clay (**402**), 0.15m b.g.l.. Cut into (**402**), a stone wall (**405**) was exposed at the break of slope in the center of the trench (**Appendix 5.26**). This wall was 1.03m in width and survived for a height of 0.4m, representing two courses of facing stones, the lower with an offset. The wall was of a dry-stone construction and had been deliberately lowered in height. The wall (**405**) was directly aligned with the wall (**305**) exposed in Trench 3, and appeared to be a continuation of the same feature along the south-west edge of the terrace. No traces of any path surfaces were found in the north-east half of the trench, and the up-cast spoil (**404**) from the excavation of the drainage gully (**403**), lay directly over the clay (**402**). The drainage works appear, therefore, to have

involved lowering the ground level and removing all traces of path surfaces in this section of the terrace. A layer of topsoil (**401**) covered the trench and abutted (**404**).

No artefactual evidence was recovered from this trench.

TRENCH 5: (NGR SP 36245 26123)

This trench was at the south-east end of the Cold Bath Terrace, 1m to the north of the Cold Bath Building (**Appendix 4.9**). The trench measured 1.05m x 5.4m x 1m in depth and was orientated north-east to south-west (**Appendix 5.27**). It was excavated by machine.

The base of the trench comprised a firm yellow silty-clay (**502**), identical to that from Trenches 3 and 5, cut into which was a substantial drystone wall (**502**). This wall survived to a greater height than (**305**) or (**405**), measuring 0.6m in height and was also wider at 1.3m (**Appendix 5.28**). The wall is orientated towards the Cold Bath Building, but appears to change direction immediately beyond the north edge of the trench to the same alignment as the walling in the other trenches; this change in orientation in the wall alignment, may partially explain the differing dimensions observed in Trench 5.

Patches of stoney material (**506**) on the down slope of (**505**) are interpreted as sections of collapsed walling. Above this was a layer of topsoil (**305**), 0.54m thick that followed the natural gradient of the hillslope. A large dump of re-deposited stone and topsoil (**504**) formed a more recent mound above (**501**), interpreted as up-cast from an excavation undertaken by Oxford Archaeology in 2006.

No artefactual evidence was recovered from this trench.

DISCUSSION

The excavation of three trenches along the Cold Bath Terrace, have provided new evidence for a wall that originally ran along the south-west edge of the terrace. The wall presumably formed part of the boundary circuit that circumnavigated the Heythrop Estate, similar to sections that still remain standing elsewhere. It does, however, appear to have been deliberately lowered in height, although whether this was to create a level terrace with a stone retaining wall is unknown. However, the orientation of the wall, with the Three Niched Seat and the Cold Bath Building would appear to have been a deliberate intention. It has unfortunately not been possible to establish the sequence of construction of the wall and the two adjacent buildings, and additional excavation would be necessary to explore this further.

COLD BATH HOUSE

LANDSCAPE SETTING:

The Cold Bath House is located at the south-west end of the Cold Bath Terrace where it meets the ha-ha forming the boundary to the garden (**Appendix 1**). The building projects forward from the line of the ha-ha on a small platform. The ground falls away to the west and south (**Appendices 5.29, 5.33**), and there is a raised area immediately to the east. Here it appears that the ground levels have been artificially raised (**Appendix 5.33**), such that they are almost level with the window sill on the south-east elevation of the building. There is a crude rockery formation made from lumps of concrete and brick fragments, which gives the effect of a rockery, but is poorly executed. The alterations to the east side of the Cold Bath Building may therefore relate to late 19th- 20th-century usage of the garden, a period when there was some re-invigoration of the gardens, including the introduction of the tarmac paths.

A stone-lined channel or rill flows away from the building down the slope to the south and meets a continuation of the ditch from the ha-ha (**Appendix 5.29**). At the junction of the two water courses the stone edging has been (recently) adapted to form a series of steps and a rocky edged pool, possibly when the surface drainage ditch was excavated along the north-east edge of the Cold Bath Terrace.

Approximately, 4-6m south-east of the ha-ha ditch, is a surviving remnant of metal estate rail fence (**Appendix 5.29**). This forms a short section of the boundary to the Wilderness and the open parkland beyond. The fence is partially obscured by vegetation and is damaged in places.

STRUCTURAL FABRIC:

The Cold Bath House is a small rectangular building (**Appendices 4.11, 4.12**), measuring 2.62m x 3.24m (external) and 1.54m x 2.16m (internal). It is orientated north-east to south-west, with a doorway in the north-east wall (**Appendix 5.31**) and round windows in the south-east and south-west walls (**Appendix 5.33**). The maximum height of the building is 2.8m (measured on the external south-west face).

EXTERIOR

The external walling comprises an irregular course of roughly finished blocks of limestone (**Appendix 5.34**), with substantial quoins at the corners. In the north-east wall is a doorway measuring 1.02m wide and 1.8m in height (**Appendix 5.31**), with a large stone lintel. There are large circular windows in the south-west and south-east walls with internal diameters of 0.94m (**Appendix 5.32**). Each is formed from two blocks of ashlar masonry, which have a raised rim measuring 0.14m, and an internal rebate 6cm deep. It is possible that this rebate once contained a wooden window frame. There are six fixing holes in the external face of the rim of each window, with lead caulking (**Appendix 5.35**) indicating that they once housed a metal armature, possibly to secure a window frame with glazed panels. The positioning of these holes is not equidistant around the circumference of the window. Four are located opposite one another, two on either side and two at the top and bottom. The remaining two are located on either side of the hole at the bottom of the window, and set at an angle of 30 degrees from its center. This configuration is unusual and may be associated with a decorative design.

The roof of the building projects slightly by 2-3cm and is constructed from a series of huge stone slabs with a stepped profile with chamfered edges (**Appendix 5.34**). On either side of the north-east end of the building the roof profile is raised at the corners. This has enabled a shallow drainage channel to be carved, thus throwing water away from the north-east elevation containing the doorway (**Appendix 5.36**). The projecting roofing slabs, and the raised rim surrounding each of the windows, are indicative that the original treatment of the exterior may have been to apply a render coat of lime plaster. This would have formed a flush surface with the roof and windows and also disguised the rough stone walling.

INTERIOR

The interior of the building is via a doorway in the north-east wall. There is a change in level down into the building of 0.25m, although it is suggested that there may have originally been a series of stone steps (now removed). There is an open channel that continues as a culvert towards the Octagon Pool to the north-east (see Oxford Archaeology 2003), and this directs a flow of water directly on to the stone floor. There was a shallow depression in the floor (**Appendix 5.38**), which would have directed the water to a low recessed drain in the south-west wall. There is a gradual fall of 12cm across the floor, with a ceiling height of 2.3m at the entrance increasing to 2.42m in front of the drain.

It is likely that there would have been a wooden door to the building, however there is only limited evidence for such a feature. There is a slight scar on the underside of the south-east side of the lintel and a series of drilled holes at the base of the north-west inner door jamb (**Appendix 5.42**), one of which contains a metal fixing. It is, therefore, suggested that if a timber frame had been used, it must have been securely fitted within the door opening, thus when removed almost no traces would be left.

The thickness of the walls of the Cold Bath Building varies from 0.5m to 0.6m. In the thicker part of the walls there are windows, which have an internal finish of finely cut ashlar blocks with thin bedding joints (**Appendix 5.37**). They have a rubble core set in cream coloured lime mortar and with roofing slates used to level the courses. Traces of paint, or limewash, were recorded on all of the walls (**Appendix 5.43**); including a dark orange colour; the paint overlay a degraded reddish/pink surface. The application to the interior walls would have changed the appearance of the room, creating a warm and bright space.

Set within the wall thickness, beneath each window, are rectangular window recesses measuring 1.02m x 0.34m (**Appendix 5.39**). A 6cm high horizontal scar in the stonework above each recess, is interpreted as the position of a former seat, made from either stone or wood. The level of this scar continues along the full length of the north-west wall (**Appendix 5.37**) where the seating would have continued. Further evidence for this is a row of three cut sockets in the stonework (**Appendix 5.38**), which would have housed vertical supports. From this long seat along the north-west wall, there are excellent views out of each window into the surrounding landscape (**Appendix 5.39**).

The roof was formed from large stone slabs, which have a smooth ashlar face. Above each of the windows and doorway, the upper section of masonry has been cut with a curved profile, which has the effect of making the interior more spacious. A row of iron nails was recorded fixed in the mortar bed of the top two courses of stone along the north-west wall (**Appendix 5.41**). They appear to be grouped together, although they are so decayed it has not been possible to be certain about their function; they may have acted as hooks, or have secured a timber fixing that has been removed. Above the window in the south-west wall (**Appendix 5.40**) a row of small holes is interpreted as the position of row of nails, which may have been used to secure a curtain in front of the window.

TRENCH 6: (NGR SP 36241 26108)

This small trench was positioned across the stone-lined channel that exits from the south-west wall of the Cold Bath Building (**Appendix 4.10**). It measured 1.2m x 0.4m x 0.33m in depth and was orientated north-west to south-east (**Appendix 5.30**). It was excavated by hand.

At the base of the trench was a thick layer of concreted limestone (**607**) that was formed following a gradual accumulation of material resulting in a calcareous deposit, apparently overlaying the natural limestone bedrock (**603**). Above (**603**) was a firm yellow/brown mottled clay (**602**) into which the culvert had been inserted, although no construction cut was observed. Ashlar cut stone blocks, measuring c.0.16m x 0.2m x 0.64m in length, were laid end to end (without mortar) to form the sides of the culvert (**605**) (**606**). Layers of topsoil (**601**), sand (**604**) and leaf litter (**600**) were built up against the outer sides of the stone sides of the channel. The stone blocks appear to have been re-used from another structure, suggesting that the culvert has been re-built in its present form, as there are no reused stones within the Cold Bath Building.

No artefactual evidence was recovered from this trench.

CLEANING OF COLD BATH BUILDING:

The internal floor of the Cold Bath Building was cleaned prior to the recording of the structural fabric. Whilst this should not be considered as an archaeological trench, the deposits were carefully removed by hand (**Appendix 5.38**).

A stone floor was exposed, although it was difficult to establish for certain the form of the slabs as they were covered with a calcareous deposit derived from the local spring water. The floor sloped on both sides into the center of the room, forming a slight channel. At the base of the south-east wall a low opening formed a stepped culvert through the wall to enable water to flow across the floor and out to the external water channel investigated by Trench 6. The deposits above the stone floor were comprised of the accumulation of silt, organic matter and small stones that had been washed into the interior.

No artefactual evidence was recovered during this cleaning exercise.

DISCUSSION

The intended function of the Cold Bath Building is still poorly understood. The archaeological recording has, however, shed new light on its appearance, in that it may

have been externally rendered, with interior decorative schemes of orange and red limewash.

The use of the building to channel water from the Octagon Pool is unusual, and may be an early example of this style of structure. The apparent repairs to the stone sides of the open culvert or rill on the south-west side of the building perhaps indicate longevity of use. The final treatment of the floor is still uncertain. The obvious interpretation of the central culvert and seating around the walls, is that it was used for sitting with the water allowed to flow over and across one's feet (see discussion by Lawrence 2010, 57). The closest parallels for this are slipper baths, popular during the Victorian period and incorporated in many large urban bathing complexes, and the Cold Bath may represent an early-precedent of this form of bathing and relaxation. Alternatively, there may have been a wooden slatted grill on the floor of the building. This would have enabled bathers using the Octagon Pool to change in the dry, whilst still hearing the sound of running water beneath their feet.

The building is notably different in appearance from the Three Niched Seat and Steading Seat, however there are subtle similarities in their designs that hint at a design by the same person, perhaps Thomas Archer. They all make use of intricately carved blocks of ashlar, which in itself is not unusual, but the treatment of the roof and ceiling vaults is an impressive example of craftsmanship and pre-mediated design. Small details such as the hidden drainage channel on the roof of the Cold Bath Building, or the use of three stones to create the ceiling vaults, are potential features that future research may be able to identify as recognisable traits of Archer.

OCTAGON POOL

LANDSCAPE SETTING:

The Octagon Pool is located 7m to the north-west of the Cold Bath Building (**Figure 3, Appendix 4.1**). It is orientated on a direct alignment with the center of the building (**Appendix 5.45**) and a stream that emerges from a spring to the north-east (**Appendix 5.52**). The pool has the form of an elongated octagon, with internal dimensions of 3.5m x 1.95m, and although silted up, its depth was probed to 0.5m. The south-east overflow of the pool is defined by a rockwork cascade (**Appendix 5.47**) that leads to a small pool, from which it flows to the Cold Bath Building, via a culvert (**Appendix 5.44**) beneath the path along the Cold Bath Terrace (see Oxford Archaeology 2003).

The pool is sited on a slight platform that forms a distinct feature at the north end of the Cold Bath Terrace. The planting is set back from the edges, although occasional remnants of box around the edges may survive from a formal hedge that once defined the pool.

TRENCH 7: (NGR SP 36258 26116)

Trench 7 was positioned to investigate the extent and condition of the Octagon Pool (**Appendix 4.13**). It measured 5.8m x 2.4m, with a short extension to the north-east to encompass the start of the stream channel. The trench did not fully expose all sides of the former pool (**Appendix 5.46**), although the east side was probed to confirm its extent. The pool and stream are still an active water course and the excavations were undertaken to retain this function, as such the internal silts (**702**) were not removed, although they were probed to confirm that the pool had a solid base. It was excavated by hand, which involved the removal of topsoil (**701**) and encroaching vegetation to a depth of 0.15m to expose the upper surfaces of the feature.

The Octagon Pool can be divided into three distinct elements. The first is the stream (**704**) that flows from the north-east (**Appendix 5.51**). Whilst this appears to be a natural feature it consists of two straight sections most likely as a result of deliberate straightening. The surface of the stream bed also forms a series of shallow pools and low cascades (**Appendix 5.52**); again, it is suggested that this is a deliberate attempt to increase movement and changes in sound as the water flows into the Octagon Pool.

The pool (**703**) itself forms the central element (**Appendix 5.49**), and comprises an elongated octagon with unequal sides. The edges are formed from blocks of yellow limestone, approximately 0.35m wide. The upper surfaces of the stones are heavily degraded (**Appendix 5.50**), however, sections of a chamfered edge still survive on a few of them. The stones were secured to one another with iron cramps set in lead.

The water flows over the top of the stones that form the south-west end of the pool, although as they do not have any evidence for a chamfered edge, it is suggested that the top course has been removed, or become dislodged and fallen into the pool. The water is then channeled over a series of large angled stones (**705**) set at right-angles to the end of this pool (**Appendix 5.47**). These large stones have a rough rockwork surface and form a decorative cascade leading to a small pool (**706**) only 0.2m x 0.4m in size. This marks the entrance to a culvert (**707**) that leads beneath the path along the terrace to the Cold Bath Building (**Appendix 5.48**).

DISCUSSION

The partial excavation of the outline of the Octagon Pool should be regarded as an important discovery, as there are no known drawings, or detailed descriptions, of the feature. The quality of the stonework, the rockwork cascade and the link to the Cold Bath Building, all confirm that they were a significant element on the circuit of walks within the Wilderness at Heythrop. It can also be suggested that they were planned as a single feature, and, thus, need to be recognised as an integrated aspect of the landscape. The date and designer of the Octagon Pool and Bath House is also unclear, although Thomas Archer is a strong candidate (see Lawrence 2010, 57-58).

7 MATERIAL CULTURE

INTRODUCTION

The archaeological excavations recovered a small assemblage of atefactual material, including pottery, glass and stone. Each material is described below with a summary interpretation. It should be noted that the Client has requested that all the excavated material will be retained at Heythrop House, and not deposited with the Oxfordshire Museums Service.

POTTERY - BY PAUL BLINKHORN AND OLIVER JESSOP

Catalogue:

1. Two sherds of pottery weighing 34g occurred in context (**102**). It is a base-sherd from a jar or jug in Glazed Red Earthenware (Oxfordshire type-series fabric OXDR; Mellor 1984), with a manganese glaze. Diameter of base 8cm (**Appendix 2.1**).
2. A single small fragment of a foot ring from a white porcelain bowl, or cup was recovered from (**102**). Weight 4g; diameter of base 6.5cm.

Discussion:

The fragments of earthenware pottery type-well known in the region, and typical utilitarian product of the tradition, with the glaze suggesting a date of *c*.AD1680 – 1750. Unfortunately, the sherd of white porcelain is so small that it cannot be attributed to a specific date, although it is likely to have originated from a small bowl, or cup.

GLASS

Catalogue:

1. Three small fragments of (modern) green bottle glass were recovered from the upper surface of the wall (**305**). Weight 35g.
2. Four body and one base fragment from a clear glass rectangular bottle were recovered from (**102**). Mould blown design with embossed incremental measuring lines, with words 'half full' and 'full'. Weight 222g.

Discussion:

The fragments of glass appear to represent two separate vessels, both of 20th century date. The measuring bottle with an embossed design, may have been intended for use with a medicine or tonic.

CLAY PIPE

Catalogue:

1. A small undiagnostic stem fragment from a clay pipe weighing 1g was recovered from context (**102**). Length 2cm; diameter 6mm.

Discussion:

Fragments of clay pipe are frequently found from deposits dating to the 18th to 19th centuries, however it is not possible to ascribe an exact date from such a small fragment.

IRON

Catalogue:

1. A single nail was recovered from context (**101**) during the cleaning of the interior of the Steading Seat. It was hand made with a flat head, partially obscured by corrosion. Weight 16g; length 9cm.

Discussion:

Whilst the nail is hand-made suggesting a pre-20th century date, it is not possible to ascribe any function apart from it is likely to have been used for securing timbers together.

STONE

Catalogue:

1. One small fragment of pale white/yellow sandstone with a smooth face was recovered from context (**102**). Weight 70g; Dimensions 7.5cm x 4.5cm x 2cm thick (**Appendix 2.2**).
2. A large fragment of pale yellow stone floor tile with a smooth surface was recovered from context (**102**). Weight 1,070g; Dimensions 13cm x 9cm x 5.5cm thick.

Discussion:

The larger fragment is interpreted as having once formed part of a stone floor surface within the Steading Seat. The thickness of the stone is typical for flooring slabs, and with a smooth upper surface, such a usage is highly likely.

8 DISCUSSION

DISCUSSION

The archaeological investigations of the Cold Bath Terrace and the Steading Seat have greatly increased our understanding of the former layout of these parts of the gardens at Heythrop. Whilst the recording and excavations were only an evaluation exercise, the results have confirmed that an approach combining an examination of both the built fabric and the settings of each structure, has been a very effective means of investigation.

The survey of the Steading Seat (**Appendix 5.9**) which is located on an artificial promontory is considered first. The building is set back from the edge of the ha-ha, but has commanding views covering approximately 180 degrees. The level area in front of the building plays an important part of the setting, although whether this was simply a mown lawn, or gravel apron is unknown at present.

The building itself is constructed from substantial stone blocks that have a smooth ashlar finish on the internal faces (**Appendix 5.1**), however they are left roughly worked to the rear. The arched vault comprises three single blocks, and is an almost identical construction to the roof of the Three Niched Seat on the Cold Bath Terrace. Internally, the building appears to have had a flagstone floor, comprising paving of a similar stone to the walling blocks. At the level of the plinth, irregular spaced notches indicate the fixing positions for a former bench seat (**Appendix 5.2**), which would have concealed the offset of the plinth and followed the curve of the rear wall of the building. Evidence for the use of the building is in the form of graffiti carved into the stonework and fragments of 20th-century bottle glass and the base of a brown glazed jug c.1680-1750 in date.

The similarity of the architectural detailing of the Steading Seat and Three Niched Seat indicates that the same person designed them, although it is less clear in regards to the Cold Bath Building. Whilst care has been paid to the treatment of external and internal stone-work the constructional techniques are different from those of the other buildings, as an enclosed room with large round windows has been created. The form of the roofs is also different, although all three structures make use of large blocks for this element of the building and this may indicate that they are all contemporary.

The Cold Bath Terrace is located at the edge of the former Wilderness, at a junction with the ha-ha and open grassland to the east and woodland and the park boundary to the

south. The terrace (**Appendices 5.21, 5.22**) comprises a walk 2.5-3m in width and c.120m in length, with a gentle gradient falling towards the north-west. The Three Niched Seat and Cold Bath Building demark the terrace at either end.

These structures are independent of one another. However the archaeological excavations have identified a stone wall (**Appendices 5.23 to 5.28**) along the down-slope side of the terrace that would have formed a physical link between the two buildings. This feature is a substantial construction, c.0.5m wide at its base, and, although only four-five courses were found to survive, the dimensions indicate that it was originally at least 1m in height. Whilst it has been deliberately lowered, its original appearance is likely to have been similar to surviving sections of boundary walling elsewhere at Heythrop. The alignment of the wall directly relates to the corners of the buildings at either end of the terrace, although it is worth noting that at the junction with the Cold Bath Building (**Appendix 5.27**), it changes its alignment to accommodate a change in direction of the ha-ha on the opposite side of the building. The effect of a wall along one edge of the terrace walk would have been to form a striking landscape feature and a sense of enclosure, adding to the division of the gardens from the wider landscape beyond.

The Three Niched Seat (or Nymphaeum) at the north-west end of the terrace walk (**Appendix 5.11**) comprises a flat wall, broken by a large central recess and two side niches forming seats. A moulded cornice defines the top of this wall, with five equally spaced stone blocks perhaps once supporting finials, or statues. The central recess forms an open-sided chamber that contains three further niches c.1m above the existing floor level (**Appendix 5.14**), presumably intended for statuary, or lanterns. Similar to the Steading Seat, there are cut notches in the plinth indicating the position of a curved bench seat, although no physical traces remain. The excavation of a trial hole at the entrance to the structure (**Appendix 5.20**) has confirmed that the original ground surface was c.0.25m lower than today, which would have enabled the external side niches to function as seats. It is interesting to note, that, above this original level, a secondary flooring layer of tarmac had been laid (**Appendix 5.19**), although the effect of such a hard and dark surface would have detracted from the internal appearance of the building. No trace of the original floor covering was exposed, although a flagstone, or gravel surface is likely.

At the opposite end of the terrace walk is the small rectangular structure known as the Cold Bath Building (**Appendix 5.33**). This curious structure has an external appearance of rough

cut stone walling, with ashlar detailing in the form of large round windows and a stepped roof structure of large chamfered slabs. It is suggested that the exterior was once rendered, thus hiding the rough walling and giving the building a more pleasing appearance. The windows look out to the south-west and south-east, with now partially restricted views by the external planting of yew trees. The windows have lead encased metal fixings that would have supported an external armature, or bars, although the form of this structural element cannot be established from the position of the holes.

There is a stone floor (**Appendix 5.38**) with an angled profile that forms a channel for the run-off water from the Octagon Pool. This water enters the building via a stone lined culvert from the north-east and exits though a square hole at floor level beneath the south-west window. There are large sockets in the north-west wall for a former seat (**Appendix 5.37**), which was level with two recessed stone seats beneath each window. A scar on the stonework confirms that the seating was 4-5cm in thickness, but whether it was stone of wood is unknown. The location of the seating and flow of water across the floor indicates that the room may have acted as a changing room for the adjacent Octagon Pool, whilst also having a use as a slipper bath, where visitors could sit on the benches and look out of the windows whilst allowing the water to flow over their feet. Alternatively, there may have been a wooden slatted floor covering, beneath which the water was allowed to flow, thus feet and clothing could be kept dry whilst maintaining the effect of the sound and movement of flowing water beneath.

Internally, traces of an orange and red paint, or limewash, were recorded (**Appendix 5.43**). This appears to have once covered the whole of the interior and would have created a room with a warm character and feel. It has not been possible to confirm whether there was a door leading into the building, although a scar on the underside of the lintel may represent a recess for housing a pivot for a former door. A row of nails above the former bench along the north-west wall and scars for further nails above in the horizontal joint above the south-west window, are of indeterminable date. They may have once secured fabric, or acted as hooks, however a conclusive interpretation is not possible.

To the south-west of the Cold Bath Building is an open stone-edged culvert (**Appendix 5.29**), or rill. This feature has a crude appearance and is formed from reused ashlar blocks. There is evidence that the setting of the south-east of the building has been altered, particularly in regards to the ground level, which is currently at the height of the window sill.

The ground surface here also has an irregular wall comprised of rubble and fragments of brick (**Appendix 5.33**), possibly a crude attempt to form an ornamental rockery in the late 19th to early 20th century. Beneath this feature is the continuation of the ditch at the base of the ha-ha.

Further archaeological investigations to the south-east of the building should be able to re-establish the former ground surface, which was presumably considerably lower than today, and examine the significance of the rockery feature and whether it is indeed a secondary addition. This work could be undertaken in conjunction with ground works along the Cold Bath Terrace in the form of an archaeological watching brief.

The archaeological investigations to the north-east of the Cold Bath Building have partially exposed an Octagon Pool with an elongated shape (**Appendix 5.46**). This is created from cut ashlar blocks with a chamfered edge defining the rim of the pool, c.0.5m in depth. There is a stream channel to the north-east, which has a series of rock cut steps forming small pools (**Appendix 5.52**). The outflow to the pool is defined by raised ribs of rockwork (**Appendix 5.48**) that form an ornamental cascade between which the water can flow. It then collects in a small pool, which forms the entrance to a stone culvert that flows beneath the terrace walk and directly onto the floor of the Cold Bath Building. The Octagon Pool was not fully exposed, although its original form can be inferred and which has striking similarities to the pool and rill at Rousham designed by William Kent c.1730s, only 10 miles to the north-east of Heythrop.

The stepped stream channel, Octagon Pool, Cascade, culvert, Cold Bath Building and stone-lined channel are all linked to create an integrated water feature, which would have once formed a focal point in this corner of the Wilderness. The possibility that the Wilderness and the various built structures were designed by Thomas Archer is one that requires further research and analysis. The Cold Bath building, for example, has features, such as the round windows, that were used by Archer on other designs such as at garden pavilions at Dyrham Park, while the up-turned corners of the roof are reminiscent of the parapet on the Cascade House at Chatsworth, although no direct link has yet been established.

9 CONCLUSION

CONCLUSION

The archaeological investigations have successfully explored the aims and objectives of this initial phase of detailed analysis of the buildings comprising the Steading Seat, the Cold Bath Building, Octagon Pool and Three Niched Seat. In addition, they have provided a new understanding of the former appearance of the Cold Bath Terrace and fabric.

This final section of the report presents a series of comments and recommendations that it is hoped will be considered during the preparation of the Heritage Management Plan and long term management of the individual garden elements.

VEGETATION CONTROL

The immediate setting of each building is enhanced by the visual permeability within the landscape, and encroaching vegetation, both in regards to growth on the historic fabric and immediately in front of each structural element, must be managed. At the Steading Seat, for example, a regular mowing regime of the grass in front of the building will ensure that it maintains its role as a focal point along the ha-ha. The pruning back of the yews to the rear will also enhance the immediate setting of the building, which has a marked contrast to the honey coloured stone.

HARDSTANDING

The excavations have identified that the treatment of both the interior of each building and their immediate setting may have varied, and consideration should be given to reinstating internal surfaces within the buildings and the adjustment of ground levels as appropriate to restore their historic appearance. For example, at the Three Niched Seat, it has been established that the original surface was c.20cm lower that the existing level. The recreation of this will have a dramatic impact upon the external appearance of the building, making it taller, but will also then permit the two side niches to function as seats once more.

The ground levels to the south-east of the Cold Bath Building should also be adjusted following further archaeological investigation to establish the original ground level and its relationship with the path running along the top of the ha-ha.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING

It is recommended that the repairs to the buildings and any associated landscape works are monitored by an intermittent archaeological watching brief.

CONNECTIVITY BETWEEN ELEMENTS

The excavations have identified significant aspects of the Cold Bath Terrace that should be considered for reinstatement and repair. These are:

- The terrace had a continuous wall along the down slope side of the walk, which respects both the Cold Bath Building and the Three Niched Seat. The wall has been reduced in height, although it is interpreted as a continuation of the former garden/park boundary wall that still exists elsewhere within the estate.

- The former surface of the terrace has not yet been confirmed, although either a gravel or grass path are likely and the reinstatement of such would greatly enhance this area of the garden and form a tangible link between the different garden elements. The path should extend to the ha-ha to the east of the Cold Bath Building, thus also reinstating access to the Octagon Pool.

- The modern drainage ditch that has been cut along the edge of the terrace is an important element of the water management within the current layout at Heythrop. However, it detracts from the appearance of the terrace. Perhaps the most effective approach would be either to divert the water to the ditch below the ha-ha, or to channel it into a culvert/pipe buried below the terrace.

- On the up slope of the terrace yew trees have been noted, which may represent a former hedge, or row, that originally delineated the terrace walk. Replanting of this feature would add to the overall appearance and character of the terrace walk.

- The Octagon Pool and rockwork cascade should be repaired and reinstated as a garden feature. The outflow culvert may need to be re-lined, although the flow of water across the floor of the Cold Bath Building should be maintained.

- The short section of ha-ha and the adjacent ditch at its base should be repaired and reinstated in the immediate vicinity of the Steading Seat. This would greatly improve

the external appearance of the building, making it a focal point along the approach to the house and Crown Plaza Hotel.

INTERIOR DETAILS

Perhaps the most significant feature of the interiors of each the three standing structures is the loss of bench seating. The archaeological evidence confirms that seats were integral to the appearance and use of the structures and their reinstatement is important. Whilst no evidence has been observed for any surface treatments inside the Steading Seat or Three Niched Seat, traces of an orange and red painted surface were recorded within the Cold Bath Building. Consideration should be given to the re-painting of this building with an appropriate product, which will have a dramatic effect upon the overall character of the internal space.

DISSEMINATION

The group of garden elements that are the subject of this programme of conservation repairs - the Three Arched Nymphaeum, the Cold Bath, Octagonal Pool, Cold Bath Terrace and Steading Seat - are all important aspects of the earliest phases of the landscape laid out at Heythrop at the start of the 18th century. The detailed analysis and interpretation of each has shed new light on their former appearance and their inter-relationship to one another and the results of this work should be disseminated to a wider audience.

It is recommended that the following are considered:

- New interpretation in the form of information boards, or a booklet, is prepared
- The findings are published in an appropriate journal such as - *Garden History*, or *Post Medieval Archaeology*
- A public talk, or tour, to explain the process of restoration, research, archeological investigations and interpretation

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MAPPING AND TOPOGRAPHIC DATA

- *A map of Heythrop Estate Oxfordshire belonging to George Earl of Shrewsbury, 1767*
- *Bainbridge Plan of Heythrop, 1791*
- *A plan of Heythrop Estate in the County of Oxford – copied from M. Bainbridges' plan by I. Henderson Sept 1799*
- *A plan of the Heythrop Estate in the County of Oxford, 1870*
- *Ordnance Survey Mapping, 1880, 6" to 1 mile, 1st edition*
- *Ordnance Survey Mapping, 1900, 6" to 1 mile, 2nd edition*
- *Ordnance Survey Mapping, 1920, 6" to 1 mile*
- *Ordnance Survey Mastermap data, 2012*
- *British Geological Survey Digital mapping, 2012*

INTERNET RESOURCES

- *Archaeology Data Service (ADS): www.archaeologydataservice.ac.uk*
- *British Geological Survey (BGS): www.bgs.ac.uk*
- *English Heritage – Historic Environment Local Management (HELM): http://www.helm.org.uk/upload/pdf/Understanding_Historic_Buildings_1.pdf http://www.helm.org.uk/upload/pdf/Understanding_Historic_Buildings_2.pdf*
- *English Heritage – National heritage List: http://list.english-heritage.org.uk/resultsingle.aspx?uid=1000489*
- *English Heritage: http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/content/publications/publicationsNew/ guidelines-standards/morphe-project-managers-guide/morphe-project-managers-guide-1.1-2009.pdf*
- *Heritage Gateway: www.heritagegateway.org.uk*
- *Institute for Archaeologists (IfA): www.archaeologists.net/sites/default/files/node-files/ifa_standards_field_eval.pdf http://www.archaeologists.net/sites/default/files/node-files/ifa_standards_ buildings.pdf*
- *Natural England (NE): http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/ourwork/landscape/protection/historiccultural/heritagelandscapes/default.aspx http://www.publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/31047*

11 APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 – SUMMARY OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONTEXTS

APPENDIX 2 – ARTEFACT PHOTOGRAPHS

APPENDIX 3 – HISTORIC MAPPING

APPENDIX 4 – ARCHAEOLOGICAL ILLUSTRATIONS

APPENDIX 5 – RECORD PHOTOGRAPHY

Appendix 1.1 – Summary of Archaeological Contexts

TRENCH 1

Context	*Type*	*Depth (m)*	*Comment*	*Material Culture*
100	Layer	0.0	Grass	n/a
101	Layer	0.0	Topsoil	Iron nail
102	Layer	0.7	Subsoil	Clay pipe; frag. 18th C brown glazed jug; 20th C glass; stone.
~~**103**~~	n/a	n/a	Not used	n/a
104	Structure	0.16	Foundation of archway	n/a
105	Deposit	0.12	Hardcore for removed paving	n/a

TRENCH 2

Context	*Type*	*Depth (m)*	*Comment*	*Material Culture*
200	Layer	0.0	Leaf litter	n/a
~~**201**~~	n/a	n/a	Not used	n/a
~~**202**~~	n/a	n/a	Not used	n/a
~~**203**~~	n/a	n/a	Not used	n/a
204	Surface	0.0-0.03	Upper surface within alcove	n/a
205	Surface	0.0	Upper surface of external path	n/a
206	Surface	0.0	Same as **204**	n/a
207	Surface	0.07	Tarmac path	n/a
208	Deposit	0.16	Hardcore below tarmac	n/a
209	Deposit	0.12	Hardcore below tarmac	n/a
210	Surface	0.21	Remains of external path	n/a
211	Structure	0.18	Foundation of arch/threshold	n/a

TRENCH 3

Context	*Type*	*Depth (m)*	*Comment*	*Material Culture*
301	Layer	0.0	Topsoil	n/a
302	Layer	0.2	Possible natural clay	n/a
303	Layer	0.25	Possible limestone bedrock	n/a
304	Deposit	0.03	Up-cast from excavation of **308**	n/a
305	Structure	0.12-0.32	Terrace wall (truncated)	20thC glass frag.
306	Deposit	0.05	Possible sub-base of tarmac path	n/a
307	Surface	0.06	Possible remnant of path surface	n/a
308	Cut	0.2-0.3	Modern drainage gully	n/a

TRENCH 4

Context	*Type*	*Depth (m)*	*Comment*	*Material Culture*
401	Layer	0.0	Topsoil	n/a
402	Layer	0.16	Possible natural clay	n/a
403	Cut	0.2-0.3	Modern drainage gully	n/a
404	Deposit	0.0	Up-cast from excavation of **403**	n/a
405	Structure	0.2	Terrace wall (truncated)	n/a

TRENCH 5

Context	*Type*	*Depth (m)*	*Comment*	*Material Culture*
501	Layer	0.0	Topsoil	n/a
502	Layer	0.16	Possible natural clay	n/a
503	Layer	0.98	Possible limestone bedrock	n/a
504	Deposit	0.0	Up-cast from 2003 excavation	n/a
505	Structure	0.2	Terrace wall (truncated)	n/a
506	Deposit	0.3-0.8	Sections of wall tumble from **505**	n/a

TRENCH 6

Context	*Type*	*Depth (m)*	*Comment*	*Material Culture*
600	Layer	0.0	Leaf litter	n/a
601	Layer	0.02	Topsoil	n/a
602	Layer	0.25	Possible natural clay	n/a
603	Layer	0.2	Possible limestone bedrock	n/a
604	Layer	0.03	Layer of sand	n/a
605	Structure	0.0	Stone edge to culvert/rill	n/a
606	Structure	0.0	Stone edge to culvert/rill	n/a
607	Surface	0.2	Concreted layer in water channel	n/a

TRENCH 7

Context	*Type*	*Depth (m)*	*Comment*	*Material Culture*
701	Layer	0.0	Topsoil	n/a
702	Deposit	0.1-0.5	Silt within pool	n/a
703	Structure	0.1-0.2	Stone edged octagonal pool	n/a
704	Feature	0.0	Stream with rock cut steps	n/a
705	Structure	0.15	Rockwork cascade	n/a
706	Structure	0.1	Pool forming entrance to **707**	n/a
707	Structure	0.2	Stone culvert to Cold Bath Building	n/a

Appendix 2.1

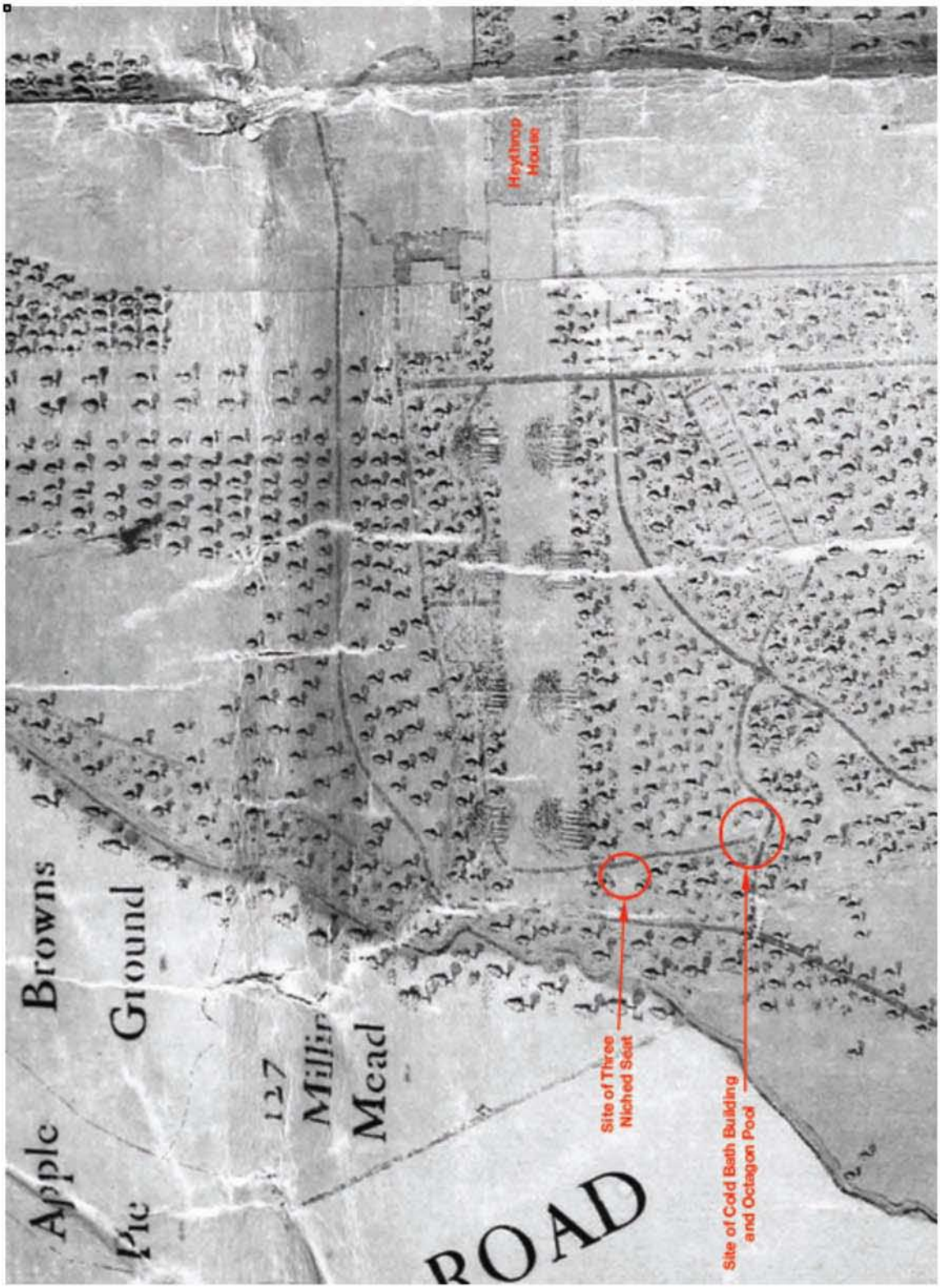
Base fragment of a brown glazed jug from (102), Steading Seat (5cm scale).

Appendix 2.2

Fragment of stone floor tile from (**102**), Steading Seat (5cm scale)

Appendix 3.1 – Historic Mapping and Photographs

EXTRACT FROM MAP OF HEYTHROP ESTATE BELONGING TO EARL OF SHREWSBURY, 1767



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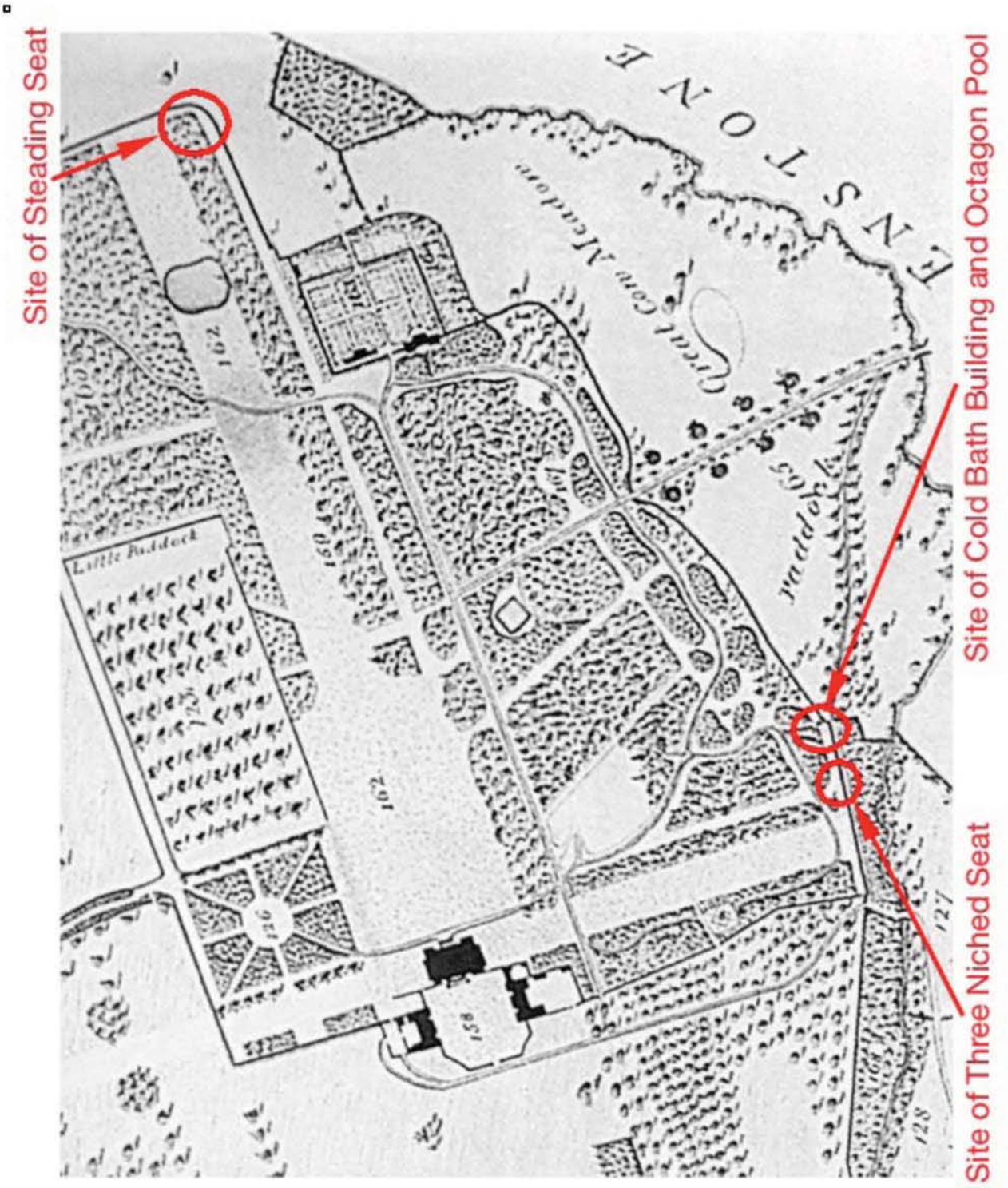
Appendix 3.2 – Historic Mapping and Photographs

EXTRACT FROM BAINBRIDGE PLAN OF HEYTHROP, 1791



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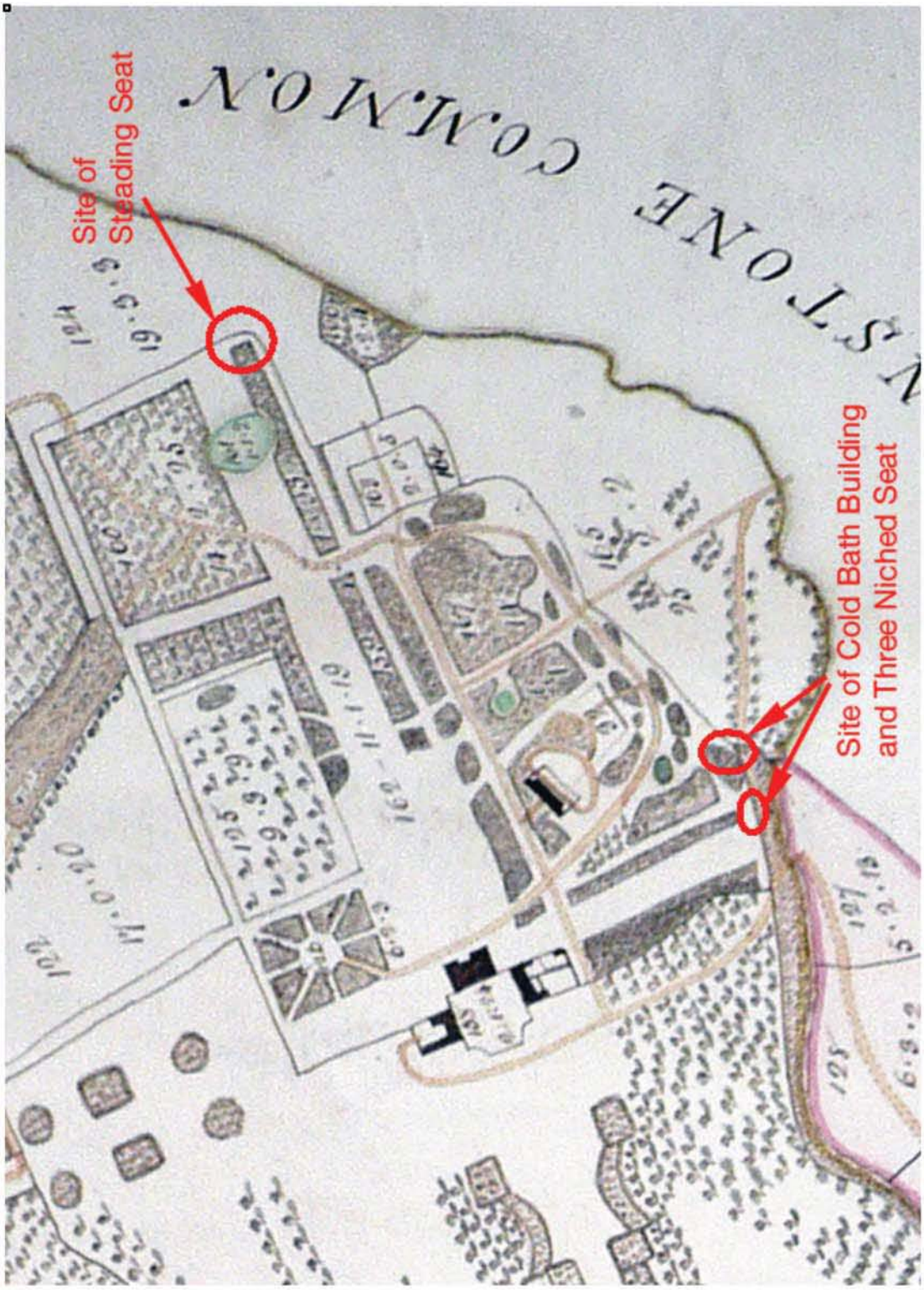
Appendix 3.3 – Historic Mapping and Photographs

EXTRACT FROM PLAN OF HEYTHROP ESTATE BY I. HENDERSON, SEPT 1799



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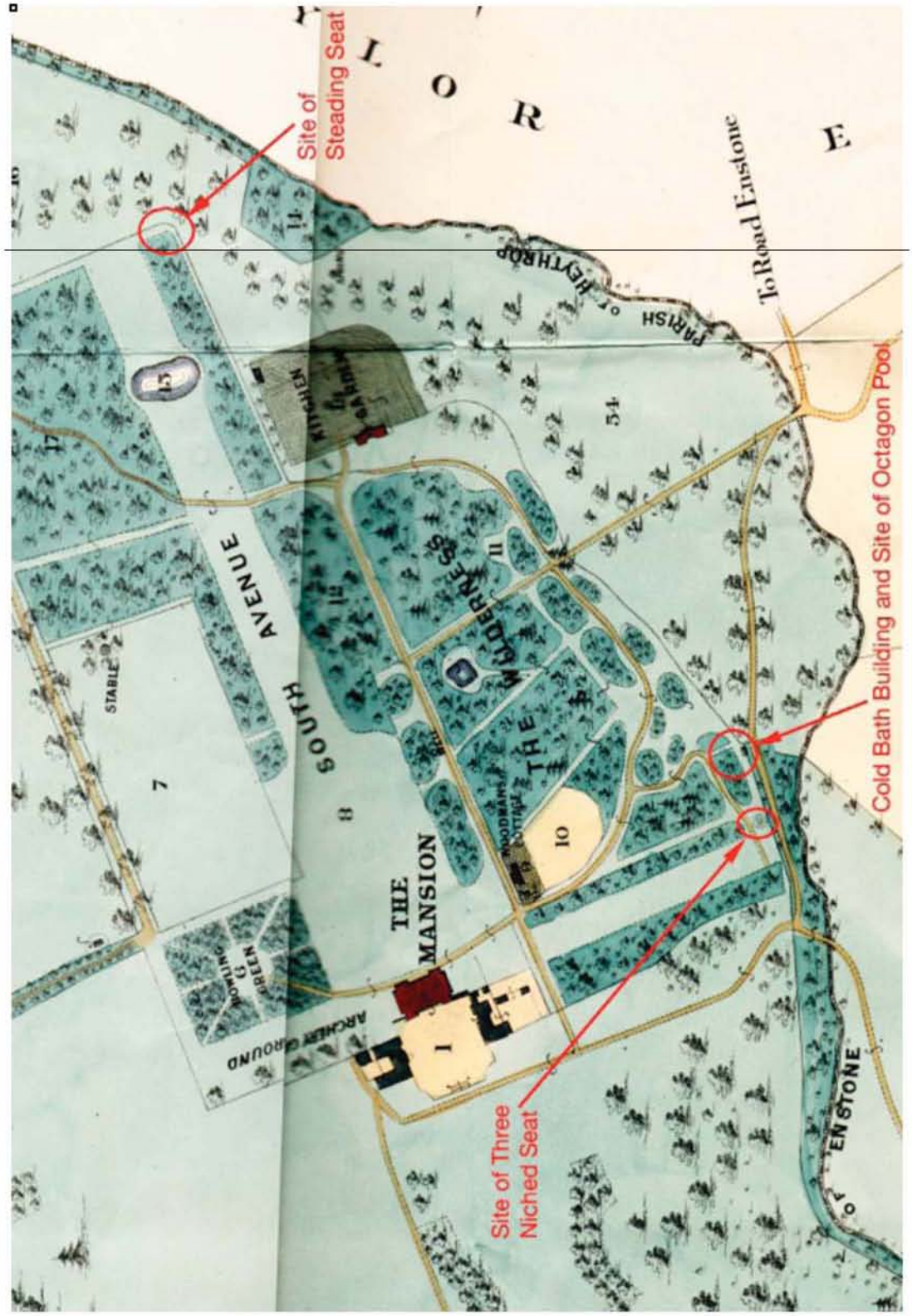
Appendix 3.4 – Historic Mapping and Photographs

EXTRACT FROM A SALE PLAN OF THE HEYTHROP ESTATE IN THE COUNTY OF OXFORD, 1870



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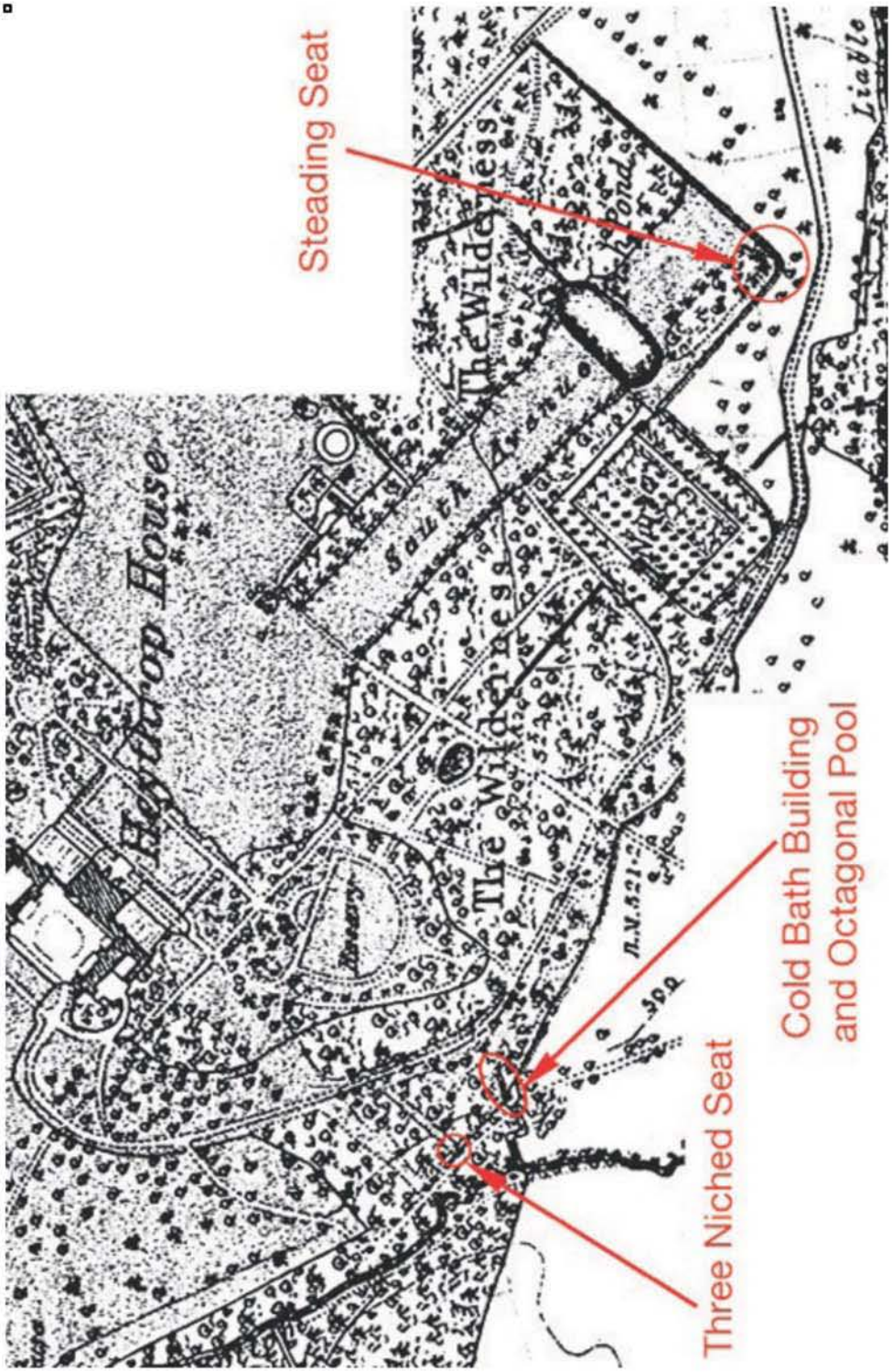
Appendix 3.5 – Historic Mapping and Photographs

EXTRACT FROM ORDNANCE SURVEY MAPPING, 1880, 6" TO 1 MILE, 1ST EDITION



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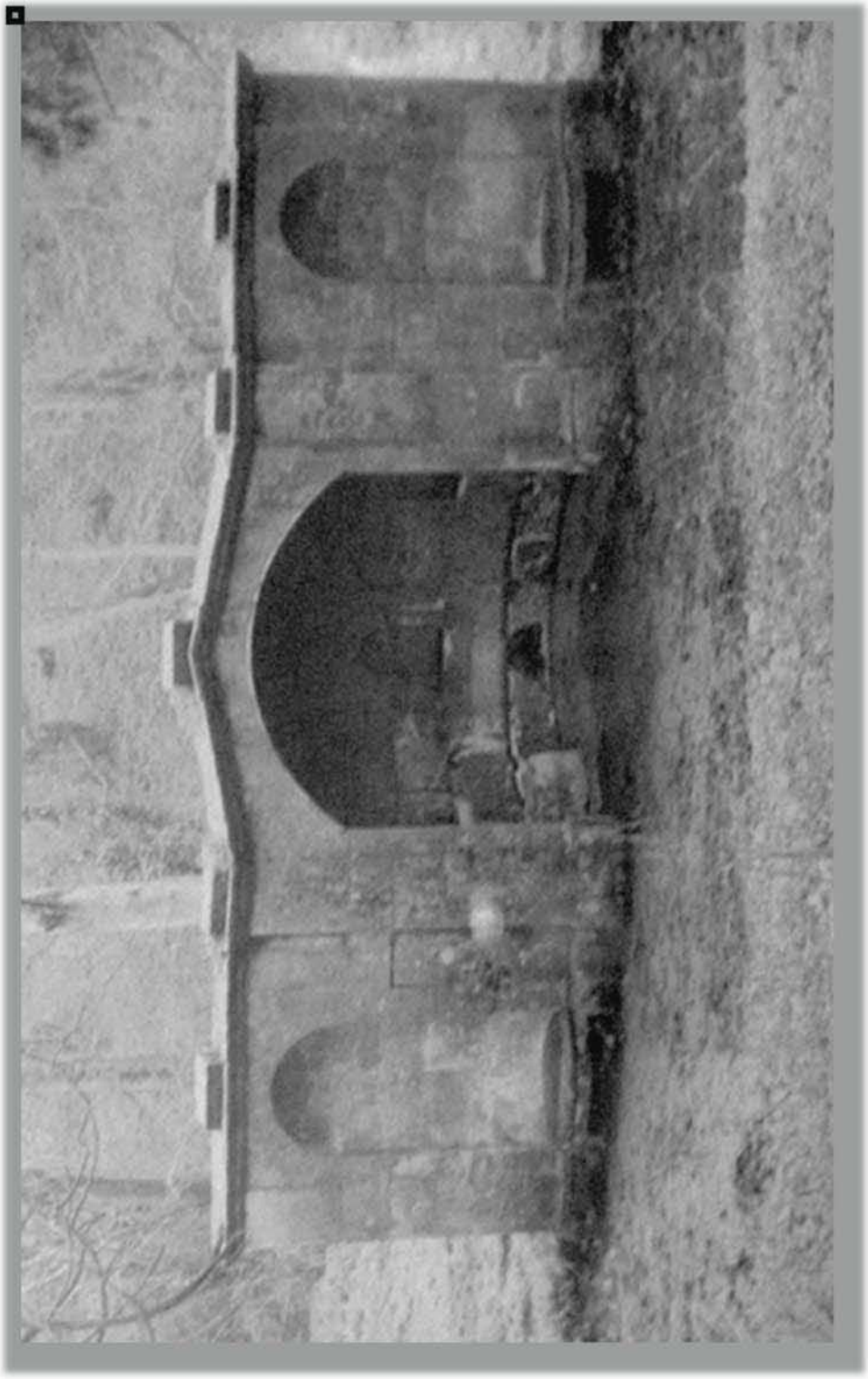
Appendix 3.6 – Historic Mapping and Photographs

PHOTOGRAPH OF THREE NICHED SEAT- (?) EARLY 20TH C?

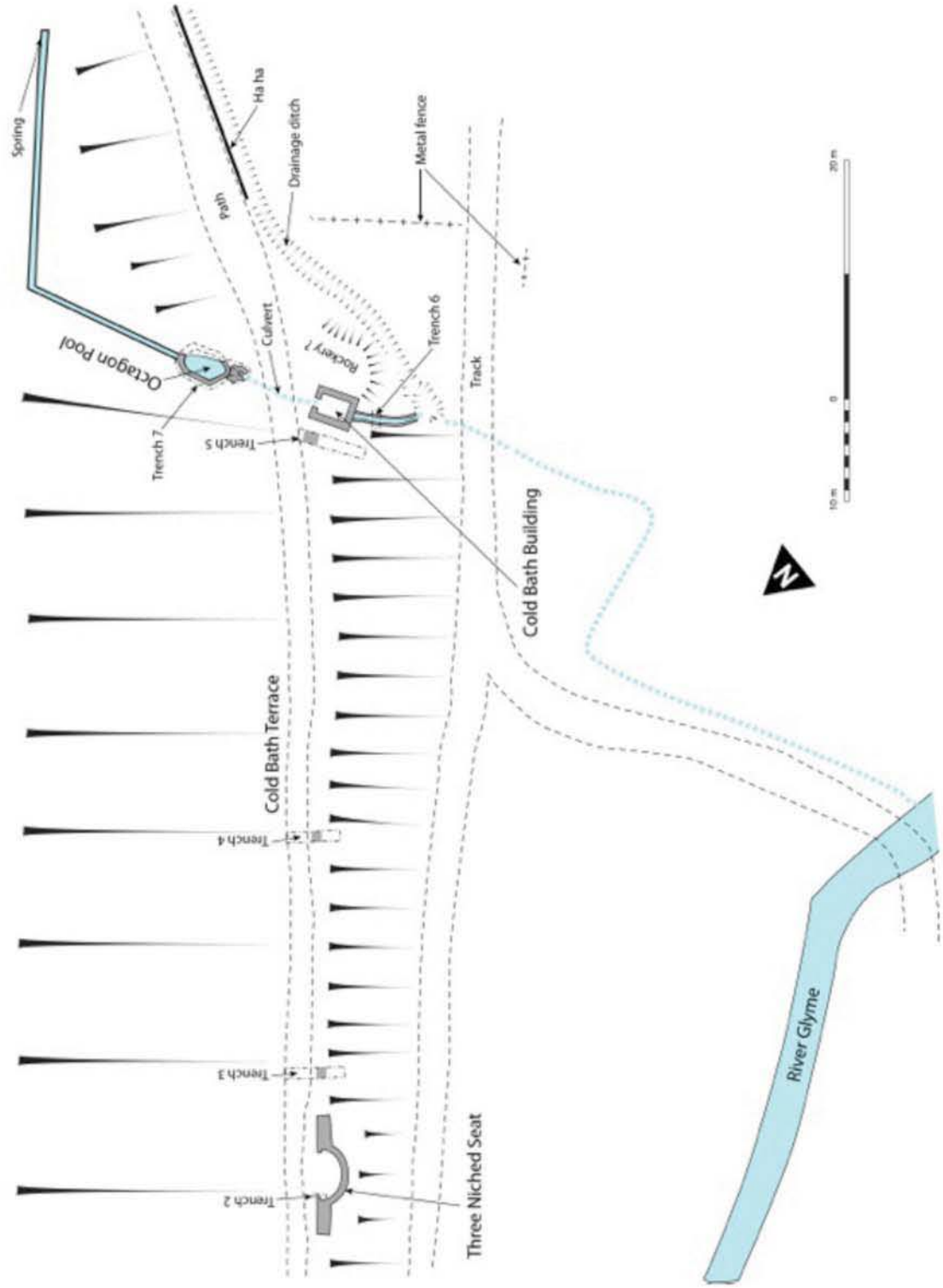


Appendix 3.7 – Historic Mapping and Photographs

PHOTOGRAPH OF OCTAGON POOL AND BATH HOUSE- (?) EARLY 20TH C

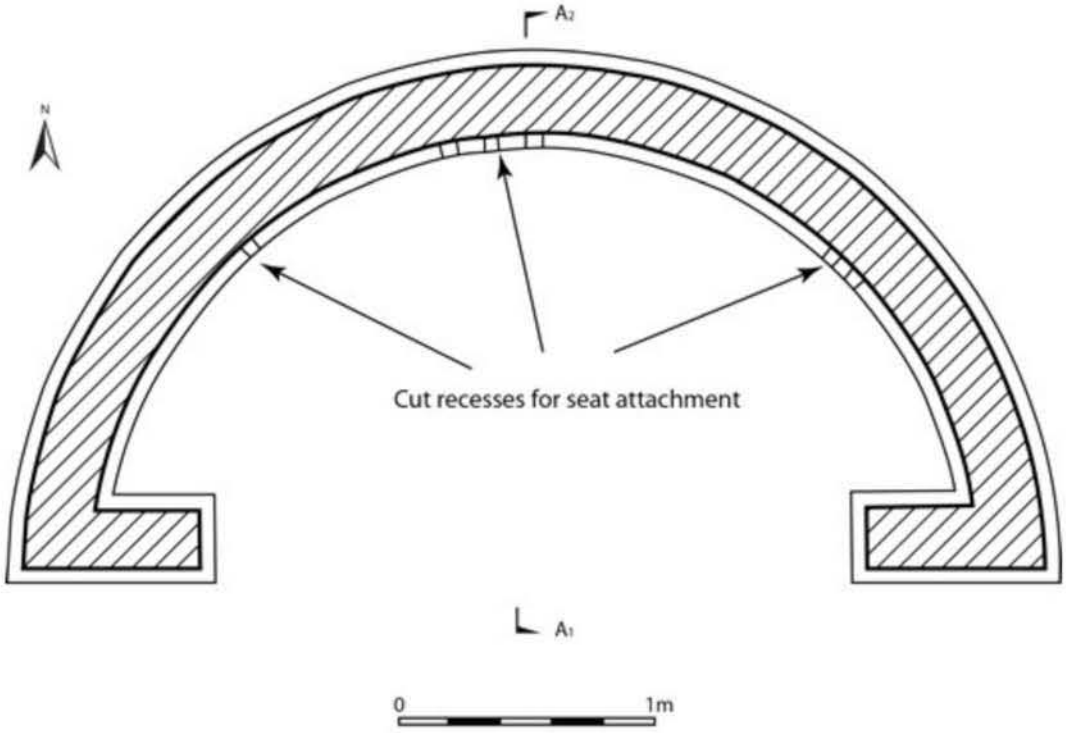
Appendix 4.1 – Archaeological Illustrations

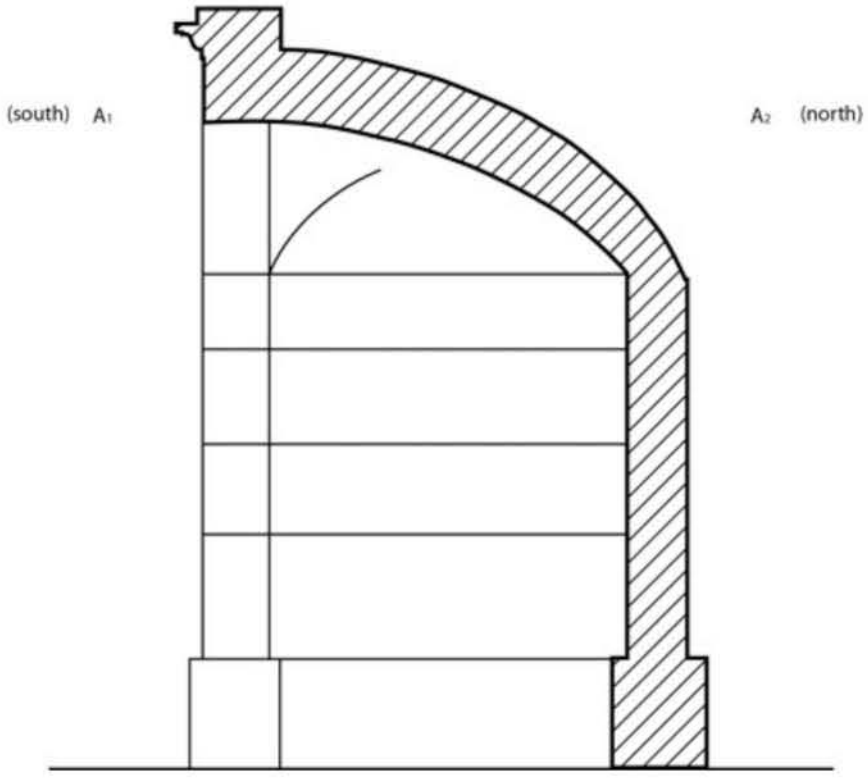
TOPOGRAPHIC SURVEY OF COLD BATH TERRACE



Appendix 4.2 – Archaeological Illustrations

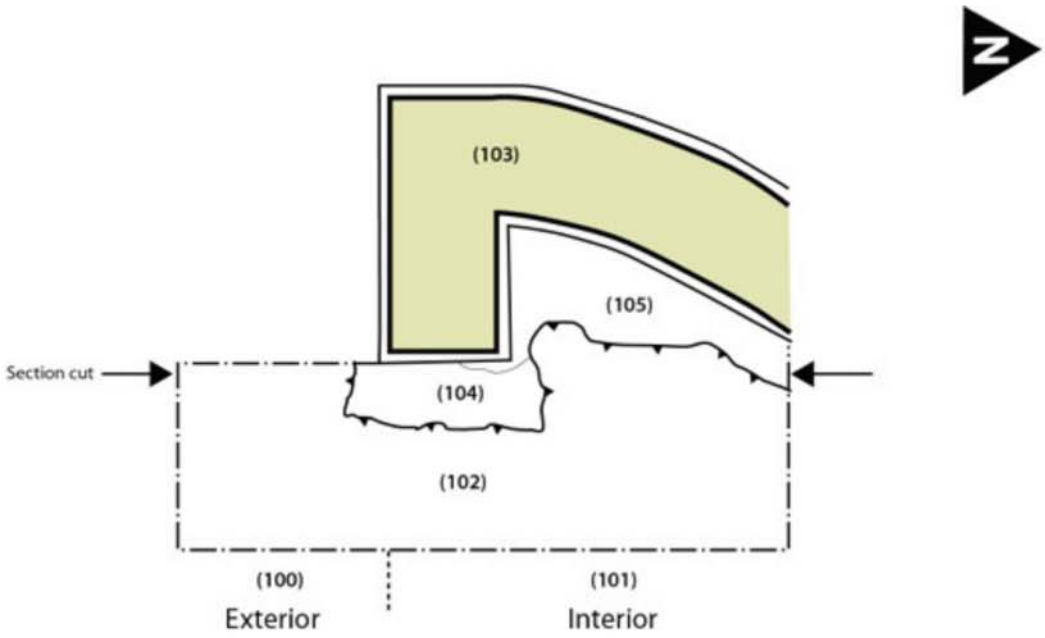
PLAN AND SECTION OF STEADING SEAT

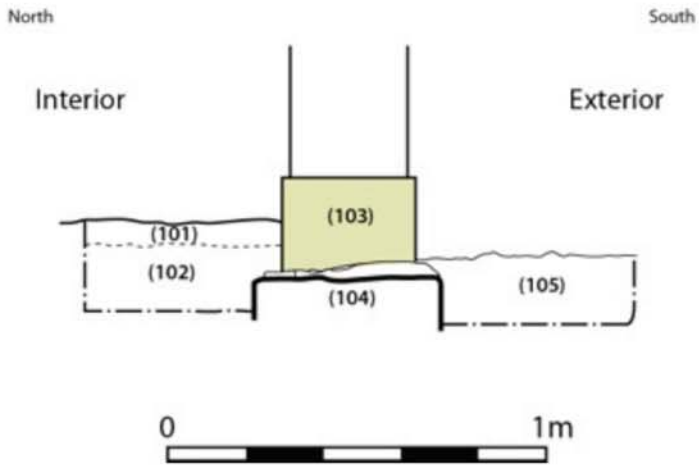




Appendix 4.3 – Archaeological Illustrations

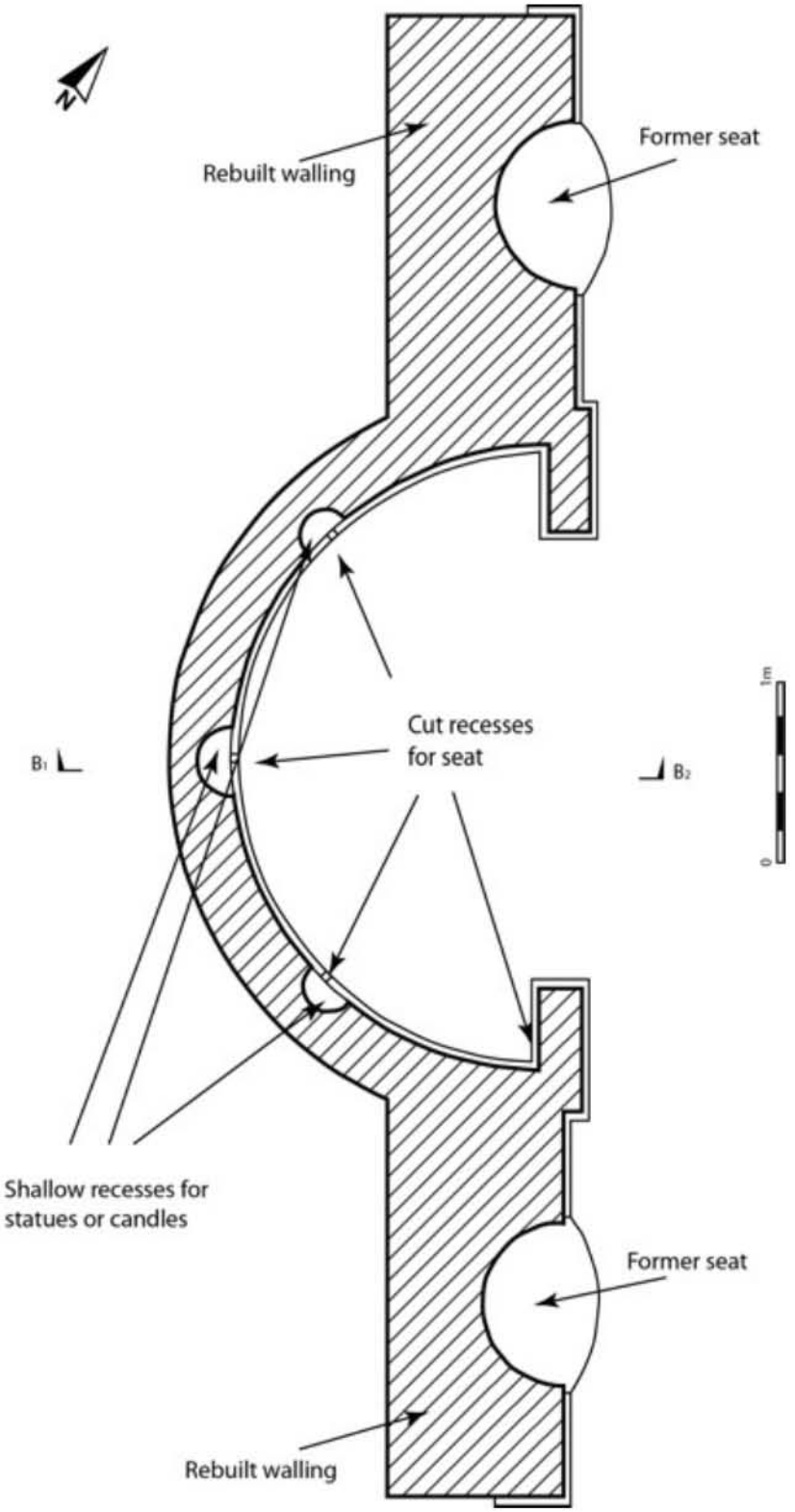
TRENCH 1





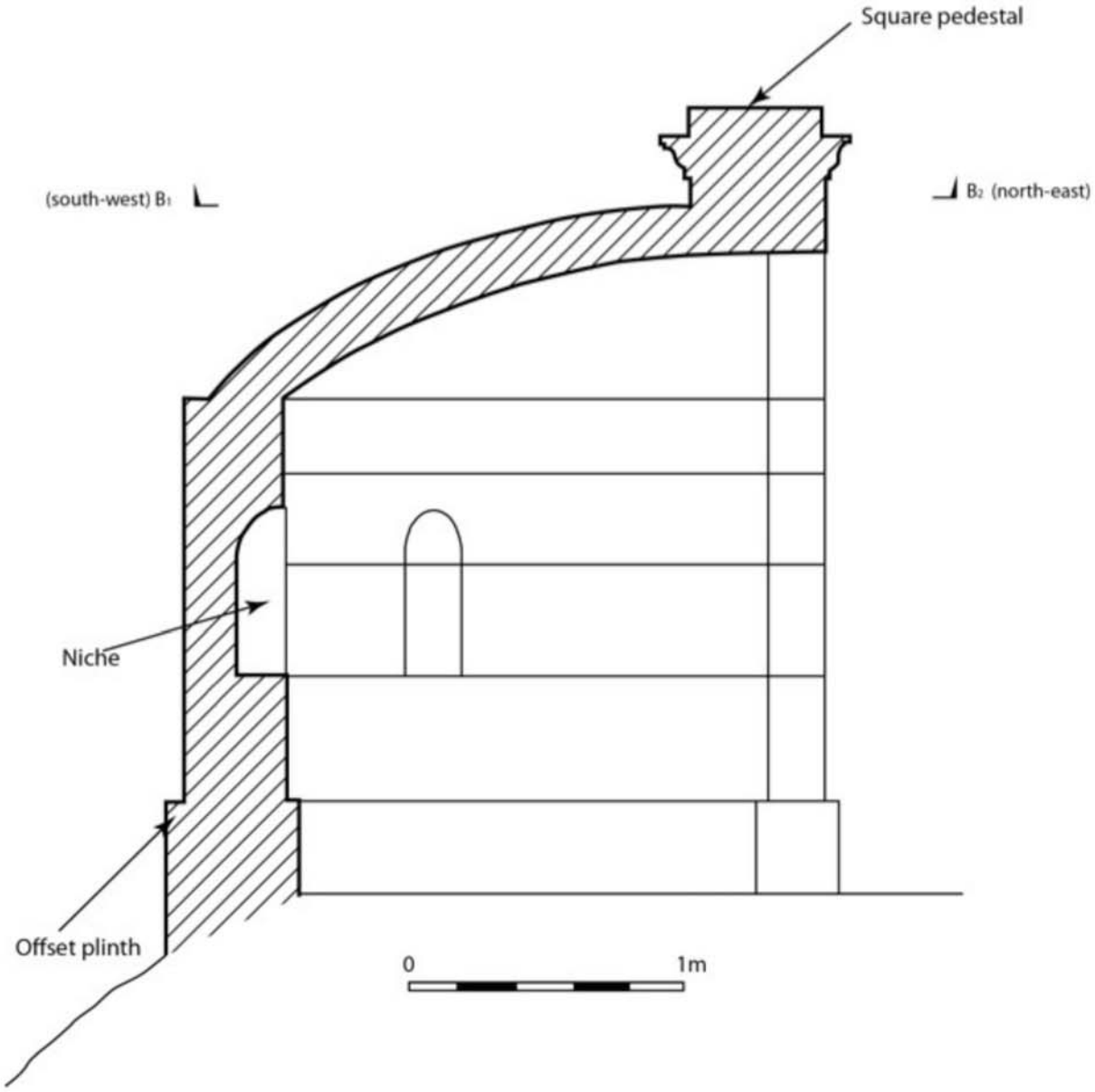
Appendix 4.4 – Archaeological Illustrations

PLAN OF THREE NICHED SEAT



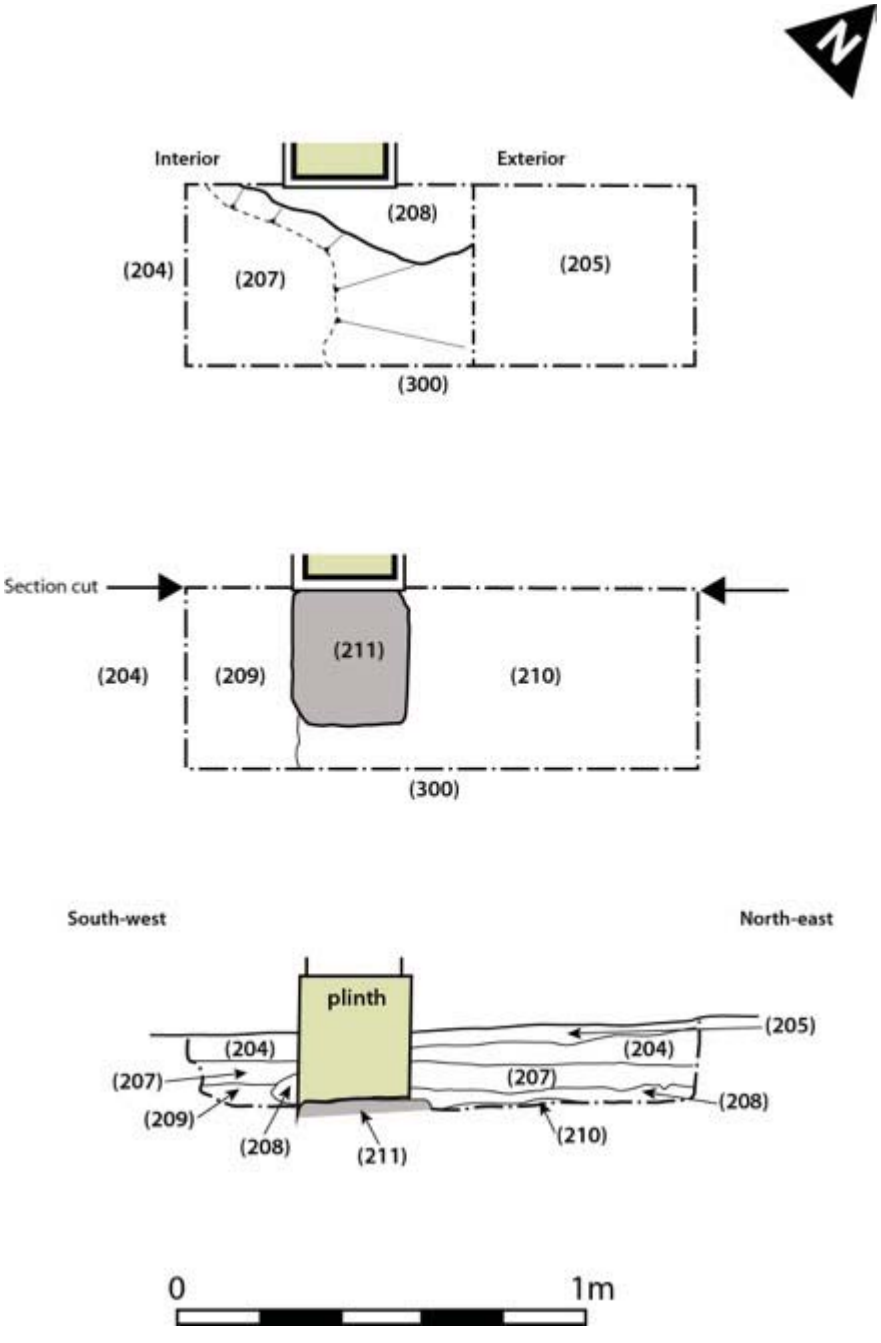
Appendix 4.5 – Archaeological Illustrations

SECTION THROUGH THREE NICHED SEAT



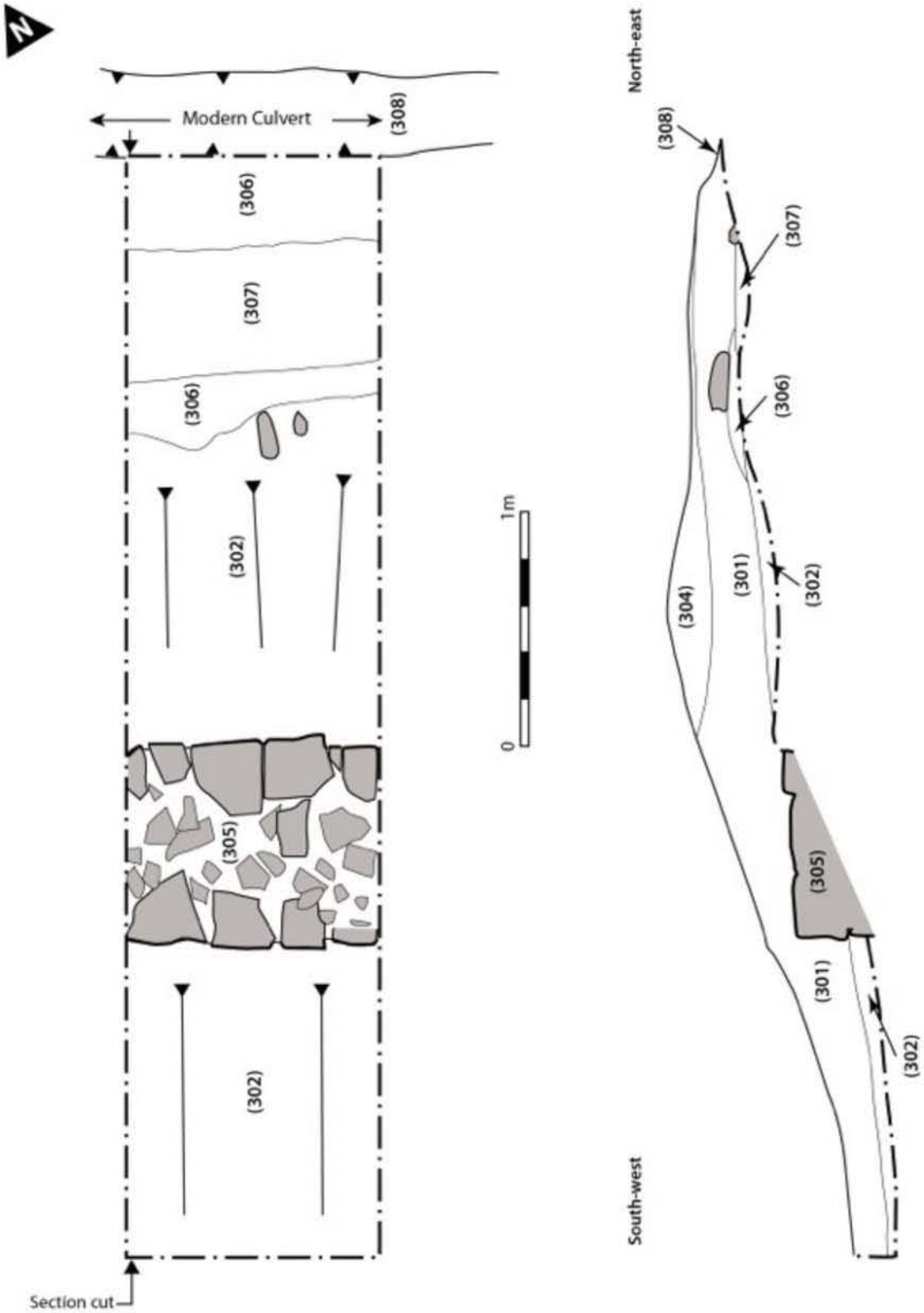
Appendix 4.6 – Archaeological Illustrations

TRENCH 2



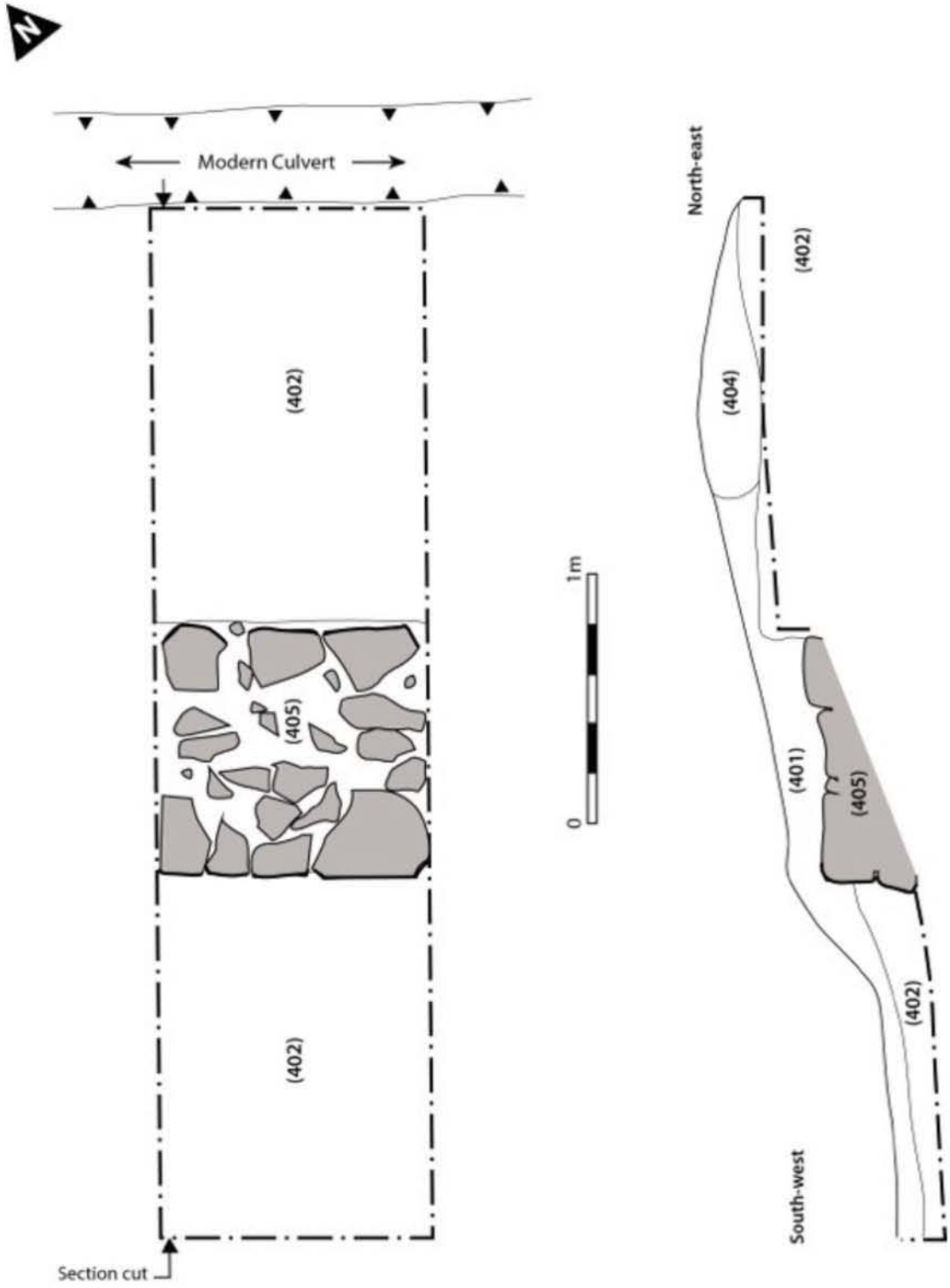
Appendix 4.7 – Archaeological Illustrations

TRENCH 3



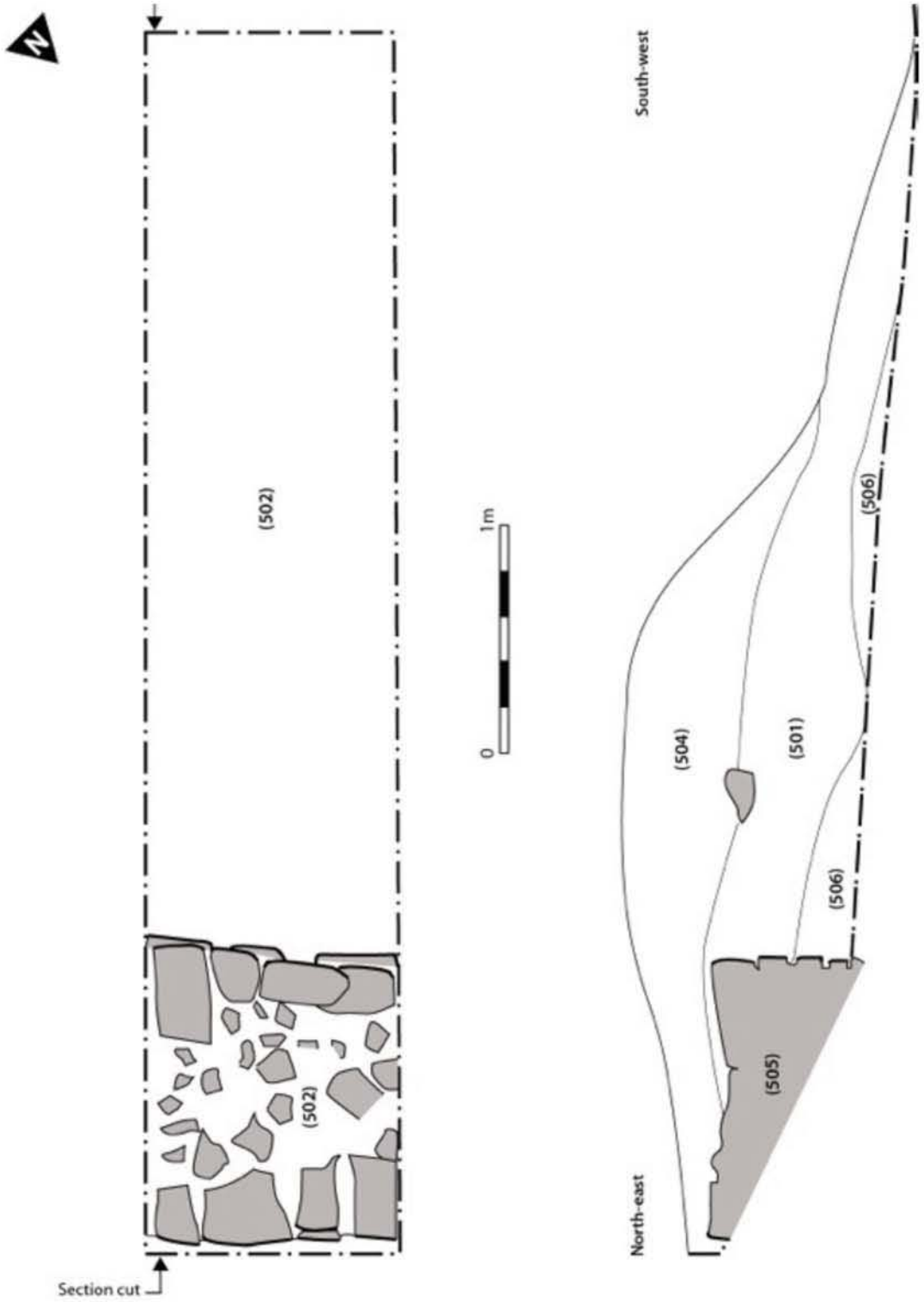
Appendix 4.8 – Archaeological Illustrations

TRENCH 4



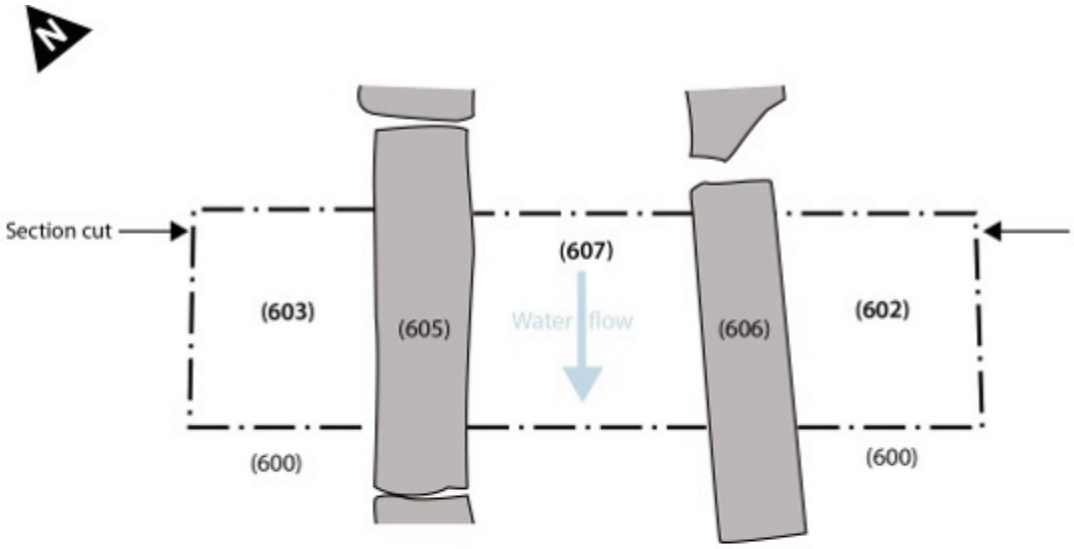
Appendix 4.9 – Archaeological Illustrations

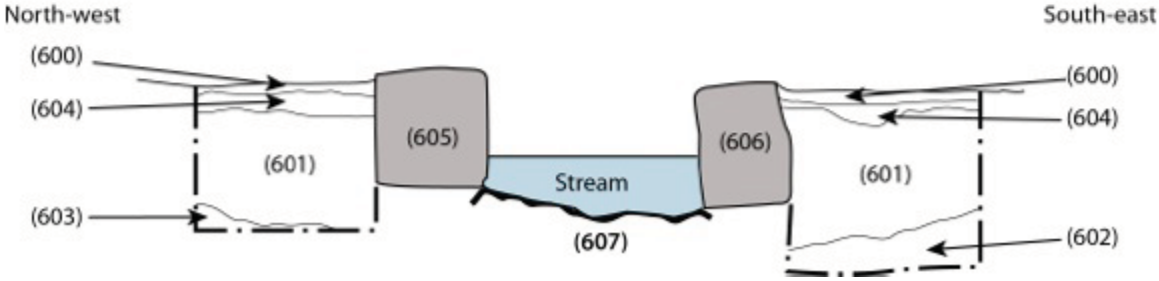
TRENCH 5



Appendix 4.10 – Archaeological Illustrations

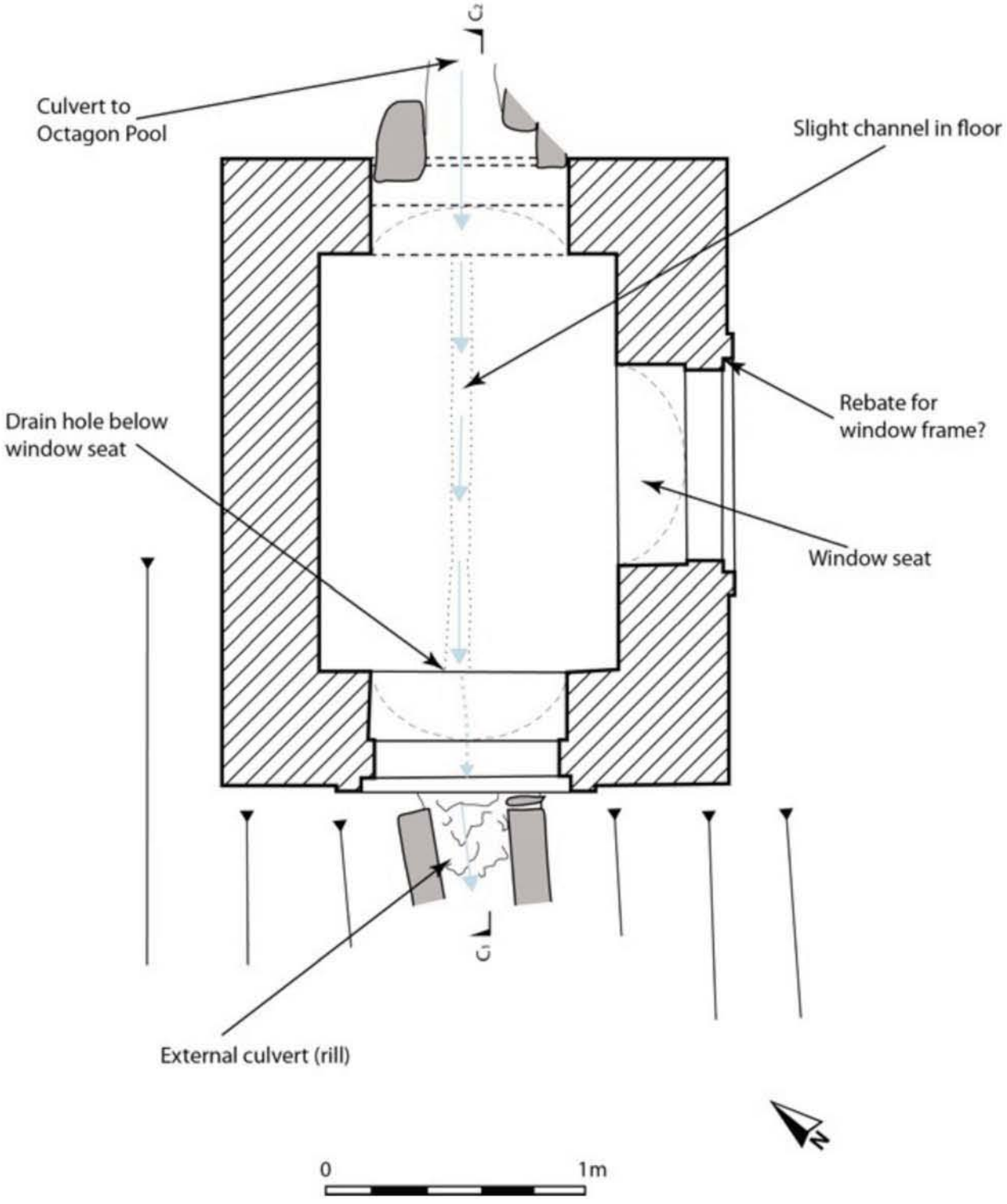
TRENCH 6





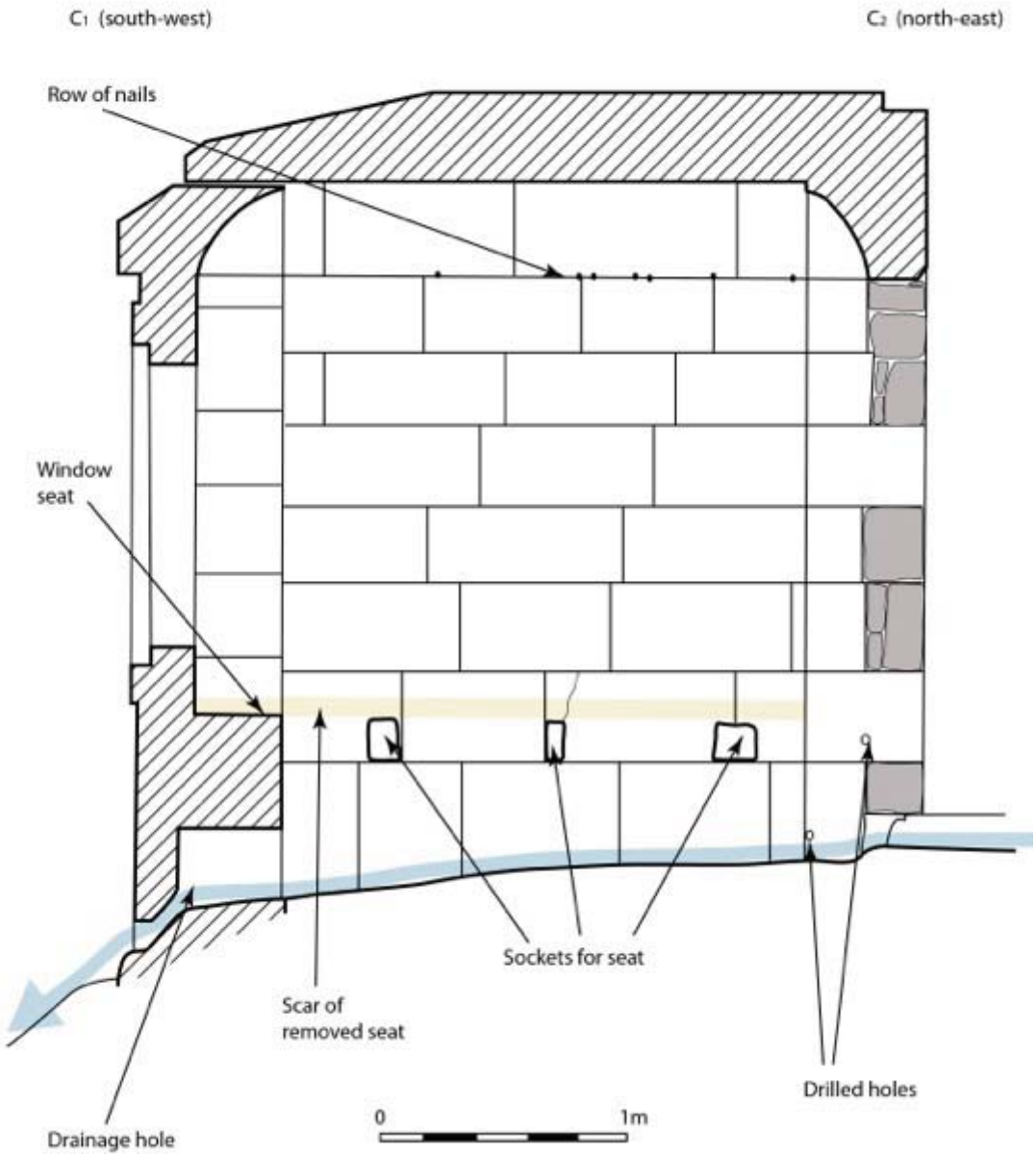
Appendix 4.11 – Archaeological Illustrations

PLAN OF COLD BATH BUILDING



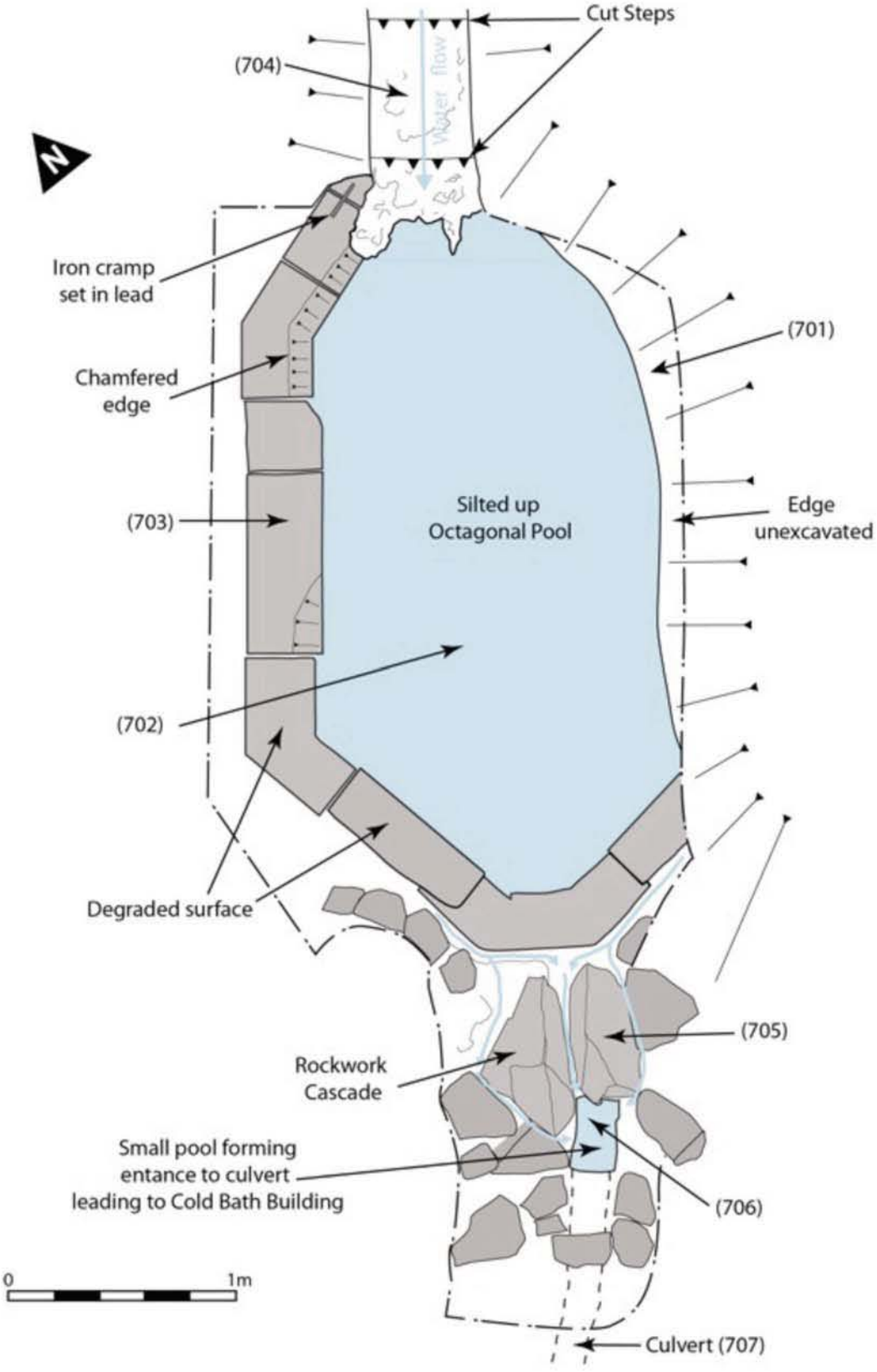
Appendix 4.12 – Archaeological Illustrations

SECTION THROUGH COLD BATH BUILDING



Appendix 4.13 – Archaeological Illustrations

TRENCH 7



Appendix 5.1

Front elevation of Steading Seat, looking north (2m scale).

Appendix 5.2

Detail of all interior of Steading Seat; note notches in plinth for seat (2m scale).

Appendix 5.3

Rear of Steading Seat; note continuous plinth (2m scale).

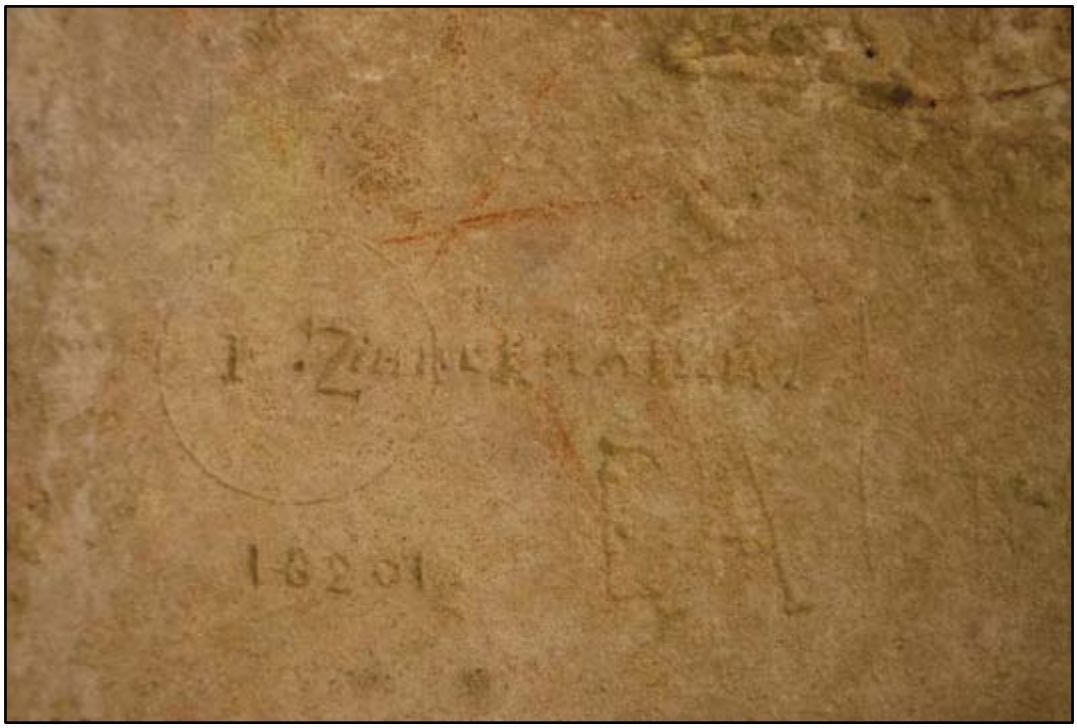
Appendix 5.4

Detail of roof of Steading Seat; note raised pedestals on top of cornice.

Appendix 5.5

Detail of graffiti on internal wall of Steading Seat (T+R 1812).

Appendix 5.6



Detail of graffiti on internal wall of Steading Seat (I.Zimmerman?? 182 . 01).

Appendix 5.7

Trench 1: General view of Trench 1 at Steading Seat, looking west (1m scale).

Appendix 5.8

Trench 1: foundation (**105**) for removed floor surface, looking north (0.5m scale).

Appendix 5.9

View of level platform in front of Steading Seat; note mature yews at rear.

Appendix 5.10

Detail of stone ha-ha in front of Steading Seat; note partial collapse.

Appendix 5.11

View of façade of Three Niched Seat looking south-west (1m scale).

Appendix 5.12

Central alcove and niches of Steading Seat, looking north-west (1-2m scale).

Appendix 5.13

Detail of central alcove; note statue (?) niches (1m scale).

Appendix 5.14

Detail of central alcove; note internal plinth with notches for seat (1m scale).

Appendix 5.15

Detail of south-east end of Three Niched Wall; note re-faced rear wall (2m scale).

Appendix 5.16

General view of rear of Three Niched Seat (2m scale).

Appendix 5.17

Detail of cornice moulding on Three Niched Seat; note pedestal beneath ivy.

Appendix 5.18

Detailed view of top of pedestal on Three Niched Seat (20cm scale).

Appendix 5.19

Trench 2: Detail of exposed tarmac (**207**) (1m scale).

Appendix 5.20

Trench 2: Detail of foundation (**211**), hardcore (**209**) and (**210**) (20cm/1m scale).

Appendix 5.21

General view looking north-west along Cold Bath Terrace prior to excavation.

Appendix 5.22

General view looking south-east along Cold Bath Terrace prior to excavation.

Appendix 5.23

Trench 3: Wall (**305**), looking north-west; note alignment with Three Niched Seat.

Appendix 5.24

Trench 3: Detail of wall (**305**), looking north-east (20cm/1m scale).

Appendix 5.25

Trench 4: View looking north-west along terrace; note exposed wall (**405**) (1m scale).

Appendix 5.26

Trench 4: View looking east of surviving courses of wall (**405**) (1m scale)

Appendix 5.27

Trench 5: View wall (**505**) and alignment with Cold Bath Building (1m scale).

Appendix 5.28

Trench 4: View looking north-east; note height of surviving wall (**505**) (1m scale).

Appendix 5.29

Trench 6: View looking east of open culvert (rill) exiting from Cold Bath Building.

Appendix 5.30

Trench 6: Detail of excavated trench across stone culvert; note layer (**607**) (1m scale)

Appendix 5.31

External north-east elevation of Cold Bath Building (1m/2m scale).

Appendix 5.32

External south-east elevation of Cold Bath Building (1m/2m scale).

Appendix 5.33

External south corner of Cold Bath Building, looking north (1m/2m scale).

Appendix 5.34

External west corner of Cold Bath Building, looking east (1m/2m scale).

Appendix 5.35

Detail of fixing hole on rim of window in south-west elevation of Cold Bath Building.

Appendix 5.36

Detail of roof drainage channel, south-east corner Cold Bath Building.

Appendix 5.37

Internal north-west wall of Cold Bath Building; note bench scar (2m scale).

Appendix 5.38

Stone floor and drain inside Cold Bath Building, looking west (1m/2m scale).

Appendix 5.39

Internal view of windows and seats in Cold Bath Building, looking south (2m scale).

Appendix 5.40

Detail of row of holes above internal south-west window in Cold Bath Building

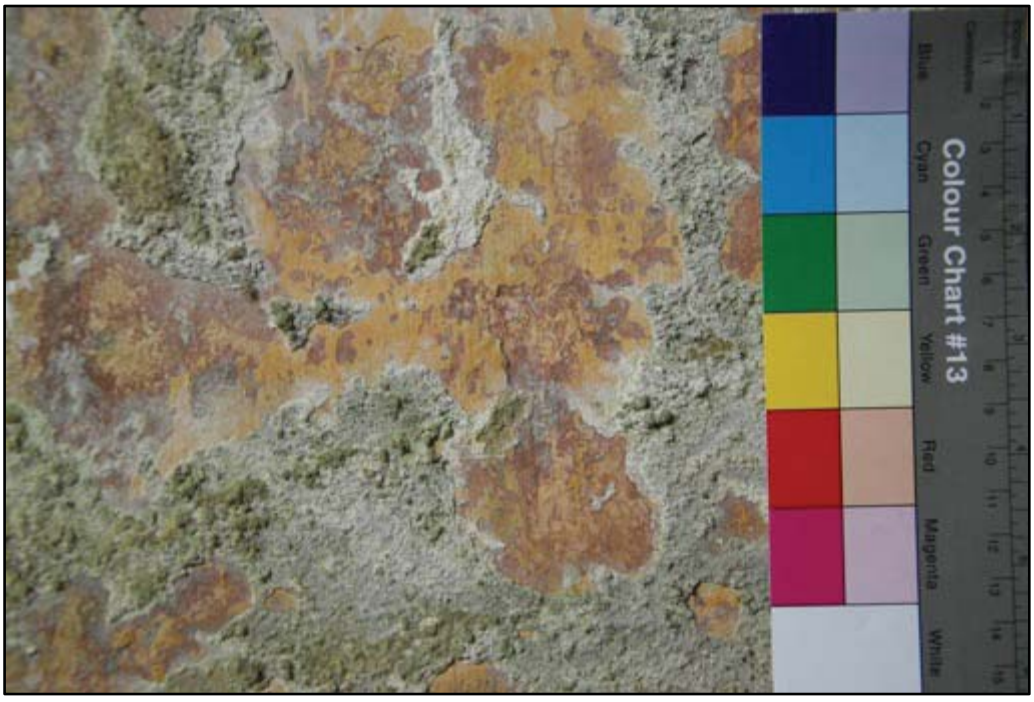
Appendix 5.41

Row of nails in bedding joint of north-west internal wall of Cold Bath Building.

Appendix 5.42

Detail of fixing holes in west door jamb of Cold Bath Building.

Appendix 5.43



Section of paint/limewash decoration on interior of Cold Bath Building (cm scale)

Appendix 5.44

View looking south-east of path between Octagon Pool and Cold Bath Building.

Appendix 5.45

View looking south-west prior to excavation of Octagon Pool (1m scale)..

Appendix 5.46

Trench 7: View looking south-west of excavated edges of Octagon Pool (1m/2m scale).

Appendix 5.47

Trench 7: View looking north-east of cascade and Octagon Pool (1m scale)

Appendix 5.48

Trench 7: Detail of rockwork cascade at south-west edge of Octagon Pool (1m scale).

Appendix 5.49

Trench 7: View looking south of excavated Octagon Pool (1m/2m scale).

Appendix 5.50

Trench 7: View looking south-west of excavated Octagon Pool (1m/2m scale).

Appendix 5.51

Trench 7: View of north-east end edge of Octagon Pool (1m/2m scale).

Appendix 5.52

Trench 7: Detail of stepped stream bed to the north-east of Octagon Pool (1m scale).