

T H A M E S V A L L E Y

ARCHAEOLOGICAL

S E R V I C E S

**Quaker Meeting House,
42-43 St Giles, Oxford**

Archaeological Evaluation

by Andrew Muddin

Site Code: SGH18/217

(SP 5112 0678)

Quaker Meeting House, 42-43 St Giles, Oxford

**An Archaeological Evaluation
for The Society of Friends**

by Andrew Mundin

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code SGH 18/217

April 2019

Summary

Site name: Quaker Meeting House, 42-43 St Giles, Oxford

Grid reference: SP 5112 0678

Site activity: Archaeological Evaluation

Date and duration of project: 20th and 21st February 2019

Project coordinator: Tim Dawson

Site supervisor: Andrew Muddin

Site code: SGH 18/217

Summary of results: A single trench was excavated adjacent to the proposed extension to the rear of the Quaker Meeting House. Though the rear has a 20th-century extension, the frontages of the two properties that form this plot are older. The trench stratigraphy showed several episodes of made ground containing pottery and clay pipe of post-medieval date (17th-19th centuries), with some residual medieval and early post-medieval sherds. No cut features of archaeological interest were recorded. A modern sewer pipe and 19th century brick-built garden wall were also recorded. Natural gravel was not exposed but its depth was ascertained by augur.

Location and reference of archive: The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited with Oxfordshire Museum Service in due course.

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Report edited/checked by: Steve Ford ✓ 04.04.19 Steve Preston ✓ 04.04.19

Quaker Meeting House, 42-43 St. Giles, Oxford An Archaeological Evaluation

by Andrew Muddin

Report 18/217

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried out at the rear of the Quaker Meeting House, 42-43 St Giles, Oxford, OX1 3LW (SP 5112 0678) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Phil Reid, of Miller and Howard RIBA Architect, St. Marys Hill, Chalford, Stroud, Gloucestershire, GL6 8NX, on behalf of the Society of Friends.

Planning permission and Listed Building Consents are being sought from Oxford City Council (18/01248/LBPAC) for a new extension at the rear of the property, to create a new meeting space, and other interior modifications to the property. A recent building survey suggested that the core of the current buildings should be 17th century, even if much of the frontage seems 19th century. The building to the rear garden is considered 19th century, and is Grade II Listed (No.1 and 2 Wellington Place) and a feature on the frontage is also Grade II Listed; that of a boundary marker stone placed in front of No. 42. The results of field evaluation are required to provide sufficient information on the archaeological potential of the site to enable a scheme to be drawn up to mitigate the effects of development should deposits of archaeological interest exist.

This is in accordance with the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government's *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF 2018), and the City Council's policies on archaeology. The fieldwork was supervised by Andrew Muddin, with assistance from Anne-Michelle Huvig on 20th and 21st February 2019 and the site code is SGH 18/217.

The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at Oxfordshire Museums Service in due course.

Location, topography and geology

The site is located on the west side of the wide thoroughfare, called St Giles, in the parish of the same name. At this point, the two main roads (Banbury Road and Woodstock Road) converge as they enter the north part of the City Centre (Fig. 1). The two former properties that occupy the frontage (Nos 42 and 43) are considered to add to the heritage character of St. Giles and this part of north city centre. Access to the rear garden is to the west, via

the northern extent of Pusey Lane, which lies behind, parallel with Wellington Square. The underlying geology is Second Terrace Gravel (Summertown-Radley Member) (BGS Geoindex; BGS 1982) and the site is at an elevation of 63.5m above Ordnance Datum within the garden and 63.2m aOD at the road frontage. A protected silver birch tree stands within the garden close to the northern boundary wall, with a second smaller tree adjacent. Both have a 6m stand off from the excavation area.

Archaeological background

The site's archaeological potential has been highlighted by a brief supplied by Mr David Radford, Oxford City Archaeologist. Oxford city centre has an extensive archaeological history, with rich evidence found in a number of systematic archaeological excavations (Hassell 1986, 115). Recent significant findings have located prehistoric monumental features on this side of Oxford, sited as they once would have been, on the fields of the terrace gravels of the Rivers Thames and Cherwell (Braybrooke 2011; Wallis 2014). Other recent summaries have highlighted later use and significance of the medieval city suburb of St Giles (Dodd *et al* 2003, 62; Beckley and Radford 2013).

The two houses are Grade II listed (1068618 and 1047145). No 42 St. Giles is considered to be a 17th century town house (date stone 1660), converted on the first floor in the 20th century to create the meeting space. Fabric in the interior is considered to date between the 17th and 18th centuries (BHC 2018). Nos 1 and 2 Wellington Place (1051622) to the rear are also Grade II Listed properties, and also there is a boundary stone inscribed '*Here Endeth the North Gate Hundred.*' in front of No 42 which is itself Grade II Listed (1046585), and is perhaps 15th century. If this is in its original position, which seems possible, this locates the Medieval divide between the city and the recognised edge of the north suburb outside the north gate of Oxford (Cam 1936, 118), which was thought to lie beyond the Church of St. Giles.

Tenement plots have occupied the sides of St Giles since the 11th century, and a number of archaeological investigations have located deposits of interest at some of these properties (Norton and Cockin 2008; Muddin 2018). Most of the plots were arranged regularly and densely from the 12th century onwards. These plots, at Nos 42 and 43, are deemed to be at the most northerly extent of documented occupation, shown on historic maps of St Giles parish and though documentation such as the 13th century Assize Rolls, which note the plot was at that time under control of Headington Manor (Salter 1969).

Objectives and methodology

The purpose of the evaluation was to determine the presence/absence, extent, condition, character, quality and date of any archaeological deposits within the area of development. The work was to be undertaken in a manner which will not compromise the integrity of any archaeological deposits found which would warrant preservation *in situ*, or might be excavated under conditions pertaining to full excavation.

Specific aims were:

- to determine if archaeological deposits were present on the site;
- to determine if there is any evidence of Medieval and early post-medieval activity on the site; and
- to provide information to allow the preparation of mitigation strategy if necessary.

Excavation was undertaken with a small 360° mechanical excavator, fitted with a bladed bucket, 1.2m wide. It was intended to excavate one trench, 10m long and 1.4-1.6m wide, to be located immediately adjacent to the south of the proposed development, to allow a standoff for the tree on the north boundary. The location of the trench was positioned to angle across the lawn to investigate a linear strip, thought likely to be a garden wall, in place when the properties were divided, and also to sample a small part of the garden to the north.

Results

Trench 1 was excavated in three parts, including two test pits: Test Pit 1 within the main body of the trench, to the south of a brick boundary wall, and Test Pit 2 to the north of the wall. Trench details (length, breadth, depth and a description of sections and geology) are given in Appendix 1. The excavated features, with dating evidence, are summarized in Appendix 2.

Trench 1 (Figs 3 and 4; Pls 1–3)

Trench 1 was dug at a slight angle relative to the gardens to cross the ‘parch mark’ noted on the ground. This mark in the grass of the lawn was assumed to indicate some feature close to the surface under the lawn. The trench was aligned W–E, with a full excavated length of 10.5m, separated in two conjoined areas, 7.8m and 2.3m long. After the turf had been cut, the width of the trench was 1.5m at the east end, narrowing slightly to 1.2m towards the deepest excavated point of Test Pit 1. Test Pit 2 at the west extent was 1.2m wide and 2.3m long. The trench was staged to varied depths, but the deepest excavated point was 1.35m deep. With augering, natural gravel was reached at the bases of Test Pits 1 and 2 at 1.55m and 1.75m deep respectively.

The stratigraphy consisted of a series of made ground levels, forming distinct dated horizons. Under 0.32-0.35m topsoil and turf of the lawn (50), was a brown-grey sandy gravel fill (52). At this level, was a cut containing a ceramic drain (1). This reached a depth between 0.56-0.6m, with the cut for the drainage pipe

visible from 0.4m deep. The backfill over and by the side of the pipe (53) contained a mix of post-medieval pottery sherds and relatively modern finds, in a sandy dark yellow-brown sandy silt. It lay parallel to the brick boundary wall (3), and is assumed to be a similar date.

At 0.6m deep, was the top of a layer (54) containing clay pipe fragments and pottery sherds (most of the site's pottery) with a mixture of dates but the deposit must be no earlier than the 18th century. This fill was a medium compact grey brown sandy silt, with occasional sub-rounded gravel inclusions (54). This layer was dug through at two points with continued machine excavation, forming Test Pit 1 to the west and a hand dug slot, (2) forming a sondage through the layer to reach lower deposits. With the edge of the pipe forming one side of the slot, the next horizon was reached at 0.95m deep. This layer (56) was reduced further in Test Pit 1, but there is no doubt that the layer, containing fragments of Medieval and post-medieval pottery was the same. Augering at the base (Hole 1) cored through layer 56 at this point, to reach the gravel natural at 0.44m, with the final depth of deposits reaching an overall depth of 1.45m.

The base of the post-medieval layer was recorded at a depth of 1.05m, with a brown grey clayey silt, with occasional small sub-angular pieces of flint inclusions. This layer extended to the base of excavation at a depth of 1.35m deep. Augering (Hole 2) at the base, found the layer extended a further 0.2m to a final depth of 1.55m deep, when gravel natural geology (51) was reached. Towards the base of the layer, there was a marked increase in charcoal flecks, indicating an interface lens between the lower layer and the gravel.

The excavation of the trench westwards was halted due to a brick wall being located just under the turf. This wall (3) extends beyond the excavated area, visible as a mark in the lawn dividing the garden on a WSW-ENE axis. This wall was a double brick thickness, of evenly made bricks (18th or 19th century) with lime mortar, 0.57m deep. There were four courses, well laid, with limited space between bonds, with no pointing. The bricks had been laid on a foundation of a single course of shaped limestone blocks. There was no suggestion this was formed on an earlier base, as no remains of an earlier wall was present in section.

To the north of this wall, Test Pit (2) showed by a similar stratigraphy. Under topsoil was a sandy gravel (52) to a depth of 0.62m deep. From this point, post-medieval deposit (55) extended to a depth of 0.96m. This was a loosely compacted, brown grey clayey silt, similar to 54, with a moderate quantity sub-rounded gravel. Two sherds of post-medieval pottery and one medieval sherd came from this layer. It is unclear if the medieval sherd dates the layer with the post-medieval sherd being intrusive (or simply pressed down from above) but at face value, the layer is probably also no earlier than 17th century with the medieval sherd residual. Below this was a dark brown-yellow clayey sandy silt, with oyster shell, fragments of animal bone and occasional rounded

gravel (57). No pottery was recovered from this layer but it did contain a small fragment of probably medieval tile. Again, however, whether this provides a date is debatable, as all the other medieval tile came from post-medieval deposits. The base of this test pit was excavated to 1.14m, with an auger hole (3) cored through its base. This extended beyond 0.6m, to a final depth of the deposits at 1.75m deep.

Finds

Pottery by Sue Anderson

Thirty-three sherds of pottery weighing 402g were collected from four contexts (Appendix 3). Quantification was carried out using sherd count, weight, estimated vessel equivalent (EVE) . A full catalogue is available in the archive including a estimate of the minimum number of vessels (MNV). Medieval fabric codes were assigned from the Oxfordshire fabric series (Mellor 1994), and post-medieval codes are based on the author's own fabric series. Methods follow MPRG recommendations (MPRG 2001) and form terminology follows MPRG (1998). An Access database forms the archive catalogue.

The assemblage

Only a small quantity of the assemblage was of medieval date. This comprised small, abraded body sherds of Oxford ware (OXAC) and Wychwood ware (OXCX). There was also one sherd of Brill/Boarstall unglazed ware of high medieval date (OXAW), one body sherd of yellow glazed Brill/Boarstall ware, and a base fragment of the same fabric (OXAW). These sherds were residual in land drain fill (53), ditch fill (54) and layer (55).

The majority of pottery was of late medieval date. Much of this comprised Brill/Boarstall wares and the majority were unglazed body sherds, most of which came from ditch fill (54). Identifiable vessels comprised a copper green glazed jug (tapered beaded rim) and a pedestal from a lamp similar to an example illustrated by Mellor (1994, fig. 54.18). A body sherd of a late medieval and transitional type earthenware with internal brownish green glaze was also found.

Post-medieval wares comprised a Midlands Purple rim sherd from a bowl with internal dark brown glaze; three sherds of brown or orange glazed red earthenwares including a jar rim and a beaded rim from a bowl or dish; two fragments of Border ware including a beaded bowl rim; two sherds of speckle glazed or manganese wares; a fragment of a Staffordshire slipware plate/dish; and two sherds of a tin-glazed earthenware footstand base with blueish white glaze. A fragment of a porcelain saucer with overglaze turquoise and gold hand-painted decoration was the latest find in the assemblage.

Discussion

A small quantity of medieval pottery was recovered, all in fabrics typically found in Oxford. However, all sherds were found with later wares and were redeposited in the contexts in which they were found. The majority of pottery in this assemblage was broadly of 16th to 18th-century date. This group included local and regional wares, together with occasional non-local wares such as a fragment of porcelain and sherds of yellow and green-glazed whitewares from the Surrey-Hampshire border.

Ceramic building material by Sue Anderson and Danielle Milbank

Seven fragments (222g) of ceramic building material were recovered (Appendix 4) along with a sample of the brick from wall 3. Most fragments were pieces of plain roof tile of probable medieval date. These were in fine sandy and medium sandy calcareous fabrics and all had reduced cores. One overfired fragment from layer 54 had spots of glaze on the surface. They ranged in thickness from 10mm to 13mm. One other fragment in a medium sandy fabric appeared to be a piece of medieval ridge tile with thick dark brown glaze on the surface and a burnt underside. This fragment was 15mm thick and had been overfired to a dark red. The presence of these fragments in post-medieval contexts may suggest that they represent demolition or renovation waste from a late medieval structure in the vicinity.

The brick sample (not retained) recovered from boundary wall 3 comprised a hard, evenly-fired dark red fabric with a light red colour. The brick is unfrogged, and the dimensions (58mm x 110mm x 230mm) and neat form are suggestive of an 18th or 19th century date.

Glass by Sue Anderson

A shard of post-medieval bottle glass (6g) was recovered from layer 55. The surfaces were denatured, as is typical of wine bottles of the 16th–18th centuries.

Clay tobacco pipe by Danielle Milbank

Clay pipe fragments were recovered from two contexts encountered during the evaluation, comprising one bowls and 5 stem pieces (Appendix 5).

Deposit 53, within the lowest excavated part of the trench contained a single stem piece with a bore diameter suggestive of an early to mid 18th century date.

Deposit 54 contained pieces of stem with bore diameters suggestive of a range of dates from the early 17th to the late 18th century. The bowl that was recovered was small and bulbous, with a rouletted rim and flat pedestal foot, and is comparable with Oswald type 5 (Oswald 1975), with a likely date range of 1640–60.

One fragment of likely burnt shale was recovered from deposit 54. This is of likely post-medieval date but cannot be more closely dated and the presence of one piece is not indicative of any particular industrial process being carried out on the site.

Animal bone by Ceri Falys

A small assemblage of animal bone was recovered from three contexts (including a modern land drain cut 1, and two features within trench 1). A total of 24 pieces of non-human bone were present for analysis, weighing 447g (Appendix 6). The surface preservation of the remains is generally good, although a moderate degree of fragmentation is noted. No complete bones are present.

Initial analyses roughly sorted elements based on size, not by species, into one of three general categories: “large”, “medium”, and “small”. Horse and cow are represented by the large size category, sheep/goat and pigs are represented in the medium size category, and small covers, e.g. dog, cat etc. Wherever possible, a more specific identification to species has been made. The determination of the minimum number of individuals both within and between the species was investigated based on the duplication of elements and differences in age categories.

A minimum of four animals have been identified within the assemblage: one cow, two medium-sized individuals (pig and a probable sheep/goat), and one small animal (unidentified). The large-sized animal is represented by seven fragments recovered from deposit 54, including a distal tibia and portions of rib shafts, as well as a non-descript long bone shaft fragment in layer 56. Evidence of butchery practices (transverse cut marks) are present on the large size rib shaft fragments in 54, as well as the large sized non-descript long bone shaft fragment in 56. A pig canine is present in deposit 54, and a portion of a pig scapula in the modern land drain, cut 1 (53). Finally, a small animal is suggested by the presence of two long bone fragments in 54. No further information can be retrieved from this small assemblage of animal bone.

Oyster Shell by Danielle Milbank

Three oyster shell halves were recovered from deposit 54, which are likely to represent food waste.

Conclusion

The single evaluation trench was successfully excavated in the garden, but failed to locate any features of great archaeological interest. Sequential layers of made ground were observed, with two distinct horizons recorded, showing a depth of an upper post-medieval deposit and a lower, possibly late Medieval but more likely also post-medieval deposit. Neither level contained, discrete archaeological features. Natural gravel was located by augur at 1.55m and 1.75m depth

The only cut features identified from the works were a service pipe and the base of a garden wall, no deeper than 0.6m deep, and both can be deemed to be no earlier than 18th century.

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APPENDIX 1: Trench details

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Length (m)</i>	<i>Breadth (m)</i>	<i>Depth (m)</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1	10.5	1-1.5	1.75m max	0-0.32/0.35m topsoil and turf lawn (dark brown silt and sand with roots and gravel; 50), 0.35m- 0.56 brown-grey sandy gravel (52) (later post-medieval-modern level); 0.6-0.96m brown grey clayey silt (54/55) (early post-medieval layer); 0.96-1.75m+ dark brown yellow clayey sandy silt (56/57) (medieval layer), base extended between 1.55/1.75m deep with auger. Sewer pipe 1 and garden wall 3. [Pls 1-3]

APPENDIX 2: Feature details

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Cut</i>	<i>Fill (s)</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Dating evidence</i>
1	1	53	Sewer pipe cut	19th century	-
1	2	54	Slot	17th-18th century	Pottery, clay pipe
1	3	58	Boundary garden wall	18th century	-

APPENDIX 3: Pottery Catalogue

<i>Cut</i>	<i>Context</i>	<i>Fabric</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Wt/g</i>	<i>Form</i>	<i>Rim</i>	<i>Spot date (century AD)</i>
1	53	OXBX	1	6			15-17
1	53	STAF	1	20	press-moulded flatware		18
2	54	BORD	1	54	bowl	bead	17?
2	54	GRE	1	23	bowl/dish	bead	16-18
2	54	GRE	1	5			16-18
2	54	LMT	1	12			15-16?
2	54	MIDP	1	9	bowl	everted	17?
2	54	OXAC	1	11			11-13
2	54	OXAM	1	3	jug	tapered bead	13-15
2	54	OXAW	2	5			12-14
2	54	OXBX	1	37	lamp		15-17
2	54	OXBX	11	119			15-17
2	54	OXCX	1	3			11-13
2	54	PORC	1	4	SA?	PL	18
2	54	SPEC	1	13			17-18
2	54	TGE	2	20			18
2	55	BORD	1	5			16-18
2	55	GRE	1	18	JR	CAV	16-18
2	55	OXAW	1	22			12-14
2	56	OXAC	1	7			11-13
2	56	SPEC	1	6			17-18

Pottery quantification by fabric.

<i>Fabric</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Date range (century AD)</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Wt/g</i>	<i>eve</i>
OXAC	Early Medieval Oxford ware	11th–mid 13th	2	18	
OXCX	Medieval NW Oxfordshire Ware	Mid 12th–mid 15th	1	3	
OXAW	Brill/Boarstall-type ware	Late 12th–Mid 14th	3	27	
OXAM	Brill/Boarstall-type ware	13th–15th	1	3	0.07
OXBX	Late Medieval Brill/Boarstall ware	15th–17th	13	162	
LMT	Late medieval and transitional	15th–16th	1	12	
MIDP	Midlands Purple	14th–17th	1	9	0.04
GRE	Glazed red earthenware	16th–18th	3	46	0.10
SPEC	Speckle-glazed ware	17th–18th	2	19	
BORD	Border ware	16th–18th	2	59	0.17
STAF	Staffordshire slipware	17th–18th	1	20	
TGE	Tin-glazed earthenware	16th–18th	2	20	
PORC	European porcelain	17th–20th	1	4	0.07
<i>Totals</i>			33	402	0.45

APPENDIX 4: Ceramic Building material

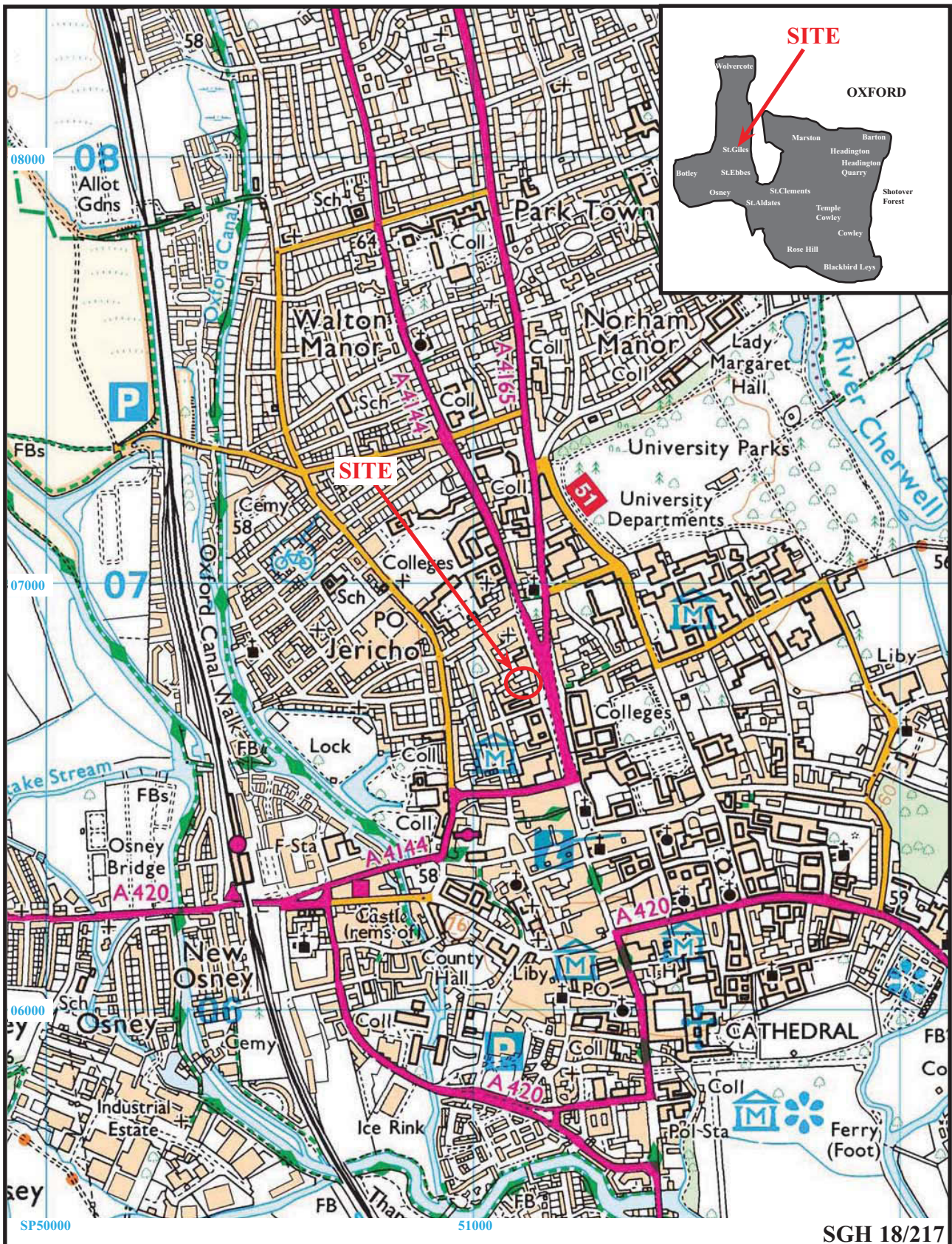
<i>Context</i>	<i>Form</i>	<i>Fabric</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Wt</i>	<i>Abr</i>	<i>L</i>	<i>W</i>	<i>T</i>	<i>Glaze</i>	<i>Notes</i>	<i>Date</i>
54	RTM	fs	1	9				11	SB	hard fired, oxid surfaces, reduced core	Medieval
54	RTM	msc	1	10	++			10		poss thick pot, but appears to have flat surface	Medieval
54	RTM	fs	1	23	+			13		buff with grey core	Medieval
54	RTM	fs	2	35	+			13		buff with grey core	Medieval
55	Tile	fs	1	93				11		rough underside and slight edge thickening	Medieval or early post-medieval
56	Tile	msc	1	35	+			8	S	The finish is slightly uneven and the upper surface has a small amount of splashed glaze.	Medieval
57	RID?	ms	1	27	+			15	DB	dark red, underside dark grey, overfired or burnt	?medieval
3	Brick									unforged	C18-19

APPENDIX 5: Inventory of clay pipe

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Cut</i>	<i>Deposit</i>	<i>FType</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Wt (g)</i>
1	1	53	Drain	1	4
1	2	54	Layer	5	32
			Total	6	36

APPENDIX 6: Inventory of animal bone

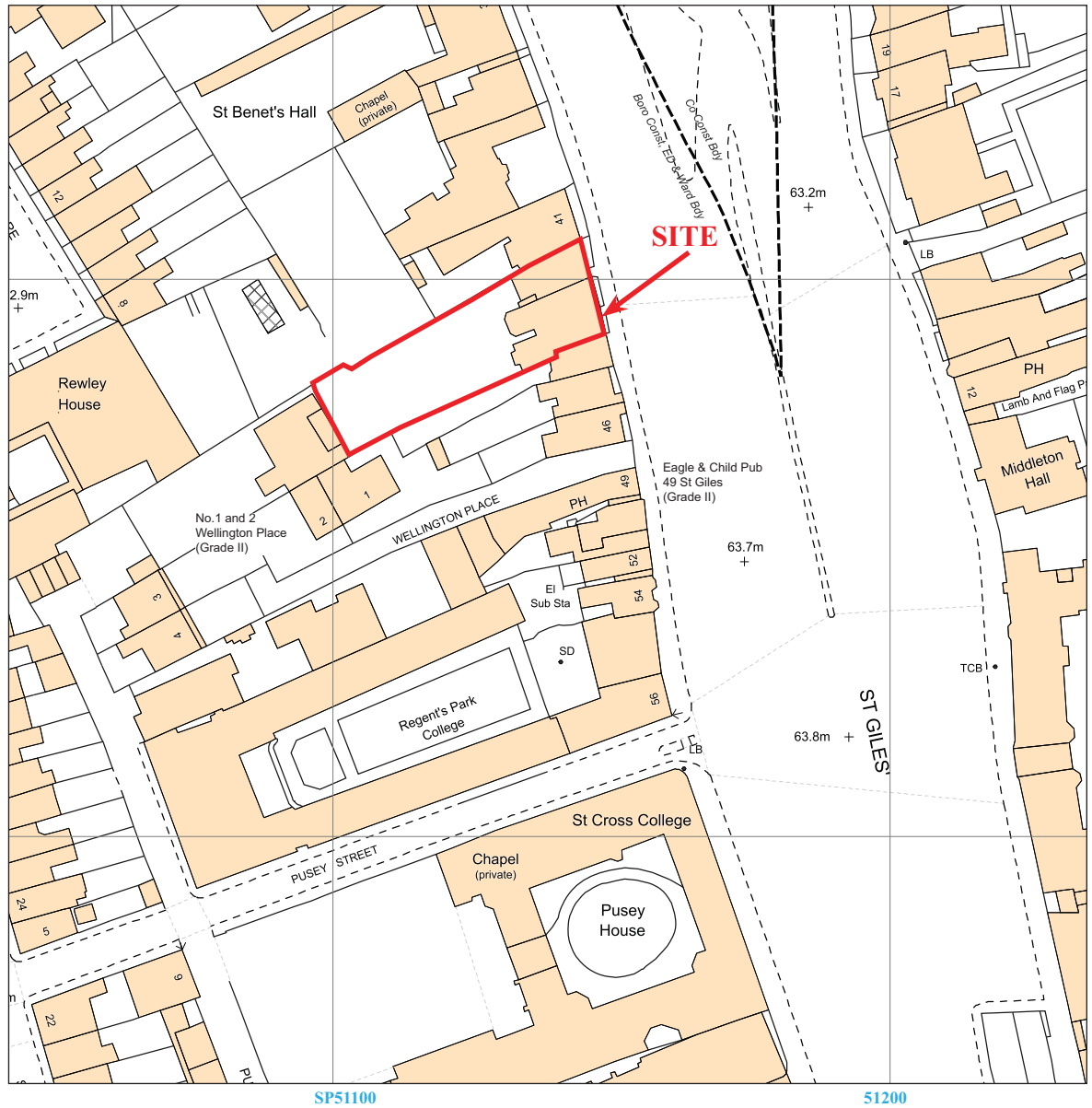
<i>Cut</i>	<i>Deposit</i>	<i>No. frags</i>	<i>Wt (g)</i>	<i>Large</i>	<i>Medium</i>	<i>Small</i>	<i>comments</i>
1	53	1	22	-	1 (pig)	-	Pig scapula fragment (left side)
2	54	18	373	7 (cow)	3 (pig + sheep/goat)	2	6 unidentified fragments
3	56	5	52	1	4 (?sheep/goat)	-	An unidentified "large" animal long bone shaft fragment with transverse cut marks, and four fragments of "medium" sized mandible (? sheep/goat).
Total / MNI		24	447	1 cow	1 pig, 1 sheep/goat	1	-



Quakers Meeting House, 42-43 St Giles,
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 Figure 1. Location of site within Oxford.



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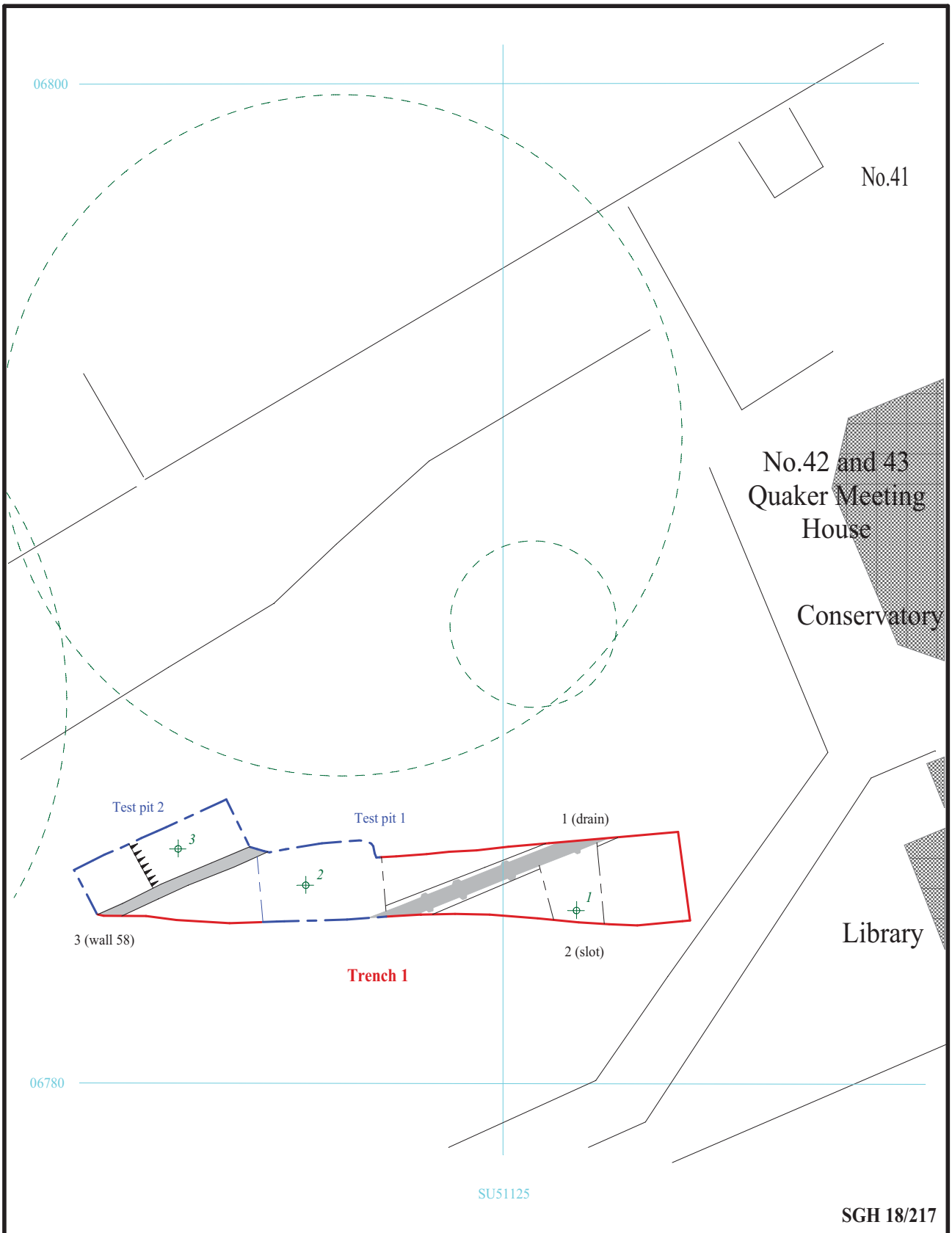
SGH 18/217



**Quakers Meeting House, 42-43 St. Giles,
Oxford, 2019**
Archaeological Evaluation
 Figure 2. Detailed location of site.

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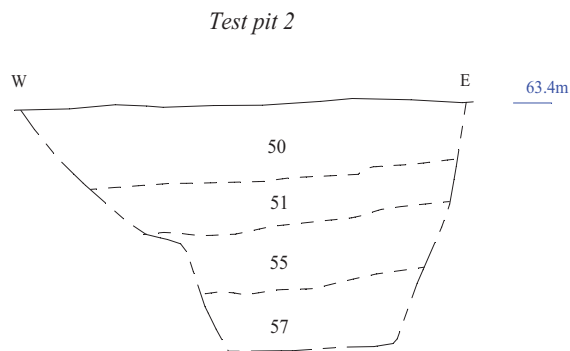
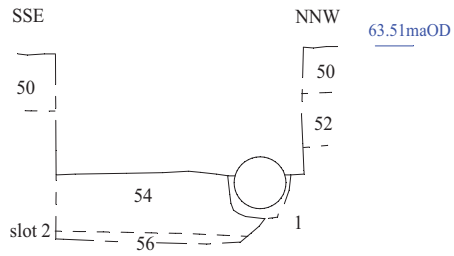




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Figure 3. Location of Trench 1.





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Figure 4. Sections.



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Plate 1. Trench 1, looking west, Scales: 1m.



Plate 2. Trench 1, test pit 2, looking north,
Scales: horizontal 0.5m, vertical 1m.



Plate 3. Trench 1, garden wall 3, looking south,
Scales: horizontal 1m, vertical 0.1m.

SGH 18/217

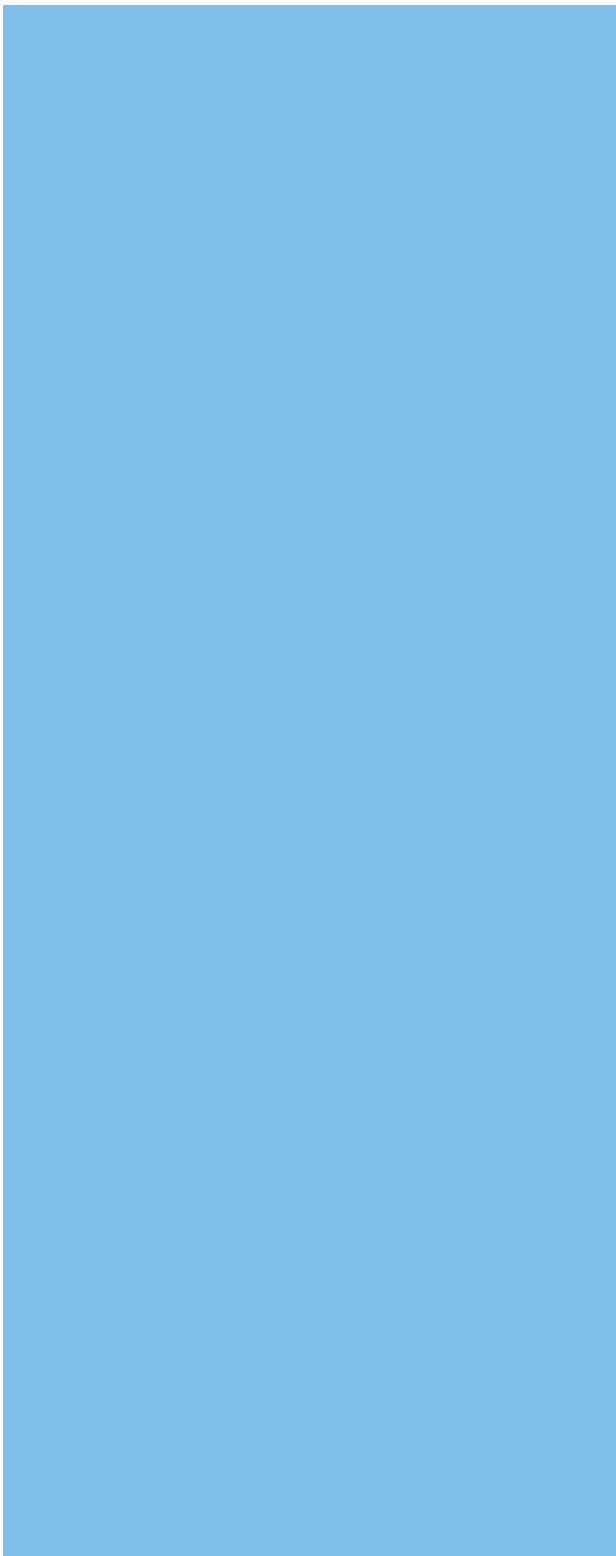
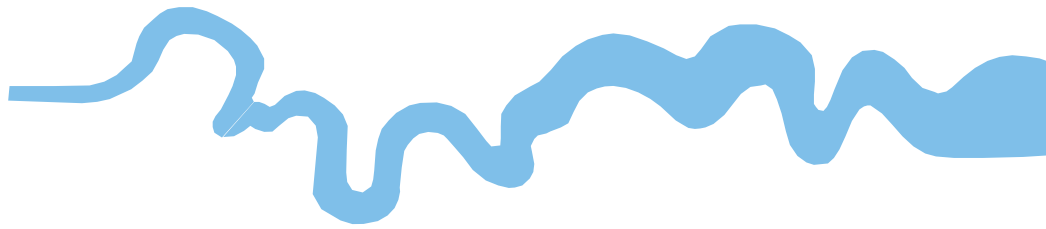
**Quaker Meeting House, 42-43 St.Giles,
Cheltenham, Gloucestershire, 2019
Archaeological Evaluation
Plates 1 - 3.**

THAMES VALLEY
ARCHAEOLOGICAL
SERVICES

TIME CHART

	Calendar Years
Modern _____	AD 1901
Victorian _____	AD 1837
Post Medieval _____	AD 1500
Medieval _____	AD 1066
Saxon _____	AD 410
Roman _____	AD 43 AD 0 BC
Iron Age _____	750 BC
Bronze Age: Late _____	1300 BC
Bronze Age: Middle _____	1700 BC
Bronze Age: Early _____	2100 BC
Neolithic: Late	3300 BC
Neolithic: Early	4300 BC
Mesolithic: Late	6000 BC
Mesolithic: Early	10000 BC
Palaeolithic: Upper	30000 BC
Palaeolithic: Middle	70000 BC
Palaeolithic: Lower	2,000,000 BC





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