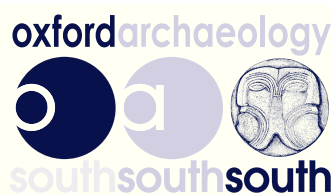


Logic Lane Paving
University
College
Oxford



**Archaeological
Watching Brief Report**



May 2012

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Logic Lane Paving, Oxford

Archaeological Watching Brief Report

Written by Brian Dean

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Summary

Oxford Archaeology (OA) has undertaken a programme of archaeological recording and watching brief in Logic Lane, Oxford relating to the replacement of a section of stone cobbles with York stone slabs. The repaving works were undertaken to provide disabled access across the road. The archaeological investigation comprised recording in October 2010 before the start of the development and watching brief recording in March 2011 during excavation works.

The work was carried out in relation to planning reference 09/01265/FUL and was in accordance with the Written Scheme of Investigation (OA 2010) and a brief produced by David Radford, Oxford City Council.

The project allowed accurate recording of the in situ cobbled surface and also allowed observation of underlying deposits during constructor's excavation works. No artefactual evidence was recovered and no underlying archaeological deposits were observed.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Scope of work

- 1.1.1 In 2010 University College Oxford was granted planning permission (re: 09/01265/FUL) for a project to re-surface a cobbled section of Logic Lane in order to provide for disabled access across the road and between college buildings. Condition 4 of the planning consent required a programme of archaeological recording and watching brief before and during the works and a brief was issued by Oxford City Council detailing the requirements.
- 1.1.2 Oxford Archaeology (OA) were commissioned to undertake the work and in July 2010 OA's Written Scheme of Investigation was approved by David Radford, Oxford City Archaeologist.
- 1.1.3 The initial recording was undertaken in October 2010 and this was followed by watching brief recording during excavation works in March 2011.
- 1.1.4 The section of road which has been resurfaced is towards the central part of Logic Lane. The resurfacing covered an area c.4m wide and between 6.75m long and 3.5m long. The lane was re-covered with York stone to match the existing surface immediately to the west (towards a college building).

1.2 Location, geology and topography

- 1.2.1 Logic Lane is a narrow road which extends between the High Street to the north and Merton Street to the south and which passes through University College.
- 1.2.2 The site is situated on the eastern side, and to the north of the edge of a gravel promontory consisting of Quaternary River Gravels of the 2nd (Summertown-Radley) Terrace Deposits (British Geological Survey sheet 236). The promontory extends between the River Isis c 1km to the west and the River Cherwell c 400m to the east. The gravels on this terrace are typically overlain by a 0.3m depth of red brown loessic loam. It is centred on NGR SP: 5174 0620.

1.3 Archaeological and historical background

- 1.3.1 The main historical background below is based on information contained in from *The Encyclopaedia of Oxford*, edited by Christopher Hibbert and in OA's 2006 evaluation report on the Buttery and Kitchen at University College.
- 1.3.2 Oxford was an Anglo-Saxon *burh* probably founded in 878-9 and stimulated by the important mid Saxon crossing of the Thames in St Aldate's. The extent of the *burh* is not entirely certain,



although it has long been accepted that the area between the later medieval Eastgate and Schools Street/Oriel Street (in which the proposed development lies) represents an extension, perhaps of the early 11th century. However even before this extension was formally established there would have been suburbs extending east from the burh.

- 1.3.3 Use of the area set well back from the High Street at this period is demonstrated by the discovery of 11th-century rubbish pits at Logic Lane, and 11th-century (or later) pits at Postmaster's Hall Yard, Merton Street. The excavations at Logic Lane also showed that Kybald Street was created c.1130, possibly along the line of an 11th-century boundary fence separating properties fronting the High Street from those fronting Merton Street (the latter appearing to predate Kybald Street). The excavators also conclude that Logic Lane (which dog-legs across Kybald Street) was built at the same time or later, but this assumes that the lengths north and south of Kybald Street are coeval.
- 1.3.4 There is known to have been a road in the location of Logic Lane from at least the medieval period when it was known as Lawdenyslanesine and Horseman Lane (in 1247 and 1328). At this time a street ran across Logic Lane as an extension of the current Kybald Street but this was closed in 1448. Also in the medieval period there is known to have been a Horse-mill in the lane and it was called Horsemul Lane. By the 17th century it had acquired the name Logick Lane (at least the southern part) after a school of logicians at the northern end.
- 1.3.5 In 1904 the ownership of the lane was clarified and a court ruled that it belonged to University College
- 1.3.6 The date of the existing cobbled surface is not known but it could potentially be of 18th-century date.

2 PROJECT AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

2.1 Aims

- 2.1.1 To record the presence or absence, extent, condition, character, quality and date of any archaeological remains within the area affected by development.
- 2.1.2 To produce a photographic record of the cobbled surface prior to its removal.
- 2.1.3 To signal, before the destruction of the material in question, the discovery of a significant archaeological find, for which the resources allocated are not sufficient to support a treatment to a satisfactory and proper standard.
- 2.1.4 To make available the results of the investigation.

2.2 Methodology

2.2.1 *Initial recording of cobbled surface*

- 2.2.2 Prior to the start of the construction works a photographic record was be made of the existing cobbled surface. This was undertaken using black and white 35 mm print film and with a digital camera. The photographs included general views to place the areas directly affected in context and more detailed 'flat on' views of the surface.
- 2.2.3 In addition outline annotations was made to an existing metric survey of the area to interpret the construction and any apparent phasing, features or areas of distinct repairs. A textual description of the cobbled surface was also produced to detail its character and the main features within it.

2.2.4 *Archaeological watching brief*



- 2.2.5 An intermittent watching brief was maintained during the period of ground works that may have affected or revealed archaeological deposits. This included monitoring the removal of the cobbles and any limited excavations associated with the preparations for the proposed new surface.
- 2.2.6 The main contractor on site allowed sufficient time and suitable access for the attending Archaeologist(s) to carry out agreed mitigation procedures requested by the City Archaeologist. Recording to full excavation standards was necessary, but was undertaken in such a way as to minimise any delays the main contractor's work programme.
- 2.2.7 All features and deposits were issued with unique context numbers, and context recording was in accordance with the Written Scheme of Investigation. Black-and-white negative photographs and digital photographs were taken of all trenches and archaeological features.
- 2.2.8 Site plans were drawn at an appropriate scale (normally 1:50 or 1:20) with larger scale plans of features as necessary. Section drawings of features and sample sections of trenches were be drawn at a scale of 1:20.
- 2.2.9 The project was carried out by a suitably qualified OA supervisor, under the direction of a Project Manager and overall direction of Dan Poore, OA Head of Fieldwork.

3 RESULTS

3.1 Description of deposits

- 3.1.1 The area under investigation measures c. 19m² with an average width of 2.7m. It lies adjacent to an east – west oriented entrance area. The earliest phase of the surface consists of light orangey brown to mid brown rounded and sub-rounded stone cobbles ranging in size from 40mm x 50mm up to 140mm x 80mm. The overall area has a slightly concave profile with a negative camber giving the road a slope from both the eastern and western sides towards the central surface of the road.
- 3.1.2 Two smaller areas were visible within the cobbled surface. The smallest of these, measuring 0.55m x 0.35m lies to the south with the second measuring 0.60 m x 0.65 m lies slightly to its north and east. Both areas are slightly raised in comparison to the cobbling in general.
- 3.1.3 The western edge of the cobbles is lined by a surface consisting of granite setts. These are mid to dark orangey brown in colour and measure 80 mm x 90 mm. They are laid in regular rows with the long axis oriented east – west with a border formed of the same setts with their long axis oriented north – south. This setting is 1.1m in width and traverses the whole length of the cobbled road and is bounded on its west by a stone wall.
- 3.1.4 A single row of black cobbles is positioned 0.6m from the eastern edge of the roadway running north from the eastern entranceway. This row consists of black cobblestones measuring 100mm x 100mm. To the south of the entranceway also on the eastern side is a later brick setting made up of yellowish brown bricks measuring c. 200 mm x 12 mm. This measures 0.7m in width and extends south. The latest component appears to be the small wall and entranceway located on the eastern side. These consist of York stone slabs. In the case of the small walls these rest upon a single course of brick work. The slabs are 70mm x 45 mm on average with a single larger slab observed.
- 3.1.5 A sequence of construction deposits were observed below the cobbled surface. The first of these 1001 was a loose light greyish yellow sand with occasional gravel inclusions. This extended throughout the excavated trench with a thickness of 0.05m. The underlying layer, 1002, was a loose mid orange-yellow sandy gravel with frequent gravel inclusions. Again this extended throughout the trench and had a thickness of 0.1m. The earliest deposit recorded, 1003, was a



loose dark yellowish orange sandy gravel with common gravel inclusions. The deposit was present throughout the trench with a thickness of 0.1m.

3.2 Finds

3.2.1 No artefactual evidence was recovered during the watching brief.

3.3 Environmental remains

3.3.1 No environmental remains worthy of sampling were encountered during the watching brief.

4 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

4.1.1 The recording revealed that the area comprised construction deposits and a cobbled surface. The earlier two deposits, 1003 and 1002, were utilised for levelling purposes and appear to be derived from local geological deposits which were redeposited. The upper deposit, 1001, appears to be a bedding deposit for the laying of the cobblestones themselves.

4.1.2 The earliest phase of the surface consists of light orangey brown to mid brown rounded and sub-rounded stone cobbles ranging in size from 40 mm x 50 mm up to 140 mm x 80 mm. The two internal areas, described above, show re-setting in modern cement or mortar and are, hence, interpreted as showing evidence of relatively recent repair.

4.1.3 Two areas appear as depressions and hence being evidence of some slumpage. The most evident of these was located towards the southwest of the investigated area.

4.1.4 The western edge of the cobbles was lined by a later surface consisting of granite setts. This setting is 1.1m in width and traverses the whole length of the cobbled road and is bounded on its west by a stone wall.

4.1.5 In conclusion the cobbled surface has remained in situ with minimal disturbance. There was evidence for maintenance as some of the cobbles were bonded by more modern cement or mortar. Some damage was observed in the southwestern corner where slumping was evident

4.1.6 No artefactual evidence was recovered and it is therefore difficult to suggest any timescale for the original construction or subsequent repairs. It could be seen that there was clear phasing with the preserved original cobbled surface being repaired in two distinct areas and a later addition of granite setts along its western edge. The latest phase comprised the small wall and York stone slabs forming an entranceway to the east of the cobbled surface. No underlying archaeological deposits were observed for the duration of the watching brief.



APPENDIX A. ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONTEXT INVENTORY

Context	Type	Depth	Width	Length	Comments	Finds	Date
1000	Structure	0.05	2.7m	>6m	Cobbled surface	-	-
1001	Deposit	0.05	0.6	>4m	Bedding layer	-	-
1002	Deposit	0.1	0.6	>4m	Levelling layer	-	-
1003	Deposit	0.05	0.6	>4m	Levelling layer	-	-

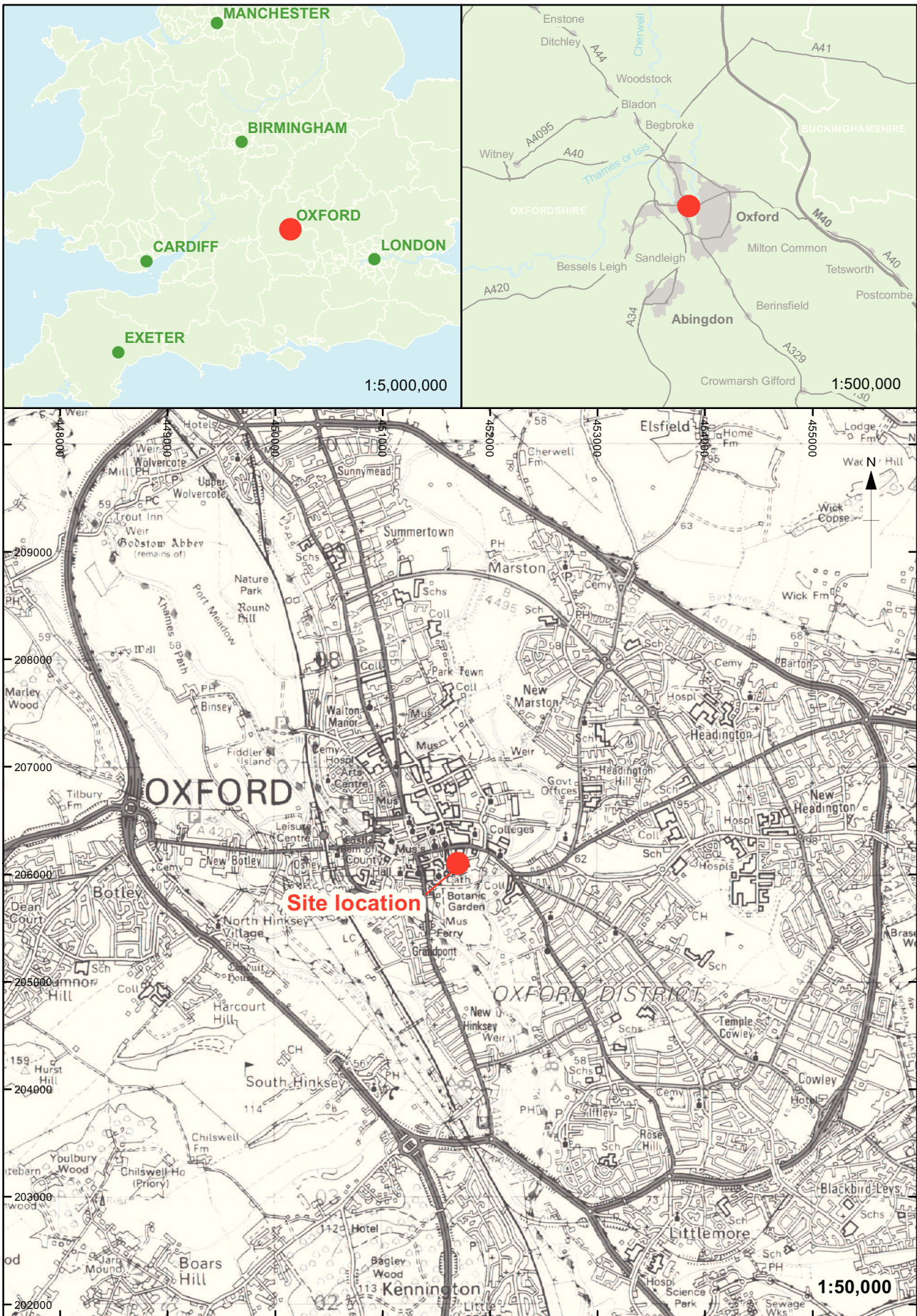


APPENDIX B. BIBLIOGRAPHY AND REFERENCES

Hibbert C, 1988 *The Encyclopaedia of Oxford*

IFA, 2008 *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs*

OA 2010 Logic Lane Paving. University College London Written Scheme of Investigation for recording of cobbled road and Archaeological Watching Brief



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Figure 1: Site location



Figure 2: Pre-excitation plan

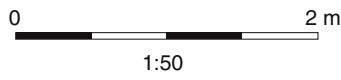
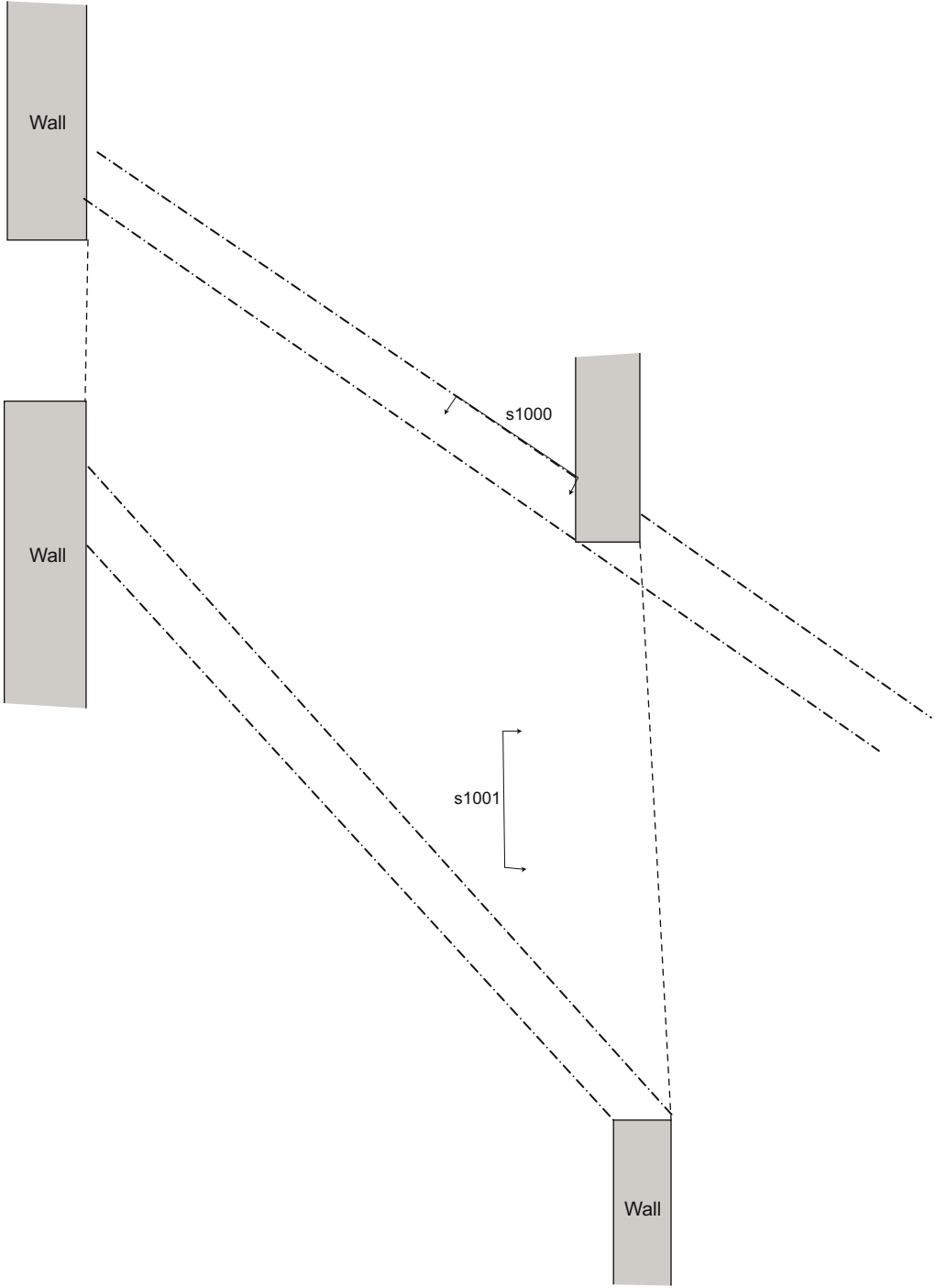


Figure 3: Trench location P1001

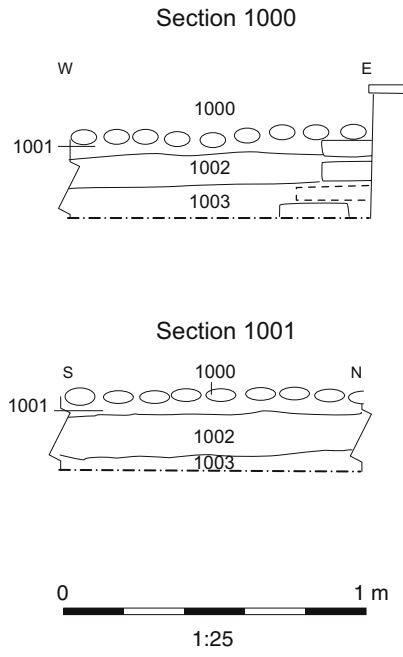


Figure 4: Sections 1000 and 1001



Plate 1: Logic Lane, looking north

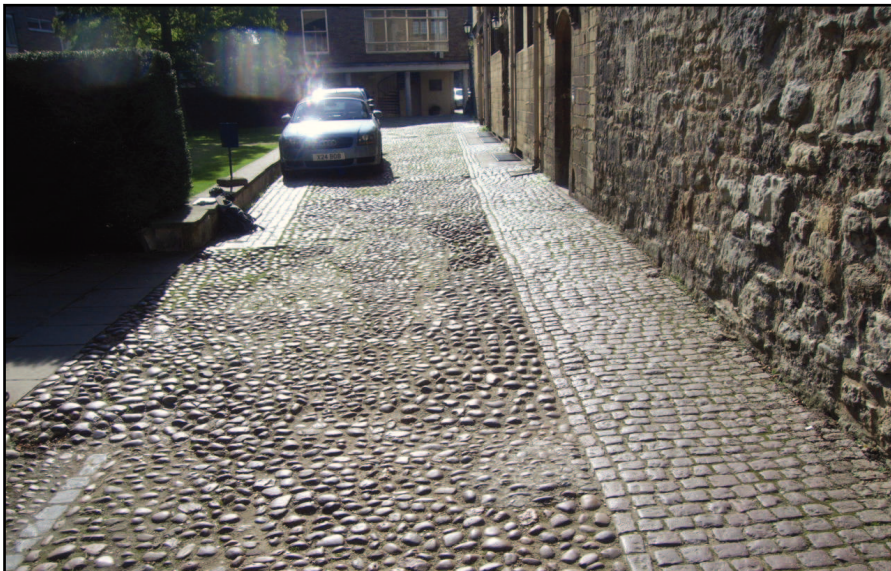


Plate 2: Logic Lane, looking south



Plate 3: Logic Lane, looking at cobbles



Plate 4: Logic Lane, looking north during works



Plate 5: Section 1000



Plate 6: Section 1001



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