

# Proposed Kitchen Extension, Oriental College, Oxford



## Archaeological Evaluation Report

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# Proposed Kitchen Extension, Oriel College, Oxford

## *Archaeological Evaluation Report*

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## Summary

*In March 2015, Oxford Archaeology (OA) undertook an archaeological evaluation on the site of the proposed kitchen extension at Oriel College, Oxford (SP 5165 0612). The evaluation revealed the top of the gravel terrace which, where encountered was at a relatively consistent elevation.*

*The gravel had been truncated by features probably dating to the 12th-14th century occupation of the site, and perhaps relating to medieval tenements pre-dating the construction of the medieval Front Quadrangle of the college in the mid-14th century. The Front Quadrangle was itself re-built in the first half of the 17th century.*

*A number of structures were revealed which appeared to truncate the 12th-14th century deposits. The earliest of these may relate to a building fronting Merton Street, possibly part of St Martins Hall which preceded the 17th century re-modelling.*

*A second structure was revealed running parallel to the eastern boundary wall of the college along Magpie Lane. Outbuildings are shown in this area of the college on cartographic sources from the 16th century onwards - although the fact that this structure appeared to truncate a deposit which produced 17th century artefactual material would imply that it related to a later phase of construction.*

*The third structure revealed was the foundation for an extant pillar base which dates from the 17th century re-build of the Front Quadrangle, and a series of rubble rich deposits overlying the foundation are probably contemporary with this phase of construction.*

*The remaining deposits and structures encountered related to modern re-configurations of the kitchen area and former back yard to the west of Magpie Lane.*



## 1 INTRODUCTION

### ***Location and scope of work***

- 1.1.1 Oxford Archaeology (OA) were instructed by Anna Joynt of Allies and Morrison on behalf of Oriel College to undertake the excavation of two trial trenches on the site of the proposed kitchen extension at Oriel College, Oxford (SP 5175 0612 - Fig. 1). Two geotechnical pits and a borehole were simultaneously undertaken by Soil Consultants Limited and monitored by OA.
- 1.1.2 The work was undertaken in advance of a planning application for a proposed extension to the existing buildings, and followed on from an archaeological desk-based assessment (DBA) produced by OA (OA, 2015). Both the DBA and the results of the evaluation are intended to assess the archaeological potential of the site and the likely impact of previous and proposed development on the survival of any archaeological remains.
- 1.1.3 All work was carried out in full accordance with the appropriate sections of the Institute for Archaeologists (IFA) Code of Conduct, the IFA Code of Approved Practice for the Regulation of Contractual Arrangements in Field Archaeology, the IFA Standards and Guidance for excavation, the IFA Standards and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief, and the British Archaeologists and Developers Liaison Group Code of Practice.

### ***Geology and topography***

- 1.1.4 The historic centre of Oxford is located at the southern end of a north-south promontory. This raised ground occupies an elevated position above the floodplains of the River Cherwell and the River Thames. The promontory is formed of two terraces; the Summertown-Radley (Second Terrace) Sand And Gravel Member and the Floodplain (First Terrace) Northmoor Sand And Gravel Member. The promontory is surrounded by Alluvium - Clay, Silt, Sand and Gravel. The bedrock geology for the centre of Oxford is Oxford Clay Formation and West Walton Formation (undifferentiated) - Mudstone formed in the Jurassic Period (British Geological Survey 2014).
- 1.1.5 Ground level appears to slope gently downwards towards the south west. This is demonstrated by a level of 60.07m OD south of 4A Merton Street (OA, 2003) which decreases to 59.4m OD c 57m west-south-west of 4A at the crossroads of Merton Street and Magpie Lane (just south east of the site).
- 1.1.6 Oriel College is located south of the High Street in Oxford and is located towards the southern edge of the sand and gravel promontory. As with the wider historic city of Oxford the area under the college is located upon Second Terrace and First Terrace formations as mentioned above. The gravels on this terrace are typically overlain by a 0.3m depth of red brown loessic loam.
- 1.1.7 The site is located to the east of the east range of the front quadrangle of Oriel College, and is immediately adjacent to Magpie Lane which runs NNW-SSE and defines the eastern extent of the site.

## 2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1.1 A comprehensive summary of the archaeological and historical background of the site can be found in the DBA (OA, 2015). This summarised the archaeological potential of the site as follows (full references can be found in the source document):





### **Prehistoric Periods**

- 2.1.2 There is a low potential for surviving prehistoric remains to be present within the site. Possible Neolithic to Bronze Age ditches were located 150m north east of the site in Logic Lane and Lambrick 2012 notes a number of findspots within Oxford Oriel College Oriel College Kitchen, Oxford City centre which suggests further isolated artefacts may be present within the gravels upon which the Site lies.

### **Roman Periods**

- 2.1.3 No Roman remains are known to have been found within the Study Area, therefore the site has low potential for Roman remains. Within the wider Oxford City centre Roman building fragments and pottery have been found. However the focus of Roman activity within Oxford appears to have been a rural settlement in the University Science Area, kiln sites to the east of the historic city centre and villas on the hills surrounding Oxford. Isolated Roman finds may be found as the historic city may have been used for agriculture.

### **Early Medieval Period**

- 2.1.4 There is some potential for further evidence of the line of the Saxon burh defences of Oxford to exist within the site. It has been suggested that the initial phase of the Saxon defences may have run along or just east of Oriel Street, to the west of the site. To the south-west of the site, an excavation in Corpus Christi quadrangle (Hassall, 1973) revealed a deep north-east/south-west aligned feature, which was interpreted as a ditch possibly forming part of the defensive circuit. However, the trench in which this possible feature was seen was not accessed as it was in excess of 4m deep, and the feature was rapidly recorded prior to backfilling. Additionally, the natural gravel of the second terrace was not encountered - which was interpreted at the time as evidence for the location of the nearby St Frideswide's minster (subsequently Christ Church Cathedral) being on a promontory of the gravel. The potential ditch was seen to "*cut through loam*" - the origin of which is unclear - and the alignment seems incongruous with the interpretation of the feature as the eastern defensive ditch of the late-Saxon burh. Consequently, the veracity of the interpretation of this undated feature as a late-Saxon defensive ditch is uncertain.
- 2.1.5 There is also some potential for evidence of Saxon occupation to be found within the area of the site. Within the area studied for the DBA, several excavations have shown evidence of late Saxon activity. The excavations of the Middle Quadrangle of Oriel College in 1941 found rims and body sherds of St Neots type cooking pots, dating to between the 10th century to the mid 11th century (Poore, Score & Dodd, 2007, 214-215). Under the floors of a 16th century tennis court to the east of the site, Saxon and medieval deposits were found. Also three excavations within the area covered in the DBA found rubbish pits and pottery that was dated between the 11th-13th century including a watching brief in St Mary's quadrangle and excavations at 4A Merton Street in 2002.
- 2.1.6 It is possible that Saxon rubbish pits may survive in situ at depth under the site, depending on how far the 20th century kitchen developments have truncated the area.

### **Later Medieval Period**

- 2.1.7 The construction of St Martin Hall is likely to have been after 1278 as Salter notes that it was called *domus Cestre* (heavenly house) in 1275-8 and held by Bogo de Clare at £2 a year. It then appears to have reverted to St Frideswides Priory from 1220 who then sold the land to Oriel College in 1503. The construction of St Martin's Hall may have



been between 1279 - 1578 (the date of Agas map). Therefore the construction of St Martin's Hall may have truncated earlier medieval tenements on this site as Salter notes ownership of lease of the land to Hen. Simeon in 1220 and 1230 (Salter, 1960, 207). The construction of the medieval Front Quadrangle at Oriel College probably took place during the mid 14th century. (Underdown, 2006, 3). Salter notes that the area of land which La Oriole was built on was also called Seneschall Hall (Salter, 1960, 210). The construction of the Front Quadrangle may have truncated earlier medieval tenements that may have previously existed on the site. The location of the medieval Front Quadrangle is likely to have been to the west of the Site, occupying the same footprint as the later Front Quadrangle, however its exact position is unknown.

- 2.1.8 There is a possibility that medieval rubbish pits and truncated structures may be found underneath the site. This is because archaeological and documentary evidence has been found of 12th-13th century medieval houses within the Study Area (Dodd, 2003, 60-61). Medieval rubbish pits have been found during excavations within the Study Area. A late medieval cellar was found during an evaluation at the Rhodes Building (Wessex Archaeology, 2011); buildings at 4A Merton Street (Poore et al, 2007) dated to between 1200-16th century (and later), and a watching brief at Christ Church between 2005 and 2007 (ref. DBA for reference) found extensive evidence for medieval inns, halls, trades and crafts.
- 2.1.9 The excavations at the rear of 4A Merton Street (Poore et al 2007) give a good indication of the depth at which medieval pits may survive within the site. Ground level at the Merton Street site sloped gently from 62m OD in the north to 60.1m in the south. A mid-11th to early-13th century pit located in the central area of the site, where ground level was approximately 61m OD, was cut from approximately 57.90m OD, and was 1.4m deep - indicating that the bottom of the feature was approximately 4.5m below the existing ground surface (56.5m OD).

#### ***Post-medieval and Early Modern Periods***

- 2.1.10 The construction of Oriel College and Chapel in 1620-42 would have truncated the remains of any medieval buildings and pits to the south and west of the Site. Part of the site, nearest the boundary wall with Magpie Lane began to be built on from the 17th century with low range outbuildings. These outbuildings may have been rebuilt several times within similar footprints.
- 2.1.11 One area of the site that did not get built on until the 20th century kitchen developments is the area labelled as 'Back Yard' on the 1848 plan of Oriel College. However a small part of this area may have had a porch attached to the East Range during the 18th century seen on Taylor's map of 1751. This back yard area is the location on Site that may have been the least truncated as it remained an open yard from the 17th century until the early 20th century. However this yard area would have also been truncated by the kitchen developments in 1928 and the more modern kitchen extensions to the north.

### 3 AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

#### **General**

3.1.1 The general aims of the work were to:

- determine the character of any remains present;
- ensure that deposits were removed (where appropriate and practicable) by proper controlled archaeological methods;
- determine or estimate the date range of any remains from artefacts or otherwise;
- determine the potential of the deposits for significant palaeo-ecological information;

#### **Specific aims and objectives**

3.1.2 The specific aims and objectives of the trial trenches and topographical survey are listed below and assessed:

- evidence for features and deposits associated with the possible Saxon defensive circuit
- evidence for features and deposits associated with the occupation of the late Saxon burh
- evidence for features or deposits associated with St Martin's Hall
- evidence for the elevation of the top of the gravel.

#### **Methodology**

3.1.3 A summary of OA's general approach to excavation and recording can be found in the standard methodologies for geomatics and survey, environmental evidence, artefactual evidence and burials. Copies of these can be made available on request.

3.1.4 The investigation comprised two trial trenches positioned in locations least likely to disturb the day to day running of the working kitchen (Fig. 2).

3.1.5 Trench 1 initially measured 1 m<sup>2</sup> in plan, but was subsequently extended westward due to the presence of live services. The full archaeological sequence was excavated to the top of the underlying terrace gravel (c 1.55 m below ground level), although this was only achieved within a small sondage in the base of the trench.

3.1.6 Trench 2 measured approximately 1 m<sup>2</sup> in plan, and was excavated to a maximum depth of 1.7m below existing ground level, at which depth a hand auger was employed to sample the remainder of the stratigraphic sequence.



## 4 RESULTS

### **Presentation of Results**

- 4.1.1 Detailed context descriptions are presented in the context inventory (Appendix B), and within the descriptive text below where they are integral to the interpretation of the deposit in question.
- 4.1.2 Specialist reports are presented in Appendix C and D. A discussion and interpretation of the results can be found in Section 5.

### **Trench 1 (Figs 3 and 5)**

- 4.1.3 A sterile sandy gravel (1) was encountered at 1.5m below ground level (bgl) at 58.43 m OD, which was likely to be the terrace gravel, although was only encountered in a small sondage at the base of the western half of the trench. Deposit 1 appeared to have been truncated by an undated east-west aligned cut (10) although this was also only encountered in the sondage and consequently the shape in plan was uncertain. The fill of this feature comprised predominantly limestone rubble in a mid-dark brown silty clay matrix (11).
- 4.1.4 Fill 11 and Deposit 1 were overlain by a relatively horizontal layer of limestone (2) which may have formed a rudimentary surface, although it is possible that this represented the top of the limestone rich fill (11) of the negative feature described above (10).
- 4.1.5 The limestone layer was in turn overlain by a tenacious, mid-dark grey, silty clay (3) which may have represented a buried soil horizon. Datable artefactual material from this deposit suggests that it dates from the mid 12th to late 14th-century.
- 4.1.6 This possible medieval horizon was overlain by a series of deposits (4 and 8) which were truncated by a north-south aligned structure (6) comprising c 4 courses of roughly hewn limestone blocks with no discernible bond. Only the eastern 'face' of this structure was revealed within the trench. This face was quite irregular in profile and no obvious construction cut was discernible, perhaps suggesting that the structure had been trench built from this side at least.
- 4.1.7 Structure 6 and Deposit 8 were overlain by a fairly homogeneous clay silt deposit (9) which may have represented a post-medieval garden soil. Clay pipe recovered from this deposit suggested a date of 1630-1655.
- 4.1.8 The remaining deposits and structures within the trench represented modern truncation associated with the concrete slab floor and services primarily associated with the toilet block in which the trench was located.

### **Trench 2 (Figs 4 and 5)**

- 4.1.9 The earliest deposits in Trench 2 were encountered within 2 hand-augered boreholes. The analysis of the sediment from one of these (BH2) is the subject of a report which can be found in Appendix D (ref. Meen below). The earliest deposit (29) was an olive, stiff clay loam with approximately 20% gravel inclusions. Although some very tiny charcoal flecks were recovered during the processing of the sample, it seems likely that these are a result of contamination from the overlying deposits during the augering, and that given the otherwise sterile nature of the deposit (Plate 3), it is likely to represent the oxidised top of the Oxford clay or a variation in the composition of the gravel terrace. The top of this deposit was encountered at 2.7m bgl (57.27 m OD), which would suggest that the overlying deposits are filling a negative feature, given that



probable gravel was encountered at 58.43 m OD and 58.48 m OD in Trench 1 and Test Pit 1 respectively (see below for summary of results from Test Pit 1).

- 4.1.10 Immediately overlying the sterile clay were four deposits which were probably fills of this feature (28, 27, 26 and 22 - ref. Meen below). The uppermost fill (22) dated to AD1175-1400. These fills were overlain by an homogeneous silty clay layer (18), possibly a garden soil or a later fill of the same feature, which dated to the 12th-13th century.
- 4.1.11 Deposit 18 had been truncated by an east-south-east/west-north-west aligned structure of roughly hewn limestone fragments in a matrix of re-deposited gravel (19), and both were overlain by a homogeneous silty clay deposit (17) approximately 0.32m thick.
- 4.1.12 The remaining deposits within the trench comprised a series of rubble rich layers (12, 14) interspersed with layers of compacted lime mortar (13 and 16). The earliest of the possible mortar surfaces was overlain by a 0.1m thick layer of clay silt which is loosely interpreted as a layer of trample (15). The uppermost of the rubble rich deposits was directly overlain by the re-enforced concrete slab floor.

***Test Pit 1 (Fig. 6)***

- 4.1.13 Test Pit 1 was excavated to investigate the foundations of the boundary wall with Magpie Lane. The test pit measured c 0.5m<sup>2</sup> and was excavated to a depth of 1.55m bgl (58.38m OD) and natural geology was encountered at 1.45m (58.48m OD). A single homogeneous deposit, approximately 0.72m thick overlay the natural, but no dating was recovered and further characterisation within the confines of the test pit was problematic. The remaining deposit(s) within the trench were modern. The wall footing itself was roughly vertical to c 0.75m bgl before stepping to the west approximately 0.1m. The base of the footing was a further 0.6m below the top of the offset and the western face had a batter which saw the base of the wall at approximately 0.2m west of the face of the upstanding element of the structure.

***Test Pit 2 (not illustrated)***

- 4.1.14 Test pit 2 was excavated to investigate the foundations of the north east corner of the 17thC east range of the Front Quadrangle. Due to the location of live services, the size of the test pit was limited to 0.35m x 0.25m x 1.45m deep. Consequently, characterisation of the deposits encountered was problematic, as was the identification of any recognisable archaeological horizons. The footing of the wall appeared to step eastward at approximately 0.5m bgl, and appeared to still be present at 1.4m bgl, but this was far from certain.



## 5 DISCUSSION

### ***Reliability of field investigation***

- 5.1.1 All deposits were hand excavated and although there was a paucity of datable artefactual material the stratigraphic sequence is reasonably well understood. However, only a relatively small area was subject to excavation and consequently the following interpretation is necessarily circumspect.

### ***Discussion***

#### ***Natural Gravel***

- 5.1.2 Following analysis of the results from a number of archaeological investigations in this part of the city, the DBA suggested that natural gravels may be encountered at between 58.29m and 58.72m OD.
- 5.1.3 The results from the trial trenching and geotechnical pits correspond broadly with this analysis, with the similarity in the elevation of the top of the gravel in Test Pit 1 and Trench 1 indicating an average depth of the natural geology at 58.45m OD. However, no evidence for *in-situ* loess was recovered and it is possible that the overlying deposits are fills of features truncating the gravel and loess (see below) and that consequently gravel may be present at a higher elevation elsewhere within the site.
- 5.1.4 The sterile clay deposit encountered at 57.27m OD in Trench 2 may have represented the oxidised top of the Oxford Clay, although the sediment analysis of the auger sample was inconclusive. The elevation of the top of the sterile clay strongly suggests that the overlying deposits are filling a negative feature which appears to have completely truncated the terrace gravel in this location.

#### ***Medieval period***

- 5.1.5 The results from both trenches would suggest the presence of negative features associated with 12<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> century occupation of the site, possibly relating to the occupation of medieval tenements fronting onto Merton Street prior to the construction of St Martin Hall at some point after 1278, or possibly with St Martin Hall itself (OA, 2015, 7.4.1).
- 5.1.6 Although the interpretation of the origin and inter-relationships between the deposits and structures discussed below is far from conclusive, it seems clear that there are at least three phases of medieval activity across the trenches. The dating evidence would suggest that the top of the sequence of deposits associated with the 12<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> century is between 58.76m OD (Trench 1) and 59.25m OD (Trench 2).
- 5.1.7 The DBA identified the potential for the line of the putative primary burh defences to be present within the site, and it was considered possible that the deposits encountered within the augered borehole in Trench 2 were the result of fluvial deposition within a ditch. However, the sediment assessment concluded "... the sediment is perhaps coarser and less well sorted than would be expected if the sediment accumulated through the settling out of fine particles in standing water in the bottom of a ditch".
- 5.1.8 Additionally, the only dating evidence from the deposits interpreted as fills of this feature dated to the 12<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> century (Cotter below, Contexts 18 and 22). Consequently, the results from both the sediment analysis and the dating of the artefactual material would suggest that this feature is unlikely to be late-Saxon in origin, and that this sequence of deposits (28, 27, 26, 22, 21 and 18) may be filling a single 12<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> century feature.



- 5.1.9 In Trench 1, the possible east-west aligned negative feature (10) was seen to cut the gravel but the small size of the trench prevented any further characterisation. This feature was overlain by a possible limestone surface (2) which was in turn overlain by a buried soil (3) dating to the 12<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> century, although it is possible that the limestone deposit represented the top of the limestone rich fill (11) of the negative feature and that consequently Deposit 3 was also a fill of the same feature.
- 5.1.10 The uppermost of the possible fills in Trench 2 (18) appeared to have been truncated by Wall 19, and both were overlain by a fairly homogeneous deposit (17) which produced 13<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> century artefactual material. If the sequence of deposits described above (5.1.8) does relate to activity pre-dating the construction of St Martin Hall, then it is possible that Wall 19 represents a structure associated with the medieval hall, which has been demolished prior to the wholesale re-building of the college between 1620 and 1642.
- 5.1.11 However, the origin of the overlying deposit (17) is unclear. It clearly post-dated Wall 19, and the dating evidence would suggest that the wall had already been demolished by the 13<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> century and that it must therefore significantly pre-date the 17<sup>th</sup> century re-build. As such, it is possible that the wall represents a structure associated with the tenements which occupied the site prior to the construction of St Martin Hall.

#### *Post-medieval*

- 5.1.12 Post-medieval deposits were encountered at between 59.25m OD (Trench 1) and 59.75m OD (Trench 2), although the uppermost c 0.4 m of the post medieval sequence in Trench 2 comprised construction debris, suggesting that significant deposits commence at approximately 59.25 - 59.35m OD across the site. The fact that the base of the modern truncation in Test Pit 1 was encountered at 59.20m OD may suggest that this horizon also represents the top of the post-medieval archaeology, although no dating was recovered and the origin of this deposit (30) was uncertain. However, the fact that the base of this deposit roughly corresponded with the base of the boundary wall with Magpie Lane may imply that it is filling the construction trench for the wall footing - the edge of which is beyond the western extent of the trench.
- 5.1.13 The structure revealed in Trench 1 (6) is probably the western wall of a building shown on cartographic sources of 1675 (OA, 2015, Fig. 5) and 1751 (*ibid.* Fig. 7) located along the western face of the Magpie Lane boundary wall. However, a building of similar dimensions to that shown by Loggan and Taylor is also depicted on Ralph Agas's plan of 1578 (*ibid.* Fig. 4), although the dating evidence from the 17<sup>th</sup>-century layer which it appeared to truncate (4) would suggest that this is likely to be a later rebuild on a similar footprint to an earlier structure. It is possible that Deposit 8 was associated with the demolition of this structure as it contained c 15-20% limestone rubble. However, the relationship between the deposit and the structure was unclear.
- 5.1.14 If the interpretation of Structure 6 is correct then it would suggest that the early-mid 17<sup>th</sup> century clay pipe recovered from the overlying deposit (9) is re-deposited, and that Deposit 9 is associated with a later re-configuration of this part of the kitchen yard – possibly as late as the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Deposit 9 was originally interpreted as a post-medieval garden soil, but this seems unlikely given that a structure appears to have been located on the same approximate footprint from Agas plan of 1578 to at least the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century (OA, 2015, Figs 7 and 9 respectively).
- 5.1.15 In Trench 2, the foundation (20) for the existing pillar was seen to truncate the possible medieval deposits (17 and 18) described above, and was overlain by a series of rubble rich deposits (14, 12) and lenses of compacted mortar (16 and 13) – the latter of which



may represent surfaces. It seems likely that this sequence of deposits relates to the construction of the east range in the first half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, with the possible surfaces representing rudimentary construction horizons. This interpretation would be consistent with the 13<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> century building material recovered from these deposits (ref. Cotter below, Contexts 15 and 14), as this is likely to have originated from the demolition of the medieval Front Quadrangle.

#### *Modern*

- 5.1.16 The remaining deposits and structures within the Trench 1 were 0.5-0.7m deep bgl (c 59.45mOD) and included the concrete slab floor (0.25m thick) and services primarily associated with the toilet block in which the trench was located.
- 5.1.17 In Trench 2, the modern concrete slab was approximately 0.3m thick and appeared to directly overlie the 17<sup>th</sup> century construction rubble described above.

Elevation of archaeological horizons by trench (m OD)

	?Oxford Clay	Natural Gravel	12th-14thC	Significant post-medieval	Undated (pit fill/construction cut fill)
Trench 1		58.43	58.76	59.25	
Trench 2	57.27		59.25	59.35	
Test Pit 1		58.48			59.23
Test Pit 2					



**APPENDIX A. BIBLIOGRAPHY AND REFERENCES**

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## APPENDIX B. TRENCH DESCRIPTIONS AND CONTEXT INVENTORY

Trench 1					
Contexts					
Context no	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Comment	Soil Description
1	Layer			Natural gravel	
2	?Surface			Possibly a rudimentary surface or fill of feature 10	Fairly horizontal layer of roughly hewn limestone fragments of varying dimensions in a mid grey-brown silty clay matrix with 25-30% gravel fragments
3	Deposit			Medieval buried soil horizon or fill of feature 10	Mid-dark blueish grey silty clay
4	Deposit			Post medieval buried soil of indeterminate origin	Mid olive brown silty clay with c5% gravel inclusions
5	Cut			Arbitrary construction cut for structure 6	
6	Structure			North-south aligned wall	Four courses of roughly hewn limestone fragments of varying dimensions with no discernible bond
7	Fill			Arbitrary number allocated to backfill of 'construction cut' 5	
8	Deposit			Post-medieval rubble-rich deposit of indeterminate origin	Mid grey-brown clay silt with 10% gravel inclusions and 15-20% limestone fragments
9	Deposit			Post medieval deposit post-dating Structure 6	Predominantly mid grey-brown clay silt with 5-10% gravel inclusions
10	Cut			Possible east-west aligned ?linear cut in bas of sondage	
11	Fill			Possible east-west aligned rubble foundation or rubble filled ?linear feature	Limestone rubble



<b>Trench 2</b>					
<b>Contexts</b>					
<b>Context no</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Width (m)</b>	<b>Depth (m)</b>	<b>Comment</b>	<b>Soil Description</b>
12	Deposit			Possible 17 <sup>th</sup> century construction rubble	Mixed, but predominantly mid-pale grey silty clay with concentrations of lime mortar, limestone fragments and occasional CBM
13	?Surface			Possible rudimentary construction horizon	Compacted lime mortar
14	Deposit			Possible 17 <sup>th</sup> century construction horizon	Mixed rubble rich layer of limestone rubble, lime mortar, gravel and occasional CBM
15	Deposit			Trample layer over mortar lens 16	Mid brownish grey clay silt with 2-3% gravel inclusions
16	Deposit			?Rudimentary construction horizon	Compacted lime mortar
17	Deposit			Possible medieval buried soil of indeterminate origin	Mid grey-brown clayey silt with 5% gravel inclusions and very occasional limestone fragments
18	Deposit			Possible fill of 12th-14thC feature	Mid brownish-grey silty clay with 5-10% gravel inclusions
19	Structure			SSE-NNW aligned wall footing	
20	Structure			Foundation for pillar base	
21	Deposit			Possible fill of 12th-14thC feature	Mid-dark grey silty clay with 5-10% gravel inclusions
22	Deposit			Possible fill of 12th-14thC feature	ref. Appendix D
23	Cut			?Cut for Wall 19	
24	Fill			?Base of 17 or fill of linear cut robbing top of Wall 19	Predominantly mid grey-brown clay silt with occasional charcoal and scorched clay an 10% gravel
25	Cut			Cut for Structure 20	
26	Deposit			Possible fill of 12th-14thC feature	ref. Appendix D
27	Deposit			Possible fill of 12th-14thC feature	ref. Appendix D
28	Deposit			Possible fill of 12th-14thC feature	ref. Appendix D
29	Layer			?Oxford clay	ref. Appendix D

**Test Pit 1****Contexts**

<b>Context no</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Width (m)</b>	<b>Depth (m)</b>	<b>Comment</b>	<b>Soil Description</b>
30	Deposit			Pit fill / construction cut fill	Homogeneous mid grey brown clay silt

**Test Pit 2**

**No context number were issued for Test Pit 2**



## APPENDIX C. FINDS REPORTS

### C.1 Pottery *by John Cotter*

#### *Introduction*

C.1.1 A total of 5 sherds of pottery weighing 63g were recovered from four contexts. All of these are of medieval date. Given the small size of the assemblage a separate catalogue has not been constructed and instead the pottery is simply described and spot-dated below. Fabric codes referred to for the medieval wares are those of the Oxfordshire type series (Mellor 1994). No further work is recommended.

#### **Context (3) Spot-date c 1150-1400**

C.1.2 Description: 2 sherds (16g). Fairly fresh sagging jar/cooking pot base and separate body sherd (from the same vessel). Hard/dense smooth brown ware with abundant fossil shell temper - probably Olney Hyde-type shelly ware (Fabric OXCG) from north Bucks or Northants. Otherwise possibly a denser thick-walled example of St Neot's-type ware from the same general area (OXR, c 900-1100)?

#### **Context (17) Spot-date c 1075-1300?**

C.1.3 Description: 1 sherd (5g). Fairly worn rim sherd from a wheel-turned jar/cooking pot in a fine dark grey sandy ware. Possibly Medieval Oxford ware (OXY, c 1075-1300)? However the rim is unusually plain, flaring and slightly everted and the fabric somewhat denser than OXY. Alternatively it could be an unidentified regional Saxo-Norman coarseware, or possibly even a late Saxon North French import?

#### **Context (18) Spot-date c 1050-1250**

C.1.4 Description: 1 sherd (41g). Fairly worn flattish basal sherd probably from a large jar or bowl in limestone-tempered Cotswold-type ware (OXAC).

#### **Context (22) <1> Spot-date c 1175-1400?**

C.1.5 Description: 1 sherd (c 1g). A very small and fairly undiagnostic body sherd. Probably a local hard sandy medieval greyware cooking pot fabric with traces of sooting externally. It is rather more likely to be Early Medieval Brill/Boarstall ware (OXAW, c 1175-1400), but could be Medieval Oxford ware (OXY, c 1075-1300)? Both are common finds on Oxford sites.

### C.2 Clay tobacco pipes *by John Cotter*

#### *Introduction*

C.2.1 Five pieces of clay pipe weighing 13g were recovered from two contexts. These have not been separately catalogued but are described below. It is recommended that the pipes from Context (9) should be researched and published if funding becomes available.

#### **Context (4) Spot-date: 17th century**

C.2.1 Description: 1 piece (3g). Fresh stem fragment (40mm long) tapering to a mouthpiece with slightly bevelled edges. The stem bore diameter is c 3mm indicating a 17th-century date.

#### **Context (9) Spot-date: c 1630-1655**

C.2.1 Description: 4 pieces (46g). All fresh. Comprises three near-identical complete pipe bowls of Oxford Type A, c 1630-1655 (Oswald 1984, fig. 51A). These examples are

slightly more 'chinned' and perhaps show West Country influence (ibid., fig. 51.3, 4 and 6). They may date from the 1630s or 1640s (Civil war period?). All three have large round heels and milling around the rim. They appear to be unburnished. One example has a maker's mark on the flat of the heel - a large incuse 'IT' in serified capitals. Marks of this date are fairly rare in Oxford and this example has not yet been positively identified. Two possible 17th-century contenders occur in Oswald's revised list of Oxfordshire clay pipemakers (ibid., 261-2): John Thorneton of Abingdon (start-date unknown, died 1684), and John Taylor of Oxford (c 1660-1681), however both of these seem a little too late to be the maker of the pipe here. It could be that the pipe was made by an earlier member of one or other of these pipemaking families, or it may perhaps be a non-local product, or perhaps a completely unknown maker? Further research would be required to identify the maker with any certainty. A single fresh stem fragment (35mm long) with a stem bore diameter of 3mm is also compatible with a 17th-century dating.

### **C.3 Ceramic building material (CBM) by John Cotter**

#### *Introduction*

- C.3.1 A total of 15 pieces of CBM weighing 1096g were recovered from five contexts. This all appears to be of medieval date although two pieces might be early post-medieval. The condition is generally fairly poor and fragmentary. The assemblage has not been separately catalogued but is described and quantified below. No further work is recommended.

#### **Context (12) Spot-date: 15th-17th century?**

- C.3.2 Description: 2 pieces (107g). Poor/very fragmentary condition. Includes orange sandy peg tile edge fragment (with circular nailhole) in Oxford 'St Giles-type' fabric (15th-17th century). Also one very worn flattish fragment in a light orange sandy brick-like fabric - probably from a Flemish-style floor tile or quarry tile (late 14th to 16th century).

#### **Context (14) Spot-date: 13th-14th century?**

- C.3.3 Description: 1 piece (80g). Fairly fresh. Edge fragment from a medieval peg tile in orange sandy fabric with grey core and a trace of glaze (Fabric 3B). More likely 13th-14th century than later?

#### **Context (15) Spot-date: 13th-14th century**

- C.3.4 Description: 9 pieces (696g). Poor/fragmentary condition but some quite large. Includes fragments from three thick early peg tiles in local tile fabrics. One of these (five joining pieces, fresh breaks) is in a pink-buff fabric with a grey core and common fine chalk inclusions (Fabric 7B), it also has a circular nailhole. Two peg tile fragments in orange sandy fabric with grey core (Fabric 3B); the larger 'body' sherd has a pair of circular nailholes; the smaller edge fragment with traces of clear glaze. Two other thick roof tile fragments probably from the flat sides of two separate ridge tiles, both with greenish-brown glaze. One is a corner fragment (Fabric 3B/7BB), the other an edge fragment with sparse chalk in the fabric (Fabric 7BB).

#### **Context (17) Spot-date: 13th-14th century**

- C.3.5 Description: 2 pieces (177g). Fairly fresh. Fragments from two separate medieval peg tiles. The larger 'body' sherd in Fabric 7BB; the smaller edge fragment in Fabric 3B with traces of greenish-brown glaze.

**Context (18) Spot-date: 13th-14th century?**

C.3.6 Description: 1 piece (36g). Fairly fresh. Small fragment of medieval peg tile in Fabric 3B.

**C.4 Animal Bones** *by Lena Strid*

C.4.1 A total of 9 hand-collected animal bone fragments were recovered from deposits, which were probably of post-medieval date.

C.4.2 The bones were identified to species using a comparative reference collection, as well as osteological books and articles. Ribs and vertebrae, with the exception for atlas and axis, were classified by size: 'large mammal' representing cattle, horse and deer, and 'medium mammal' representing sheep/goat, pig and large/medium-sized dog.

C.4.3 The condition of the bone was graded on a 6-point system (0-5), grade 0 equating to very well preserved bone and grade 5 indicating that the bone had suffered such structural and attritional damage as to make it unrecognisable. Generally the bones were in good to fair condition (Table 1). Traces of burning or gnaw marks were absent.

C.4.4 The assemblage contains bones from cattle, sheep/goat and horse (Table 2). These taxa are common in medieval and post-medieval urban and college animal bone assemblages, although due to the small sample size it is not possible to extrapolate the frequency of the different species and their over-all dietary contribution. Judging by species and element representation, most bones, with the notable exception of a horse tooth, represent butchery and kitchen waste.

C.4.5 The only bone that could be aged was a sheep/goat mandible in context 18. The third molar had a wear stage of 'f' or 'g' (Grant 1982), which with Payne's age estimation suggest an age at death of 3-8 years (Payne 1973). Judging by bone surface structure, juvenile animals were absent in the assemblage.

C.4.6 The assemblage has been fully recorded and no further information can be gained from such small sample of bones. However, if further excavations take place on the site, the bones should be considered alongside any additional material.

Table 1. Bone preservation per context.

Context	N	0	1	2	3	4	5
4	1			1			
9	1		1				
14	2		2				
17	1			1			
18	4		2	1	1		

Table 2. Bone assemblage from the Oriel College kitchen (OXOCK15) evaluation

	Context 4	Context 9	Context 14	Context 17	Context 18
Cattle	1				
Sheep/goat			1		1
Horse					1
Medium mammal			1		1
Large mammal		1			1



	Context 4	Context 9	Context 14	Context 17	Context 18
Indeterminate				1	
TOTAL	1	1	2	1	4
Weight (g)	37	22	11	4	144





## APPENDIX D. ENVIRONMENTAL REPORTS

### D.1 Assessment of sediment samples from augered borehole *by Julia Meen*

- D.1.1 Five small sediment samples were recovered during hand augering of a possible medieval ditch sequence at Oriel College, Oxford. The aim was to characterise the sequence; in particular, to ascertain whether the lowermost deposits seen in the sequence were water-lain in origin. In addition, the samples were taken with the aim of recovering material suitable for radiocarbon dating.
- D.1.2 The five sediment samples were characterised using the finger texturing method described in English Heritage 2007, and using Munsell soil colour classifications. The samples were then gently wet sieved over a 250µm mesh and residues retained for further assessment, and extraction of plant material suitable for dating where appropriate.
- D.1.3 Sample <1> was taken from context (22), thought likely to be the uppermost fill of a medieval ditch. The sediment was a brown (10YR 4/3) sandy silt loam, with a gravel component making up approximately 30% of the sediment and consisting of granular (2-4mm) to medium pebble-sized (10-20mm), subrounded to subangular stones. A very small fragment of pot and one of bone, and a small number of iron concretions (possibly nails), were present. Small charcoal flecks were noted.
- D.1.4 Sample <2> was taken from context (26), the deposit directly below context (22) and also thought to be part of the medieval ditch fill. The sediment was a brown (10YR 4/3) sandy silt loam, with a notably gritty texture. No finds were recovered, and charcoal flecks occurred occasionally. Gravel made up approximately 30% of the sample, and consisted of granular to occasional medium pebble-sized subrounded to subangular stones.
- D.1.5 Sample <3> was taken from context (27), the uppermost of two deposits overlying the "natural" which were potentially of fluvial origin. The sediment was a very dark grey (5Y 3/1) sandy clay. Charcoal flecks were frequent, although were generally of very small size. A small number of small burnt bone fragments were present. Gravel made up 30-40% of the sediment volume, consisting of fine sand to medium sized subrounded pebbles. The residue after wet sieving was scanned under a binocular microscope at low magnification and found to contain around eight examples of elder (*Sambucus nigra*) seeds, as well as a small number of other seeds including members of the pink (*Caryophyllaceae*) and nightshade (*Solanaceae*) families and a possibly charred example of stinking chamomile (*Anthemis cotula*).
- D.1.6 Sample <4> was taken from context (28), the lower of the two possible fluvial deposits. The sediment was a dark grey (5Y 4/1) clay loam, with occasional small charcoal flecks. Gravels made up 30-40% of the sediment, consisting of medium sand to small, subrounded pebbles. The very small residue produced by sieving the sediment was examined under microscope and shown to contain little plant material, with a couple of charred seeds and occasional fragments of waterlogged elder.
- D.1.7 Sample <5> was taken from context (29), assumed to be the natural geology. The sediment was an olive (5Y 5/3) stiff clay loam. Rare, very tiny charcoal flecks were present. The gravel component was approximately 20% of the volume of the sediment, and consisted of small to medium subrounded pebbles. No finds were recovered.
- D.1.8 Assessment of the sediment samples shows that the two 'fluvial' deposits, contexts (27) and (28), were moderately well sorted with a relatively high content of gravel (between



30-40%) and a clay matrix. The sediment is perhaps coarser and less well sorted than would be expected if the sediment accumulated through the settling out of fine particles in standing water in the bottom of a ditch. Little waterlogged material was preserved in either sample.

- D.1.9 Sample <3> showed the highest potential for providing suitable material for radiocarbon dating; although material was present in sample <4> it is unlikely to be of sufficient quantity to be datable.



## APPENDIX E. SUMMARY OF SITE DETAILS

**Site name:** Proposed Kitchen Extension, Oriel College, Oxford

**Site code:** OXOCK15

**Grid reference:** SP 5165 0612

**Type:** Evaluation

**Date and duration:** 6 Days from 11th-18th March 2015

**Summary of results:** In March 2015, Oxford Archaeology (OA) undertook an archaeological evaluation on the site of the proposed kitchen extension at Oriel College, Oxford (SP 5165 0612). The evaluation revealed the top of the gravel terrace which, where encountered was at a relatively consistent elevation.

The gravel had been truncated by features probably dating to the 12th-14th century occupation of the site, and perhaps relating to medieval tenements pre-dating the construction of the medieval Front Quadrangle of the college in the mid-14th century. The Front Quadrangle was itself re-built in the first half of the 17th century.

A number of structures were revealed which appeared to truncate the 12th-14th century deposits. The earliest of these may relate to a building fronting Merton Street, possibly part of St Martins Hall which preceded the 17th century re-modelling.

A second structure was revealed running parallel to the eastern boundary wall of the college along Magpie Lane. Outbuildings are shown in this area of the college on cartographic sources from the 16th century onwards - although the fact that this structure appeared to truncate a deposit which produced 17th century artefactual material would imply that it related to a later phase of construction.

The third structure revealed was the foundation for an extant pillar base which dates from the 17th century re-build of the Front Quadrangle, and a series of rubble rich deposits overlying the foundation are probably contemporary with this phase of construction.

The remaining deposits and structures encountered related to modern re-configurations of the kitchen area and former back yard to the west of Magpie Lane.

**Location of archive:** The archive is currently held at OA, Janus House, Osney Mead, Oxford, OX2 0ES, and will be deposited with the Oxfordshire County Museum Service in due course, under the following accession number: OXCMS: 2015.50

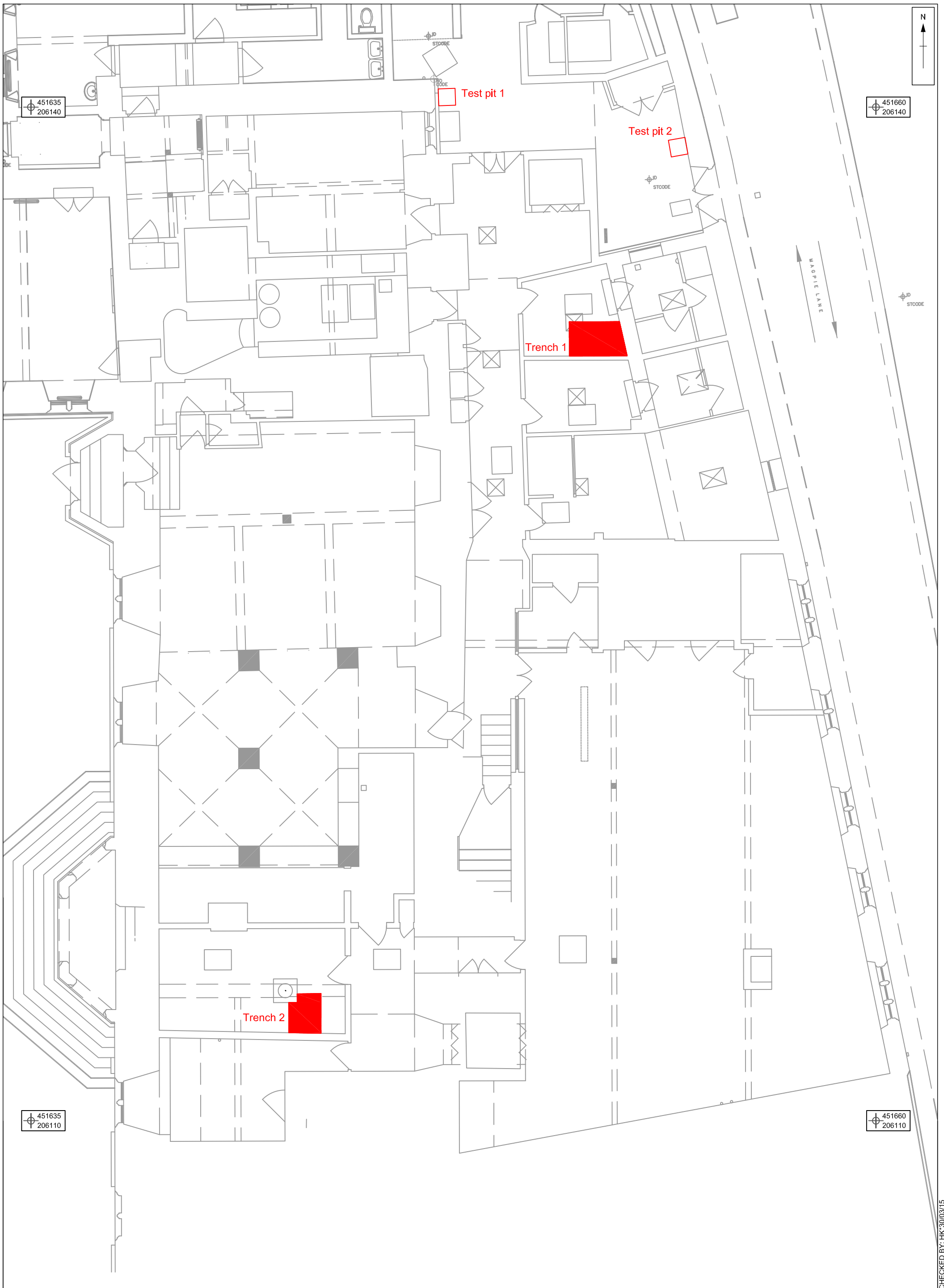




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Figure 1: Site location









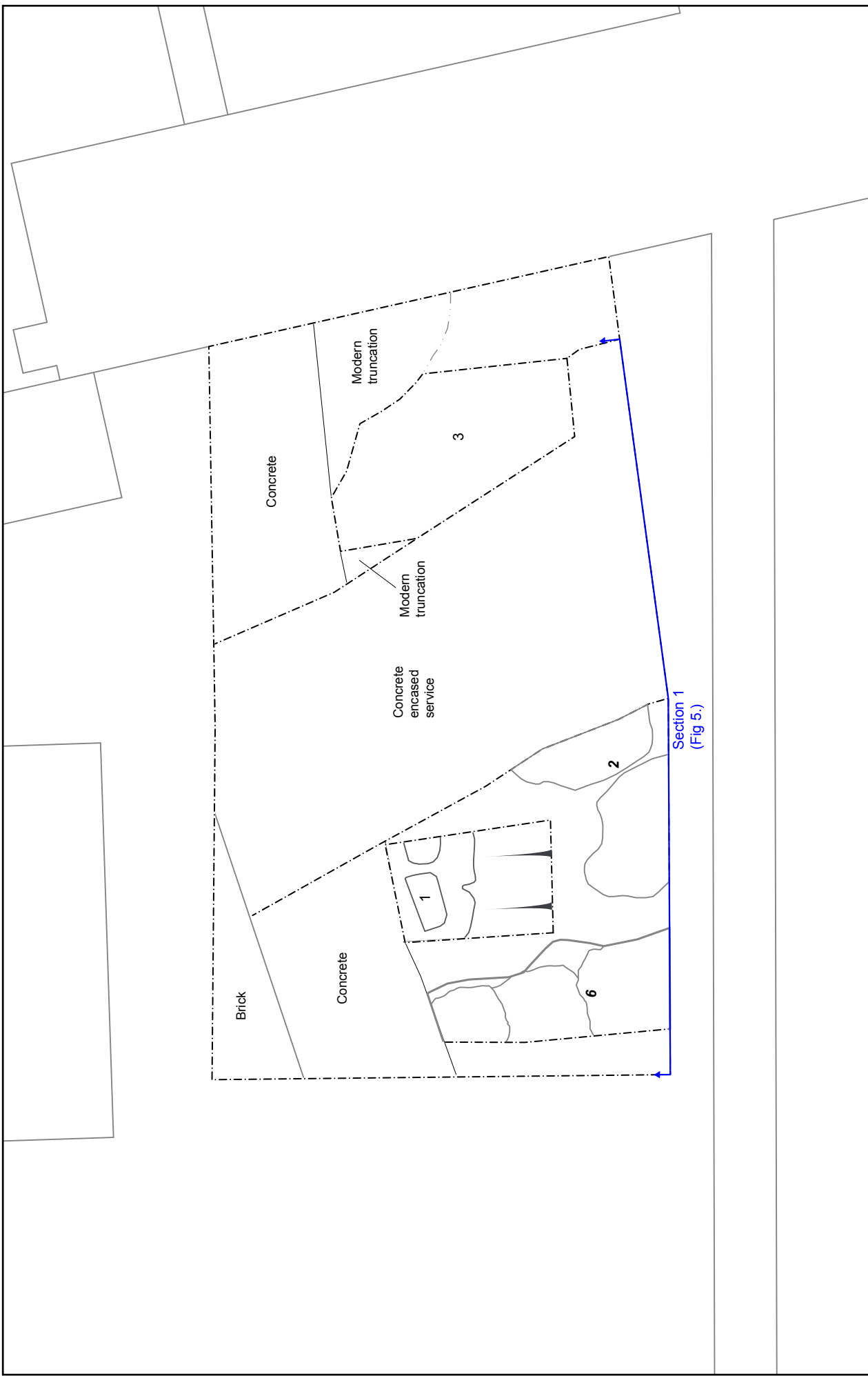


Figure 3: Trench 1 plan



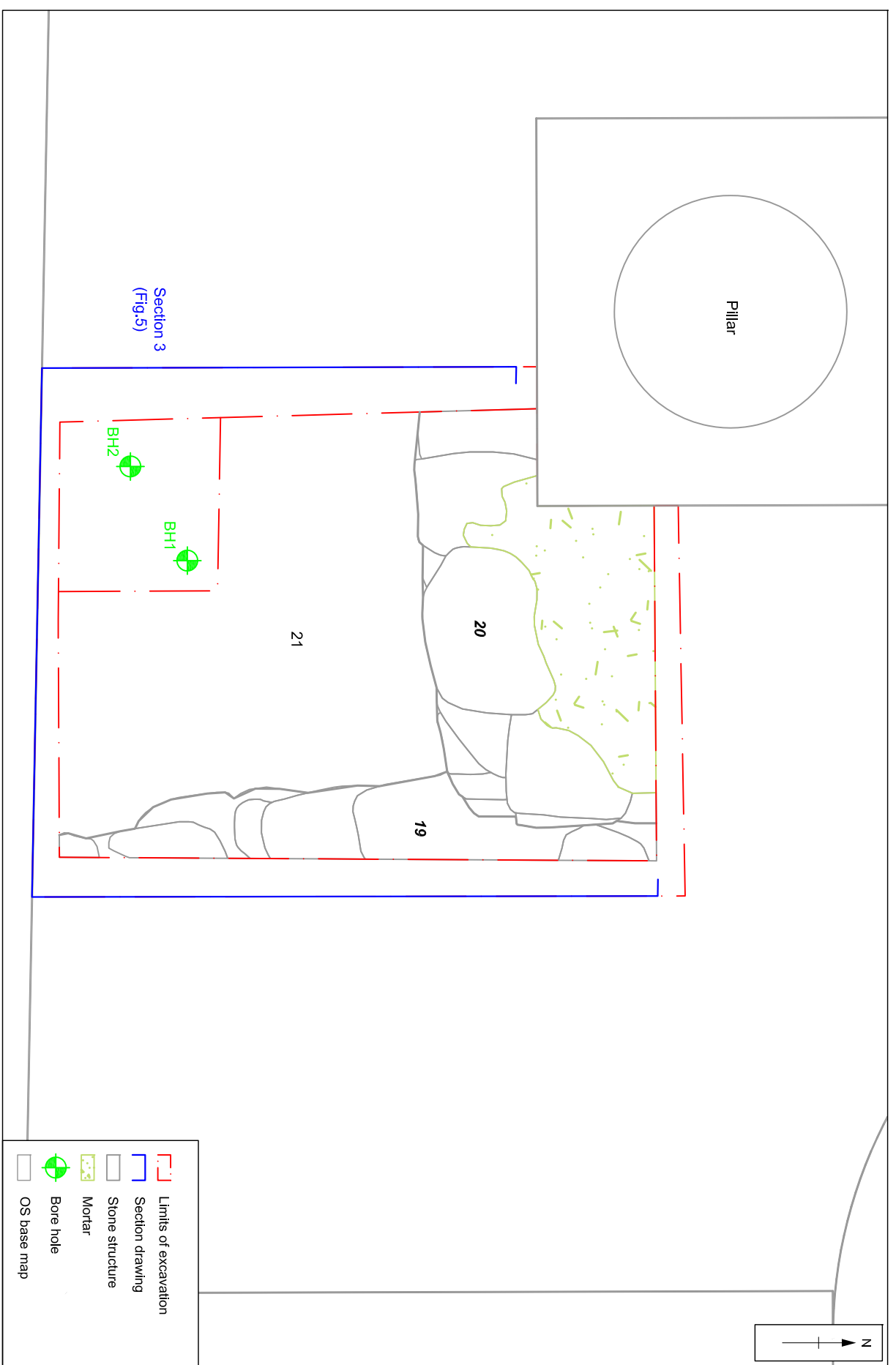
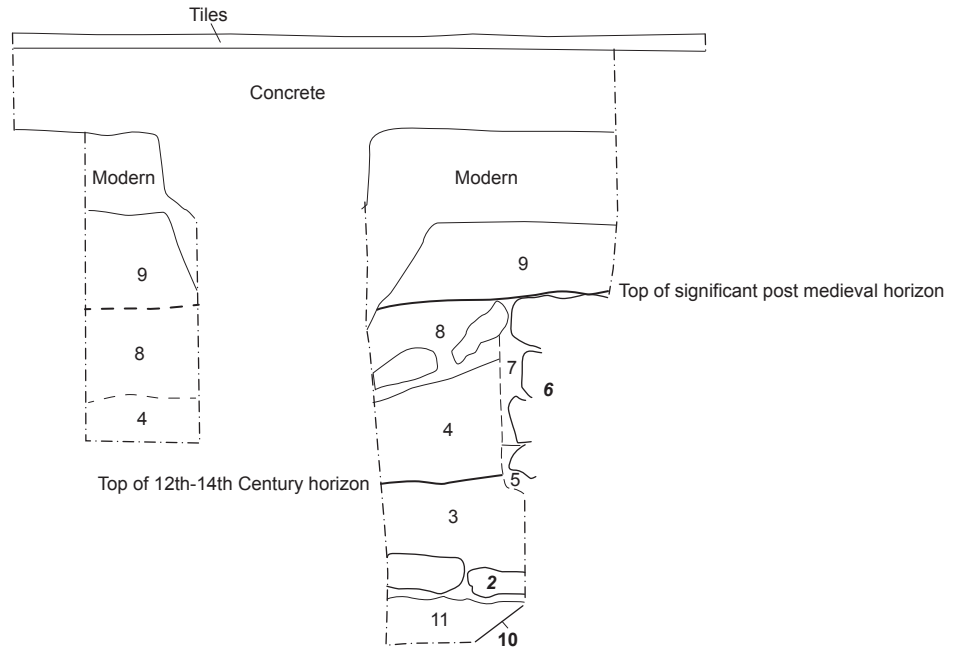


Figure 4: Trench 2 plan

CHECKED BY: HK\*30/03/15



### Trench 1 Section 1



### Trench 2 Section 2

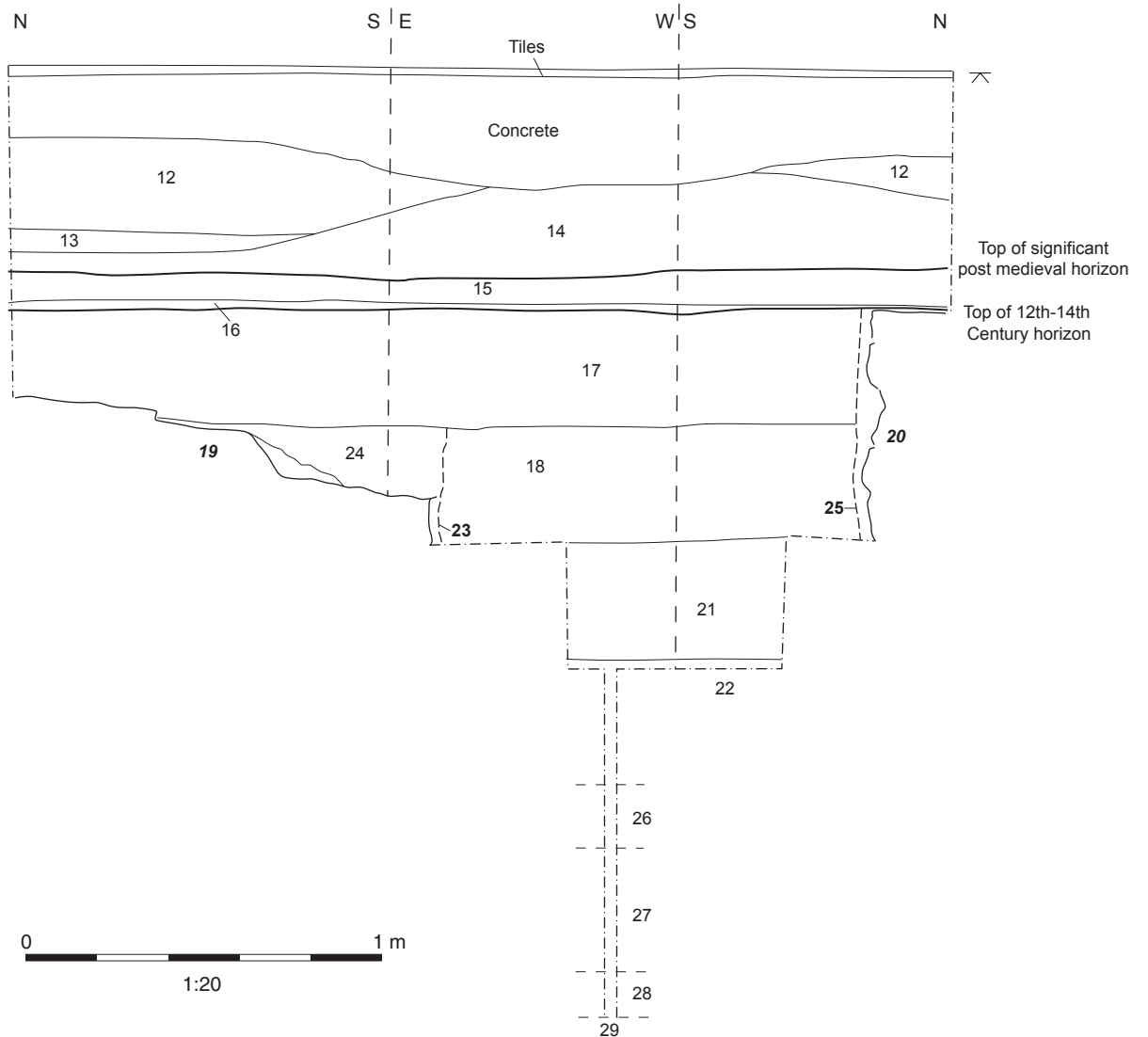


Figure 5: Trenches 1 and 2 sections 1 and 3



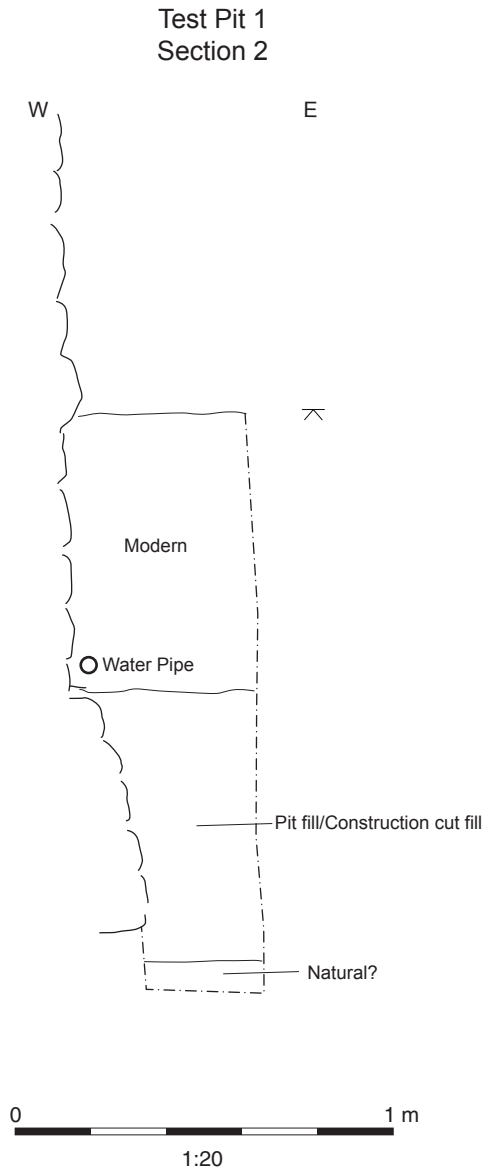


Figure 6:









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