

Eton College
Courtyard
Resurfacing Works
Windsor
Berkshire



**Archaeological
Watching Brief Report**

oxfordarchaeology



southsouthsouth

December 2015

**Client: Martin Ashley Architects/
Eton College**


Issue No: 1

OA Job No: 6260

NGR: SU 96701 77909



Client Name: Martin Ashley Architects / Eton College
Client Ref No: -
Document Title: Eton College Courtyard Resurfacing Works, Windsor, Berkshire
Document Type: Archaeological Watching Brief Report
Issue/Version Number: 1
Grid Reference: NGR SU 96701 77909
Planning Reference: -
Invoice Code: ETONSYWB
OA Job Number: 6260
Site Code: ETONSY15
Receiving Museum: -
Museum Accession No.: -
Event No.: -

Issue	Prepared by	Checked by	Approved by	Signature
1	Carl Champness Senior Project Manager	Gerry Thacker Senior Project Manager	Carl Champness Senior Project Manager	

Document File Location: X:\e\Eton College
Graphics File Location: \\Server1\invoice codes \e_codes\ETONSYWB
Illustrated by: Matt Bradley

Disclaimer:

This document has been prepared for the titled project or named part thereof and should not be relied upon or used for any other project without an independent check being carried out as to its suitability and prior written authority of Oxford Archaeology being obtained. Oxford Archaeology accepts no responsibility or liability for the consequences of this document being used for a purpose other than the purposes for which it was commissioned. Any person/party using or relying on the document for such other purposes agrees, and will by such use or reliance be taken to confirm their agreement to indemnify Oxford Archaeology for all loss or damage resulting therefrom. Oxford Archaeology accepts no responsibility or liability for this document to any party other than the person/party by whom it was commissioned.

© Oxford Archaeology Ltd 2015

Janus House
Osney Mead
Oxford OX2 0ES
t: +44 (0) 1865 263800 e: info@oxfordarch.co.uk
f: +44 (0) 1865 793496 w: oxfordarchaeology.com
Oxford Archaeology Limited is a Registered Charity No: 285627

Table of Contents

1 Introduction	1
1.1 Scope of work.....	1
1.2 Location, geology and topography.....	1
1.3 Archaeological and historical background.....	2
1.4 Potential.....	2
2 Project Aims and Methodology	2
2.1 Aims.....	2
2.2 Methodology.....	3
3 Results	3
3.1 Description of deposits.....	3
3.2 Finds summary.....	3
3.3 Environmental summary.....	3
4 Discussion	3
5 References	4
Appendix A. Summary of Site Details	5

List of Figures

Fig. 1 Site location

Fig. 2 Location of Trial Areas

List of Plates

Plate 1: Eton College Courtyard and Lupton's Tower

Plate 2: Eton College Chapel

Plate 3: Hand excavation of the cobbles within Trial Area B

Plate 4: Trial hole with the cobbled surface removed in Trial Area B

Plate 5: Insertion of one of the new stone designs in Trial Area B

Plate 6: Trial Area A pre-excavation

Plate 7: Excavated surface Trial Area B

Plate 8: Excavated surface Trial Area C

Plate 9: Excavated surface of Trial Area D

Plate 10: Revealed foundations of the College Chapel

Eton College Courtyard Resurfacing Works, Windsor, Berkshire

Archaeological Watching Brief Report

Summary

In August 2015 Oxford Archaeology undertook an archaeological watching brief for Martin Ashley Architects on behalf of Eton College, Windsor during resurfacing works of the main courtyard.

The work was found not to have impacted beyond the sandy foundations of the modern cobbled surface, leaving buried deposits unaffected. The only archaeological feature identified was the red brick foundations of the Grade I listed Eton College Chapel. These foundations were only revealed to the first brick course and following recording, were left undisturbed and reburied.

Based on the results of the trials holes and their recorded impacts, the main phase of resurfacing of the courtyard is unlikely to impact upon archaeological deposits.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Scope of work

- 1.1.1 Oxford Archaeology (OA), was commissioned by Martin Ashley Architects on behalf of Eton College, Windsor to undertake a planning archaeological watching brief during resurfacing works associated with the replacement of the historic school courtyard.
- 1.1.2 The work was undertaken as part of an application to replace the existing cobble surface that is currently in poor condition. Four trial areas were excavate during the temporarily insertion of new cobbles/set more appropriate, in traditional construction as well as in scale and colour, to the setting of the Grade I listed building of the school and chapel.
- 1.1.3 All works were carried out under an archaeological watching brief. Once an appropriate finish is chosen through the trial process, a second stage application for the replacement of the finishes between the paths, will be submitted giving final recommendations and findings from the first stage of trial works.
- 1.1.4 All work was undertaken in accordance with local and national planning policies.

1.2 Location, geology and topography

- 1.2.1 The area of proposed development is located at Eton School, Windsor, Maidenhead NGR SU 96701 77909 (Figure 1). The courtyard is made up of an area of cobbled surfaces located between the stone paths that make up the historical courtyard of the school (Plate 1). The courtyard is surrounded by the historical school and college chapel (Plate 2).



- 1.2.2 The underlying geology of the site is mapped by the British Geological Association as Seaford Chalk bedrock (BGS website 1:25,000). The bedrock is overlain by sandy gravels of the Shepperton Member, superficial deposits formed up to 2 million years ago in the Quaternary Period.

1.3 Archaeological and historical background

- 1.3.1 The archaeological and historical background to the site was previously outlined in the Heritage Statement (2015) and is only briefly summarised below:

1.4 Potential

- 1.4.1 Eton College was founded by King Henry VI in 1440, and modelled on Winchester College, as a charity school to provide free education to poor boys. The boys would then have gone on to attend King's College, Cambridge which was founded one year later. One of Henry's intentions was to create a spectacular building. The College Chapel for example was to have the longest nave in Europe. But when King Edward IV deposed of him in 1461, all grants to the school stopped and most of its treasure and assets were confiscated. The construction of the chapel was stopped and it is therefore less than half of its intended size, which was originally intended to extend across the main road through Eton.
- 1.4.2 As the school was still under construction, its completion depended on wealthy benefactors, and building work resumed in 1517 under Roger Lupton. The gate house at the west range of the cloisters carries his name. In 1670 Provost Allestree closed the western side of the school yard, between Lower School and Chapel (remodelled and completed in 1694 by Matthew Bankes). The College Library was the last significant addition to the south range of the cloister from 1725-1729 by Thomas Rowland.
- 1.4.3 In 1844 John Shaw Jr, the surveyor of Eton, designed New Buildings. Tablets in the cloister and Chapel commemorate the dead Etonians of WWI. During WWII, part of Upper School was destroyed together with many windows of the Chapel, the latter were replaced mainly during the 1950's.
- 1.4.4 The current courtyard surface finish was installed in 1990 with Purbeck stone paths spanning diagonally across paved flint areas, framed with rived washed cobbles along the paths.

2 PROJECT AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

2.1 Aims

- 2.1.1 The general aims and objectives of the watching brief were:
- To determine the location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any archaeological remains within the Site;
 - To assess vulnerability/sensitivity of any exposed archaeological remains;
 - To determine the potential of the site to provide palaeoenvironmental and/or economic evidence;
 - To provide sufficient information on the archaeological potential of the site to enable the archaeological implications of any proposed developments to be assessed;
 - To disseminate the results through the production of a site archive for deposition with an appropriate museum and to provide information for accession to the Berkshire HER.



2.1.2 Site specific research questions:

- Identify any archaeological remains or artefacts that may be revealed underneath the cobbled surfaces;
- Identify any further evidence that might help shed additional light on the history and development of the college;
- Identify any pre-college deposits or remains;

2.2 Methodology

2.2.1 This work involved the removal and replacement of small areas of the existing cobbled courtyard surface within four trial areas (Figure 2). The surface was removed by hand under archaeological supervision (Plate 3). The underlying deposits were examined and recorded before the new surfaces were installed (Plates 4 and 5).

2.2.2 Excavation and recording was undertaken in line with the IFA current Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs (IFA 1994), and the procedures outlined in the WSI (OA 2015).

3 RESULTS

3.1 Description of deposits

3.1.1 The four trial areas were monitored during and after the removal of the existing cobbled surface. No archaeological horizons were identified and no finds were recovered during the course of the works.

Areas A, B and C (Plates 6, 7 and 8)

3.1.2 Excavation of the three trial areas ceased at the sandy foundations of the modern cobbled surface. No earlier features or deposits were identified at the base of the cobbles.

Area D (Plates 9 and 10)

3.1.3 The one trial-pit with higher potential was located adjacent to the chapel, and revealed a red brick based foundations to the college chapel. This was only revealed to the first brick course that were cleaned and recorded. Once the sequence was recorded it was left undisturbed and reburied.

3.2 Finds summary

3.2.1 No finds were recovered during the course of the watching brief.

3.3 Environmental summary

3.3.1 No deposits suitable for environmental sampling was uncovered during the watching brief.

4 DISCUSSION

4.1.1 No significant archaeological features were revealed during the course of the watching brief of the trial areas. The majority of these excavations only revealed the sandy foundations of the existing cobbled surface, and therefore did not impact upon any undisturbed ground.

4.1.2 The only archaeological feature identified was the red brick foundations of the Grade I listed College Chapel. These foundations were only revealed to the first brick course



and were not disturbed by these works. Following recording the foundations were reburied.

- 4.1.3 Based on the results of the trials holes and their recorded impact, the main phase of resurfacing of the courtyard is unlikely to impact upon archaeological deposits.

5 REFERENCES

Brief Heritage Statement. Local Borough Council Application for Access Improvements to Eton College, Windsor. Martin Ashley Architects.

English Heritage 2006 The Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment: The *MoRPHE* Project Managers' Guide.

IFA, 1994 rev. 2008 Standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief, Institute for Archaeologists, Reading

Oxford Archaeology 2015 Written Scheme of Investigation for Archaeological Watching Brief. Eton College, Windsor, Berkshire.



APPENDIX A. SUMMARY OF SITE DETAILS

Site name: Eton College Courtyard Resurfacing Works, Windsor, Berkshire

Site code: ETONSY15

Grid reference: NGR SU 96701 77909

Type of watching brief: Intermittent

Date of project: 01/08/15

Summary of results: *In August 2015 Oxford Archaeology undertook an archaeological watching brief for Martin Ashley Architects on behalf of Eton College, Windsor during resurfacing works of the main courtyard.*

The work was found not to have impacted beyond the sandy foundations of the modern cobbled surface, leaving buried deposits unaffected. The only archaeological feature identified was the red brick foundations of the Grade I listed Eton College Chapel. These foundations were only revealed to the first brick course and following recording were left undisturbed and buried by the new surface.

Based on the results of the trial holes and their recorded impacts, the main phase of resurfacing of the courtyard is unlikely to have any impact upon archaeological deposits.

Location of archive: The archive is currently held at Janus House and will be made available on the ADS and OA grey literature library in due course under accession number ETONSY15



X:\Eton College Courtyard WB\010Geomatics\03 GIS Projects\Eton Courtyard_figure_1_021215.mxd\matt.bradley\02/12/2015

Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2014
 Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS, AEX, Getmapping, Aerogrid, IGN, IGP, swisstopo, and the GIS User

Figure 1: Site location

VERY GALLERY

LOWER SCHOOLS

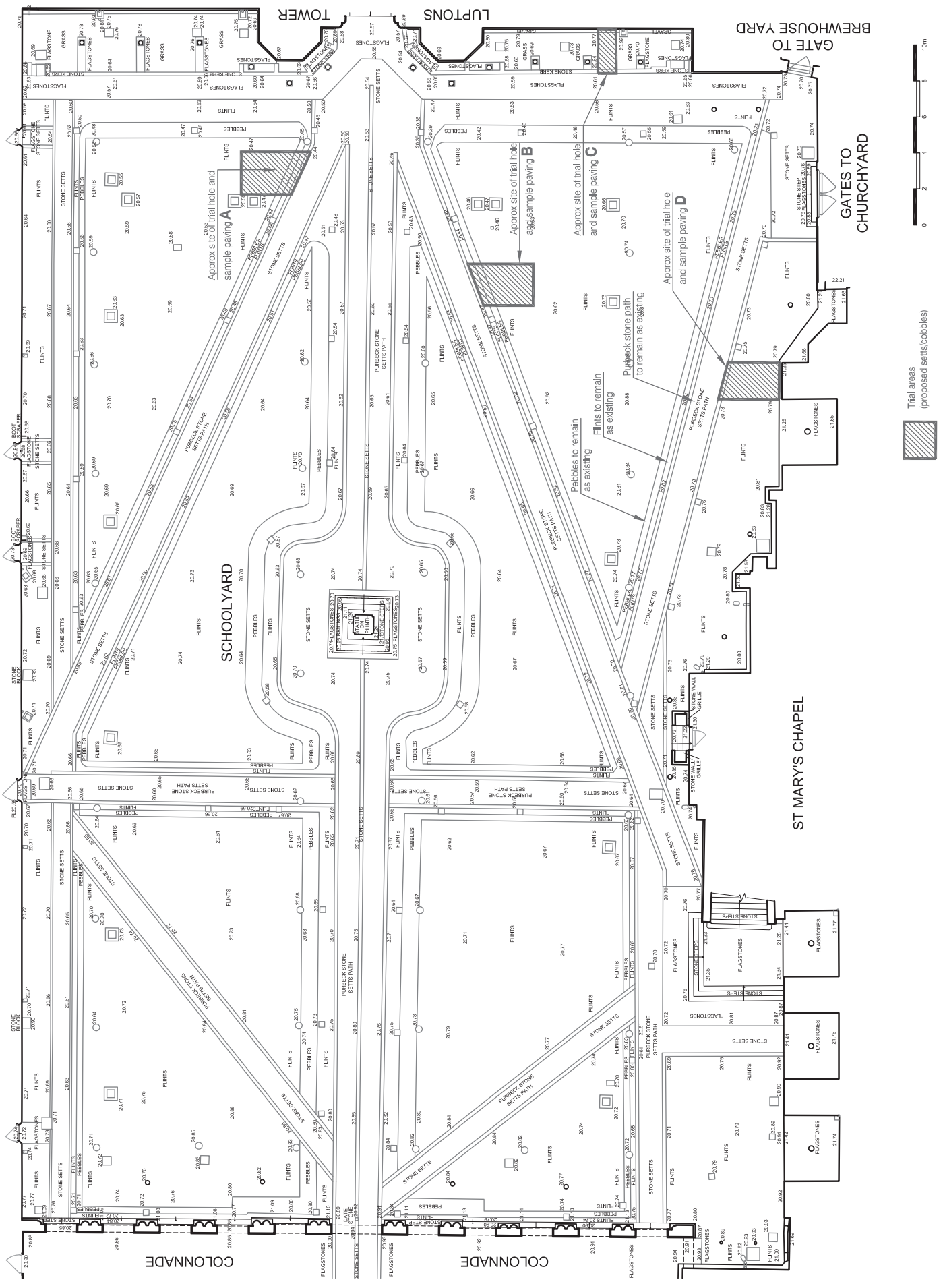


Figure 2: Location of Trial Areas

Plates



Plate 1: Eton College Courtyard and Lupton's Tower



Plate 2: Eton College Chapel



Plate 3: Hand excavation of the cobbles within Trial Area B



Plate 4: Trial hole with the cobble surface removed in Trial Area B



Plate 5: Insertion of one of the new stone designs in Trial Area B



Plate 6: Trial Area A pre-excavation



Plate 7: Excavated surface Trial Area B



Plate 8: Excavated surface Trial Area C



Plate 9: Excavated surface of Trial Area D



Plate 10: Revealed foundations of the College Chapel



**Head Office/Registered Office/
OA South**

Janus House
Osney Mead
Oxford OX2 0ES

t: +44 (0) 1865 263 800
f: +44 (0) 1865 793 496
e: info@oxfordarchaeology.com
w: <http://oxfordarchaeology.com>

OA North

Mill 3
Moor Lane
Lancaster LA1 1GF

t: +44 (0) 1524 541 000
f: +44 (0) 1524 848 606
e: [oanorth@oxfordarchaeology.com](mailto: oanorth@oxfordarchaeology.com)
w: <http://oxfordarchaeology.com>

OA East

15 Trafalgar Way
Bar Hill
Cambridgeshire
CB23 8SQ

t: +44 (0) 1223 850500
e: [oaeast@oxfordarchaeology.com](mailto: oaeast@oxfordarchaeology.com)
w: <http://oxfordarchaeology.com>



Director: Gill Hey, BA PhD FSA MIFA
*Oxford Archaeology Ltd is a
Private Limited Company, N^o: 1618597
and a Registered Charity, N^o: 285627*