

Camden Crescent Viaduct

Bath

Bath and North
East Somerset

Historic Building Recording



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Prepared by: Jonathan Gill
Position: Project Officer
Date: 14 December 2006

Checked by: Julian Munby
Position: Head of Buildings Archaeology
Date: 14 December 2006

Approved by: Julian Munby Signed

Position: Head of Buildings Archaeology
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Oxford Archaeology

Janus House
Osney Mead
Oxford OX2 0ES
t: (0044) 1865 263800
f: (0044) 1865 793496

e: info@oxfordarch.co.uk
w: www.oxfordarch.co.uk

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Camden Crescent Viaduct, Bath

HISTORIC BUILDING RECORDING AND INVESTIGATION

SUMMARY

Oxford Archaeology have undertaken a programme of historic building recording and investigation into a viaduct which supports the road immediately in front of Camden Crescent in Bath. The works have been undertaken in advance of a limited programme of structural works and refurbishment.

Although Camden Crescent is a magnificent Grade I listed monument which adds to Bath's architectural heritage only two thirds of the original composition was completed. A series of landslides during construction in the late 1780s halted work on the northern third of the crescent and eventually resulted in this section being pulled down due to the lack of a solid foundation. The viaduct, which raises the level of the road above the steep slope of Beacon Hill on which the crescent is built, shows much evidence of the instability of the ground and it has clearly had many phases of patching, propping and substantial reconstruction.

Construction on Camden Crescent started in c.1788 but as referred to above major problems were encountered with establishing a firm foundation and it may be that both the building and the viaduct supporting the road immediately in front were not completed for several years. A view dated 1794 shows the completed crescent and although this was presumably a 'proposed' or 'as intended' view rather than 'as built' it is useful as it clearly shows a viaduct (with 11-arches) as part of the original scheme. Both this view, and another from 1845, show the original viaduct with stone voussoirs rather than the brick vaults now in-situ.

A plan of 1852-4 shows a road at the front of Camden Crescent but with a different alignment to that which survives today narrowing from c.10 m wide in its northern half to less than 3 m wide at its southern end. The 1st edition Ordnance Survey map of 1886 suggests that a major reconstruction occurred between these two maps which included a realignment of the southern part of the road. The road layout shown on the 1852-4 map would suggest that the entire southern half of the road was realigned between the 1850s and the 1880s but evidence suggests that the road shown on the 1852-4 map was somewhat schematic. On the map the road is shown with an irregular width quite different to that shown on each of the views and although it probably did narrow towards the southern end it is unlikely to have followed the exact line on the map.

The non-intrusive 'archaeological' investigation also suggests this interpretation. The southern end (beyond the arched vaults) has clearly been reconstructed and is of a later date than the adjacent facing wall of the viaduct. The rest of the road probably follows its original layout although most of the vaults have been reconstructed in later 19th or 20th-century brick. These vaults rest on older stone sleeper walls which probably survive from the original viaduct. Several vaults in the northern half retain more substantial original elements including partially surviving stone vaults (behind the later brick portals).

The viaduct also shows much evidence of later patching to the arch portals as well as one of the vaults reconstructed in in-situ poured concrete.

Camden Crescent Viaduct, Bath

HISTORIC BUILDING RECORDING AND INVESTIGATION

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

1.1.1 Oxford Archaeology have been commissioned by Bath & North East Somerset Council (Transportation and Highways) to undertake a programme of historic building recording and investigation on the viaduct which supports the road in front of Camden Crescent in Bath. The work relates to a programme of works to the viaduct and it will form part of an application for listed building consent for the works.

1.1.2 The proposed construction works will comprise:

- strengthening the existing arch (No.13)
- repairing the existing buttress at the northern end of the viaduct
- repairing the stonework to the spandrel wall and parapet plinths
- Repairing the brickwork to the barrel vaults
- refurbishment of the cast iron parapet railings
- removing vegetation from the structure

1.1.3 It is anticipated that the works will start early 2007 and it may be that further recording works will be undertaken at this stage during the works.

1.2 Aims and objectives

1.2.1 The principal aim of the work was to create an archive record of the structure prior to the works. The work concentrated on the structure's construction, history, character, alteration and use.

1.2.2 The second main aim was to deposit the results of the recording and the investigation in a publicly accessible archive

1.3 Methodology

1.3.1 The work was undertaken broadly to English Heritage Level II (as defined in *Understanding Historic Buildings: A Guide to Good Recording Practice* English Heritage 2006).

1.3.2 The work comprised three principal elements: a photographic survey, a drawn survey and a written, descriptive survey. The **photographic survey** was undertaken using 35 mm film (black and white prints and colour slides) and comprised general shots and specific details. A digital camera was also used. The **drawn survey** was

based on an existing metric survey of the structure provided by Bath and North East Somerset Council and it comprised adding annotation to the elevation and plan of the viaduct. The *written survey* complemented the other two surveys and provided an analysis and description of the viaduct. A programme of documentary research was also undertaken to provide further historical context and understanding of the structure.

2 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 The main historical research was undertaken at the Bath Record Office although further study was made at the Bodleian Library, Oxford and in the OA library. The Building of Bath Museum was also consulted. There is little historical or documentary material about the viaduct in particular but there is a significant amount of information about the construction and the buildings of Camden Crescent itself. Clearly information on the crescent is relevant to the understanding of the viaduct so this historical background concentrates largely on the buildings and the street.

2.2 The Georgian development of Bath

2.2.1 Camden Crescent (formerly known as Camden Place) is one of Bath's many famous streets and at least an outline of its history is already well known. A short summary of the development of Bath, particularly in the Georgian period, would be useful however to place the original construction of Crescent in its historical context.

2.2.2 Walter Ison, in his definitive book on Georgian Bath, described Bath at the end of the 17th century as an 'insignificant city, with little to recommend it beyond the medicinal springs and a charming situation'. It was a walled medieval city, which incorporated the substantial remains of the important Roman town, and was dominated by a 16th-century abbey. There were few buildings outside the city walls but by the end of the 18th century the city had been dramatically transformed with a series of elegant developments, mainly to the north, which expanded Bath way beyond its Roman and medieval origins. This growth was due to Bath becoming the destination of choice for fashionable and wealthy pleasure seekers in Georgian England. The city's key attractions appear to have been the 'medicinal springs', the 'charming situation' and most importantly the widespread gambling which was encouraged by the authorities (particularly Master of Ceremonies, Beau Nash).

2.2.3 The physical transformation of the city in the Georgian period relied heavily on several important, well known architects such as John Wood, and John Wood II but another figure of great importance is Ralph Allen, who developed the local Combe Down stone mine from 1727 from which came the Bath stone used to construct the city's new developments.

2.2.4 John Wood designed several early schemes such as Queen Square (1728-34) and the Parades but his most famous work was the Circus (1754-58) which forms part of the

monumental Upper Town. Construction on the circus began in 1754, the year in which Wood died, and the project was completed by his son, also called John Wood. John Wood II extended the streets linking with the circus and added the Royal Crescent (1767-74) which is regarded as Bath's finest building.

2.3 John Eveleigh

2.3.1 As well as the Woods there were several other lesser, but still notable architects who contributed to the development of Bath including John Palmer, Thomas Baldwin and John Eveleigh who designed Camden Crescent. Eveleigh began working in Bath in the 1780s and the work of his practice appears to have been particularly varied. He was an architect, a builder, supplier of architectural ornaments as well as a designer who advised other builders or speculators on matters such as the finishes within their buildings. Although his practice appears to have been busy Eveleigh was declared bankrupt in Bath in 1793. He then attempted to resume practising in Plymouth in 1800 but he appears to have little success. In summarising the work of Eveleigh Walter Ison states that *'...he used a curiously personal idiom, successfully fusing elements drawn from Baroque and Adam sources. Although they undoubtedly possess many features which might offend the purist, his designs for Grosvenor and Somerset Place have a vigorous and original quality which lifts them far above the general level achieved by pattern-book architects'*.

2.4 Camden Crescent

2.4.1 Camden Crescent forms part of the relatively late expansion of Georgian Bath to the north of the Circus and the Royal Crescent and architecturally it follows their lead. It was constructed from c.1788 and although it has variously been attributed to Chambers, his pupil Willey Reveley and John Wood II it is now accepted to have been designed by John Eveleigh. This attribution is partly based on architectural details but also on entries in a ledger against John Morgan, a builder and carpenter working on Camden Crescent (Ison, 1948). The Crescent is set on the steep south-east slope of Beacon Hill and would originally have overlooked the main approach into the city from London.

2.4.2 Eveleigh's original conception was of a great 22-house crescent with straight wings at either end and a further lower terrace in the form of a tangent beneath the main crescent. The crescent was to be called 'Upper Camden Crescent' and the lower terrace 'Lower Camden Crescent'. However a series of landslips during construction revealed that although the lower (south-western) half was set on solid rock the north-eastern half was not. The sections set on rock were completed but the other partially built sections were eventually pulled down thus leaving an 18-house crescent and an off-centre pediment. The lower terrace also appears never to have been completed although later structures were built on a similar footprint. The pavilion at the very north-eastern end is reported to have survived for many years, set on rock but detached from the rest of the crescent by the landslip (Ison).

- 2.4.3 The earliest map showing Camden Crescent dates to 1800 (Fig.2) and the main interest of this map is that despite the fact that it is known that Camden Crescent was never completed the map shows the entire composition of the crescent and wings (*Upper Camden Place*) and the lower, straight tangential terrace (*Lower Camden Place*). This might simply have been a cartographic simplification showing what was meant to have been constructed (and what they possibly still intended to construct) or it could be that they had not yet pulled down the half built north-eastern half and lower terrace.
- 2.4.4 The next map dates to 1810 and this clearly shows Camden Crescent in its truncated, modern form with only the south-western two-thirds as a standing building and the rest in outline suggesting that only partial remains of this survived. Similarly only an outline of lower Camden Place is shown apparently confirming that although some remains survived there were no standing buildings in this location.
- 2.4.5 Although there are two further maps which show Camden Crescent dated 1816 and 1845 these are clearly amended versions of the 1810 map and neither show any differences to Camden Place. The next significant new map dates to 1852-4 and this is much more detailed showing individual numbered houses, gardens, small extensions to houses, sewer pipes, retaining walls and what is assumed to be an accurate representation of the road layout in the area at this time (Fig. 4).
- 2.4.6 It is particularly useful to compare the 1852-4 map with the next map which is the 1:500 Ordnance Survey town plan of 1886 (Fig.5). This has a similar level of detail to the 1852-4 map but it shows a number of significant differences which suggests that substantial works, relevant to our study were undertaken between the 1850s and the 1880s. The clearest difference is the fact that the road in-front of Camden Crescent is shown with an irregular width on the earlier plan, varying from less than 3 m wide at the south-west end to c.10 m wide towards the middle, whereas on the 1886 plan it is shown with a much more regular form c.10 m wide for its full length.
- 2.4.7 The main difference in layout is to the southern half of the crescent where the street was clearly significantly re-aligned and therefore reconstructed between the two maps. The northern half of the street is shown with a broadly similar layout in the two maps but the curve is more regular on the later plan. The earlier map shows that there was a pavement (shaded blue) to either side of the road and it shows a striped linear feature along a similar line as the current south-eastern 'open' face of the viaduct. When the two maps are overlain it is clear that this striped feature 'cuts across' the modern line of the street in this area.
- 2.4.8 However the irregular layout shown on the 1850s plan is quite different to the gracefully curved road shown on several views from the first half of the 19th century and it may be that the map is a simplified or schematic representation merely intended to show the rough layout of the road for the purposes of identifying the sewer set within it. The plan clearly shows the southern end of the road as

considerably narrower than the northern half so it probably did narrow but not with the long taper shown. The whole junction between the southern end of Camden Crescent and the lower, adjoining road (*Hedgemoad*) which originally led to Lower Camden Place was realigned between these maps. On the 1886 map (as now) there is a clear retaining wall which stretches partly down the hill towards the north-east and which continues south-west well beyond the end of Camden Crescent.

- 2.4.9 Both maps show that by the mid 19th century any possibility of completing the originally intended form of Camden Crescent had been totally lost as several other housing developments had by 1850s been constructed immediately to the north-east of the crescent. It is also interesting to note that both maps show a terrace of houses along the broad footprint of the original Lower Camden Crescent. The OS map shows that by 1886 the houses at the south-western end of this row had been demolished and that this terrace was called Crescent View. As the 1810 map shows no buildings at this location the structures shown on the 1886 map were presumably new constructions, possibly built on the foundations of the original Georgian terrace. There is known to have been a landslide in 1889 which demolished these buildings and Hedgemoad Park was subsequently laid out.
- 2.4.10 Another valuable source of information regarding the historic form of Camden Crescent and its viaduct are several views contained in *Images of Bath* by James Lees-Milne and David Ford which illustrate the structure from its original construction in the late 18th century to the mid 19th century (see Fig 6). Some of these views are purely of Camden Crescent while others are general views of Bath in which Camden Crescent is only partly visible in the distance. The earliest views are three which date to 1794 including one which shows a completed Camden Crescent (labelled *Camden Place*) and with a prominent 11-arch viaduct supporting the road in front. Presumably this was a view of the crescent 'as intended' as other sources have stated that the structure was never completed. We therefore cannot assume that there was a viaduct fully constructed by 1794 but this confirms that a viaduct was part of the original scheme (rather than merely a retaining wall). The view also appears to show the arch portals as being constructed with stone voussoirs rather than brick.
- 2.4.11 One of the other 1794 views is more distant and therefore does not add further information while the other is from some way down the slope in front of the crescent and does not show the viaduct. The next view is from c.1800 and this shows the Crescent in its truncated form. It also shows the road in front supported by arched vaults (only two of which are visible). The road and pavements appear much narrower than their modern form but this is likely to be due to artistic licence. A distant view of 1805 shows the crescent and 11 arches from the viaduct clearly visible beneath it. The view also shows the isolated northern pavilion of the crescent which, as described above, survived for many years on an isolated outcrop of rock.

- 2.4.12 A view of c.1845 also shows part of the viaduct and similarly to that of 1794 it also strongly suggests that the arches had stone voussoirs rather than the brick which survives today. There are also several other illustrations but these are mainly distant views which do not add new information regarding Camden Crescent.

3 DESCRIPTION

3.1 General description

3.1.1 The subject of the current study is a brick and stone viaduct which supports the road immediately in front of Camden Crescent. The crescent is set on the steep south-eastern slope of Beacon Hill and the viaduct is necessary to raise the level of the road to that of the houses. The viaduct comprises 13 segmental arched vaults which support the road and each one has a portal in the south-eastern face of the viaduct which opens into a heavily overgrown area which slopes steeply down to Upper Hedgemoor Road. There are iron railings along the south-eastern edge of the viaduct and a drop down to the ground surface which varies between c.2m at the ends to c.3 towards the centre.

3.1.2 The railings are set on a stone plinth and both of these are believed to survive (albeit with some replacements) from the original viaduct. Every 22nd railing is supported by an iron prop or buttress which rests on a stone corbel.

3.1.3 Very little of the visible fabric of the vaults appears to pre-date the mid 19th century and there is much evidence of patching, rebuilding and of the general instability of the site (detailed further below). In particular almost all the abutments in the facing wall (ie the area between each arch spring) have been rebuilt or refaced and relatively modern ceramic drainage pipes have been inserted into most of the arches.

3.2 Description of each individual vaults

3.2.1 **Vault 1** is at the north-eastern end of the viaduct and it comprises a 35 cm deep brick arch (3 headers deep) which rests on low stone sleeper walls. The vault is much narrower (c.1.4 m deep) than most of the other vaults and it is truncated by a roughly coursed stone wall without a doorway (as in some vaults) or other significant features. The bricks appear to be of probable later 19th or possibly early 20th century date. Immediately to the north-east of Vault 1 is a relatively modern (mid to later 20th century) stone buttress c.2 m wide which appears contemporary with a large amount of stone patching throughout the outer face of the viaduct.

3.2.2 **Vault 2** is deeper (c.2 m) than Vault 1 but again has a 3-brick arch (all vertical headers) of probable later 19th or early 20th-century date. The rear wall and the sleeper walls are both again of roughly coursed stone but the vault is narrower (4.3 m wide) than Vault 1 (5.3 m) which results in the sleeper walls being significantly taller to maintain a similar highest point to the arch. The west pier of Vault 2 has been reconstructed with mid to later 20th-century engineering bricks of a distinctly different character to the bricks in the vault.

- 3.2.3 **Vault 3** again comprises a brick arched vault but this has a shallower segmental profile to all the other arches and it is only two headers deep (24 cm). The bricks are older than those in the other arches but as detailed above the original viaduct is believed to have had stone voussoirs so the bricks are probably not primary and probably date from an earlier 19th-century reconstruction. The junction between Vaults 2 and 3 present a good example of the development of the viaduct and of its different phases of construction as at this point the (probably) earlier 19th-century arch of Vault 3 meets the (probably) later 19th-century arch of Vault 2 and they are both supported by the 20th-century, rebuilt pier. The rear wall of Vault 3 is of uncoursed stone and has a slightly different character to Vaults 1 and 2 but it is also of interest as it incorporates an opening towards its southern edge which leads to a small chamber and a low tunnel which extends north and then returns westwards. There is a very small opening in the rear (west) wall of the chamber and it is possible to see a small room with a later vaulted ceiling. This is marked on the 1st ed OS map, as well as the modern survey provided by B&NES council, as *site of St Swithen's well*. This awkward arrangement of tunnels and chambers presumably relates to the site of the well and is either designed to allow its preservation in-situ or to avoid it constructionally.
- 3.2.4 **Vault 4** is c.10.5 m long and is the northernmost vault to be open for the full width of the road. At the rear of the vault is a door opening which leads up to the cellar of one of the houses in Camden Crescent and the entire vault is clearly used as the private cellar of that house. A modern concrete slab has been laid within the vault and on this a garden shed has been constructed as well as a low concrete block wall at the eastern edge of the vault. It is unclear whether the space within this vault (along with all the other vaults) is publicly owned or whether it belongs to the house in Camden Crescent to which direct access is possible.
- 3.2.5 The main interest of Vault 4 is the fact that much of the arch is constructed of stone (roughly squared blocks) rather than brick in most of the other arches. The outer face of the arch, extending c.1.5 m into the vault, is of the same bricks (probably later 19th-century) as found widely throughout the viaduct but the stone vault almost certainly survives from the original viaduct (late 18th century). This supports documentary evidence which suggests that the whole of the original viaduct was probably of stone.
- 3.2.6 Very little of **Vault 5** is now visible due to a breeze block wall (painted black) having been constructed c.1m within the vault to form an enclosed cellar for the adjacent house within Camden Crescent. The wall, which has clearly been constructed in recent decades (1980s?) comprises two windows and a central door. Little of the arch is visible but from what can be seen it is at least partly stone built similarly to Vault 4. The face of the vault portal is of later 19th-century bricks (4 bricks, 47 cm deep) and towards the top of the vault this construction extends beyond the breeze block wall but towards the sleeper walls and arch springs there are surviving areas of older stonework.

- 3.2.7 **Vault 6** is at the northern end of a row of seven arched vaults, each of which extend for the full width of the road and each of which are publicly accessible. Vault 6 is entirely built with probable later 19th-century bricks (4 bricks deep c.46 cm) and which rest on an older stone sleeper walls. The west end of the vault is terminated by a stone wall (roughly coursed to uncoursed) and within this is are two openings. In the southern half is a door opening with a set of steps (c.10) directly behind which lead up to two basement rooms of the adjacent house in Camden Crescent. The steps and the flanking wall have been partly rebuilt in recent decades with concrete blocks and the basement rooms are in use. Immediately to the north of this doorway is a low stone segmental arch within the wall with splayed jambs immediately beneath. The arch is c.1.75 m long and c.50 cm high (at the arch springs) and although it was once infilled the face of this fill has now largely collapsed. This arch is directly beneath a cellar room and it is assumed that it was merely a relieving arch to add support beneath this room. The jambs presumably rest on deeper foundations and the slight inward splays would add strength by countering the spread of the arch. As detailed elsewhere subsidence was a significant problem on this site
- 3.2.8 **Vault 7** is similar to Arch 6 comprising a fully brick vault (probable later 19th century bricks, 4 deep) resting on a stone plinth and with an unmade dirt floor. The rear (west) wall is of rough stonework with a door opening around a set of steps which lead up to two cellar rooms which are in use. The western of the two raised rooms has a stone flag floor and a limewashed stone vault. Again similarly to Vault 6 there is a low segmental stone arch in the rear wall of the main vault which is believed to have been a relieving arch to support the floor of a cellared room above. Unlike in Vault 6 the infill directly beneath the arch remains in-situ.
- 3.2.9 **Vault 8** is again similar to Vaults 6 and 7 with a probable later 19th-century brick vault (4 deep) resting on stone sleeper walls. A large quantity of builders waste has been dumped within the vault together with blue plastic sheeting and this obscures some parts of the vault and limits access but it is possible to see that the rear stone wall again has a door opening with steps leading up to a cellar. However a modern floor has been constructed over this opening preventing access between the vault and raised basement area.
- 3.2.10 **Vault 9** again comprises a 4-brick vault which is believed to date to a substantial reconstruction of the viaduct probably in the later 19th century. It again rests on low stone side walls and the rear (west) wall is also of roughly coursed stone blocks. There is a door opening which leads to steps up to the basement immediately adjacent to the house but a locked later 20th-century galvanised metal gate prevents access to the steps. It is possible to see that the steps lead up to a main room immediately above and then a further room to the north. The rear wall again comprises a low segmental stone arch which supports the room above.
- 3.2.11 **Vault 10** also has a brick arch (probably later 19th century) on stone sleeper walls. The rear wall is again of roughly coursed stone with a doorway which formerly led to the basement of one of the houses in Camden Crescent but this has now been

blocked by a fixed wooden board. A secondary iron gate remains in-situ but there appears to be no evidence of an adjacent relieving arch.

- 3.2.12 **Vault 11** also comprises a brick segmental arch (4 brick) which rests on earlier stone sleeper walls. The end wall is of stone and has a former door which is now infilled with stone. A timber lintel remains in-situ.
- 3.2.13 **Vault 12** appear to have been substantially rebuilt in the mid to later 20th century as it comprises an in-situ poured concrete arch (shuttering marks visible) which rests on concrete raft foundations. The outermost 75 cm of the arch (including the portal) is of brick but unlike most of the arches to the north it is only three bricks deep (35 cm). The rear wall is of rough, uncoursed stone in which is a former doorway which is now infilled with concrete block. The rough, secondary timber frame from a former doorway is in-situ. Below the height of this door way are two relieving arches, which are formed with relatively high quality Bath stone although they are now blocked and in poor condition.
- 3.2.14 At its highest point **Vault 13** is 2.83 m above the external ground surface, 2.5 m above the floor within the vault and c.2.2 m above the arch springs. The arch comprises three courses of brick with headers facing the portal and stretchers to the underside of the vault. The brick vaults are a secondary addition and they rest on earlier stone sleeper walls. However, the stone walls had clearly sunk in areas prior to the addition of the brick vault in order to ensure that the vault was at the necessary height the lowest course of bricks (directly on the stone) has been cut in areas to achieve the right height and abuts the stone at a skewed angle. The bricks are 22 cm x 8 cm x 11 cm and probably date to the second half of the 19th century although they could be early 20th.
- 3.2.15 Vault 13 is significantly shallower than most of the other vaults (c.3 m deep) and is terminated by a roughly coursed stone wall with a former doorway at its centre blocked with stone. Together with the sleeper walls this wall has subsided so that the outline of the former arch is visible, particularly towards the northern side, slightly below the later brick arch. The rear wall and the brick arch were clearly never keyed in and there is a rough edge between them.
- 3.2.16 The section of wall immediately to the south-west of Vault 13 is constructed of non-coursed (roughly coursed in some areas) squared blocks which vary considerably in size from c.15 x 10 cm to c.50 x 30 cm. The face of many of the stones has crumbled away in patches and there is much evidence of patching with cement mortar. This section was not included in the metric survey provided by Bath & NE Somerset Council.
- 3.2.17 The *south-westernmost section* of the retaining wall has a distinctly different character to the section described immediately above, between it and Vault 13, and almost certainly dates to the realignment of the southern part of the road believed to have been undertaken between 1854 and 1886 (detailed above in historical background). This section of the wall is c.5 m long and it is constructed with

regular, coursed stone blocks which are squared but with the outer face non-dressed to give a rusticated appearance to the wall. The size of the stones range from c.30 x 50 cm to c.20 x 30 cm. The character of this section is the same as the very tall retaining wall which flanks the adjacent section of Upper Hedgemoor Road from its junction with Camden Crescent. Each wall has ornamental battlements to its top with dressed stone coping and jambs. The section flanking Camden Crescent also has iron railings between the battlements and at its north-eastern end this section has a taller pier which abuts the section immediately to the north-east.

4 CONCLUSION

- 4.1.1 Camden Crescent is a Grade I listed building and is therefore by definition of national architectural and historical importance. It was constructed at a time when Bath was at the peak of its Georgian popularity and the city was expanding well beyond its historic borders. Although it is a magnificent structure which adds to the unique townscape and character of Bath it has sometimes been criticised by architectural purists. For example Pevsner describes it as a 'fragmentary composition' and Walter Ison says that it has been 'overpraised' due to it sometimes being initially wrongly attributed to better known architects such as John Wood. Camden Crescent inevitably suffers due to it forming part of the same movement as (but following) the undisputed architectural masterpieces of Georgian Bath such as the Royal Crescent and the Circus. Ison describes the Royal Crescent as 'at once the finest building in Bath and the greatest single achievement in the whole field of our urban architecture' so almost any building would suffer comparison.
- 4.1.2 The clearest reason why Camden Crescent is open to criticism is that the original structure only forms two-thirds of the original composition. The northern third collapsed, apparently during construction, and was never completed. Historical research undertaken in the current study suggests that foundations from the whole structure remained intact into the early 19th century but that by 1805 the partially collapsed section had been fully demolished leaving the main crescent and an isolated pavilion at the northern end. Several views (including one from 1794) show a viaduct in front of the crescent supporting the road but they strongly suggest that the voussoirs of the original viaduct were of stone rather than the brick which now lines each portal.
- 4.1.3 A map of 1852-4 shows the Crescent with the same layout as today but the road immediately in front of it, which is supported by the viaduct which forms the main subject of the current study, shows considerable differences. In particular while the layout of the northern half of the road is shown as being broadly similar to that which survives today the southern half appears to have tapered in the 1850s and was considerably narrower than the road today. This is at odds with both physical evidence, which suggests that although the viaduct has been heavily reconstructed original elements survive along the whole structure, and documentary evidence which includes several views showing a regular curved road prior to the 1852-4 map.

- 4.1.4 The main reconstruction works undertaken to the viaduct include the replacement of most of the original vaults with brick vaults of probable later 19th or early 20th century date. Several of the vaults towards the northern end retain older elements which presumably survive from the original viaduct including partially surviving stone vaults. Stone sleeper walls which pre-date the brick vaults survive widely and this appears to confirm that the current footprint of the viaduct is substantially the same as the original. In addition, although the eastern face of the viaduct shows a great deal of clear patching works it does not appear to have been fully taken down and rebuilt at the same time as the brick arches.

Jonathan Gill
Oxford Archaeology
December 2006

APPENDIX I BIBLIOGRAPHY**Published Sources**

- Ison W *The Georgian Buildings of Bath from 1700 to 1830* (First published 1948, revised 1980)
- Jolly & Son The City of Bath (undated but poss 1950s) (Accession number PP330(ii) at Bath Record Office)
- Lees-Milne, J & Ford, D *Images of Bath* (1982)
- Pevsner N *The Buildings of England: North Somerset* (1958)

Unpublished Sources

'Acercrombie Plan'. Scrap book of black and white pictures taken of Bath entitled 'The Historical Growth of Bath' entitled 'Aerial View of the City'. No date is given (but probably about 1930/1940s as the other photos seem to be about this date). (Accession number – PX602 – photo number 146)

Individual photograph of bath entitled 'Camden Crescent'. No date is given but from dating features (car, clothes etc) likely to be c.1915-25. (Accession number – PX121)

Maps

A New and Correct Plan of the City of Bath by B Donne, 1810

Ordnance Survey map - Somerset Sheet XIV.1.24 Bath (1886) (surveyed in **1885**) 1:500 (41.66 feet to one inch)

OS Map - Somerset Sheet XIV.1.19 Bath (1886) (surveyed in **1885**) 1:500 (41.66 feet to one inch) *nb- continuation sheet from no.24*

A New and Accurate Plan of the City of Bath to the present Year (**1800**), published by A.Taylor and W.Meyler (1000 feet is 6.4 cm)

A New and Accurate Plan of the City of Bath to the present year (**1803**) published by J.Salvage and W.Meyler (1000 feet is 6.4 cm)

A New and Correct Plan of the City of Bath with the New Additional Buildings (c.**1775**) (220 yds is 5.7 cm)

A New and Correct Plan of the City of Bath from a recent Survey, published by and for H.Godwin, Bookseller (new edition **1816**) in corner states D.Wright sculp Richard Str. Islington (1 mile = 4.3 cm)

A New and Correct Plan of the City of Bath from a recent survey, published by and for C.Godwin, Bookseller (**1845**) (1 yard is 4.3 cm)

‘Surveyed by the order of the Town Council of the City of Bath in the years **1852, 1853, 1854** by Catterall and Spackman. (10 feet is 5.2 cm)

APPENDIX II SUMMARY OF SITE DETAILS

Site name: Camden Crescent Viaduct, Bath

Site code: BACCV06

Grid reference: ST749657

Type of evaluation: Historic building recording and investigation

Date and duration of project: Site work undertaken in October 2006

Location of archive: The archive is currently held at OA, Janus House, Osney Mead, Oxford, OX2 0ES. It will be deposited at an appropriate museum or other agreed body.

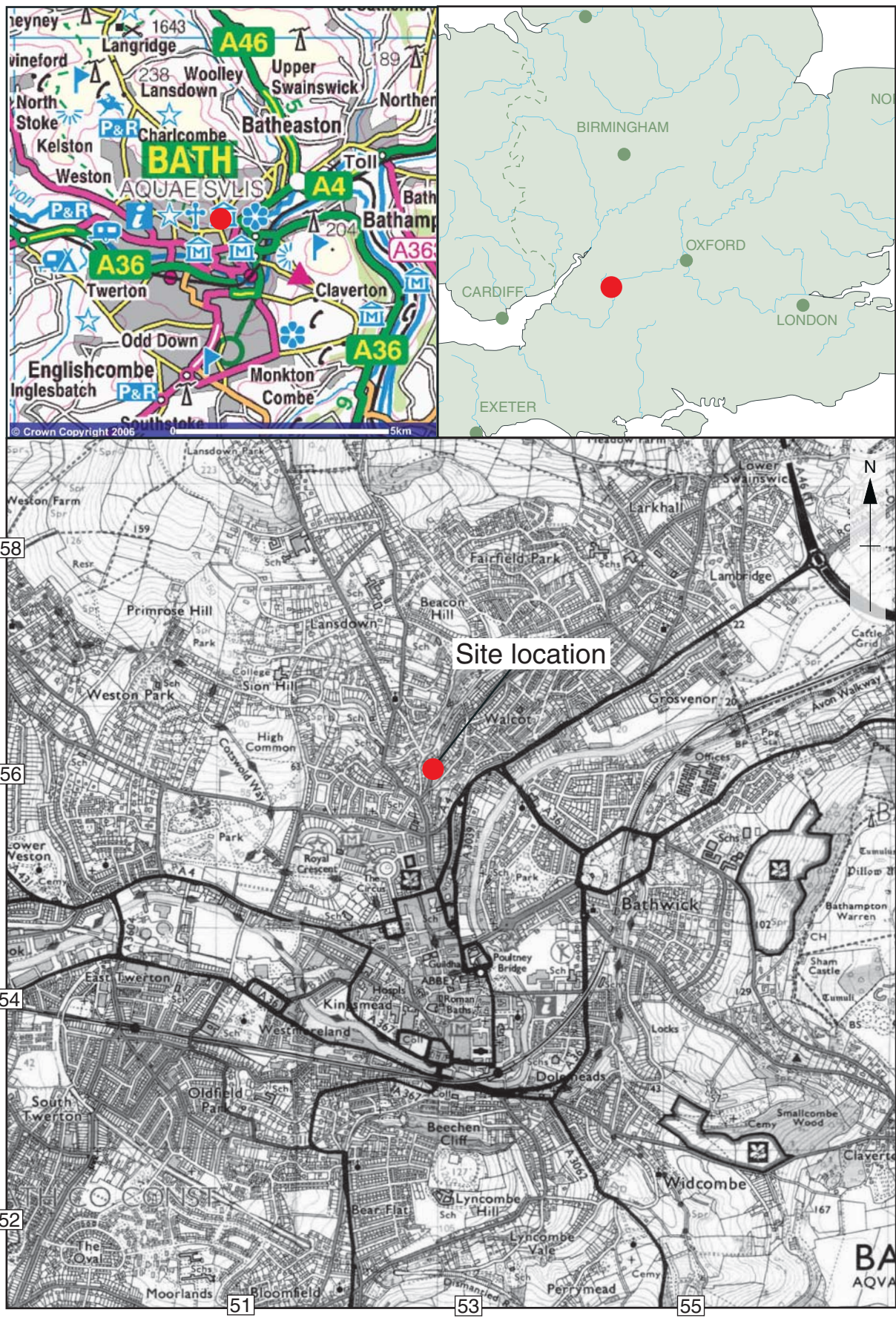
APPENDIX III LISTED BUILDING DESCRIPTIONS

Location	6-21 Camden Crescent, Bath
Date listed:	12 June 1950
Date of last amendment	12 June 1950
Grade	I

CAMDEN CRESCENT 823 Nos 6 to 21 (consec) ST 7465 NE 10/457 12.6.50. I
CAMDEN CRESCENT 1. 823 Nos 6 to 21 (consec) ST 7465 NE 10/457 12.6.50. I 2. 1786-1792. Architect: John Eveleigh. 9 houses came down owing to landslide in early C19 at East End so that central feature is not now in middle. Corinthian pilasters through 2 storeys which change to three quarter columns in centre and at the 1 remaining end house, the ground floors of which are rusticated with circular headed windows. Much of the balustraded parapet removed to give light to the attic dormers. The ground rises to centre of Crescent and so order and entablature rise in continuous sweep, windows rising in groups of 3. 2 middle houses united by pediment on 5 columns causing a duality. In tympanum are Lord Camden's Arms. Central column supporting pediment is like Eveleigh's Grosvenor Hotel. Rising of the Crescent's facade towards centre is like his Somerset Place which also has similar front door details. Circular headed windows on ground floor have impost mouldings similar to Grosvenor Hotel. Original wrought iron railings remain.

Location	1-5 Camden Crescent, Bath
Date listed	12 June 1950
Date of last amendment	12 June 1950
Grade	II

1. CAMDEN CRESCENT 823 Nos 1 to 5 (consec) ST 7465 NE 10/458 12.6.50. II 2. Not part of Crescent proper. 3 storeys and mansard. 3 windows. Strong cornice stepped up hill. Doorways with threequarter Doric columns and pediments.



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Figure 1: Site location



Figure 2: Plan of Bath in 1800 (published by Taylor and Meyler), showing Camden Crescent (then Camden Place)

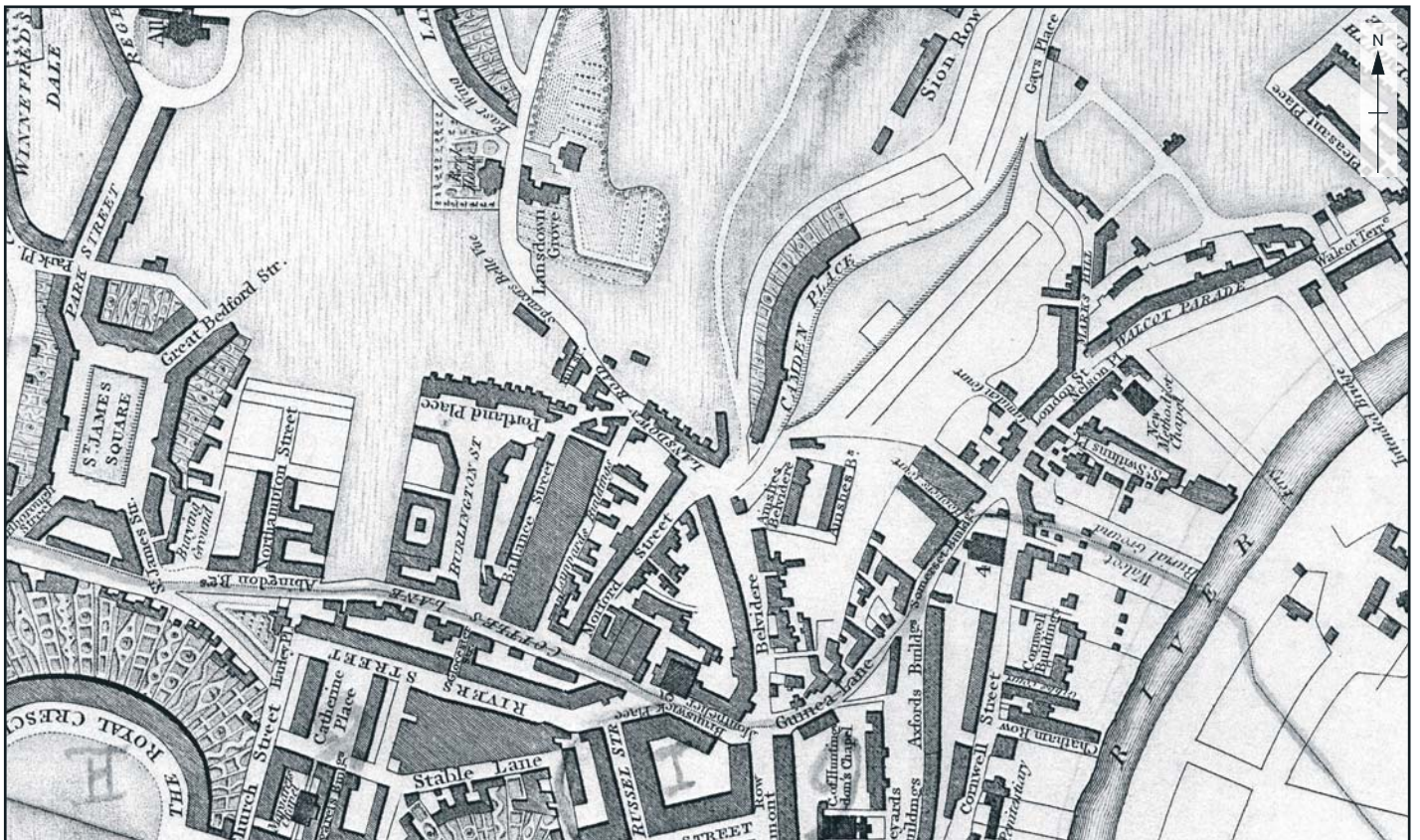


Figure 3: Plan of Bath in 1816 (published by H Godwin)



Figure 4: 1852-54 Plan

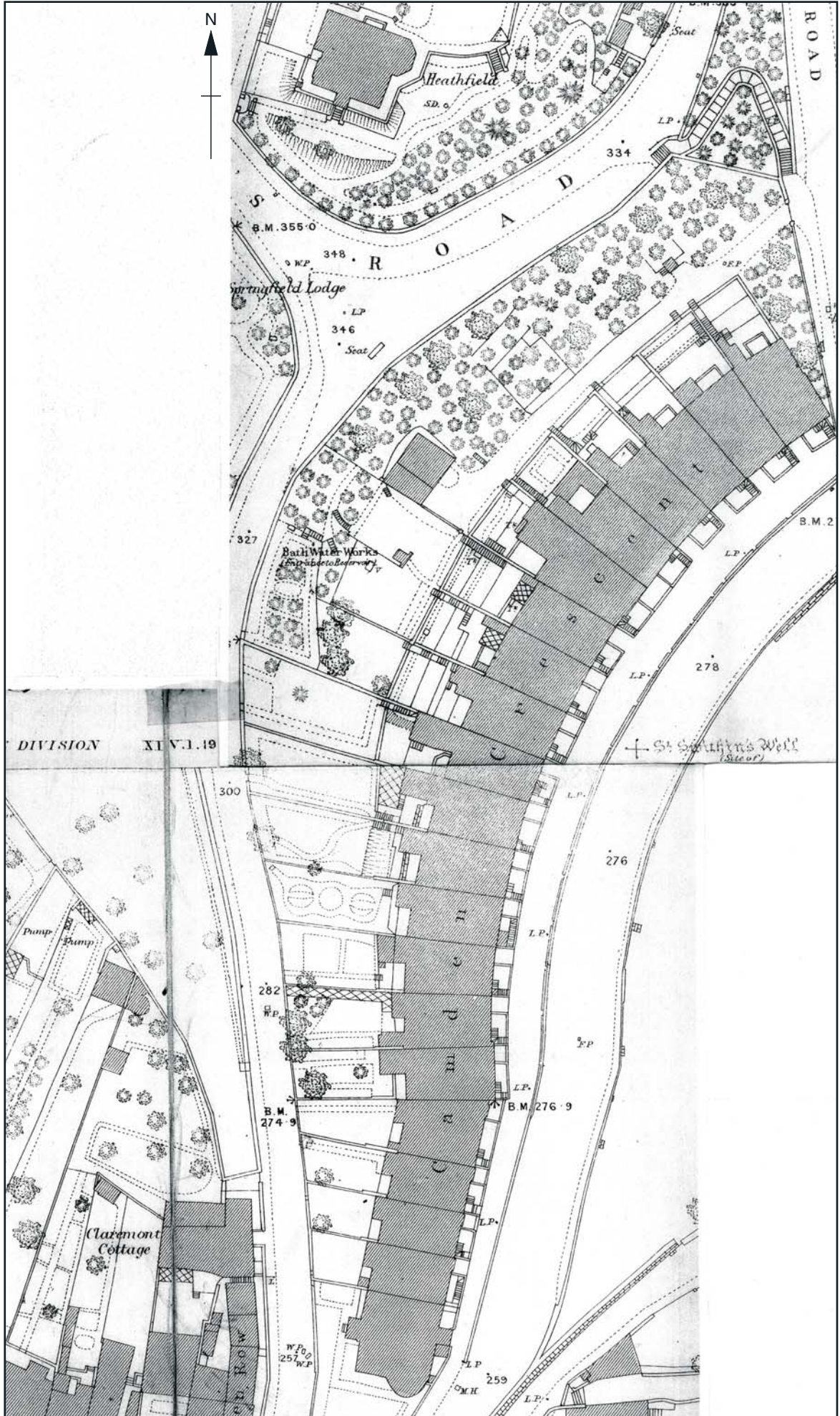


Figure 5: 1886 1st Edition Ordnance Survey map (1:500)

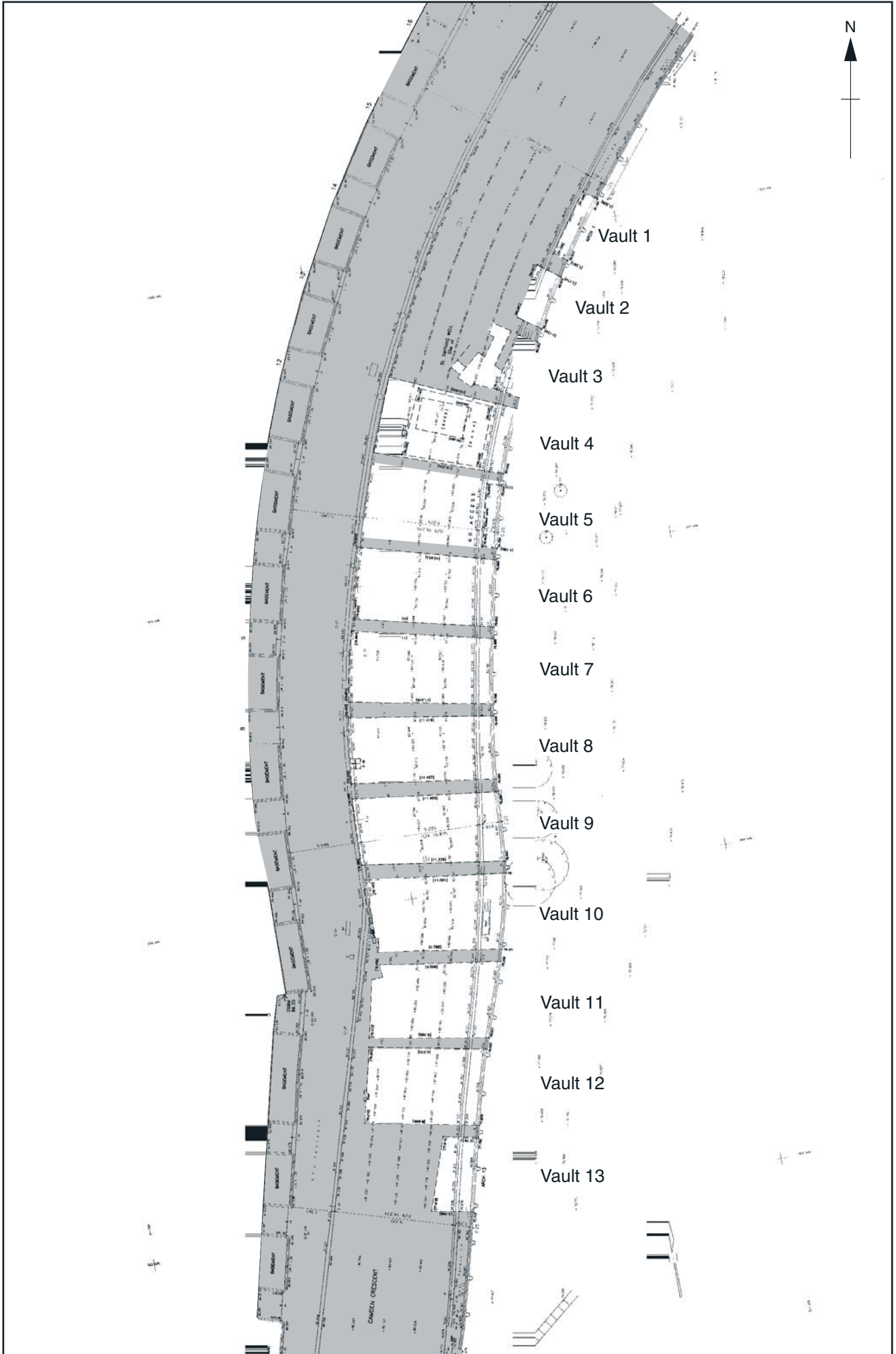


Figure 8: Plan of vaults (from Survey provided by B&NES)



Plate 1: Face of Vault 1 in foreground



Plate 2: Vault 3 in foreground



Plate 3: Pier between Vaults 2 (to right) and 3

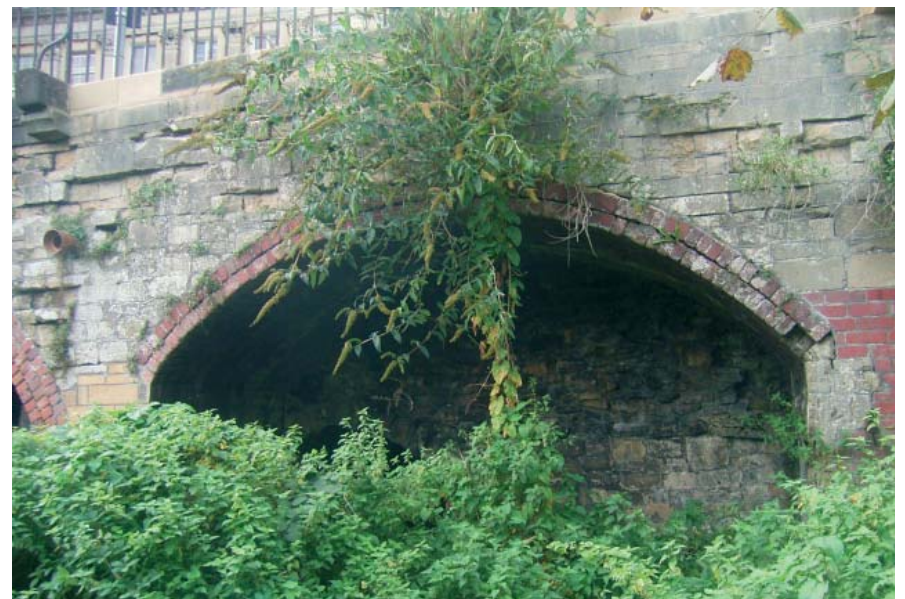


Plate 4: Face of Vault 3



Plate 5: Inside of Vault 3



Plate 6: Passage in Vault 3



Plate 7: Arch face of Vaults 3, 4, 5 and 6



Plate 8: Interior of Vault 4



Plate 9: Face of Vaults 5 (to left) and 4



Plate 10: Face of Vault 6 (to left)



Plate 11: Interior of Vault 6



Plate 12: Interior of Vault 7



Plate 13: Basement room of house beyond Vault 7



Plate 14: Face of pier between Vaults 7 (to right) and 8



Plate 15: Vault 9 (to right) and 10



Plate 16: Rear wall of Vault 9 showing relieving arch



Plate 17: Vault 10



Plate 18: Vault 11



Plate 19: Vault 12 showing concrete arch and brick face



Plate 20: Interior of Vault 13



Plate 21: Wall to south of Vault 13 and later pier



Plate 22: Later pier and wall at south end of viaduct



Plate 23:
Corbel supporting iron railing



Plate 24: Junction between viaduct and Hedgemoad retaining wall



Oxford Archaeology

Janus House
Osney Mead
Oxford OX2 0ES

t: (0044) 01865 263800
f: (0044) 01865 793496
e: info@oxfordarch.co.uk
w: www.oxfordarch.co.uk



Oxford Archaeology North

Storey Institute
Meeting House Lane
Lancaster LA1 1TF

t: (0044) 01524 848666
f: (0044) 01524 848606
e: lancinfo@oxfordarch.co.uk
w: www.oxfordarch.co.uk



Director: David Jennings, BA MIFA FSA

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Oxford Archaeological Unit
Janus House, Osney Mead, Oxford OX2 0ES