Archaeological Evaluation Report

Soakaway Test Pit St Peter's College Oxford

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Soakaway Test Pit, St Peter's College, Oxford

Archaeological Evaluation Report

Written by Robin Bashford

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Summary

In August 2014, Oxford Archaeology (OA) was commissioned by Waterman Project Management Ltd on behalf of St Peter's College, Oxford, to undertake the excavation of an evaluative test pit on the site of a proposed soakaway pit in the Linton Quadrangle of the college. The evaluation revealed a 16th-17th century pit cutting through a series of earlier deposits of uncertain provenance. The pit is likely to represent occupation associated with properties fronting on to New Inn Hall Street (formerly Little Bailey).

The fills of the pit were overlain by a series of fairly homogeneous 18th-19th century deposits which are likely to represent landscaping contemporary with the construction of Wyaston House (now Linton House) in 1797.

The remaining deposits are likely to represent a second phase of landscaping, possibly associated with the construction of St Peter's Church (now the college chapel) in 1874.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Location and scope of work

1.1.1 Oxford City Council granted planning permission to St Peter's College, Oxford, for the erection of a single storey extension to Linton Lodge. The work includes the removal of existing windows, alteration to front porch columns and alterations to front boundary wall and railings, and the erection of a single storey extension to the chapel including the installation of new doors in the north wall, and the erection of a new covered passage to the Besse Building. Additionally the construction of a single storey extension to the Latner Building, the excavation of a new soakaway pit and landscaping within the curtilage of buildings at their site at New Hall Street, Oxford (Planning Permission 14/01106/FUL).

1.1.2 A condition relating to archaeology was attached to the Notice of Grant, which stated that:

"No development shall take place until the applicant, or their agents, have secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation [WSI] which has been submitted by the applicant and approved by the planning authority"

1.1.3 David Radford, the Oxford City Council Archaeologist, issued a "Brief for an Archaeological Test Pit and Watching Brief" detailing what would be a satisfactory level of archaeological response at the site (18th July 2014). This detailed the requirements for an archaeological watching brief to be conducted during any significant intrusive ground works and the excavation of a trial pit on the site of the proposed soakaway pit.

1.1.4 Oxford Archaeology (OA) was instructed by Andy Waterman of Waterman Project Management Ltd on behalf of St Peter's College to prepare a WSI and undertake the works required to the satisfy the conditions as outlined in the brief from OCC.

1.1.5 Consequently, in August 2014 OA excavated a trial trench on the site of the proposed soakaway pit, and this document details the results of that excavation. All work was undertaken in accordance with local and national planning policies.

1.2 Geology and topography

1.2.1 The site lies towards the western edge of the medieval core of Oxford, approximately 250m west of Carfax Tower and approximately 100m inside the medieval city walls (Fig. 1). It is centred on National Grid Reference SP 5111 0625, and is situated within the northern half of the St Peter's College campus adjoining New Inn Hall Street, Oxford.

1.2.2 The college is bounded to the north and south by buildings, to the west by Bulwark Lane and by New Inn Hall Street to the east.

1.2.3 The development area itself consists of the quads, areas of paving and hard standing together with standing buildings within the precinct of the college itself.

1.2.4 The geology of the area is the Summertown-Radley Sand and Gravel Member overlying the Oxford Clay Formation (Geological Survey of Great Britain, sheet no. 236). The area of proposed development lies at *c* 62.5m OD.

1.3 Archaeological and historical background

Prehistoric

1.3.1 Evidence prehistoric activity - most notably from the Bronze and Iron Ages – has been recovered from the immediate area of the site. A Bronze Age brooch and early Iron Age pottery were found in deposits thought to have come from the Twinings Building in George Street, *c* 175m north of the area of proposed development. A Bronze Age barrow ditch was excavated at 24a St Michael's Street in 1985, 150m north-east of the site, and two more were identified during the building of the Sackler Library 350m to the north.

Roman

1.3.2 A Roman urn was uncovered when the Wesleyan Methodist Church was built in 1878. If this was related to a burial, there is the potential for other burials in the vicinity.

1.3.3 Further evidence of Romano-British activity has come from the nearby area in St Michaels Street and Queen Street, including a figurine, a patera and quern and pottery.

Late Saxon

1.3.4 Oxford has long been an important river crossing. In the early 10th century Oxford was added to the West Saxon system of defensive burhs, and the town was laid out inside the walls with a regular street pattern centred on Carfax, 280m from the area of proposed development. Evidence for settlement has been recovered from many archaeological investigations from the castle eastwards.

1.3.5 An earthwork bank and ditch were constructed around the town, some remains of which have been found in archaeological investigations. These results suggest that the later medieval city wall was constructed over the late Saxon defences for the most part. The turf rampart was found in the centre of St Michael's Street, north-east of the site, during drainage work in 1976 and at No 24 St Michael's Street in 1985. St Michael-at-the-Northgate church was founded during the Late Saxon period. Its tower dates to the 11th century and formed part of the gate. It lies c 250m north-east of the area of proposed development.

1.3.6 During excavations at 40 George Street in 1977-8, 150m to the north, a large north-south aligned ditch was found. This pre-dated the line of the medieval stone wall which first appeared in the documentary record in 1226. It is thought that this ditch may have represented the Saxon defensive ditch around the western extent of the primary burh. If this is the case, it would imply that the late-Saxon wall found during recent excavations on the castle site may represent a western extension.

Medieval-19th century

1.3.7 The land to the west of New Inn Hall Street (formerly Little Bailey) was occupied by a number of tenements and their gardens by at least the late 13th century (Salter 1969). New Inn Hall to the south of the site was founded in 1392. The Linton Quad lies within a property identified by Rev. HE Salter (ibid) as Rose Hall, which is likely to have originated as one of the many academic halls which were the precursor to the university colleges.

1.3.8 The property boundaries around the area of proposed development are fairly well understood, and it is likely that these tenements had houses on the street frontage with

backyards behind which are typically characterised by pits of varying functions (cess pits, wells etc).

1.3.9 However, one of the earliest cartographic sources is a plan of the city by Ralph Agas of 1578 which shows the area of the site as empty plots, although walls still exist between the tenements, and “Newe Inn” is present to the north of the medieval church of St Peter le Bailey. The open spaces shown throughout the town by Agas reflect a decline in the fortunes of Oxford in the 13th and 14th century owing to a number of economic factors and exacerbated by the Black Death which killed perhaps a third of the population (Tiller and Darkes 2010).

1.3.10 By the later part of the 17th century a considerable amount of development had taken place across Oxford. Although Loggan’s Map of 1675 shows Rose Hall and its neighbouring properties as still mainly gardens, a number of relatively large properties now appear to have been constructed along the western frontage of New Inn Hall Street. Taylor’s 1751 Map shows little change with the site still represented as part of a garden at that date.

1.3.11 Wyaston House (later to be re-named Linton House and now the entrance lodge and chambers to the college) was constructed for the Oxford Canal Company in 1797.

19th century to the present

1.3.12 The first Methodist meeting-house in Oxford was on the other side of New Inn Hall Street in the building now numbered 32-34. In the early 19th century, the Wesleyan Methodists purchased the property to the north of the site and the original chapel was constructed in 1817/18. The surviving Memorial Methodist Church was constructed in 1878.

1.3.13 In 1874, St Peter's Church (now the college chapel) was constructed to replace the 12th century church of St Peter le Bailey which had been demolished as part of a road widening scheme, and in 1878 Wyaston House was converted to the rectory of St Peter's.

1.3.14 The east range of the Linton Quad comprises Staircase 2 and Staircase 3 (constructed in 1928-29), together with the Besse Building which was constructed in 1952 (Anna Joynt, pers. comm.)

1.3.15 Following the foundation of St Peter's Hall in 1929, the Emily Morris Building was constructed on the site of the old Weslyan school to the west of the original chapel. The chapel itself was purchased by the college in 1932 and was eventually demolished in the early 1970s prior to the construction of the Latner building.

Previous archaeological work

1.3.16 In 1980 an excavation for St Peter’s College at the south end of Bulwarks Lane, *c* 100m south-west of the proposed developments, found an area of turf stripping, which was attributed to the Saxon rampart, and suggested a continuation of the north-south alignment of the defensive ditch.

1.3.17 A 2003 watching brief undertaken by Oxford Archaeology during the construction of a new seminar room 100m north-west of the site recorded post-medieval garden soils cut and sealed by 19th century constructions and modern services (OA 2003).

1.3.18 In June 2010 Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out a single trench evaluation against the south side of the Oxford City Wall at the rear of the Wesley Memorial Church, north of the proposed developments. The evaluation revealed a 17th-century garden soil and

a robber trench for the 13th-century city wall. The wall had been subject to at least two repairs/alterations, one of which may have comprised the creation of a doorway. The construction deposits were overlain by two thick soil horizons deposited prior to the 19th-century redevelopment of the site (OA 2010).

2 Evaluation Aims and Methodology

2.1 Aims

2.2 General

2.2.1 The aims of the test pit excavation were to:

- To determine the presence or absence of any archaeological remains which may survive.
- To determine or confirm the approximate extent of any surviving remains
- To determine the date range of any surviving remains by artefactual or other means.
- To determine the condition and state of preservation of any remains.
- To determine the degree of complexity of any surviving horizontal or vertical stratigraphy.
- To assess the associations and implications of any remains encountered with reference to the historic landscape.
- To determine the potential of the site to provide palaeoenvironmental and/or economic evidence, and the forms in which such evidence may survive.
- To determine the implications of any remains with reference to economy, status, utility and social activity.
- To determine or confirm the likely range, quality and quantity of the artifactual evidence present.

2.3 Specific aims and objectives

2.3.1 The specific aims and objectives of the test pit excavation were to:

- Identify any evidence for an early defensive boundary of the “primary burh”, thought to run along the break in slope running north-south and parallel with New Inn Hall Street;
- Investigate the potential for multi-period tenement occupation activity within this location;
- Determine if there are burials within the vicinity of the old 19th century Methodist Chapel garden.

2.4 Methodology

Test pit excavation

2.4.1 The test pit was excavated within the site of planned new soakaway (Fig. 2). The test pit measured 1.5m by 1.5m, and was excavated to a depth of 2m, with a 0.4m² sondage excavated to 2.25m below ground level. A hand augered borehole in the base of the sondage penetrated to *c* 4.1m below ground level. Excavation was by hand following standard archaeological methodologies. The test pit required shoring, which was undertaken under standard OA methodology.

2.4.2 The test pit was backfilled by the ground work contractor after David Radford, the City Council Archaeologist had inspected it.

3 RESULTS

3.1 Introduction and presentation of results

3.1.1 Detailed context descriptions are presented in the context inventory (Appendix A), and within the descriptive text in Section 3.2 below where they are integral to the interpretation of the deposit in question.

3.1.2 Finds reports are presented in Section 4. A discussion and interpretation of the results can be found in Section 5.

3.2 Soakaway Test Pit (Figs 3 and 4)

3.2.1 The earliest deposits encountered were only seen along the northern edge of the trench as they had been truncated by a later pit (015 – see below). These comprised what appeared to be a fairly homogeneous silty clay deposit (022) which was not fully characterised as it was only seen in the free section created by the excavation of a sondage through the fills of the possible pit; consequently the origin of this deposit is uncertain (Fig. 4). Deposit 22 was overlain by a fairly compacted, *c* 0.2m thick mixed layer of limestone rubble in a mid reddish brown silty clay matrix with concentrations of lime mortar throughout (016). There was an irregularity in the interface between this layer and the overlying deposit (012 – see below), which may have represented a shallow linear feature (18) (Fig. 3), although it was relatively ephemeral and may have merely been an undulation in the top of deposit 016 (additionally, deposit (019), the fill of feature 18, was identical in composition to the overlying layer). Deposit 016 was in turn overlain by a 0.28m thick silty clay deposit (017).

3.2.2 All three of these deposits (022, 016 and 017) and the fill (019) of the possible linear feature (018) had been truncated by the northern edge of a probable pit (015). The shape of this feature in plan was uncertain, although where revealed within the trench there did appear to be a curvature to the edge of the cut which possibly indicated a sub-circular pit. The deposit(s) encountered within the augered borehole are likely to represent the earliest fills of this feature (021) although it is feasible that they represent fills of an earlier feature that had been truncated by pit 015. Deposit(s) 021 was overlain by a clayey silt fill (014) from which 16th-17th century artefactual material was recovered. This was in turn overlain by the uppermost fill of the feature (013) which is likely to be part of the same deposit as it produced similarly dated artefacts and was similar in composition.

3.2.3 Fill 013 was overlain by 0.48m of fairly homogeneous clay silt (012) which was interpreted as a garden soil and was in turn overlain by a series of deposits (011, 010, 009, 008, 005, 004) which probably represent phases of landscaping. This is discussed in further detail below (Section 5).

3.2.4 Deposit 004 was overlain by a fairly compacted layer(s) (002 and 003) which may have formed a rudimentary surface pre-dating the deposition of the existing topsoil of the Linton Quadrangle lawn.

4 Finds Reports

4.1 **Pottery** by John Cotter

Introduction and methodology

4.1.1 A total of 139 sherds of post-Roman pottery weighing 1417g was recovered from seven contexts. Most of this is of post-medieval date with a few (mainly residual) sherds of definite medieval date also present. The pottery was examined and spot-dated during the present assessment stage. For each context the total pottery sherd count and weight were recorded on an Excel spreadsheet, followed by the context spot-date which is the date-bracket during which the latest pottery types in the context are estimated to have been produced or were in general circulation. Comments on the presence of datable types were also recorded, usually with mention of vessel form (jugs, bowls etc.) and any other attributes worthy of note (eg. decoration etc.). Post-medieval pottery fabric codes noted in the spreadsheet or below are those of the Museum of London which can be applied to most post-medieval types in south-east England, (LAARC 2007). Medieval pottery fabrics are those of the Oxfordshire County type series (Mellor 1994). The range of pottery is described in some detail in the spreadsheet and therefore only summarised below.

Date and nature of the assemblage

4.1.2 The assemblage is mostly in a very fragmentary condition with no complete profiles present. However most of the late medieval and post-medieval sherds are fairly fresh and occasionally fairly large. Ordinary domestic pottery types are represented and all typical of the wares commonly found in Oxford. In terms of dating there is a strong presence of late medieval/early post-medieval pottery (mainly 16th to early 17th century) and also a strong presence of later post-medieval pottery types (18th to 19th century). Although no pottery as late as the 20th century was identified the ceramic building material includes a few pieces that are almost certainly of this date (see below; context 1). A small number of residual medieval sherds as early as the late 11th or 12th century were also noted.

4.1.3 The ten or so sherds of medieval pottery are mostly small and worn and all residual in late 18th- or 19th-century contexts (ctxs 1, 10 and 12). The earliest pieces are two sherds of Cotswold-type ware (OXAC, *c* 1050-1250) and a sherd of medieval Oxford ware (OXY, *c* 1075-1300). A fairly fresh sherd from the body of jug in Olney Hyde-type shelly ware (OXCG, *c* 1150-1400), from north Buckinghamshire or Northamptonshire is one of the rarer medieval fabrics from the city and the only piece of note. The site assemblage is dominated by late Brill/Boarstall ware (OXBX, *c* 1400-1625) and most of this occurs as fresh sherds of jugs and jars which are clearly not residual in their contexts (ctxs 13,14, 20 and 21). The fabric can be difficult to date very closely when it occurs in isolation (as it does in ctxs 14, 20 and 21) but most of this occurs in a very similar smooth pink-buff fabric often with minimal glaze and this (and the rim forms) probably place it in the final phase of the Brill/Boarstall industry *c* 1550-1625. The largest assemblage of this fabric (36 sherds from Ctx 13) also occurs with a squat German Frechen stoneware drinking jug with form and decoration confirming the latter dating and possibly even as late as c 1570-1625?

4.1.4 The later post-medieval contexts (1, 10 and 12) comprise a range of commonplace post-medieval wares with an emphasis on 18th- and 19th-century Staffordshire-type products such as refined creamwares and whitewares mainly in the form of tablewares. London stonewares and tin-glazed wares also occur. Local post-medieval red

earthenwares (PMR) including storage jars and flowerpots are also fairly common. The only item of note is a inturned rim from an unusual small globular vessel in mid 18th-century Staffordshire slipware (STSL) which may be from something like an 'owl' or 'bear' jug (ctx 10). No further work on the assemblage is recommended.

4.2 Clay tobacco pipes by John Cotter

4.2.1 Sixteen pieces of clay pipe weighing 52g were recovered from two contexts. These have not been separately catalogued but are fully described here. Most of the pieces are likely to be residual in their contexts. No further work on the assemblage is recommended.

Context (10) Spot-date: Late 18th or 19th century

4.2.2 Description: 5 pieces (11g): All stem fragments. Latest is a fresh slender stem (50mm long) with a narrow stem bore diameter of c 1.5mm suggesting a late 18th or 19th century dating. The four other stems are shorter and worn. These include two 18th-century stems and two 17th-century stems - one with an unusually wide stem bore (4mm diam).

Context (12) Spot-date: Late 18th or 19th century

4.2.3 Description: 11 pieces (41g): Comprises ten stems and one bowl fragment. The stems include a fresh slender stem (35mm long) with a narrow stem bore diameter of c 1.3mm suggesting a late 18th or 19th century dating. Seven stems are probably of 18th-century date and two of 17th-century date - all fairly worn. The remaining fragment is from the damaged base of a pipe bowl probably of late 17th-century or early 18th-century date with a very damaged heel or stubby spur and with a stem bore diameter of c 2.5mm.

4.3 Ceramic building material (CBM) by John Cotter

4.3.1 A total of 27 pieces of CBM weighing 1170g were recovered from five contexts. This comprises a mixture of medieval, post-medieval and modern CBM, mostly in a poor and fragmentary condition. The dating broadly agrees with the pottery spot-dating. The assemblage has not been separately catalogued but is described and quantified below. No further work is recommended.

Context (1) Spot-date: 20th century

4.3.2 Description: 4 pieces (193g). Poor/very fragmentary condition. Three pieces of very hard granular machine-made orange-brown brick - probably (?mid) 20th century. One piece of corduroy-textured (ribbed) drainpipe or service-pipe in fine white fabric - late 19th/20th century. One small piece of curved orange terracotta ?drainpipe of similar date?

Context (12) Spot-date: 18th-19th century?

4.3.3 Description: 8 pieces (519g). Poor/fragmentary condition. Includes six pieces of orange sandy flat roof tile. Three of these (from two tiles) are in a very hard sandy fabric and fresh condition - probably 18th or early 19th century. The three other very small worn fragments of roof tile probably include tiles of medieval and early post-medieval date. There is a single fairly large lower edge fragment from a ridge tile in a similar fabric to Oxford 'St Giles-type' tiles (15th-17th century) but in a light brown fabric with a broad grey core and a broad patch of greyish ash glaze along the edge. A 16th- or 17th-

century date is likely for the latter. Also a single edge fragment from a very hard orange sandy brick - possibly of 18th-19th century date?

Context (13) Spot-date: 16th century?

4.3.4 Description: 11 pieces (360g). Poor/fragmentary condition. Includes three fairly large joining fragments (246g) from a curved ridge tile (including one lower corner/edge fragment) in a smooth light orange fabric with a pale grey core and traces of a brown medieval-style external splash-glaze from higher up the tile near the (missing) apex. The fabric resembles medieval Oxford Fabric IIIB orange sandy roof/ridge tiles but the fabric is lighter in colour and unusually smooth and almost sand-free. An early post-medieval date, probably 16th-century, is therefore suggested. A sample of this fabric has been added to the Oxford medieval tile fabric reference collection. The nine remaining much smaller fragments (114g) come from several indeterminate orange roof or ridge tiles of late medieval or early post-medieval date. These may include a few small scraps from the ridge tile just described plus tiles in a coarser sandier fabric.

Context (20) Spot-date: 15th-17th century?

4.3.5 Description: 2 pieces (94g). Poor/fragmentary condition. Includes a larger/fresher edge fragment (87g) probably from a ridge tile 17mm thick. This is in a paler orange-buff fabric variant of the Oxford 'St Giles-type' tiles (15th-17th century). It has specks of clear glaze externally. The other piece (7g) is a scrap from a medieval roof or ridge tile in an orange sandy fabric with a grey core and brown external glaze (13th-16th century).

Context (21) Spot-date: 15th-17th century?

4.3.6 Description: 1 piece (4g). Poor/very fragmentary condition. Scrap from plain roof tile in orange sandy Oxford 'St Giles-type' fabric.

4.4 **Stone** by Ruth Shaffrey

Description

4.4.1 A total of nine pieces of stone were retained. None of these is worked although four pieces of slate from context 1 could be pieces of roofing. If so, these are likely to be post-medieval in date.

4.4.2 No further work is recommended.

4.5 **Metal finds** by Ian R Scott

4.5.1 A small assemblage of metal objects was recovered from a watching brief at St Peter's College, Oxford. Eight metal finds were recovered from 3 contexts. None of the finds was closely datable and none need date earlier than the later 19th century.

Context 1

4.5.2 (1) Wire, Deliberately folded and rolled 3 twist copper wire, with 6 bent and folded lengths of fe wire bundled with it. Probably modern. L: 148mm; W: 68mm.
(2) Wire. 3 x lengths of thick cu alloy wire, 2 lengths with rolled over loops threaded onto the third piece. Modern drawn wire. L: 75mm; W: 64mm.
(3) Lead sheet, small rectangular offcut. L: 53mm; W: 24mm; Th: 2mm.

Context 12

4.5.3 (4) Tang and bolster from a tool, possibly a gouge or chisel. Fe. L: 71mm.
(5) Nail with slightly domed sub-square head, bent but complete. Fe. Overall L: c 85mm.

Context 13

4.5.4 (6) Nail, small with flat thick square head, incomplete. Fe. Not measured.
(7) Nail, small cut nail. Fe. L: 45mm.
(8) Bar, short length bent at one end. Fe. L: 37mm.

4.6 **Glass** by Ian R Scott

4.6.1 There are just 4 sherds of glass, three sherds from wine bottles from context 12 and one sherd of window glass from context 13.

Context 12

4.6.2 (1) Wine bottle. Two refitting sherds forming most of the upper body of a squat thick-walled early 18th-century wine bottle. Light green metal with heavy iridescent weathering. 130mm x 100mm. Early 18th-century bottle.
(2) Wine bottle. Small body sherd from cylindrical wine bottle. Light green glass. Not measured. Mid 18th-century or later. Not more closely datable.

Context 13

4.6.3 (3) Window glass. Small sherd, probably centre of bullseye from crown glass, or less likely part of the pushup of a free blown wine bottle. De-vitrified and now opaque. 30mm x 20mm, Th: 6mm. Probably late medieval or post medieval.

4.7 **Animal bones** by Lena Strid

4.7.1 A total of 175 hand-collected animal bone fragments were recovered from this site. The majority of the assemblage came from pit (15), preliminarily dated to the 16-17th C; the remaining bones were recovered from 18th-19th century landscaping layers and top soil.

4.7.2 The bones were in a very good condition, 96% being well or very well preserved. A small number of bones had traces of gnawing by carnivores, probably dogs. Burnt bones were absent.

4.7.3 The assemblage contains bones from cattle, sheep/goat, pig, rabbit, domestic fowl and goose (Table B2). The early post-medieval cattle assemblage is dominated by fragments of metapodials, possibly deriving from small-scale oil or fat processing. The rest of the early post-medieval assemblage and the entire late post-medieval assemblage represent kitchen waste with a minor inclusion of butchery waste. It is not possible to ascertain to what extent cattle, sheep/goat, pig and poultry formed part of the diet, due to the small sample size. However, the bulk of medieval and post-medieval urban meat diet usually came from beef or mutton. Poultry, rabbit and other game were only occasionally on the table (Sykes 2007; Wilson 1984).

4.7.4 A small number of bones could be attributed to minimum age at death (Table B3). Most bones from livestock were fused or fusing, indicating sub-adult and adult animals. A preference for veal, which has been observed in other post-medieval assemblages from Oxford (Wilson 1994, 107), was not indicated by the small assemblage. All poultry

bones were from skeletally mature animals. The single rabbit humerus was fusing proximally, suggesting slaughter of a sub-adult rabbit.

4.7.5 Butchery marks in the early post-medieval assemblage were noted on bones from cattle, sheep/goat, goose, medium and large mammal. Five medium and four large mammal vertebrae had been split sagitally during the primary butchery stage. Portioning of the carcass into smaller parts suitable for cooking was evidenced on four large mammal ribs, one cattle femoral head and one sheep/goat pelvis. Cut marks from filleting occurred on one sheep/goat femur shaft and on one goose coracoid.

4.7.6 The late post-medieval assemblage included two bones with indication of filleting: one sheep/goat scapula with cut marks at the neck and one medium mammal rib with cut marks. It also contained a cattle mandible where the articulate process had been chopped off from below, probably as a way to disarticulate the head for cheek meat and tongue removal.

4.7.7 Pathologies were noted on two cattle metapodials, both from the early post-medieval assemblage. A metatarsal had osteophytes at its proximal end, suggesting muscle strain or high age. One distal metacarpal had an extended medial condyle, a trait which has been connected to the use of cattle as draught animals (Bartosiewicz et al. 1997).

5 Discussion

5.1 Reliability of field investigation

5.1.1 All deposits were hand excavated and datable artefactual material was recovered from the majority of them. Consequently, the stratigraphic sequence is reasonably well understood, although only a relatively small area was subject to excavation and consequently the following interpretation is necessarily circumspect.

5.2 Interpretation

5.2.1 Where observations of the late-Saxon primary street surfaces in the city have been made, it invariably overlies the post-glacial loess which overlies the top of the gravel and represents the buried late-Saxon ground surface. The primary surface has been recorded at nos 18-24 New Inn Hall Street at 62.41m OD; no 4 Queen Street at 61.70-61.80m OD; no 7 Queen Street at 61.70-61.80m OD and the top of the buried soil itself at 61.88m OD at nos 11-12 Queen Street (Dodd, 2003, 261-2). The loess is typically 0.2 - 0.3m thick which would indicate that the top of the untruncated gravel in this area of the City should be between 61.40m and 62.11m OD. As the top of the first significant horizon was at 63.60m OD, this would imply a significant accumulation of material above the level of the loess, although the layers (022, 016, 017) through which the pit was cut were only revealed along the very northern edge of the trench and consequently any further characterisation of these deposits was problematic. What can be said with some degree of certainty is that the deposits recorded within the auger are filling a negative feature which has almost certainly truncated the gravel as well as the deposits along the northern edge of the trench, as the base of the augered borehole was at 60.93m OD - a considerably lower elevation than the anticipated depth of the gravel.

5.2.2 The artefactual material retrieved from the fills of the pit itself would indicate that it is 16th-17th century in date. As discussed above (1.3), the evidence from the cartographic sources suggests that following the economic decline and consequent hiatus in activity in this area of the town in the 13th-14th centuries, the area to the north of the site remains relatively undeveloped throughout the 16th to 18th centuries, reflecting the relatively peripheral location of the site within the medieval walled town. However, a number of relatively large properties were constructed along the western frontage of the street between the late 16th (Agas) and late 17th (Loggan) centuries, and it seems likely that the pit represents activity to the rear of the property shown by Loggan which occupies the frontage to the north of “Newe Inn”, presumably on the plot formerly occupied by Rose Hall.

5.2.3 The series of layers (010-012) overlying the fills of the pit are interpreted as a landscaping deposits and are likely to represent imported garden soils, which the artefactual evidence would suggest are contemporary with the construction of Wyaston House in 1797.

5.2.4 The overlying deposits (001-009) probably represent a later phase or phases of landscaping associated with the construction of St Peter's Church in 1874, or perhaps the Besse Building in 1900.

5.3 Evaluation objectives and results

- Identify any evidence for an early defensive boundary of the “primary burh”, thought to run along the break in slope running north-south and parallel with New Inn Hall Street;

5.3.1 No definitive evidence for this boundary was recovered from within the confines of the test pit.

- Investigate the potential for multi-period tenement occupation activity within this location;

5.3.2 Although the function of the probable pit was uncertain, the presence of intercutting pits of various functions is characteristic of tenement occupation throughout the medieval and post-medieval periods, and it is likely that this feature relates to occupation associated with buildings fronting on to New Inn Hall street in the 16th-17th century.

5.3.3 The remaining deposits appear to represent phases of landscaping associated with the construction of Wyaston House in 1797 and possibly St Peter's Church in 1874. If the interpretation of these deposits is correct, then the first significant archaeological horizon is at 63.73m OD (1.55m below existing ground level).

- Determine if there are burials within the vicinity of the old 19th century Methodist Chapel garden.

5.3.4 No evidence for burials was recovered from within the confines of the test pit.

Appendix A. Trench Descriptions and Context Inventory

Trench 1					
General description				**Orientation**	E-W
A series of deposits, one of which contained a significant amount of limestone rubble and mortar had been truncated by a 16th – 17th century pit of indeterminate function. The fills of this feature were overlain by a series of post-medieval homogeneous silty soils which are likely to represent landscaping.				**Avg. depth (m)**	2.00
				Width (m)	1.5
				Length (m)	1.5
Contexts					
Context no	**Type**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Comment**	**Soil Description**
001	Deposit		0.22	Topsoil	Firm mid brown clay silt, occasional stones
002	Deposit		0.04	Possible rudimentary surface	Firm light yellowish-brown gravelly silt with frequent stones; frequent coal/clinker; moderate CBM and mortar flecks and fragments
003	Deposit		0.08	Possible rudimentary surface	Loose mid reddish-brown clay silt, mostly homogeneous, occasional CBM and mortar flecks and fragments
004	Deposit		0.12	Imported landscaping deposit	Mid-light grey-brown silty clay, occasional stones; occasional mortar flecks
005	Deposit		0.09	Imported landscaping deposit	Mid grey brown sandy silt, frequent stones; moderate charcoal flecks and fragments; occasional mortar and CBM flecks and fragments
006	Fill	0.5	0.25	Fill of possible post hole	Mid orangey brown silty gravel
007	Cut	0.5	0.25	Possible post hole	
008	Deposit		0.1	Imported landscaping deposit	Mid-dark moderate-loose grey-brown sandy silt with moderate charcoal flecks and fragments; occasional mortar flecks and fragments; occasional small stones
009	Deposit		0.1	Imported landscaping deposit	Mid-dark grey-brown sandy silt with frequent small stones; occasional mortar flecks and fragments; occasional oyster shell
010	Deposit		0.23	Imported landscaping deposit	Mid-dark loose grey-brown sandy silt with occasional mortar and CBM flecks and fragments; moderate small stones
011	Deposit		0.18	Imported landscaping deposit	Mid yellowish-brown loose gravelly silt with occasional large flint nodules

Context no	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Comment	Soil Description
012	Deposit		0.5	Imported landscaping deposit	Mid-dark grey-brown sandy silt with occasional charcoal flecks and fragments; occasional small-medium stones; occasional mortar flecks and fragments
013	?Fill		0.35	Pit fill	Mid-dark grey-brown sandy silt with occasional charcoal; occasional small stones
014	Fill	1.1+	0.1+	Pit fill	Mid-dark greenish grey clayey silt with c10% gravel fragments and occasional charcoal
015	Cut	1.1+	0.1+	Pit cut	
016	Deposit		0.2	Deposit cut by Pit 015	Mid yellowish-brown sandy clay with c20% limestone fragments up to 0.2m x 0.1m x 0.1m
017	Deposit		0.28	Deposit cut by Pit 015	Mid-dark grey clayey silt with 10% gravel fragments
018	?Cut	0.3	0.2	Possible linear feature	
019	?Fill	0.3	0.2	Fill of 018	Mid-dark grey clay silt
020	Finds Ref			Finds from fill 014 within sondage	
021	Deposit			Borehole deposit(s)	
022	Deposit			Deposit cut by Pit 015	

Appendix B. Finds Tables

B.1 Pottery

Ctx	Spot-date	Sherds	Weight	Comments
1	c1820-1900	19	155	Fresh & scrappy sherds. 1x transfer-printed ware (TPW). 1x blue-bodied stoneware (BLUE) teapot rim. 1x English porcelain (ENPO). 2x developed Creamware (CREA DEV). 4x post-med red earthenware flowerpot (PMR FLP, probably 19C) 2x glazed post-med red earthenware (PMR) incl prob 18C jar rim & jug rim. 1x footring base Staffs white salt-glazed stoneware (SWSG). 1x prob 18C London stoneware bottle/jar sherd (LONS). 1x piecrust-dec dish rim Staffs combed slipware 18C (STSL). 1x worn bo (body sherd) prob Cheam ware (CHEA). 2x early Brill/Boarstall ware (OXAW) glazed jug & cookpot bos 13/14/C. 1x Med Oxford ware (OXY) cpot bo. 1x worn bo Cotswold-type ware (OXAC c1050-1250)
10	c1720-1780	7	99	2x fresh bases from 2 different vess in SWSG (1 flat , 1 footring). 1x dish rim in green-glazed post-med Brill slipware (BRSL, c1650-1800). 1x rim from very unusual small globular pot/jar with plain inturned rim (diam c40mm) in Staffs slipware (SWSG) with dark red-brown slip allover ext & horiz row of white slip blobs under clear glaze, maybe top of an owl or zoomorphic jug? Wide dish/charger rim in green-glazed border ware (BORDG). Squared cooking pot rim in oxidised OXAW. Sagging cpot base OXAC
12	c1780-1840	57	707	Mixed assemblage fresh & worn. Mainly post-med. Latest = small bo painted Pearlware dish (PEAR) & 1 other plain PEAR bo. 2x CREA DEV (c1760-1830). 4x tin-glazed ware (TGW) all 18C incl chamberpot rim & bos from 2 blue dec dishes. 3x Westerwald stoneware (WEST) incl tankard bo & joining sherds highly dec jug with purple & blue glaze & applied rosette pads & lentoids. 1x bo Frechen stoneware (FREC). 2x Raeren stoneware (RAER, c1480-1550) incl Aachen-style collared jug rim. 4x BORDG incl dish rim & porringer bo/handle. 1x Brown border ware (BORDB) cup/jug bo.10x PMR incl bowl rim & jar rim. 1x BRSL bowl/dish rim. 1x bo black-glazed PMR conical mug/tyg (PMBL). 1x bo CHEA prob biconical jug (c1350-1500). 21x mainly late med Brill/Boarstall ware (OXBX) incl drinking jug rim, thickened rim from jug/pitcher, drinking jug flat base, green-glazed jug bos & plain bos (1 is prob 13/14C Brill strip jug OXAM). 2x East Wilts ware (OXAQ c1150-1400) incl sag cpot base. 1x Olney Hyde-type shelly ware (OXCG, c1150-1400 = fresh bo from wheel-turned jug with deeply thumbed handle base
13	c1550-1625	39	349	All fresh but fragmentary. 1x Frechen stoneware (FREC) squat globe & shaft jug rim (diam 70mm) with applied 5-petal rosette or daisy on ext rim shaft (c1550-1625, or poss c 1570-1625?). 1x borderline early PMR or late Brill OXBX fine redware storage jar/cistern rim with horizontal applied & thumbed strip under rim & large splash clear brown glaze. 1x small flat base sherd (diam 50mm) prob from a cup in dark

Ctx	Spot-date	Sherds	Weight	Comments
				brown/black-glazed redware - poss Brill Cistercian type (CSTN c1500-1650) or early black-glazed redware (PMBL c1580-1750) but probably L16/E17C at latest. 36x v late smooth late med Brill (OXBX) all probably c 1550-1625 pale pink to orange-buff to nearly orange, incl plain everted jar rim, drinking jug rim & prob drink jug bases, drink jug bos, jar handle frags; mostly unglazed, some with splashes green or clear glaze
14	c1550-1625	8	32	Fresh bos - all v similar v late smooth OXBX from 2-3 vess. Only 1 clear glazed. Possibly JOINS (13)
20	c1450-1625	8	73	Fresh bos All OXBX incl 1x bo unglazed small ?drinking jug in smooth late pink-buff fabric. 4 sherds prob from the same glossy green-glazed ?drinking jug (poss copying Tudor Green ware?). 2 bos from a sandier OXBX green-glazed jug with band of horiz combed dec. 1 unglazed coarser jug/jar lower wall sherd
21	c1450-1625?	1	2	Small fresh basal/wall sherd probably sandy OXBX cooking vessel with clear v fresh greenish-brown glaze int & poss traces of sooting ext
TOTAL		139	1417	

B.2 Animal bone assemblage

	Early Post-medieval 16th-17thC	Late Post-medieval 18th-19thC
Cattle	24	5
Sheep/goat	8	10
Sheep	6	1
Pig	4	
Rabbit	1	
Domestic fowl	5	
Goose	2	
Medium mammal	14	4
Large mammal	29	10

	Early Post-medieval 16th-17thC	Late Post-medieval 18th-19thC
Indeterminate	45	7
TOTAL	138	37
Weight (g)	2030	507

B.3 Epiphyseal fusion of cattle, sheep/goat, pig and horse in all phases following Habermehl (1975). Fusion stages follows Serjeantson (1996).

EARLY POST-MEDIEVAL		**Unfused**	**Fusing**	**Fused**
Cattle	Early fusion			
	Mid fusion			6
	Late fusion	1		1
Sheep/goat	Early fusion			3
	Mid fusion			1
	Late fusion		2	
Pig	Early fusion			
	Mid fusion			1
	Late fusion			
LATE POST-MEDIEVAL		**Unfused**	**Fusing**	**Fused**
Cattle	Early fusion	1		1
	Mid fusion			
	Late fusion			
Sheep/goat	Early fusion			2
	Mid fusion	1		2
	Late fusion	1		

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Appendix D. Summary of Site Details

Site name: Soakaway Test Pit, St Peter's College, Oxford

Site code: OXPETE14

Grid reference: SP 5111 0625

Type: Evaluation

Date and duration: August 2014 for 5 days

Summary of results: In August 2014, Oxford Archaeology (OA) was commissioned by Waterman Project Management Ltd on behalf of St Peter's College, Oxford to undertake the excavation of an evaluative test pit on the site of a proposed soakaway pit in the Linton Quadrangle of the college. The evaluation revealed a 16th-17th century pit cutting through a series of earlier deposits of uncertain provenance. The pit is likely to represent occupation associated with properties fronting on to New Inn Hall Street (formerly Little Bailey).

The fills of the pit were overlain by a series of fairly homogeneous 18th-19th century deposits which are likely to represent landscaping contemporary with the construction of Wyaston House (now Linton House) in 1797.

The remaining deposits are likely to represent a second phase of landscaping, possibly associated with the construction of St Peter's Church (now the college chapel) in 1874.

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 Museums Service in due course, under the following accession number: OCMS2014.183

Scale 1:10,000

Figure 1: Site location

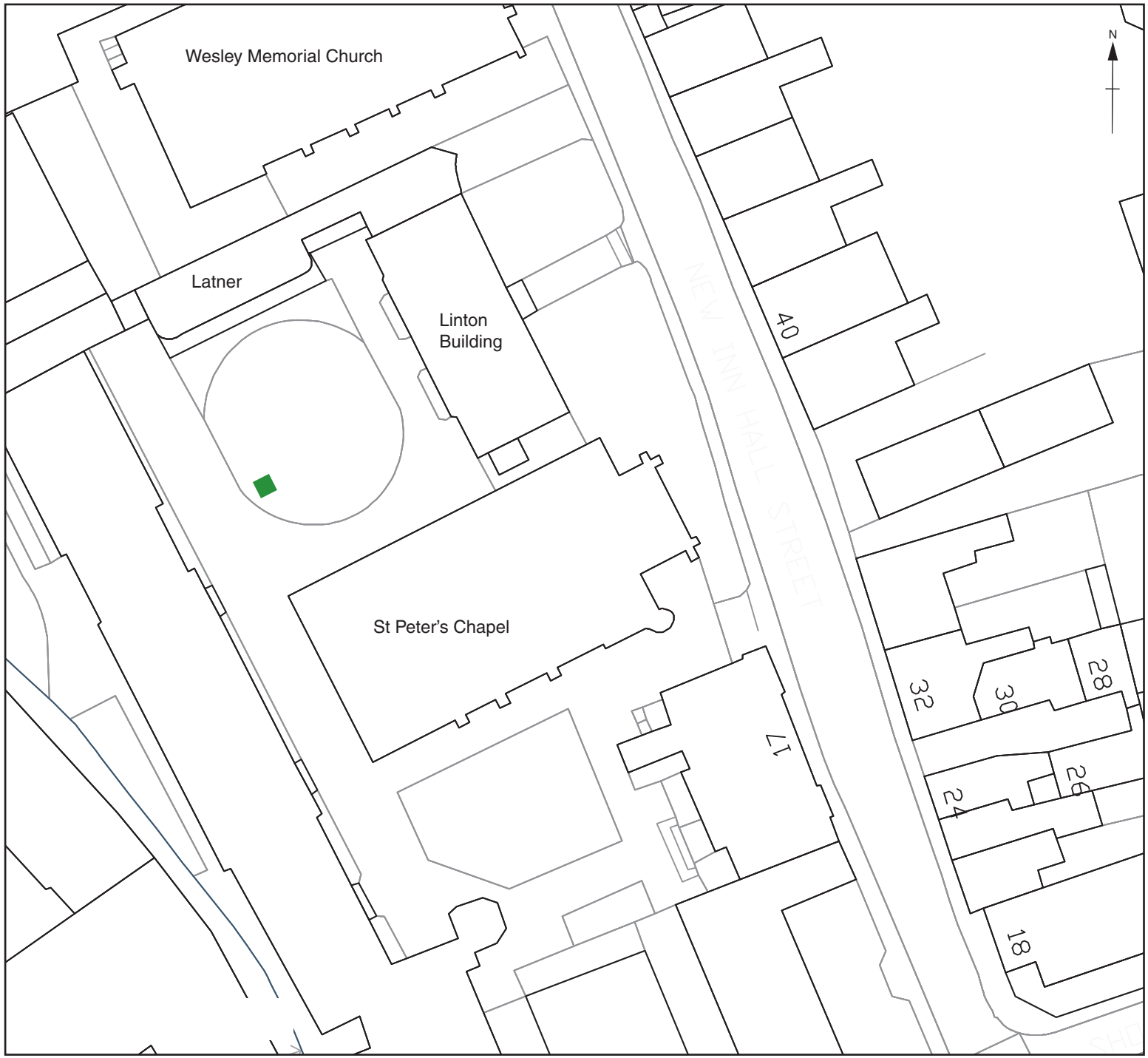

Figure 2: Test pit location

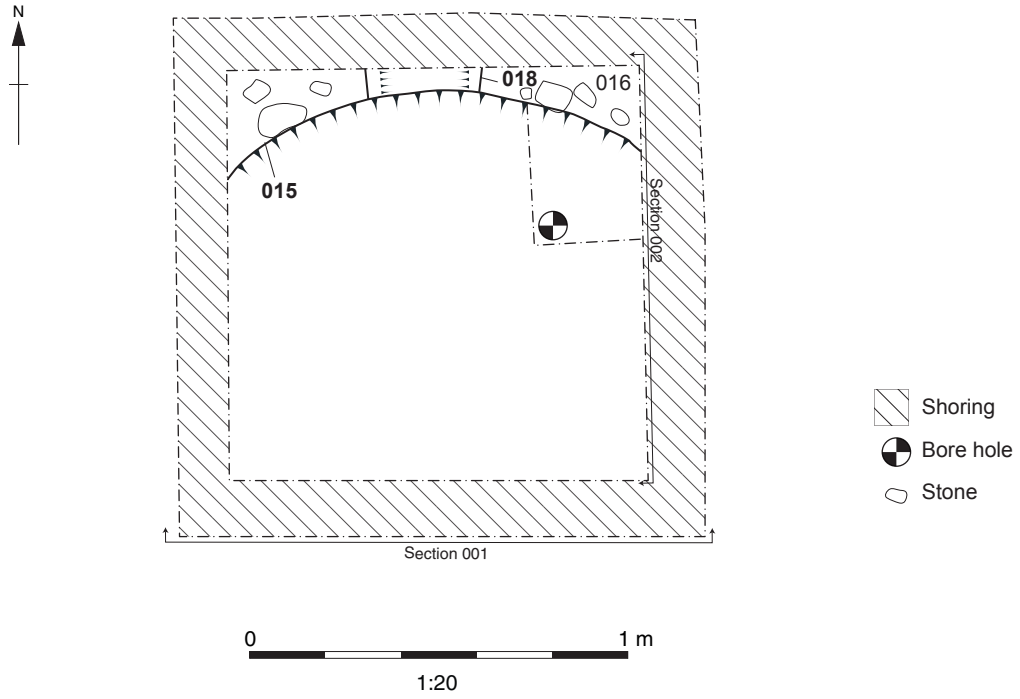

Figure 3: Trench plan

Section 003, composite of sections 001 and 002

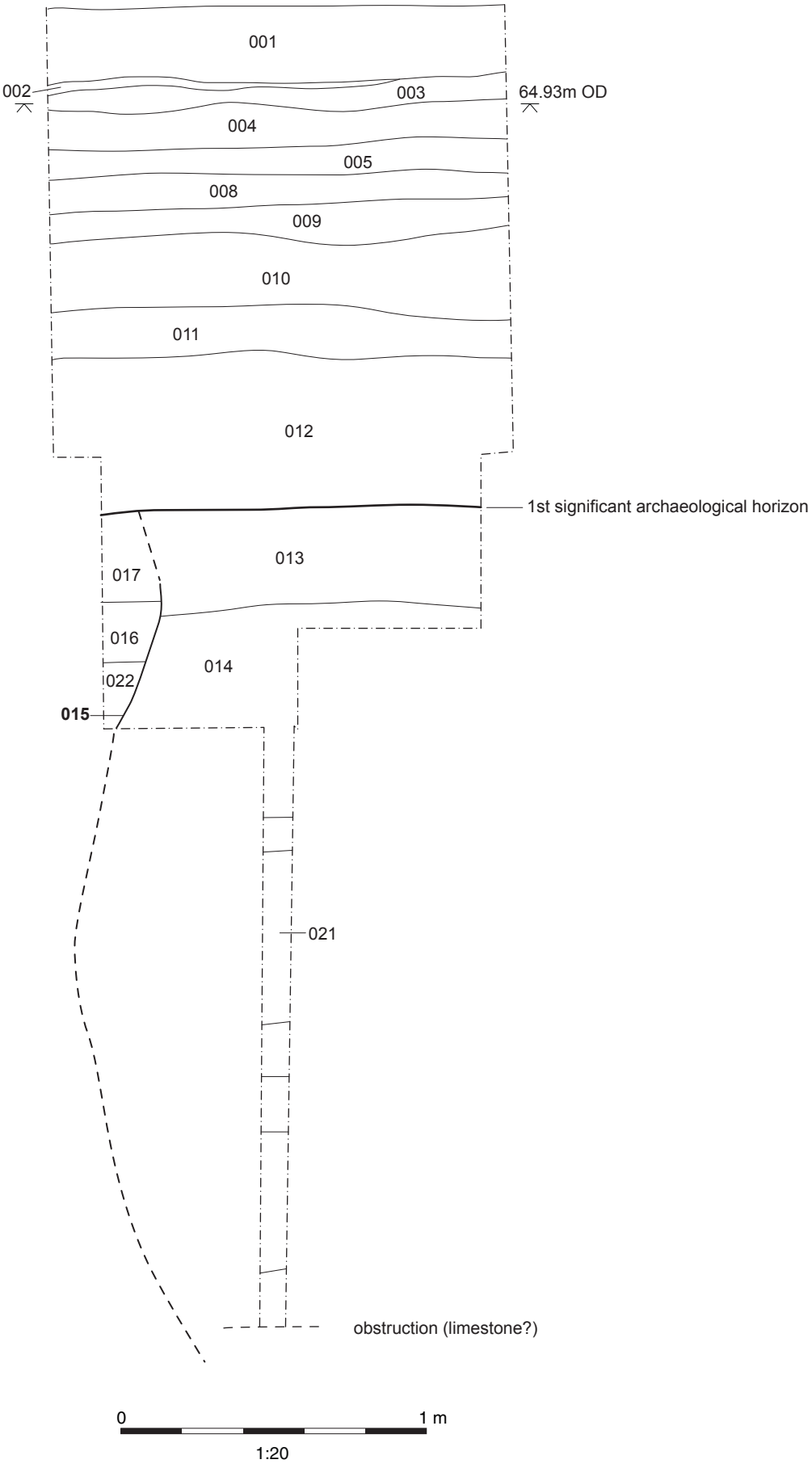

Figure 4: Composite section

Plate 1: Pit cut 015

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