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Archaeological Investigation Report



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SUMMARY

Between May 2007 and August 2008 Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out an archaeological excavation and watching brief at Magdalen College School, Oxford, where a proposal has been submitted to redevelop the Dining Hall (Planning Application No. 06/01530/FUL). Residual early-middle Saxon pottery was revealed and may be indicative of Anglo-Saxon activity on the banks of the Cherwell, possibly relating to a river crossing on the site of Magdalen Bridge.

Three 19th- and 20th-century ditches were revealed on the western side of the excavation, which may have represented a re-establishment of a medieval field boundary. A large 19th-century gravel quarry respected the limits of the ditches, and may have been dug to provide material for local development. There was no evidence for any activity associated with the 17th-century Civil War defences lying c 100 m to the north.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Location and scope of work

1.1.1 Between May 2007 and September 2008 Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out an archaeological excavation and watching brief at Magdalen College School, Oxford, where a proposal has been submitted to redevelop the Dining Hall (Planning Application No. 06/01530/FUL). As a result of the planning application Brian Durham, Oxford City Council Archaeologist, issued a condition requiring that an archaeological evaluation take place in the car park area, to the east of the proposed redevelopment (CARC01). The evaluation revealed evidence for prehistoric postholes, medieval quarrying and a boundary ditch, and a ditch thought to form part of the south-eastern limits of the city's Civil War defences (OA 2006). As a result of these findings Brian Durham (OCC) requested that a strip, map and record exercise was carried out within the footprint of the proposed building (*c* 0.1 ha), and a watching brief should be carried out on any associated services or groundworks (conditions CARC02 and 13).

1.1.2 The School is situated just off the Plain, bounded by Cowley Place to the west and Iffley Road to the east. Christ Church Sports Ground is located immediately to the south. The proposed redevelopment lies in the south-west of the school grounds (NGR SP 5221 0580), and occupies an area of 0.15 ha. The majority of the site was utilised as a car park, with the redundant dining hall and utility buildings to the south-west (Figs 1 and 2).

1.1.3 The site lies on the edge of the River Cherwell alluvial flood plain, overlying terrace gravel and sand, beneath which lies Oxford Clay. The site is located at *c* 59 m above OD, *c* 300 m to the east of the course of the River Cherwell. The site lies just outside the historic core of Oxford Town, within the parish of St Clements.

1.2 Archaeological and historical background

1.2.1 The site has been subject to previous archaeological work. An excavation was carried out in advance of the new science block in 1958, on the southern edge of the Civil War bastion (Case 1958) and a desk-based assessment (DBA) and watching brief were carried out in advance of a new three storey extension (OAU 1997 and OA 2001). The following comprises a summary of the DBA.

1.2.2 The site is located *c* 200 m to the south of the Plain roundabout, the site where St Clement's Church originally stood; St Clement's was consecrated in 1122.

1.2.3 The construction of the science block in 1958 produced evidence of Roman and Saxon activity from soil used to build the Civil War Bastion (Case 1958). Early medieval ditches and a pit, sealed by a 14th-century soil, were also revealed. The remains of the Civil War bastion survived as a small mound and evidence for an associated large ditch was also seen. A similar ditch was seen during the construction

of the Quicentenary Building in 1990. Land to the north of the present proposal area was subject to an intensive watching brief at Nos. 1-3 Cowley Place during alterations and extensions by Magdalen College. John Moore Heritage Services (JMHS) reported on late 11th-century finds, suggestive of some form of settlement here at the time of the Norman Conquest (JMHS 2001).

- 1.2.4 In 2000 a watching brief revealed 18th/19th-century pottery and features associated with the construction of the school buildings (OA 2001). A watching brief by Oxford Archaeology in January 2002 at the Jacqueline du Pré Music Building revealed an undated ditch (OA 2002a). Between December 2003 and February 2004 Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out an archaeological investigation at St Hilda's College; medieval ditches and associated postholes were revealed (Norton and Thomason 2005). The features may have formed a boundary delineating the eastern limits of the Parish of St Clements.
- 1.2.5 A number of post-medieval features were also revealed. They included 16th-century pits, a 17th-century boundary wall, surfaces, an ornamental well and an 18th-century limestone cellar. Later deposits were associated with the construction and inhabitation of the 18th-century Cowley House.
- 1.2.6 Historically the site appears to have been located within the open fields of Cowley parish, away from the main focus of settlement. In the 17th century the construction of the Civil War defences led to the remodelling of the medieval village of St Clements and the road pattern to the south of Magdalen Bridge. There was widespread demolition of the buildings around the Plain and the construction of a bulwark designed to defend the bridge. A massive three-pointed star outwork was located at the northern limits of Magdalen School, c 130 m to the north (OAU 1997).
- 1.2.7 As the parish population expanded during the late post-medieval period, the church of St Clement's became too small to serve the populous. The church was demolished in 1828 and was replaced by a new church on Hacklingcroft Meadow on the Marston Road. The old church was flanked by the London Road and the new London Toll Road created in the late 1700s and formed the island that has become the Plain. Iffley Road is shown for the first time on Faden's map of 1789. As a result of the new roads the development site became an isolated area on the north-west fringe of the parish. The development of the site by Magdalen College School began in 1928.

2 INVESTIGATION AIMS

2.1 General

- General aims were to establish the presence/absence of any archaeological remains within the proposal area, and to preserve any archaeological remains by record.
- To establish the ecofactual and environmental potential of any archaeological deposits and features and to make available the results of the investigation.

2.2 Specific

- Specific aims were to understand any posthole structures and the distribution of any prehistoric, Roman and medieval features in relation to contemporary usage of the area.
- To understand the profile, date and potential Civil War implications of the probable defence ditch.

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Scope of excavation

3.1.1 The main work comprised the stripping of overburden within the footprint of the proposed new buildings, an area of *c* 0.1 ha. The excavation was carried out by a 360° mechanical excavator, working under close archaeological supervision, and fitted with a toothless ditching bucket. Excavation proceeded to the top of the natural geology, the first archaeologically significant horizon.

3.1.2 The level of the natural geology was approximately 57.85 m OD in the western part of the site, the formation layer for the new building. Following consultation with Brian Durham (OCC), hand excavation only took place within the location of the proposed pile caps, and did not continue below 57 m OD (the base of the pile caps).

3.2 Scope of watching brief

3.2.1 A watching brief was carried out on groundworks to the north and east of the excavation area. In particular the work was focussed on four ground source heat pump trenches below the car park to the east. The trenches were aligned NE-SW and measured *c* 20 m long and 0.6 m wide. The excavation of manholes and service trenches was also observed (Fig. 2).

3.3 Fieldwork methods and recording

3.3.1 The revealed archaeological horizon was cleaned by hand and the revealed features were sampled to determine their extent and nature, and to retrieve finds and environmental samples. All archaeological features were planned and where excavated their sections drawn at scales of 1:20. All features were photographed using colour slide and black and white print film. Recording followed procedures laid down in the *OAU Fieldwork Manual* (OAU 1992).

4 RESULTS: GENERAL

4.1 Soils and ground conditions

- 4.1.1 The site is located on the first gravel terrace, which overlies Oxford Clay. The deposits encountered comprised a mix of gravel, clay and topsoil-like material. The site lies close to the River Cherwell, and in the southern part of site the water table was reached 0.1 m below the natural gravel horizon. However, through the use of a pump, excavation proceeded to the proposed impact level.

5 RESULTS: DESCRIPTIONS

5.1 Description of deposits

Excavation area

- 5.1.1 Within the main excavation area natural gravel (600) was reached in the eastern part of the site at 57.85 m OD and in the western part of site at 57.5 m OD, where it had been cut by a north-south aligned ditch (332/339 - Figs. 2 and 3, Sections 305 and 306). The ditch was flat based, over 1 m wide, 0.75 m deep and filled with dumps of clay and clay silts (333-338 and 340), fill 336 contained 14 sherds of early-mid 19th-century pottery and residual 18th-century pottery.
- 5.1.2 To the east of the ditch the natural gravel was cut by a large irregular quarry pit (315), which extended beyond the northern, western and southern boundaries of the site. The pit was up to 0.8 m deep, which coincided with the level of the underlying Oxford Clay. The pit was filled with slumped gravels and dumps of sandy and clay silts (316-320 - Fig. 3, Section 301) that contained sherds of 19th-century pottery. Residual sherds of pottery (328) dating from the early-middle Saxon period were also recovered from the eastern part of the feature. Residual sherds of 13th- or 14th-century were recovered from fill 318. The Saxon pottery comprised one sand-tempered sherd with organic tempering and a silty-tempered sherd with shell inclusions. The irregular nature of the pit and its sterile fills indicate that it probably formed an area of quarrying.
- 5.1.3 At the edge of pit 315 smaller pits were observed (see Fig. 2 - 313 and 329), which measured *c* 0.3 m deep. The pits were similarly filled and were probably extensions to the larger quarry. Residual 13th- or 14th- century pottery (331) was recovered from pit 329.
- 5.1.4 The fills of ditch 332/339, in the west of the site, had been cut by a similarly aligned ditch (343), which was 1.5 m wide, 0.7 m deep and filled with dumps of silty sand, brick and stone (344 and 345); the ditch probably formed a 'French' drain (Figs 2 and 3 Section 305). Late 18th- or early 19th-century pottery was recovered from the fills. The drain and the fills of the quarry (315) were cut by a third phase of north-south aligned ditch (341 and 346), measuring 1.2 m wide and 0.3 m deep (Figs 2 and 3).

Sections 305 and 306). It was filled with redeposited natural gravel and clay silt (342, 347 and 348) that contained 19th- or early 20th-century pottery.

- 5.1.5 Several rectangular cuts (see 321 - Figs 2 and 3, Section 301) had removed part of the quarry fills. They measured over 7 m long and *c* 4 m wide and were filled with dumps of clay silt, ash, charcoal and modern waste (322 and 323); their original function was unclear. A smaller pit (310) in the south of the site was similarly filled and contained 19th- or early 20th-century pottery. Pit 305 to the south of pit 310, measured *c* 2 m long, 1 m wide and its base was not seen. It was similarly filled and contained pottery dating from the mid 16th century to the 18th century; the pottery was abraded and likely to be residual. The deposits were overlain by modern levelling layers for the school.

Watching brief area (Figs 2 and 3)

- 5.1.6 Natural gravel (600) was revealed within the four ground source heat pump trenches at 58.9 m OD, which was cut by a quarry pit (605) in the northern part of the area. The pit was over 2 m long, and over 0.6 m wide but the base was not seen, being below the limit of excavation. It was filled with a silty clay (606) that contained animal bone, pottery and clay pipe fragments. The pit fill was overlain by a probable cultivation soil (604), measuring up to 0.4 m in thickness. The soil was also seen in Trench 2 in the 2007 evaluation, where it contained pottery dating from the 16th-18th centuries. Overlying the cultivation soil was a make-up layer (603) for the existing car park.
- 5.1.7 Similar deposits were also observed within the trenches for two manholes (A and B); within manhole B the edge of quarry pit 362 was observed, a continuation of cut 104, seen in Evaluation Trench 1. Quarry pit fills were also revealed in the service trench to the north of the new dining hall.

5.2 Finds

Pottery by John Cotter

Introduction and methodology

- 5.2.1 The assemblage comprises a total of 95 sherds of pottery weighing 2133 g, and recovered from a total of 15 contexts. All the pottery was examined and spot-dated in accordance with standard OA methodology, and recorded utilizing the coding system and chronology of the Oxfordshire County type-series (Mellor 1984; 1994).

Date and nature of the assemblage

- 5.2.2 The assemblage mostly comprises late 18th- and 19th-century domestic wares with smaller amounts of other post-medieval wares and a few earlier sherds including medieval wares and two Anglo-Saxon sherds. Many of the latest wares survive as large fresh sherds but most of the post-medieval and medieval pottery occurs as fairly small abraded sherds suggestive of residuality and re-deposition. This is also

indicated by the fact that contexts containing more than half a dozen sherds are all dated to the late 18th or 19th centuries, or conversely, that contexts containing only medieval or earlier pottery only contain small numbers of sherds.

- 5.2.3 The assemblage contains a very similar range of post-Roman pottery to that produced by the earlier evaluation. The types present are detailed in Table 1. The bulk of the pottery consists of mass-produced Staffordshire-type refined earthenwares, predominantly transfer-printed whitewares ('willow pattern' etc.) of 19th-century date and late 18th- to early 19th-century Pearlware and Creamware plus some English china and English stonewares. A variety of commonly traded 18th-century stonewares, tin-glazed earthenwares and local red earthenwares are also present. A few sherds of 18th-century Brill polychrome slipware dishes were also noted. One unusual item is an 18th-century London brown stoneware tankard rim into which a partial inscription has been neatly inscribed after firing. This is probably an owner's mark - normally pieces like this were commissioned (for taverns etc) and inscribed before firing. Unfortunately only the first two letters of the inscription 'Un---' or Ur--' survive.
- 5.2.4 A few sherds of German Frechen stoneware - a common import of the period *c* 1550-1700 were also present and a possible sherd of much rarer 16th-century late Siegburg stoneware. Medieval wares, as usual, include Brill/Boarstall ware jug sherds (*c* 1200-1600). Rather more notable items include a bowl rim in shell-tempered St Neots-type ware (*c* 900-1050) and, in the same context (context 328), two small sherds of probable Anglo-Saxon pottery including a grey sandy ware sherd with sparse organic tempering and a very small brickearth-type sherd with moderate fine shell tempering. These two probably date within the period *c* 450-850. Although small, the fact that they occur alone in the same context may be significant in hinting that that there was some Anglo-Saxon activity nearby rather than that the sherds, like other later wares, were dumped here subsequently.
- 5.2.5 The assemblage is a typical cross-section of well-known post-Roman pottery types as found on Oxford sites but dominated by a large late 18th- and 19th-century element. This is consistent with the interpretation of the assemblage as deriving from a post-medieval quarry backfill. Beyond the few pieces already noted there is nothing particularly unremarkable here.

Table 1: Pottery by context

Context	Spot-date	Sherds	Weight	Comments
302	19C	13	344	Transfer-printed Staffs whitewares (WHEW), English stoneware ink bottles (EST), Nottingham stoneware (19C type) (NOTTS), Wedgwood green-glazed Creamware (CREA). Post-med red earthenware (REW or OXDR)
308	L17-18C	4	44	English tin-glazed earthenware, min 3 vess. (ENGTN or OXCE)
309	c1550-1700	1	6	Bs Frechen stoneware (FREC)
312	19-E20C	9	122	1x WHEW dish rim with late style blue banding. 3x flowerpot. REW. Bs Staffordshire-type combed slipware (STSLBEW). Bs Midlands 18C stoneware mug. Brill polychrome slipware bs (REWSL). 18C London stoneware jar bs (EST)
318	c1375-1550	1	2	Small bs Tudor Green ware (TUDG)
323	19C	3	447	Mod English stoneware flagon (EST). Rim REW jar
326	19C	1	8	Mod English stoneware ink bottle (EST)
328	c450-850?	2	5	2 small bss prob Anglo-Saxon. 1 grey sand-tempered with sparse organic tempering. 1 small scrap grey silty with moderate fine shell inclusions & brown surfaces
330	19C	29	424	Lots transfer blue WHEW incl marker's marks incorporating Victorian Royal coat of arms. English bone china teapot. Flow blue WHEW. The earthenware assemblage is earlier (in 2 separate bags) & incl black glazed REW tyg, bs Cistercian ware tyg, Frechen jug base, green Border ware (BORDG) & REW - L16-17C wares
331	c1200-1400	4	62	OXAM 13/14C style incl slashed jug handle, & ?OXAW jug rim
336	c1820-40?	14	172	WHEW, transfer Pearlware (PEARL). Flowerpot. Staffs white stoneware 18C. Base London stoneware tankard 18C. REW. Bs late ?Siegburg stoneware - unglazed poss from a schnelle?
344	1780-1830	3	19	1x transfer PEARL. 1x 18C London stoneware mug rim with owner's name carefully scratched into surface below rim 'Un ---' or 'Ur---' - v unusual - also in that the upper iron-slip dipped brown band hasn't fired properly. 1x v worn bs glazed ?OXY 11-13C
345	L18-E19C	8	375	REW incl 2 jar bases with late-looking fabric/glazes. Bs Brill polychrome slipware 18C. BORDG ?chamberpot pad base. 1x rim St Neots-type ware (OXR) - poss a plain thickened bowl rim c900-1050
348	19-E20C	2	95	Base WHEW marmalade-type jar, plain. 1x Frechen stoneware jug handle c1550-1700
606	19C	1	8	Staffs white earthenware
TOTAL		95	2133	

Flint by Geraldine Crann (OA)

- 5.2.6 A fragment of a microdenticulated flint blade (SF 300; context 303) was recovered from the site. The blade is likely to be early Mesolithic in date, but in the absence of other diagnostic material it is not possible to confirm the date.

Clay tobacco pipes by Andrew Norton (OA)

- 5.2.7 The excavation produced a total of 38 fragments of clay tobacco pipes. The assemblage was recovered from dumped quarry and ditch fills. The pipes were examined in line with standard OA practice and with reference to Oswald's general typology (Oswald 1975).
- 5.2.8 The results of the assessment are tabulated below by context (Table 2). Of the total of 38 fragments of clay tobacco pipes 30 are stem fragments, and no decoration, makers marks or stamps were observed. The eight bowl fragments are generally whole or partially whole, and seven can be closely dated. The bowls range in date from 1640 to the late 19th century, reflecting the mixed nature of the quarry pit fills. Of interest was a mid-late 19th-century bowl with a leaf pattern on its front and rear, and ?stars on its spur (context 323). The shape of the bowl resembled a George Norwood bowl from St Ebbes dating from 1852 to 1863 (Oswald 1984, fig. 26e, 258), although the design was similar to a larger bowl from the same assemblage (Ibid., fig. 26c, 258).
- 5.2.9 The clay pipes are of uncertain provenance and add little to our understanding of the site. Although most of the date ranges given are for London types it can be assumed that examples from Oxford will have been made at a similar time.

Table 2: Incidence of clay pipe stems and diagnostic fragments by context

Context	Stem	Bowl	Heel/Spur	Comments
306	1			Discoloured through burning
308	4	3	2 x spur; 1 x heel	2 x Type 19G (bulbous bowl) 1690-1710; 1 x Type 10G 1700-40
312	6			
323	2	1	spur	1850-70 leaves on front and rear, mould lines, ?stars on spur - similar size to fig. 26e in Oswald 1984)
330	9	3	2 x spur; 1 x heel	1 x Type 17G 1640-70; 1 x Type 19G (bulbous bowl) 1690-1710; 1 x Type ?11G (fragmentary) 1730-60; 1 x stem discoloured through burning
335	1			
336	1			
348	2			
606	4	1		Fragmentary bowl

Building Material by Cynthia Poole (OA)

- 5.2.10 A total of 39 fragments, weighing 9654 g, of building material was recovered from the work. The assemblage is predominantly post-medieval in date, with some medieval material also present. No complete objects were recovered and levels of

abrasion were variable. The high mean fragment weight of 248 g reflects the dominance of brick in the assemblage rather than the quality of preservation.

- 5.2.11 The bricks, apart from very recent examples, were made in a red, orange or reddish brown sandy fabric, sometimes laminated with cream streaks, and containing medium quartz sand, calcareous clay pellets and ferruginous red or black grits. Brick size varied from 40-68 mm thick and 104-105 mm in width. The thinner bricks of 40-50 mm thickness may be of Tudor date. The range in thickness and quality of bricks suggest a range of dates through the post-medieval period from 16th to 19th century. One frogged brick, made in granular calcareous clay fabric, with part of the makers stamp in the frog is of 19th-20th century date.
- 5.2.12 Roofing material included a piece of Welsh slate with a nail hole, but otherwise comprised ceramic tile. This was almost all flat fragments without any further distinguishing characteristics, though most probably pieces of peg tile. They ranged in thickness from 10-16 mm. One with a light green glaze partly covering the surface may be part of ridge tile. One fragment of crested ridge tile was heavily weathered but retained some amber glaze with green speckles. The crest was in the form of cut low pyramidal spurs, the individual spurs measuring 35 mm long, by 30 mm wide, by 16 mm high. The roof tile was made in two fabrics: one, light reddish yellow with pale grey core, contained well sorted medium quartz sand and is probably a medieval fabric. The second was an orange laminated clay with low density of sand, cream clay pellets and in some instance calcareous or shell inclusions. The ridge and glazed tile are medieval, whilst the plain fragments were a mixture of medieval and post-medieval.
- 5.2.13 Two floor tiles were recovered. One had a heavily worn surface and may originally have had a plain glazed surface. It measured 25 mm thick by 135 mm wide, which would be consistent with a medieval date. The second tile was a thick quarry tile 53 mm thick by over 140 mm wide, which is of post-medieval date.
- 5.2.14 The heterogeneous character of the assemblage suggests that it derives from several sources of differing dates and accumulated over some period of time. This would be consistent with the interpretation of features on the site as quarries, which were infilled with occupation and building debris derived from a diverse area.

Table 3: Quantification of Building materials

Form		Total
Brick	Count	26
	Wt (g)	7582
Floor	Count	2
	Wt (g)	1312
Roof: crested ridge	Count	1
	Wt (g)	122
Roof: flat	Count	9
	Wt (g)	462
Slate Roofing	Count	1
	Wt (g)	176
Total Sum of Nos		39
Total Sum of Wt (g)		9654

Animal bone by Rachel Scales (OA)

5.2.15 Twenty-seven animal bone fragments were recovered by hand from dumped post-medieval deposits, during the excavation and watching brief work. The bones were identified with the aid of the Oxford Archaeology bone reference collection and published texts. Horse, cattle, and sheep/goat bones were identified (Table 4).

Table 4: Animal bones by context

Context	Species	Element	Quantity	Weight (g)
112	Medium mammal	longbone	2	12
116	Cattle	skull	1	146
116	Large mammal	skull	1	5
116	Sheep/goat	skull	1	3
123	Cattle	femur	1	74
204	indet	indet	1	2
204	indet	indet	3	6
204	Large mammal	mandible	1	14
208	indet	indet	1	6
212	Large mammal	metapodial	1	3
219	Cattle	calcaneus	1	61
219	Cattle	pelvis	1	167
219	Cattle	tibia	1	47
219	Large mammal	humerus	1	64
606	Horse	Metatarsal	1	54
606	Cattle	Tibia	1	219
606	Large mammal	Indeterminate	7	33
606	Large mammal	Vertebra	1	55

5.2.16 With so few mammal bones present it is not possible to investigate husbandry practices further beyond noting that the elements recorded are likely to reflect domestic activity.

6 DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATION

6.1 Reliability of field investigation

6.1.1 The investigation was limited by the fact that hand excavation only took place within the location of pile caps, and that it stopped at the proposed impact level. However, all potentially prehistoric pits (small regular, gravel filled features) were investigated, although such features proved to be extensions of the quarry.

6.1.2 Residual Saxon and medieval finds were recovered from the fills of the quarry but there did not appear to be any intrusive material entering earlier deposits, and any dating evidence can be relied upon.

6.2 Overall interpretation

Prehistoric

6.2.1 Two Iron Age postholes were revealed in Evaluation Trench 2 (Fig. 2), but no further evidence of Prehistoric activity was observed during the more recent works. It is unlikely that the postholes were isolated features, the centre of the site's elevated position beside the Cherwell would have made it an ideal settlement site; natural gravel is almost 1 m higher within the car park area than it is within the area of the new dining block area. It is more likely that other evidence of settlement was lost to the post-medieval quarrying.

6.2.2 There is very little known prehistoric activity in the eastern part of Oxford, which has seen little excavation. A prehistoric buried soil was revealed at Holywell Ford (Bell 1994, 45; Bell 1996, 277), c 0.65 km to the north of Magdalen College School; and excavation on Logic Lane, c 0.5 km to the north-west of the site, revealed prehistoric ditches (Radcliffe 1961-2, 39-43). Such evidence suggests that there was prehistoric settlement in the eastern part of Oxford, and it is possible that an Iron Age farmstead lay in close proximity to Magdalen College School.

Anglo-Saxon

6.2.3 Although no Saxon features were revealed, the early-middle Saxon pottery is very important. Little is known of Oxford prior to the 10th century; St Frideswide's minster is thought to date from the late 7th century and to lie within the grounds of Christ Church (Dodd 2003, 17-19); a stone surface at the south end of St Aldates may have formed a middle-Saxon river crossing; and settlement evidence has been found predating the 10th-century burh (ibid., 13). The pottery recovered from Magdalen College School may be indicative of early-middle Saxon activity on the banks of the Cherwell, possibly relating to a river crossing on the site of Magdalen Bridge. However, the pottery was recovered from a 19th-century quarry and we cannot be

certain of its provenance. It is possible that material from elsewhere in Oxford was dumped within the quarry.

Medieval and post-medieval

- 6.2.4 The medieval and early post-medieval finds may have derived from nearby activity, possibly farming within Cowley Parish. Three north-south aligned medieval ditches were revealed during work on the St Hilda's Library extension, to the north-west of site, and were thought to form boundary ditches possibly defining the western limits of the Parish of St Clements, or St Clement's churchyard, though they could have represented field boundary ditches (Norton and Thomason 2005, 336). A 13th-century ditch (207) revealed within Evaluation Trench 2 may have also formed a field boundary. The ditches located at St Hilda's may have continued into the site of Magdalen College School, and the 19th- and 20th-century ditches revealed during the excavation may have represented a re-establishment of this boundary. It is likely that this boundary was established prior to the 19th-century quarry; the quarry generally respected the edge of the ditches. The quarry appears to post-date the construction of the late 18th-century Iffley Road, and may have been dug to provide gravel for the construction of nearby buildings. The 20th-century rectangular features may have been associated with the construction of Magdalen College School in 1928.
- 6.2.5 There was no evidence of the 17th-century Civil War defence ditch, thought to have been observed in the evaluation (OA 2006). What is more likely is that the defences lay *c* 100 m to the north, as extrapolated in the Oxford Urban Database (OA 2002b - Fig. 4) and that the 'ditch' seen during the evaluation was actually the edge of the quarrying.

7 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- 7.1.1 Special thanks are extended to Magdalen College School and Chris Bates for their co-operation throughout the work. Brian Durham (OCC) monitored the works, which were carried out by Robin Bashford and Steve Leech. The illustrations were produced by Julia Moxham and Paul Booth edited the report in draft.

APPENDIX 1 BIBLIOGRAPHY AND REFERENCES

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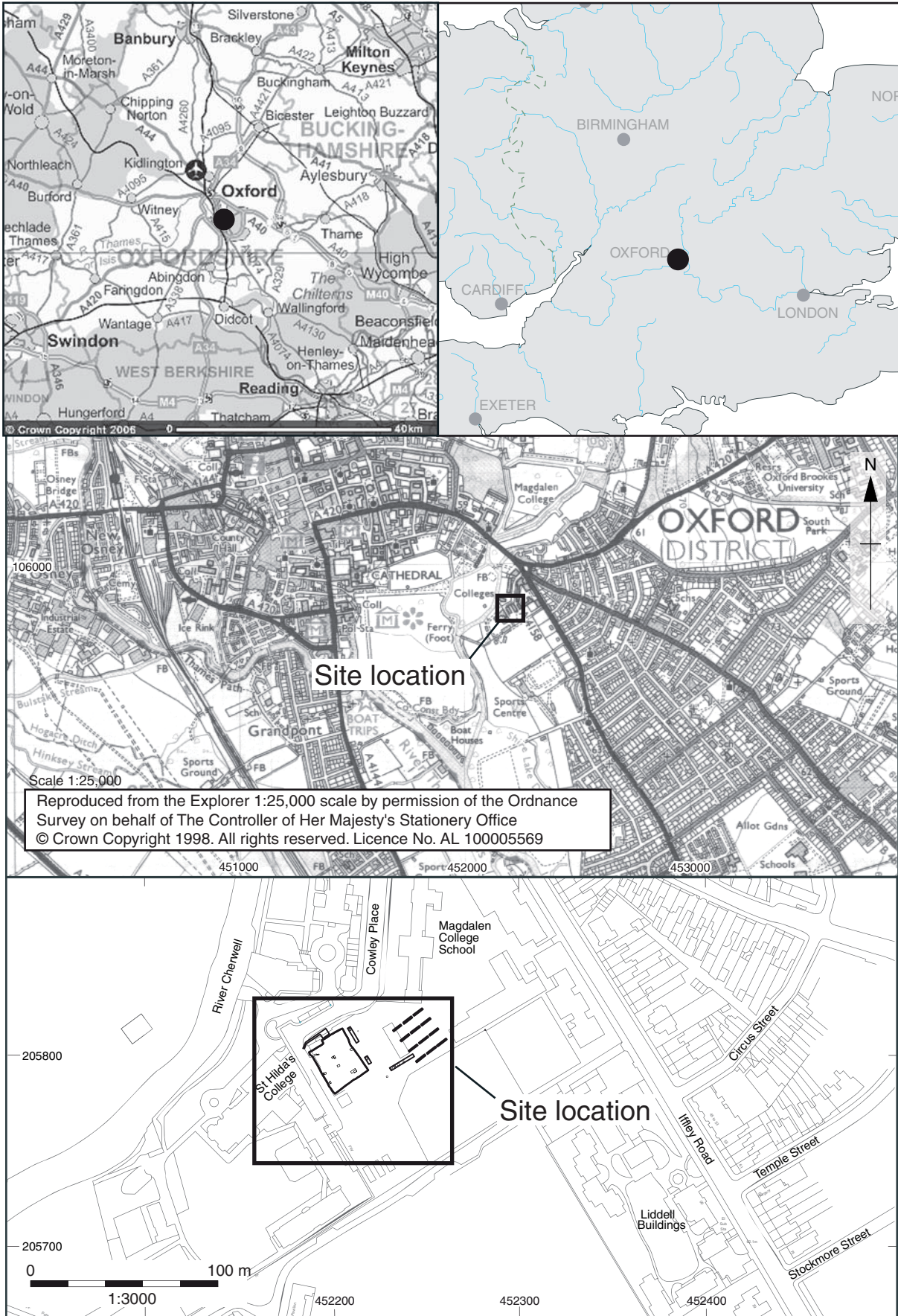


Figure 1: Site location

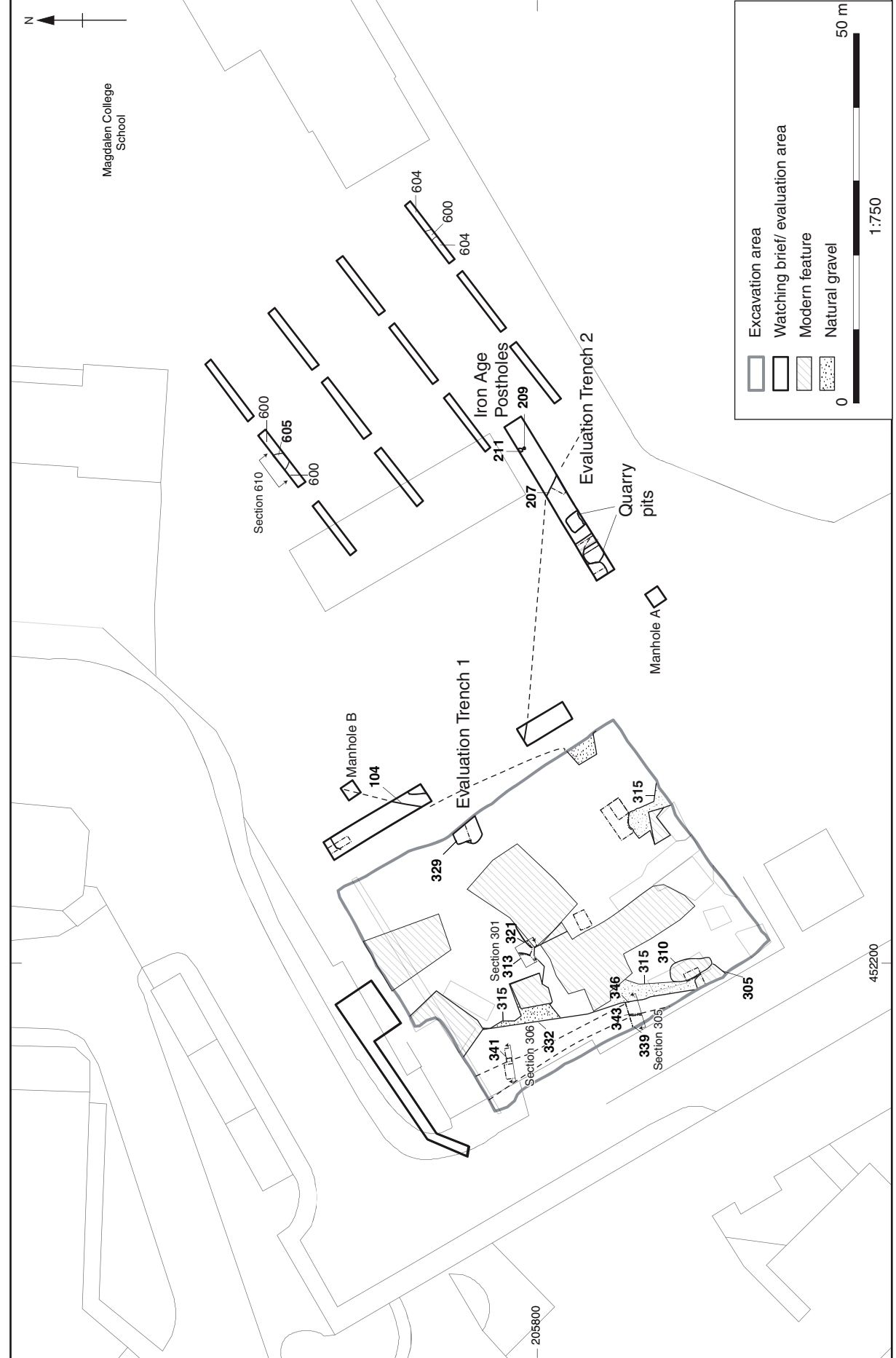


Figure 2: Excavation plan

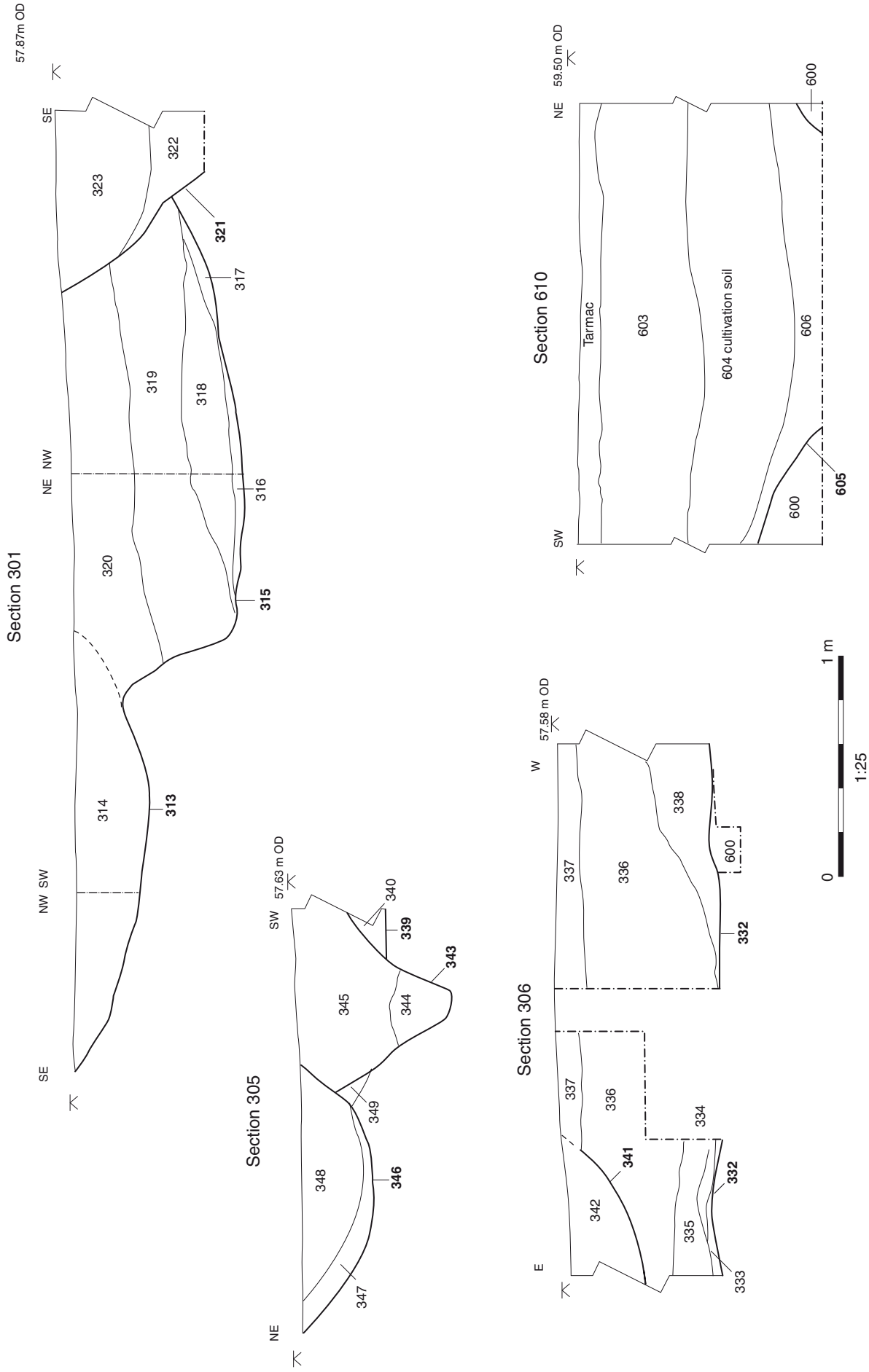


Figure 3: Sections

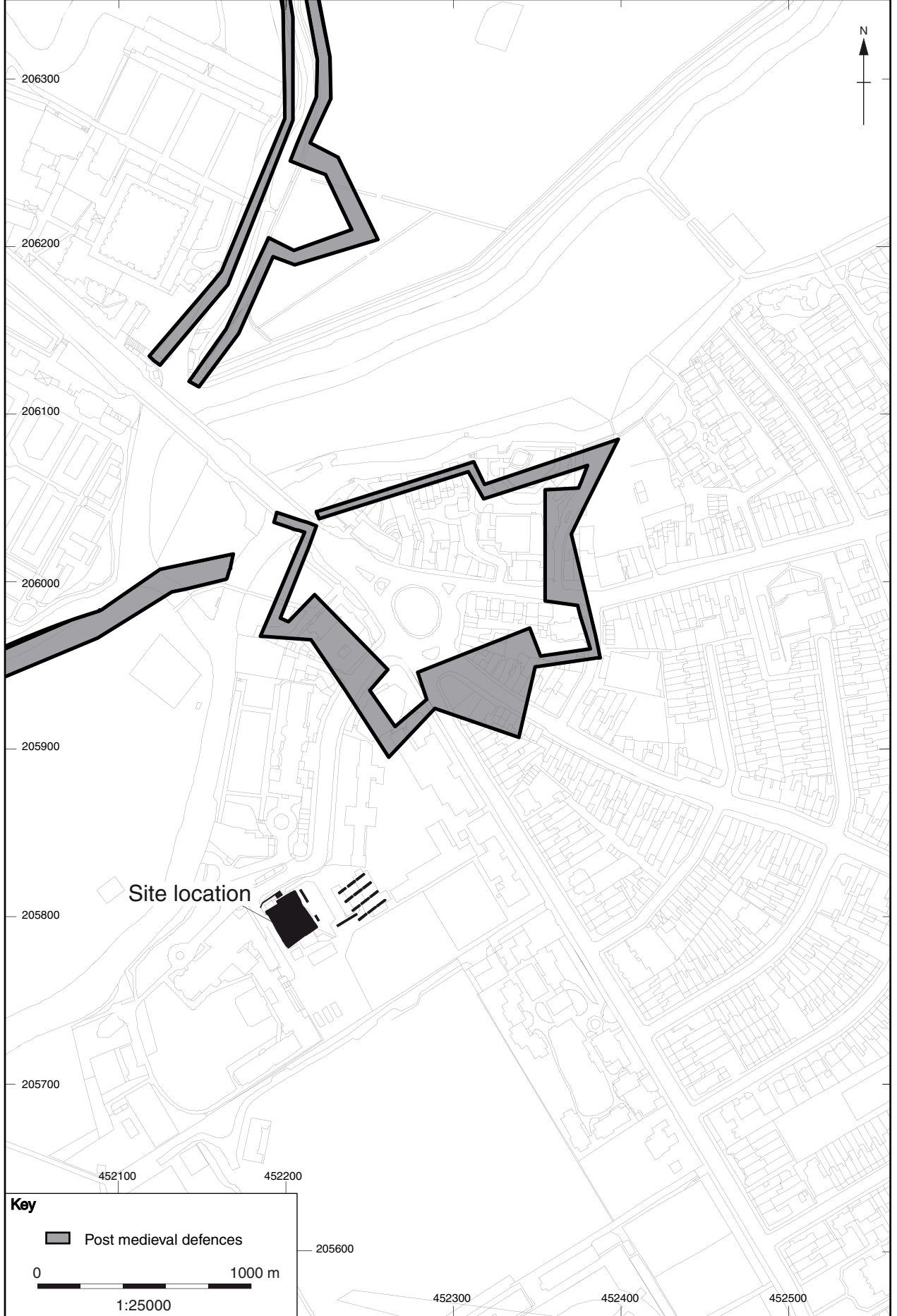


Figure 4: Detail from the Oxford Urban Archaeological Database, showing De Gomme's plan of Civil War defences



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