JOHN MOORE HERITAGE SERVICES

# AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

# OF THE

# LAND TO THE REAR OF 1 MARKET PLACE, WALLINGFORD, OXFORDSHIRE

**SU 6078 8941**

***On behalf of***

***Mr. C. Williams***

**JULY 2006**

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|---|---|
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***Summary***

*An evaluation of this site was conducted by John Moore Heritage Services from 10th-13th July 2006. Four trenches, totalling 31 metres in length, were excavated to a depth of 1.6m below ground surface. Archaeological deposits were limited. All trenches showed a sequence of made ground. Augering would suggest that the area lies within a quarry for aggregates. All trenches located several 19th - 20th pits.*

# 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Site Location *(Figure 1)*

The site is located to the rear of 1 Market place, Wallingford (NGR SU 6078 8941). The site access is from Wood Street. The area to be developed is approximately 545m$^2$. The underlying geology is Thames River gravels and the site lies at approximately 50m OD. The existing use is residential rear curtilage that is laid down to a garden with a single garage building located in the northeast corner.

## 1.2 Planning Background

There is a proposal for a terrace of new residential buildings to be erected on the site. Due to the potential for remains of archaeological significance to be present on the site, an archaeological evaluation of the site has been required prior to the determination of the planning application. This is in line with PPG 16 and Local Plan Policies.

## 1.3 Archaeological Background

This site lies within the historic core of Wallingford, which was a significant settlement in Saxon times as a defended burgh that was extremely prosperous with its own mint. During the Norman period the castle was constructed in the northeast corner of the Burgh and some of the street plan was realigned at this time. The upper part of Wood Street may have been included in this re-planning of the town. From the mid-13th century onwards Wallingford appears to have gone into a decline.

Several investigations in the centre of the town have revealed that in many areas below-ground archaeological deposits are well preserved. No significant recent structures are known on the site and therefore the potential for remains of all periods on this site was considered to be high.

Specific archaeological evidence from the St Mary's Street, Market Place, Wood Street area include HBSMR 7813 (SU6075 8938) 12th/13th century pottery from Lloyds Bank, HBSMR 10980 (SU6075 8935) medieval pits – one 1.82m deep-containing domestic debris and 12th /13th century pottery sealed beneath post medieval soil build up, HBSMR 13191 (SU6075 8932) medieval pits, HBSMR 15926 (SU6083 8941) medieval and post medieval pits, HBSMR 16140 (SU6076 8940) adjacent to, and south of the proposal area – burials from the Chapel cemetery.

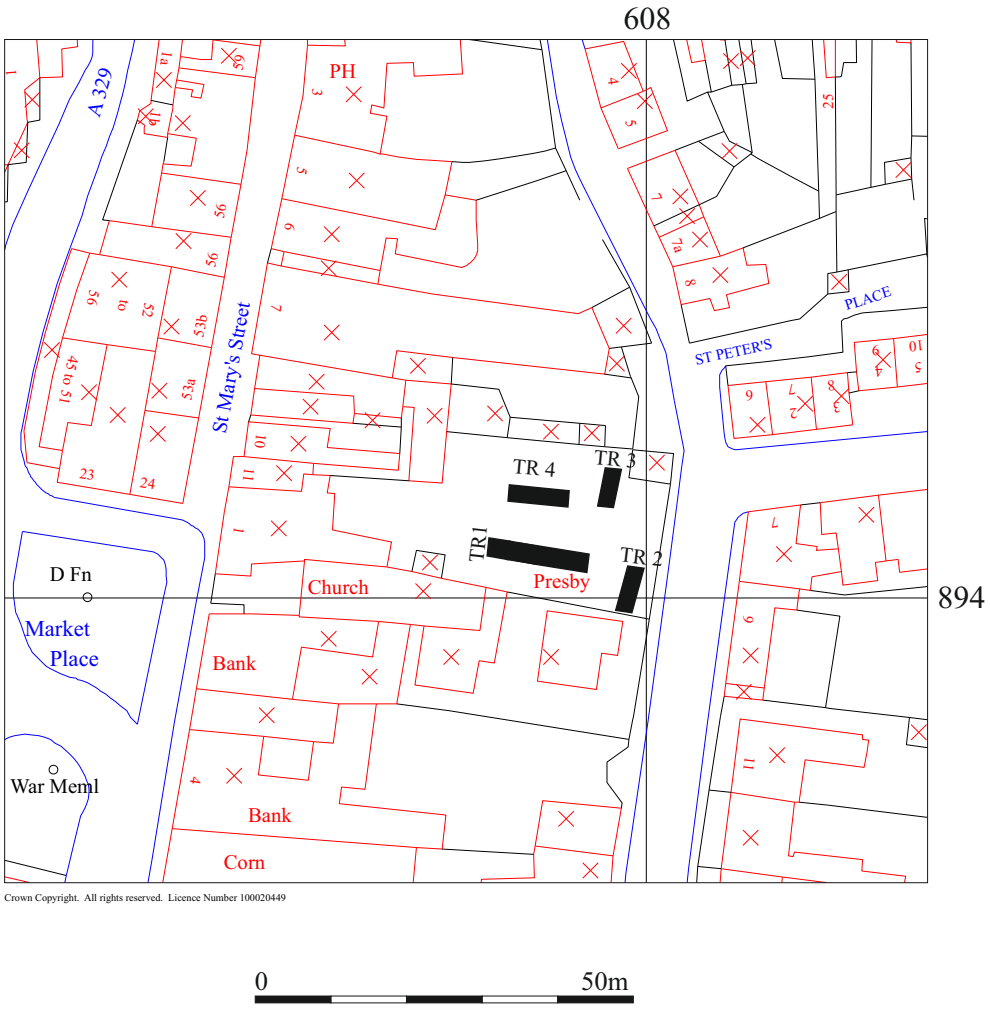



Figure 1: Site and trench location

## 2 AIMS OF THE INVESTIGATION

The aims of the investigation as laid out in the Written Scheme of Investigation were as follows:

- To establish the presence/absence of archaeological remains within the site.
- To determine the extent, condition, nature, character, quality and date of any archaeological remains encountered.
- To make available to interested parties the results of the investigation subject to any confidentiality restrictions.

In particular

- To obtain sufficient information on the significance, character, state of preservation and extent of deposits in order that a suitable mitigation policy can be drawn up.

## 3 STRATEGY

### 3.1 Research Design

In response to a *Brief* issued by Oxfordshire County Archaeological Services a scheme of investigation was designed by JMHS and agreed with the Oxfordshire County Archaeological Services and the applicant. The work was carried out by JMHS and was to involve the excavation of a total of five trenches across the site (Fig. 1).

Site procedures for the investigation and recording of potential archaeological deposits and features were defined in the *Written Scheme of Investigation*. The work was carried out in accordance with the standards specified by the Institute of Field Archaeologists (1994) and the principles of MAP2 (English Heritage 1991).

### 3.2 Methodology

The trenching sample specified within the brief was achieved through the excavation of one 13m trench (figure 1), one 10m trench, one 5m trench and a 3m trench. A proposed fifth trench of 4m was to have also been located at right angle between the two long trenches, however due to the result of the other trenches this was abandoned.

All trenches were 1.5 m wide and were excavated by a mechanical mini-excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket. The resultant surfaces were cleaned by hand prior to limited hand excavation of any identified archaeological deposits.

Standard John Moore Heritage Services techniques were employed throughout, involving the completion of a written record for each deposit encountered, with scale plans and sections drawings compiled where appropriate. A photographic record was produced. The trenches were backfilled after recording.

# 4 RESULTS

All deposits and features were assigned individual context numbers. Context numbers in [ ] indicate features i.e. pit cuts; while numbers in ( ) show feature fills or deposits of material.

## 4.1 Trench 1 *(Figure 2)*

The uppermost deposit within Trench 1 was a dark grey sandy silt loam (1/01) containing 10% gravel some charcoal flecks and brick fragments, it was 0.25m thick. This lay directly above a subsoil of light grey sandy silt (1/02), 0.2m thick with some brick fragments. Below this was a layer of mid brown-grey sandy silt (1/03) 0.6m thick that contained a considerable amount of brick rubble.

Cut into this layer (1/03) was a pit [1/10]. It was recorded only in section and was 1.25m wide and 0.4m deep with a flat base. It was filled with an orange clay sand (1/11) that contained some brick fragments (Fig. 2, Section 1.2).

In the eastern portion of the trench the deposit (1/03) lay above a thin band of compact dark brown-black sandy silt loam (1/12). This was 0.15m thick and contained frequent charcoal flecks and brick fragments. It possibly represents an old land surface.

Cut into this surface were six pits (Fig. 2, Section 1.2). The first [1/35] was 0.6m wide and 0.4m deep, with had a shallow conical profile. It was filled with a yellowish-white degraded mortar and sand with some brick fragments (1/26). The second pit [1/29] was sub-rectangular at least 1.6m by 3.25m, 1m deep and bowl shaped in profile. It was filled with a firm dark brown sandy silt loam (1/30) that displayed distinct lenses of gravel and sand. These possibly indicate discrete dumping sequences.

The other four pits were cut into the fill of pit [1/29]. The first of these [1/18] was a sharp concave feature 0.65m deep and 0.5m wide at the top. It was filled with orange sand and gravel (1/19) flecked with charcoal and brick fragments. The second [1/20] was U-shaped 0.8m deep and 0.8m wide. It was filled with a light grey sandy silt (1/21) with up to 50% mortar and some brick fragments. The next [1/22] was a rectangular U-shaped pit 0.75m deep, 0.75m wide and at least 1m long. It was filled with a white yellow mortar and degraded limestone (1/23) and also contained large fragments of brick and flint nodules. The last pit [1/24] cut both pits [1/29] and [1/22]. It was roughly U-shape in profile with a step in the east edge. It was 0.85m wide at the top and 0.6m deep. The fill of this pit was a yellowish sandy mortar with frequent brick fragments (1/25). It also displayed the banding indicative of dumping or tip sequences.

Directly under deposit (1/12) was a grey-brown sandy clay layer (1/33) at least 0.8m thick. It had frequent flecks of charcoal and brick fragments within it. Cut into (1/33) but sealed by the layer (1/12) were three pits.

The first of these pits [1/36] was a shallow U-shape 0.2m deep and 0.5m wide at the top. It was filled with a loose orange-yellow sand and gravel flecked with charcoal (1/13). The second pit [1/14] was sub-circular and 0.5m in diameter. It was 0.5m deep

with a rounded base and filled with a loose orange brown silty sand (1/15) with frequent brick fragments. The last pit [1/16] was U-shaped in profile 0.4m wide at the top and 0.4m deep. It was filled with a banded orange brown sandy gravel deposit with frequent brick fragments (1/17).

The lowest deposit (1/34) recorded was a mid grey-brown sandy silt loam flecked with charcoal, containing mortar and brick fragments. This deposit lay directly below (1/33). Cut into it was a circular pit [1/27] that measured 1.15m long and at least 0.6m wide. It was at least 0.2m deep but was not fully excavated. It was filled with a dark brown-black sandy loam (1/28) with frequent charcoal flecks and brick fragments.

In the western end of the trench under the deposit (1/03) was a layer of grey-brown sandy clay (1/04) that was 0.5m thick (Fig. 2, Section 1.1). It is probably the same layer as (1/33). Cut into this was a rectangular pit [1/05] at least 0.55m by 0.75m and 0.7m deep. This was filled with a loose light grey mortar and sand with mortar and large brick fragments (1/06).

Underneath (1/04) was a fairly compact mid brown-orange silty loam with a few stones and some brick fragments that was at least 0.2m thick (1/07).

Running the entire length of the northern side of the trench was a cut [1/08] for a services, either water or drainage. It was cut from (1/02) and was 0.6m wide at least and 1.5m deep. The fill was a mottled grey to orange-brown sandy clay (1/09) with frequent brick fragments and charcoal flecks. Under this cut was another pit [1/31] that was cut into (1/34).

### 4.2 Trench 2 *(Figure 3)*

The topsoil in the area of Trench 2 was a dark grey-brown silty loam (2/01) with 5% small stones and brick fragments that was 0.3m thick. This lay directly above a loose dark grey-brown silty clay loam subsoil (2/02) 0.2m thick containing 15% stone and brick fragments, including some whole bricks. Under this was a layer of compact brown-grey silty clay (2/03) with 10% small stones and brick fragments (Fig. 3, Section 2). It was 1.1m thick and showed some root disturbance from the small trees in the vicinity.

Cut into this layer (2/03) was a large rectangular pit [2/04]. It was over 5m long and at least 0.75m wide. It had vertical sides and was at least 1.1m deep (not fully excavated). The lowest fill recorded within this pit was a dark grey-brown silty clay deposit with charcoal flecks (2/07). Above this was a 0.7m thick layer of loose light grey sand and mortar with 50% rubble with ceramic roof tiles (2/06). The uppermost fill was a 0.2m thick compact orange sand and gravel (2/05) with some brick fragments.

The lowest deposit recorded within the trench was directly under (2/03). This was a compact orange-brown silty clay with 20% gravel and charcoal flecks (2/08). It was not excavated.

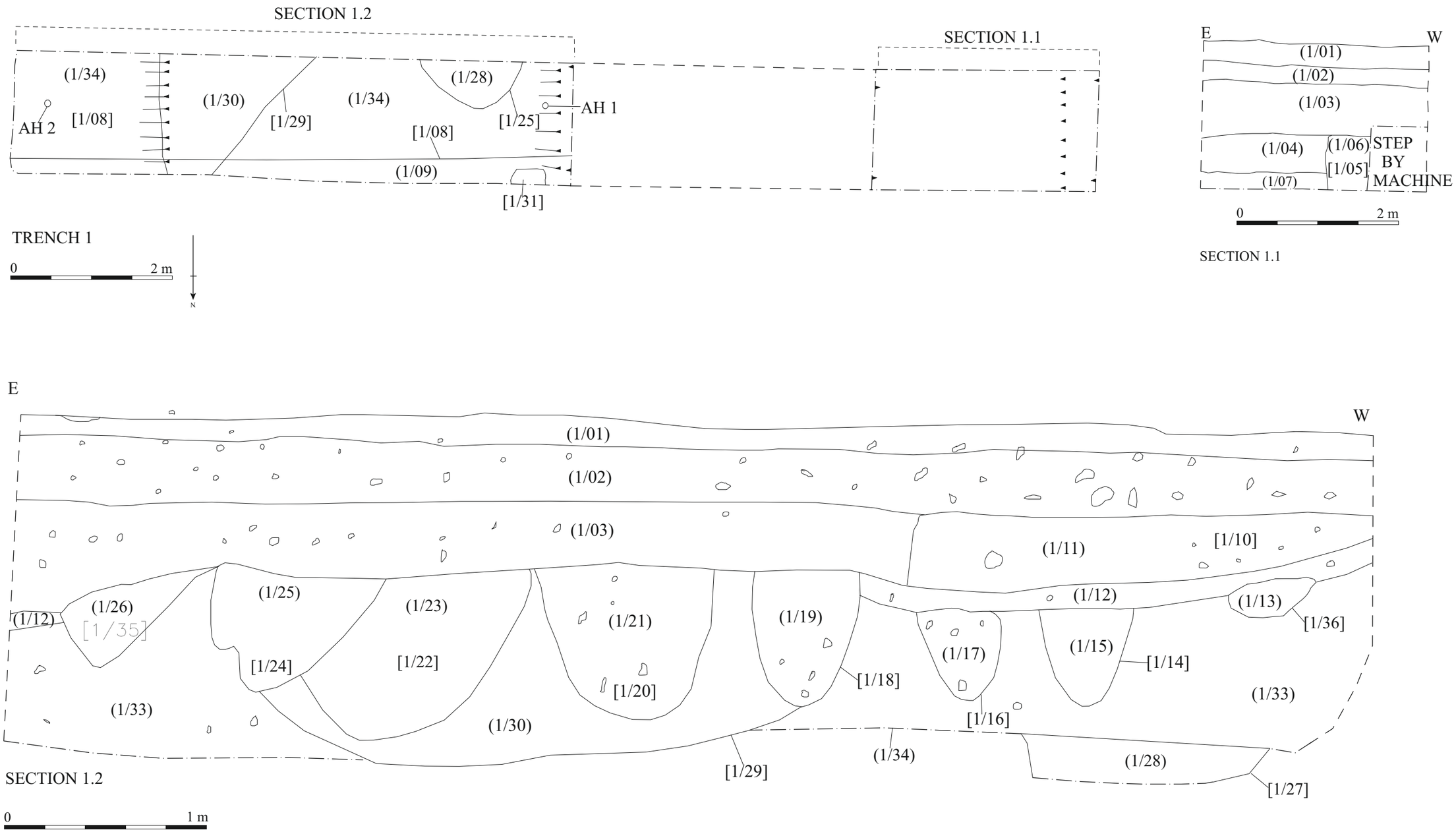



Figure 2. Trench 1 plan and sections

4.3 Trench 3 *(Figure 3)*

The uppermost deposit was a dark grey sandy silty loam (3/01) with approximately 10% small stone, some brick fragments and charcoal flecks, which was 0.3m thick. Under this was a 0.6m thick layer of friable mid grey sandy silt loam (3/02) again flecked with charcoal and containing small stones and brick fragments. This layer capped the fill (3/04) of a pit.

This pit [3/03] was large and of an in determinant size, but over 3m long by at least 1.5m wide. The edge to the south started very shallow near the top of the pit before turning to a near vertical angle after 1.4m. It was not fully excavated but was over 0.7m deep. It was filled with a loose light brown-cream sandy loam with large quantities of mortar, brick and stone (3/04). This deposit showed at least four distinct dumping episodes. These dumps appeared to be tipped from east to west into the pit. The lowest excavated dump (D) contained large amounts of building debris. Above this (C) had a high clay content with large quantities of domestic refuge in the form of pottery and glass. The next highest tip (B) consisted of smaller brick fragment and included metal working slag. While the uppermost tip recorded (A) was very sandy with some mortar included.

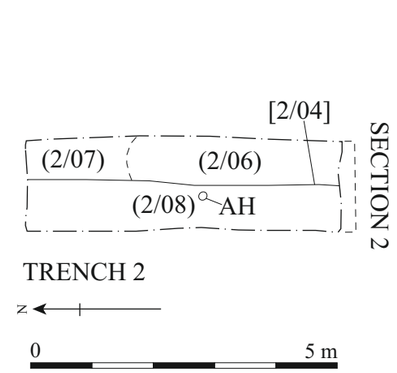
Pit [3/03] was cut into a deposit of dark grey silty clay (3/05) with 5% small stones and flecked with charcoal. This deposit was 0.24m thick. Under this was another deposit of loose greenish grey sandy clay (3/06) with sandy mortar and brick fragments that was at least 0.3m thick. Both these deposits were sequences of the made ground.

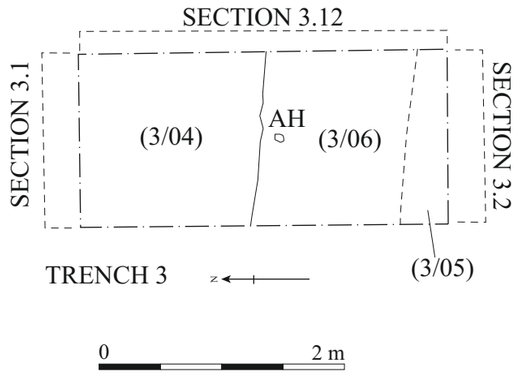
Cut into the fill (3/04) of pit [3/03] was another later pit (Figure 3, Section 3.3). This pit [3/07] was only recorded in section. It was 0.65m wide and over 0.4m deep the base was not seen. It was filled with a dark grey silty clay (3/08) with 5% gravel and flecked with charcoal.

4.4 Trench 4 *(Figure 3)*

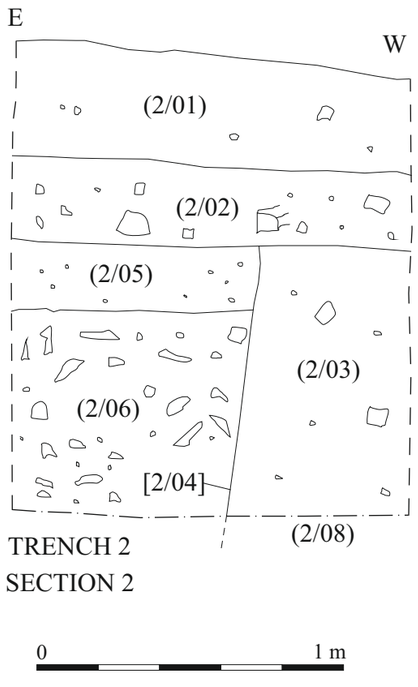
The upper deposit within Trench 4 was a friable dark grey-brown silty sandy loam (4/01) with approximately 20% small stones that was 0.34m thick. It covered the entire trench and lay directly above a deposit of mid grey-brown silty sandy loam (4/02) that contain about 30% small stones and was 0.48m thick. This lay above another layer of grey-brown silty sandy loam with 20% stones (4/03) that was 0.46m thick. Under this was a layer of dark grey-brown silty sandy loam with approximately 10% small stone (4/04) that was on average 0.36m thick (Figure 3, Section 4). All of these deposits contained small fragments of brick.

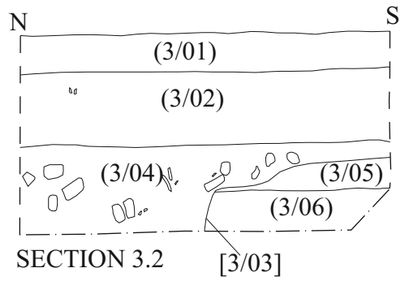
The lowest layer revealed through excavation was a dark brown-grey sandy clay loam with approximately 10% small stones, brick fragments and charcoal flecks (4/09). Cut into this deposit were two pits. The first pit [4/07] appeared to be circular and u to 1m in diameter. It was filled with dark brown grey sandy clay with charcoal and small brick fragments (4/06), but was not excavated. The second pit [4/08] was rectangular in plan measuring 1.5m by at least 0.4m. Partially excavated it had vertical sides and was filled with an orange-brown clay sand (4/05) with gravel and brick fragments (Figure 3, Section 4).

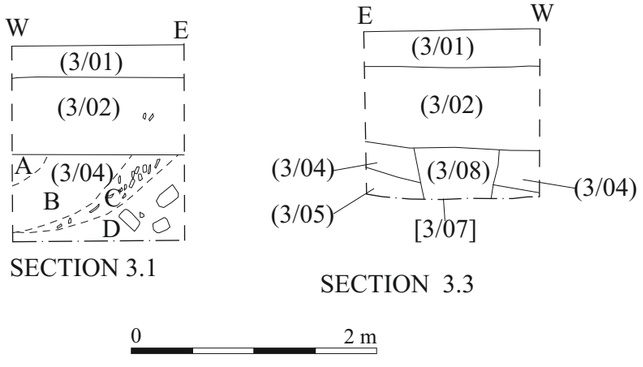






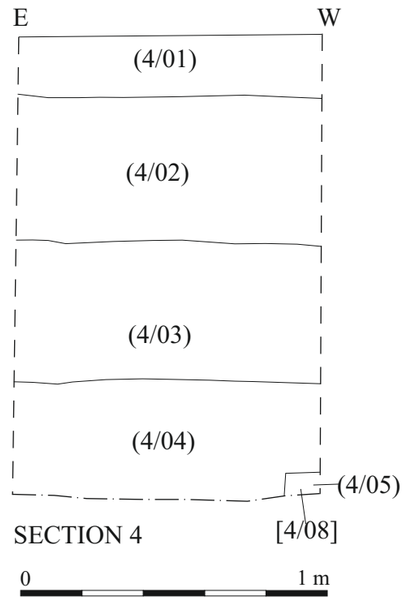




Figure 3. Trenches 2, 3 and 4 palns and sections

### 4.5 All Trenches

Due to the nature of the deposits recorded during machine trenching a limited auger survey was conducted within each trench to establish the height OD of the natural in the area (Table 1) in relation to the existing ground level.

Table 1: Auger Survey

| Trench Number | Position in Trench | Ground Level | Natural Level | Depth of Deposits |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | East | 48.91m | 45.48m | 3.43m |
| 1 | West | 48.97m | 45.54m | 3.43m |
| 2 | Middle | 49.05m | 46.67m | 2.38m |
| 3 | Middle | 49.10m | 46.43m | 2.67m |
| 4 | East | 49.17m | 45.97m | 3.20m |
| 4 | West | 49.27m | 45.77m | 3.50m |

## 5 FINDS

Several sherds of Mass-produced white earthenwares dating to the mid 19th - 20th century (WHEW) were recorded utilizing the coding system and chronology of the Oxfordshire County type-series (Mellor 1984; 1994). These came from contexts (1/01), (1/02), (2/02), (2/03), (2/06), (3/01), (3/04), (4/01) and (4/02).

Fragments of pipe stem and bowl were recovered from the following contexts (1/01), (1/03), (1/30), (2/07) and (3/04). The bowls were too fragmentary to date.

## 6 DISCUSSION

The land use to the south of the site appears to be different from that to the north in the later phases of the site. The southern area (Trenches 1 and 2) shows a sequence of dumping of building materials and waste from construction. Were as, the northern area (Trenches 3 and 4) shows a deeper sequence of garden soils, with only some dumping of domestic refuge. This is probably because the two areas were at some point within separate plots associated with houses on Market Place. The present house's split roof suggests an early phase when it was two separate dwellings.

The pits to the south contain waste building material typical of many standing buildings in the immediate area. It would appear that there are at least two main phases of pit, and therefore possible associated building sequences. These were separated by a number of years, allowing a garden soil (1/12) to build up before more work was carried out. It is possible that these pits actually contain demolition material from outbuildings not recorded archaeologically or on maps; or refurbishments to the buildings on Market Place.

The depth of the natural from modern ground level can only be explained if the area was previously used as a quarry for aggregates. This is not uncommon within

Wallingford (*pers. com.* P. Smith). It would appear that the edge of the quarry lies to the north and east of the excavated trenches. Trench 3 recorded made deposits of 2.67m and Trench 2 deposits of 2.38m. To the west Trenches 1 and 4 recorded depths between 3.2m and 3.5m.

## 7 CONCLUSIONS

All trenches located a sequence of made ground to a depth of 1.6m below present day ground level. Augering indicated this made ground to be at least 3.5m thick towards the south-west. This made ground appears to be the deliberate back-filling of an aggregate quarry, with the ground surface later raised in layers or phases. Evidence for dumping waste building material in pits was seen within two trenches and rubbish disposal within another. This activity is dated to the 19th century. The associated building activity appears to have had at least two main phases.

Whilst any decision regarding further work on the site must rest with Oxfordshire County Council Archaeological Services, it is the opinion of John Moore Heritage Services that no further archaeological work needs to be conducted regarding the development of the site.

## 8 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Mellor, M, 1994 Oxford Pottery: A Synthesis of middle and late Saxon, medieval and early post-medieval pottery in the Oxford Region *Oxoniensia* **59**, 17-217

## APPENDIX – ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONTEXT INVENTORY

| Context | Type | Description | Depth (m) | Width (m) | Length (m) | Finds | Date |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Trench 1** | | | 1.8 | 1.5 | 13 | | |
| 1/01 | Layer | Topsoil | 0.25 | Tr. | Tr. | Pot | Modern |
| 1/02 | Layer | grey sandy silt | 0.2 | Tr. | Tr. | Pot | Modern |
| 1/03 | Layer | Brown-grey silty clay | 0.6 | Tr. | Tr. | Pot | Modern |
| 1/04 | Layer | Brown-grey silty clay | 0.5 | Tr. | 5.5+ | Pot | Modern |
| 1/05 | Cut | Rectangular pit | 0.7+ | 0.55 | 0.75 | | |
| 1/06 | Fill | Grey mortar & rubble | 0.7+ | 0.55 | 0.75 | CBM | C19th |
| 1/07 | Layer | Brown-orange silty clay | 0.2+ | Tr. | Tr. | | |
| 1/08 | Cut | Linear | 1.5 | 0.6+ | 10 | | |
| 1/09 | Fill | Brown-orange clay | 1.5 | 0.6+ | 10 | Pot | C19th |
| 1/10 | Cut | Pit | 0.4 | - | 1.25 | | |
| 1/11 | Fill | Orange clay-sand | 0.4 | - | 1.25 | | |
| 1/12 | Layer | Brown-black loam | 0.15 | Tr. | Tr. | Pot | C19th |
| 1/13 | Fill | Sand & gravel | 0.2 | - | 0.5 | | |
| 1/14 | Cut | Pit | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 | | |
| 1/15 | Fill | Orange-brown silty sand | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 | CBM | C19th |
| 1/16 | Cut | Pit | 0.4 | 0.4 | 0.4 | | |
| 1/17 | Fill | Orange-Brown sand | 0.4 | 0.4 | 0.4 | CBM | C19th |
| 1/18 | Cut | Pit | 0.65 | 0.5 | 0.5 | | |
| 1/19 | Fill | Orange sand and gravel | 0.65 | 0.5 | 0.5 | CBM | C19th |
| 1/20 | Cut | Pit | 0.8 | 0.8 | 0.8 | | |
| 1/21 | Fill | grey sandy silt | 0.8 | 0.8 | 0.8 | CBM | C19th |
| 1/22 | Cut | Pit | 0.75 | 0.75 | 0.75 | | |
| 1/23 | Fill | Yellowish mortar | 0.75 | 0.75 | 0.75 | CBM | C19th |
| 1/24 | Cut | Pit | 0.6 | 0.85 | 0.85 | | |
| 1/25 | Fill | Yellowish mortar | 0.6 | 0.85 | 0.85 | CBM | C19th |
| 1/26 | Fill | Yellowish mortar | 0.4 | 0.6 | 0.6 | CBM | C19th |
| 1/27 | Cut | Circular pit | 0.2 | 0.6 | 1.15 | | |

| Context | Type | Description | Depth (m) | Width (m) | Length (m) | Finds | Date |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1/28 | Fill | Brown-black loam | 0.2 | 0.6 | 1.15 | CBM, Pot | C19th |
| 1/29 | Cut | Rectangular pit | 1 | 1.6 | 3.25 | | |
| 1/30 | Fill | Brown sandy loam | 1 | 1.6 | 3.25 | CBM, Clay Pipe | C19th |
| 1/31 | Cut | Saquare Pit | - | 0.4 | 0.6 | | |
| 1/32 | Fill | Orange sand and gravel | - | 0.4 | 0.6 | CBM, Pot | C19th |
| 1/33 | Layer | Grey-brown clay | 0.8 | Tr. | Tr. | Pot | C19th |
| 1/34 | Deposit | Grey-brown silty clay | - | Tr. | Tr. | | |
| 1/35 | Cut | Pit | 0.4 | 0.6 | 0.6 | | |
| 1/36 | Cut | Pit | 0.2 | 0.5 | 0.5 | | |
| **Trench 2** | | | 1.6 | 1.5 | 5 | | |
| 2/01 | Layer | Topsoil | 0.3 | Tr. | Tr. | Pot | Modern |
| 2/02 | Layer | Grey-brown silty clay | 0.2 | Tr. | Tr. | CBM, Pot | Modern |
| 2/03 | Layer | Brown-grey silty clay | 1.1 | 0.75 | Tr. | CBM | C19th |
| 2/04 | Cut | Rectangular pit | 1.1+ | 0.75 | Tr. | | C19th |
| 2/05 | Fill | Orange sand and gravel | 0.2 | 0.75 | Tr. | CBM | C19th |
| 2/06 | Fill | Sand, mortar and rubble | 0.7 | 0.75 | Tr. | CBM, Pot | C19th |
| 2/07 | Fill | Grey-brown silty clay | - | 0.75 | Tr. | CBM | C19th |
| 2/08 | Layer | Orange-brown clay | - | 0.75 | Tr. | | |
| **Trench 3** | | | 1.6 | 1.5 | 3 | | |
| 3/01 | Layer | Topsoil | 0.3 | Tr. | Tr. | Pot | Modern |
| 3/02 | Layer | Grey sandy silt loam | 0.6 | Tr. | Tr. | Pot | Modern |
| 3/03 | Cut | Pit | 0.7+ | Tr. | Tr. | | C19th |
| 3/04 | Fill | Brick rubble | 0.7+ | Tr. | Tr. | CBM, Pot | C19th |
| 3/05 | Layer | Grey silty clay | 0.28 | Tr. | 0.7 | Pot | |
| 3/06 | Layer | Green-grey sandy clay | 0.3+ | Tr. | 0.7 | Pot | |
| 3/07 | Cut | Circular pit | 0.4+ | 0.65 | 0.65 | | |
| 3/08 | Fill | Grey silty clay | 0.4+ | 0.65 | 0.65 | | C19th |

| Context | Type | Description | Depth (m) | Width (m) | Length (m) | Finds | Date |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Trench 4** | | | 1.6 | 1.5 | 10 | | |
| 4/01 | Layer | Topsoil | 0.34 | Tr. | Tr. | Pot | Modern |
| 4/02 | Layer | Grey-brown loam | 0.48 | Tr. | Tr. | Pot | Modern |
| 4/03 | Layer | Grey-brown sandy loam | 0.46 | Tr. | Tr. | - | - |
| 4/04 | Layer | Dark grey-brown loam | 0.36 | Tr. | Tr. | - | - |
| 4/05 | Fill | orange-brown clay sand | - | 0.4 | 1.5 | - | - |
| 4/06 | Fill | Grey sandy clay | - | 1 | 1 | - | - |
| 4/07 | Cut | Circular pit | - | 1 | 1 | - | - |
| 4/08 | Cut | Rectangular pit | - | 0.4 | 1.5 | - | - |