



JOHN MOORE HERITAGE SERVICES

**AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION**

**AT**

**WALLINGFORD SCHOOL, ST GEORGES ROAD**

**WALLINGFORD, OXFORDSHIRE OX10 8HH**

**NGR SU 6046 8997**

**APRIL 2021**

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**FIELDWORK** 7<sup>th</sup> April 2021

**REPORT ISSUED** 12<sup>th</sup> April 2021

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**JMHS Project No:** 4461  
**OASIS No:** johnmoor1-418900  
**Site Code:** WASGR 21



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## **Summary**

*John Moore Heritage Services carried out an evaluation at Wallingford School, Wallingford, Oxfordshire (NGR SU 6046 8997). Two trenches were excavated within the footprint of a consented two storey building. No archaeological features, deposits or finds were recorded during the evaluation.*

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Site Location (Figure 1)**

The development site is located on the north side of Wallingford, north of the Saxon Town Walls and on the west side of Wallingford School (NGR SU 6046 8997). The site lies at approximately 50m OD and the underlying geology is shown as River Terrace Gravels (First Terrace). The site is currently part of the School grounds, comprising a car park and bicycle storage area.

### **1.2 Planning Background**

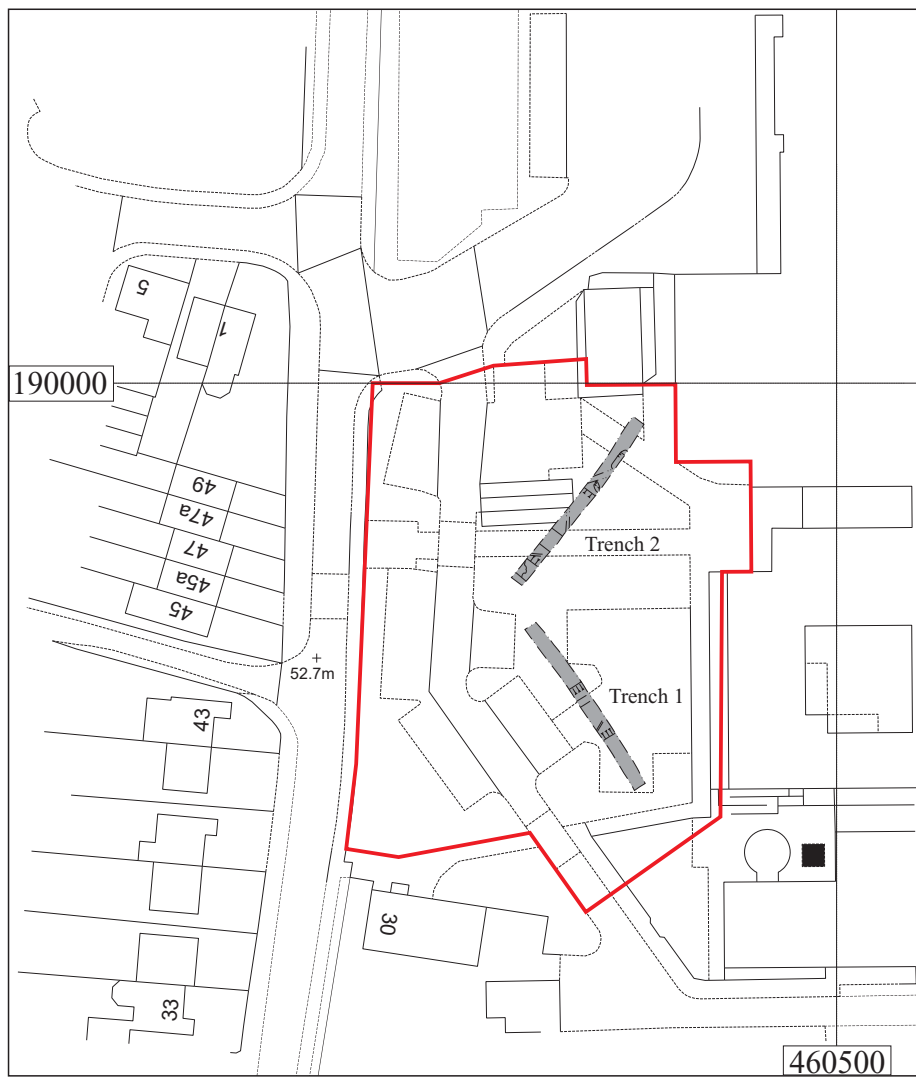
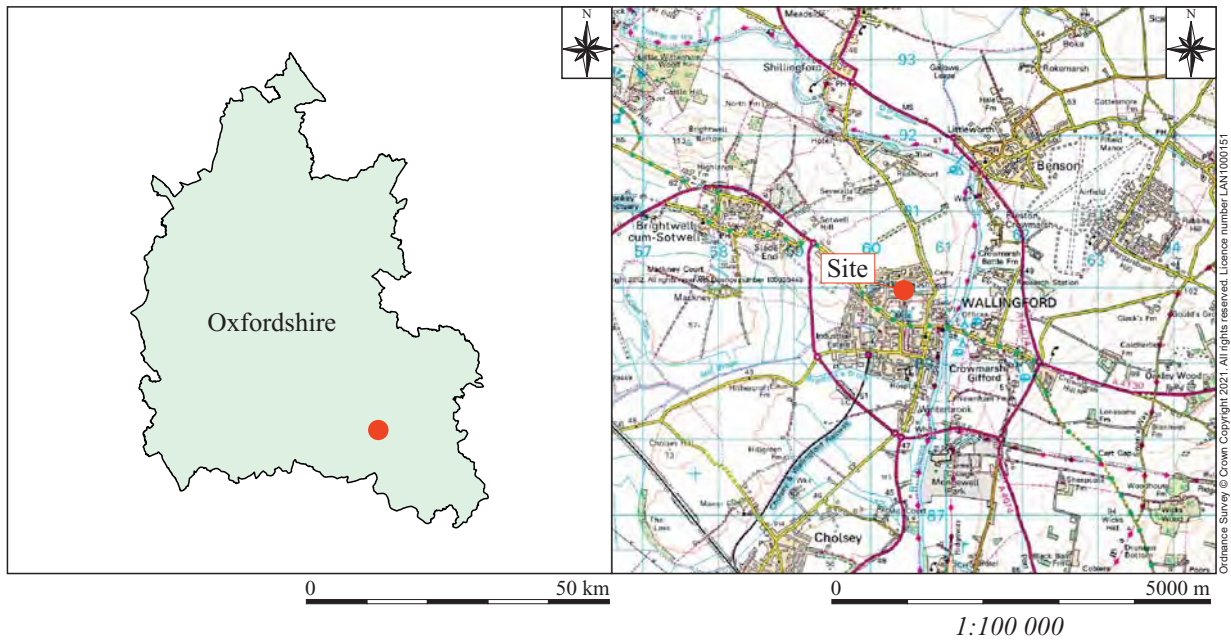
South Oxfordshire District Council granted planning permission for **Provision of a new two storey building to the school providing 20 new teaching spaces allowing the school to expand by 2 forms of entry (19/S0191/FUL)**. Due to the potential presence of archaeological features two conditions were attached, requiring a staged programme of archaeological evaluation and mitigation to be undertaken during any development:

*4. Prior to any demolition and the commencement of the development a professional archaeological organisation acceptable to the Local Planning Authority shall prepare an Archaeological Written Scheme of Investigation, relating to the application site area, which shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.*

*Reason: To secure the protection of and proper provision for any archaeological remains in accordance with Policy CSEN3 of the South Oxfordshire Core Strategy 2027 and Policies CON11 and CON13 of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011.*

*9. Following the approval of the Written Scheme of Investigation referred to in condition 4, and prior to any demolition on the site and the commencement of the development (other than in accordance with the agreed Written Scheme of Investigation), a staged programme of archaeological evaluation and mitigation shall be carried out by the commissioned archaeological organisation in accordance with the approved Written Scheme of Investigation. The programme of work shall include all processing, research and analysis necessary to produce an accessible and useable archive and a full report for publication which shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority.*

*Reason: To safeguard the identification, recording, analysis and archiving of heritage assets before they are lost and to advance understanding of the heritage assets in their wider context through publication and dissemination of the evidence in*



Key  Site boundary  Evaluation trenches

Figure 1: Site location

*accordance with Policy CSEN3 of the South Oxfordshire Core Strategy 2027 and Policies CON11 and CON13 of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011.*

### **1.3 Archaeological Background**

The area concerned lies within an area of some archaeological interest located immediately North of the Saxon defended town (SAM OX234) and the Medieval Castle (SAM OX176). A Neolithic pit was recorded during an excavation ahead of the construction of a tennis court 130m SW of the site (PRN 16357). A radiocarbon date was obtained from charred hazel nut shells found within this pit which dated to 3040-2910 BC. Features from this period are rare in this area especially found with surviving organic material to provide dating evidence. A further Neolithic pit was recorded on the eastern side of the school during an archaeological evaluation along with a medieval extraction pit

The above archaeological background has been obtained from the County Archaeological Services' Design Brief.

## **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 or absence of archaeological remains within the site and the depth of soil deposits that overlie these remains.
- To determine the extent, condition, nature, character, quality and date of any archaeological remains encountered.
- To determine the degree of complexity of any horizontal and/or vertical stratigraphy present.
- To determine the impact of the proposed development on any remains present.

In particular:

- To determine whether any Prehistoric or Medieval remains are present.

## **3 STRATEGY**

### **3.1 Research Design**

John Moore Heritage Services carried out the work to a Written Scheme of Investigation agreed with the Oxfordshire County Archaeological Services (OCAS) the archaeological advisors to South Oxfordshire District Council.

The recording was carried out in accordance with the standards specified by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (2020).

### 3.2 Methodology

Two evaluation trenches 26m and 27m in length by 1.9m in width were excavated across the footprint of the consented building using a tracked 360° excavator fitted with a bladed bucket. Excavation was carried out under the supervision of an archaeologist.

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

## 4 RESULTS (Figure 2)

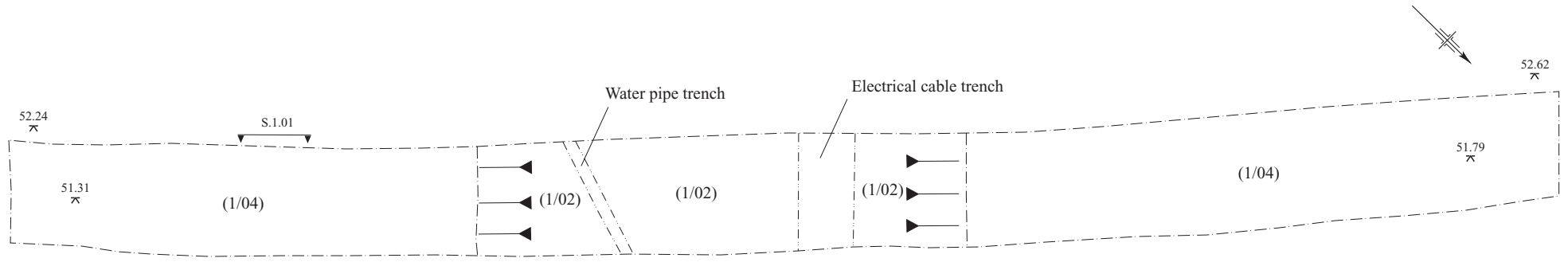
### 4.1 Trench 1 (Section 1.01)

Trench 1, aligned NW - SE and 26m in length, was situated within the southern half of the consented building. The trench was shortened at its southern end due to the presence of a gas main. The lowest deposit encountered was the geological horizon (1/04) a light yellowish brown sandy gravel, transitioning into a light reddish brown clay towards the northern end of the trench.

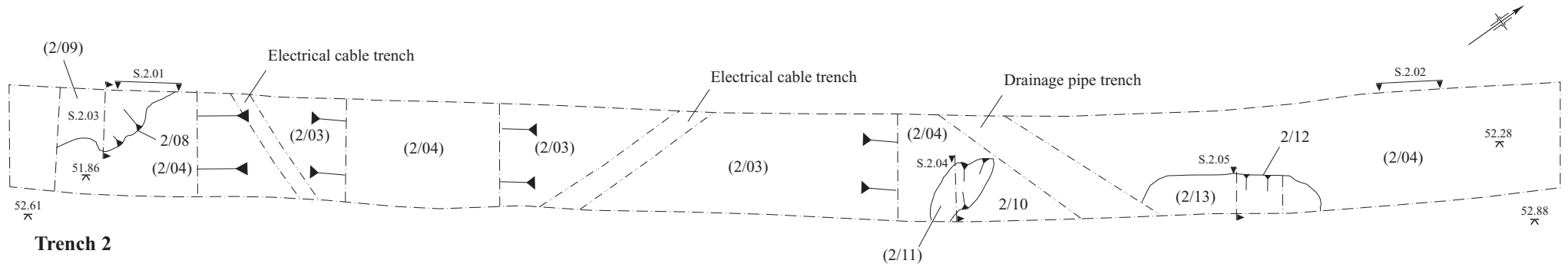


Plate 1: Trench 1; looking north west.

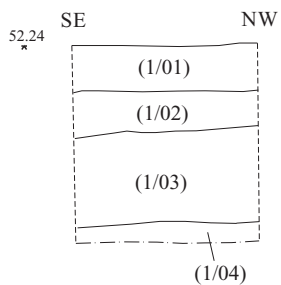
This was overlain by subsoil (1/03), a mid reddish brown silty clay 0.4m in thickness with common sub-rounded stone under 40mm. Subsoil (1/03) was in turn overlain by a layer of made ground (1/02) associated with the current car park; this was a mid reddish brown sandy silt 0.2m in thickness. This deposit was truncated by two modern service trenches aligned in a N-S direction. The final deposit in the sequence was (1/01), a layer of hardcore rubble overlain by concrete pavers 0.24m in thickness.



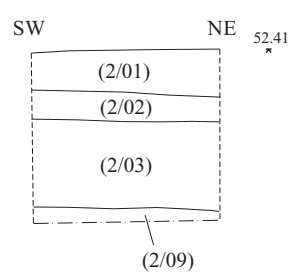
**Trench 1**



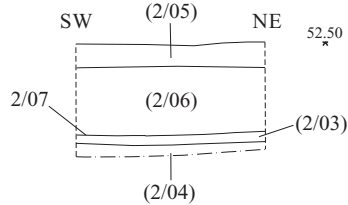
**Trench 2**



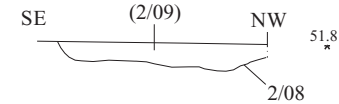
**Section 1.01**



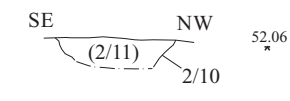
**Section 2.01**



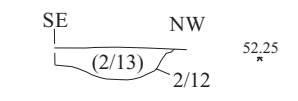
**Section 2.02**



**Section 2.03**



**Section 2.04**



**Section 2.05**

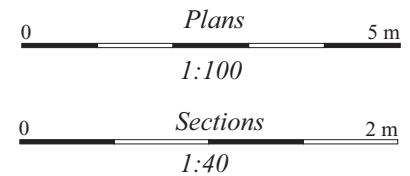


Figure 2: Trenches 1 and 2: Plans and sections





Plate 2: Trench 1, section 1.01; looking south west.

#### 4.2 Trench 2

Trench 2, aligned NE – SW and 27m in length, was situated in the northern half of the consented building. The lowest deposit encountered was the geological horizon (2/04) a mid to light yellowish brown sandy gravel with patches of silty clay.



Plate 3: Trench 2; looking south west

Several of these clay patches were examined in order to determine if they were of natural or archaeological origin (Figure 2; sections 2.03, 2.04 and 2.05). Located at the southern end of the trench was 2/08, irregular in plan and >1.5m in length by >1.1m in width and 0.18m in depth, extending beyond the limit of excavation (l.o.e.) to the north west; the sides and base of the cut were irregular in form. Fill (2/09) was a compact mid grey silty clay. Towards the northern end of the trench was 2/10, an irregular feature >1.5m in length, 0.6m in width and >0.15m in depth, extending beyond the l.o.e. to the south east. Fill (2/11) was a friable mid reddish brown silty

clay. Nearby was 2/12, a sub-ovoid feature 3m in length, >0.6m in width and 0.18m in depth. Fill (2/13) was a friable mid reddish brown silty clay. Following excavation these features were interpreted as being the result of natural formation processes due to their irregular sides and sterile, subsoil-like fills.



Plate 4: Trench 2, section 2.03; looking south west

These natural features were overlain by subsoil (2/03), a mid reddish brown silty clay up to 0.47m in thickness (Figure 2; section 2.01); this deposit was present throughout the trench, though was heavily truncated towards the north where a pathway associated with the school was present. This was recorded as cut 2/07, which was in turn filled with a levelling deposit (2/06) and sandy bedding layer (2/05) (Figure 2; section 2.02). Subsoil (2/03) was also truncated by three modern service trenches. At the southern end of the trench subsoil (2/03) was overlain by (2/02), a layer of mid to dark clayey silt 0.14m in thickness. This was in turn overlain by topsoil and turf (2/01) a friable mid to dark clayey silt 0.24m, in thickness (Figure 2; section 2.01).



Plate 5: Trench 2, section 2.01; looking north west

### **4.3 Reliability of Results**

The evaluation was undertaken in good weather with good cooperation from site staff and the trenching was monitored by Steven Weaver of OCAS. Due to the presence of a series of services in both trenches the geological horizon was not fully observed, and so there is some limitation to the results. However, as far as was possible the evaluation represents an accurate sample of the consented development site.

## **5 FINDS**

No artefactual evidence was recovered during the course of the evaluation.

## **6 DISCUSSION**

The evaluation was successful in meeting the aims of investigation as laid out in the written scheme of investigation. In Trench 2 a series of clay spreads were investigated; however upon excavation these were revealed to be irregular in form with sterile clayey fills, thus indicative of naturally formed deposits. No archaeological features or deposits were therefore encountered during the course of the evaluation.

Despite being subject to previous development there was found to have been minimal truncation to the underlying subsoil and geological horizon. In particular a significant depth of overburden, comprising a subsoil *c.* 0.5m in thickness, was present towards the southern side of the site underlying the made ground associated with the school car park. This decreased in thickness towards the north, to a thickness of *c.* 0.1m at the northern end of Trench 2, however the geological horizon remained intact beneath.

## **7 ARCHIVE**

A copy of the digital archive is maintained by John Moore Heritage Services (ID 4461).

Digitised copies of the primary records are available on OASIS (johnmoor1-418900)

A digital archive is maintained by John Moore Heritage Services (ID 4461) and will be made available upon request (to [admin@jmheritageservices.co.uk](mailto:admin@jmheritageservices.co.uk)). Digitised copies of all the primary records will be made publicly available as an appendix to the final report submitted to OASIS (johnmoor1-418900).

## **8 BIBLIOGRAPHY**

Chartered Institute for Archaeologists. 2020 *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Evaluation*.

John Moore Heritage Services 2021 *P19/S0191/FUL -Wallingford School, St Georges Road, Wallingford, OX10 8HH. Detailed Method Statement for Evaluation Trenching*. Unpublished document

**APPENDIX 1: Context Inventory**

Context	Type	Description	Depth	Width	Length	Finds	Interpretation	Date
<b>Trench 1</b>								
1/01	Deposit	Concrete hardstanding with hardcore levelling deposit	0.24	>Trench	>Trench	None	Concrete hardstanding	Modern
1/02	Deposit	Mid reddish brown sandy silt with occasional sub-rounded stone 20-40mm	0.20	>Trench	>Trench	None	Made ground	Modern
1/03	Deposit	Mid reddish brown silty clay with common sub-rounded stone 20-40mm	0.40	>Trench	>Trench	None	Subsoil	Pre-20 <sup>th</sup> century
1/04	Deposit	Light yellowish brown sandy gravel with some silty clay	N/A	>Trench	>Trench	None	Natural geology	Quaternary
<b>Trench 2</b>								
2/01	Deposit	Mid to dark grey clayey silt	0.24	>Trench	>Trench	None	Topsoil	Modern
2/02	Deposit	Mid to dark grey clayey sily with rooting <20mm throughout	0.14	>Trench	>Trench	None	Garden soil	Modern
2/03	Deposit	Mid reddish brown silty clay	0.47	>Trench	>Trench	None	Subsoil	Pre-20 <sup>th</sup> century
2/04	Deposit	Mid to light yellowish brown silty clay and sandy gravel	0.10	>Trench	>Trench	None	Natural geology	Quaternary
2/05	Deposit	Brick paving with hardcore levelling deposit	0.13	>Trench	>Trench	None	Brick pathway and levelling deposit	Modern
2/06	Deposit	Compact light whitish grey sandy gravel	0.21	3.70	>1.90	None	Hardcore layer associated with pathway	Modern
2/07	Cut	Linear cut for modern pathway	0.50	3.70	>1.90	None	Modern pathway construction cut	Modern
2/08	Cut	Irregular in plan, shallow irregular sides and irregular base	0.15	>1.10	>1.50	None	Natural feature	Quaternary
2/09	Fill	Friable mid greyish brown silty clay with infrequent stone	0.15	>1.10	>1.50	None	Fill of feature 2/08	Quaternary
2/10	Cut	Irregular in plan, shallow irregular sides and irregular base	0.15	>0.60	1.50	None	Natural feature	Quaternary
2/11	Fill	Friable mid reddish brown sandy clay with infrequent small stone	0.15	>0.60	1.50	None	Fill of feature 2/10	Quaternary
2/12	Cut	Irregular/ sub-linear in plan, shallow irregular sides and irregular base	0.18	>0.60	3.0	None	Natural feature	Quaternary

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2/13	Fill	Friable mid orange brown silty clay	0.18	>0.60	3.0	None	Fill of feature 2/12	Quaternary
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SITE NAME <u>Wallingford School</u>		SITE CODE <u>WPSG02 21</u>		Trench No. <u>TR2</u>	
DATE <u>07/04/21</u>	Recorder <u>SMS</u>	Trench size <u>27.00m x 1.90m</u>		Co-ordinates at SW corner	
Type of machine Bucket size/type <u>360°</u>	Plan Nos. <u>p. 2.01</u> Section Nos. <u>s. 2.01</u>	Conditions <u>overcast</u>			
End: <u>SW</u> Level at Top: <u>52.61</u> Level at Bottom: <u>51.86</u>			End: <u>NE</u> Level at Top: <u>52.98</u> Level at Bottom: <u>52.28</u>		

Context	Layer thickness	Extent	Over	Under	Detailed Soil/Feature Description	Interpretation
2/01	0.0 - 0.24m (0.24m)		(2/02)	✓	Mid to dark, clayey silt, occasional inclusions of <del>stone</del> <u>NO</u>	Top soil / Turf
2/02	0.24 - 0.38m (0.14m)		(2/03)	(2/01)	Mid to dark, clayey silt occasional inclusions of <0.02m diam & heavy rooting throughout	Subsoil garden soil
2/03	0.38 - 0.85m (0.47m)	WALL Framer	(2/09)	(2/02)	Mid reddish brown silty clay sand	Natural Subsoil
2/04	0.85 - 0.90m (0.05m)	WALL Framer	✓	(2/08) (2/10)	mid to light yellowish brown silty clay 40% silty gravels 60%	Natural
2/05	0.0 - 0.13m	3.71m x 1.9m	(2/06)	✓	GREEN BRICK over 4cm thick red sand	Brick path & bedding Sand (foot path)
2/06	0.13 - 0.34	3.71m x 1.9m	(2/07)	(2/05)	COMPACT SANDY GRAVEL - LIGHT CRUSTED BELOW	Made ground levelling for f.p.
[2/07]	0.5m	3.71m <sup>(w)</sup>	(2/03)	(2/06)	LINEAR CUT FOR PATHWAY	Cut / Truncation for foot path & levelling
[2/08]	0.15m	1.50m x 2.1m	(2/04)	(2/09)	Irregular in plan, shallow/irregular beds, irregular base.	Cut of natural feature S.2.03
(2/09)	0.15m	1.50m x 2.1m	[2/08]	(2/03)	mid grey brown, silty clay, friable. Inherent medium-sized stones.	Fill of [2/08] S.2.03
[2/10]	>0.15m	>1.5m x 0.6m	(2/04)	(2/11)	Irregular in plan, shallow/irregular beds, Base N/A.	Cut of natural feature S.2.04







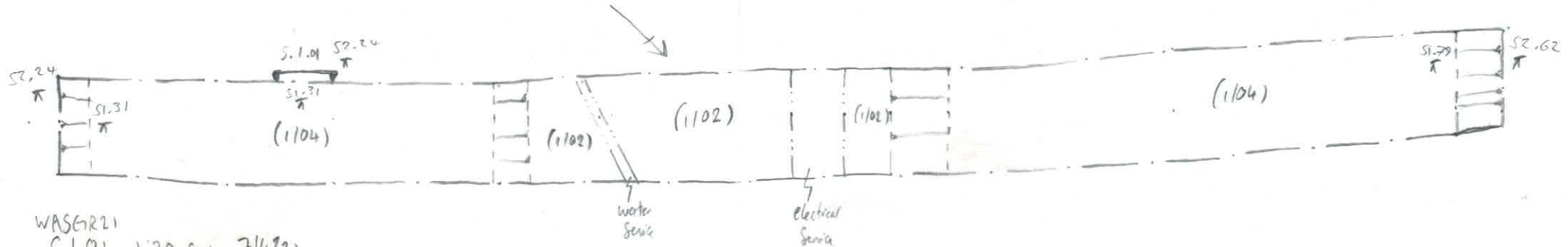




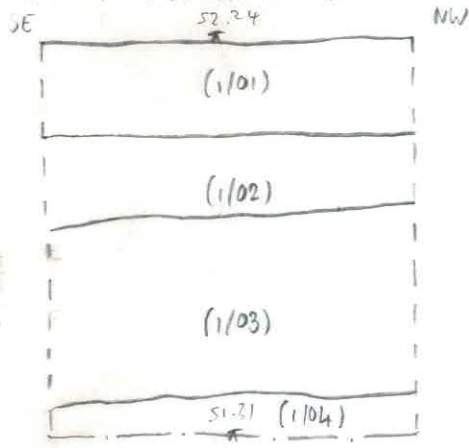


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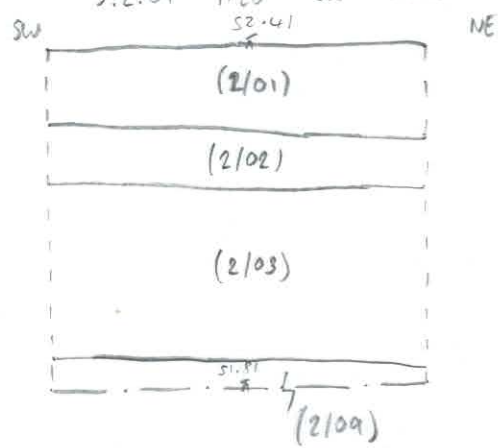
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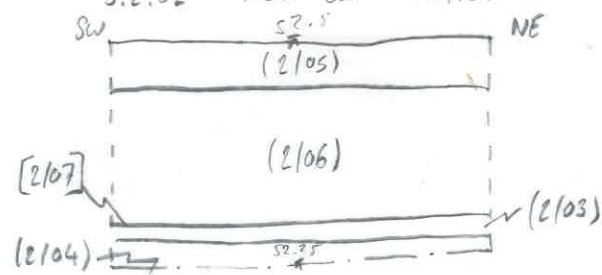
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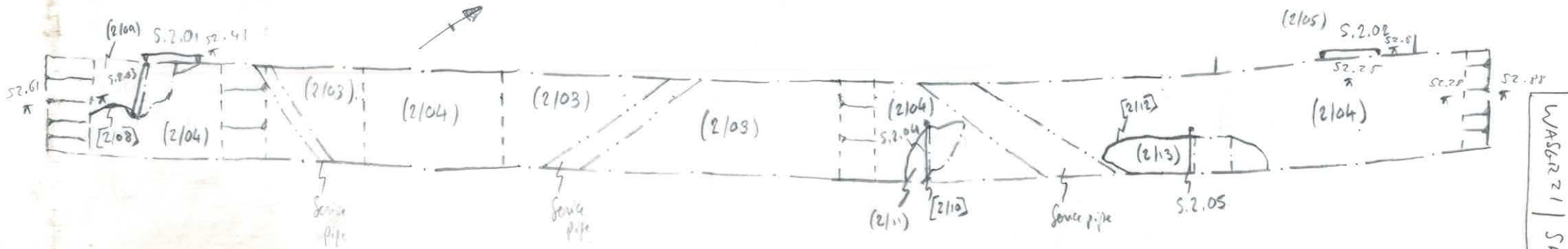
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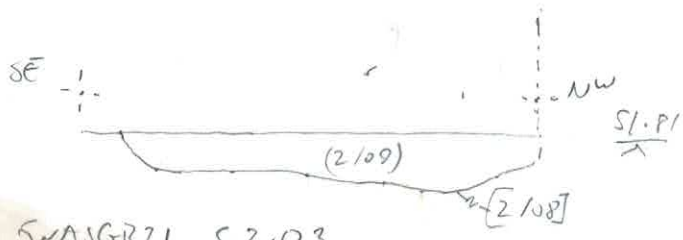
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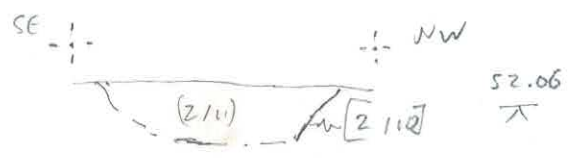
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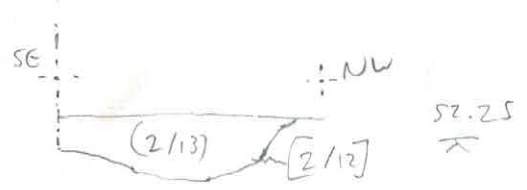
WASGR21 | SH 1



WASGRZ1 S.2.03  
1:20 7/4/21 TRJ



WASGRZ1 S.2.04  
1:20 7/4/21 TRJ



WASGRZ1 S.2.05  
1:20 7/4/21 TRJ

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**OASIS ID: johnmoor1-418900**

### Project details

Project name	WALLINGFORD SCHOOL, ST GEORGES ROAD, WALLINGFORD
Short description of the project	John Moore Heritage Services carried out an evaluation at Wallingford School, Wallingford, Oxfordshire (NGR SU 6046 8997). Two trenches were excavated within the footprint of a consented two storey building. No archaeological features, deposits or finds were recorded during the evaluation.
Project dates	Start: 07-04-2021 End: 07-04-2021
Previous/future work	Yes / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	4461 - Contracting Unit No.
Any associated project reference codes	WASGR21 - Sitecode
Any associated project reference codes	johnmoor1-418900 - OASIS form ID
Any associated project reference codes	19/S0191/FUL - Planning Application No.
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	None
Current Land use	Other 3 - Built over
Monument type	NONE None
Significant Finds	NONE None
Methods & techniques	""Sample Trenches""
Development type	Public building (e.g. school, church, hospital, medical centre, law courts etc.)
Prompt	National Planning Policy Framework - NPPF
Position in the planning process	After full determination (eg. As a condition)

### Project location

Country England

Site location	OXFORDSHIRE SOUTH OXFORDSHIRE WALLINGFORD Wallingford School, St Georges Road
Postcode	OX10 8HH
Study area	1000 Square metres
Site coordinates	SU 6046 8997 51.604845854639 -1.126882114479 51 36 17 N 001 07 36 W Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 51.31m Max: 52.28m

### Project creators

Name of Organisation	John Moore Heritage Services
Project brief originator	South Oxfordshire District Council
Project design originator	JMHS
Project director/manager	John Moore
Project supervisor	Tom Rose-Jones
Type of sponsor/funding body	client

### Project archives

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	John Moore Heritage Services
Digital Archive ID	4461
Digital Contents	"Stratigraphic","other"
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography","Images vector","Text"
Digital Archive notes	Digital files related to the project are maintained by John Moore Heritage Services (ID 4461) and will be made available upon request (to admin@jmheritageservices.co.uk).
Paper Archive Exists?	No

### Project bibliography

1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION AT WALLINGFORD SCHOOL, ST GEORGES ROAD, WALLINGFORD, OXFORDSHIRE
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Rose-Jones, T.
Other bibliographic details	4461
Date	2021
Issuer or publisher	John Moore Heritage Services
Place of issue or publication	Wheatley, Oxfordshire
Description	25 A4 pagespdf including digitised primary records
Entered by	Simona Denis (admin@jmheritageservices.co.uk)



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