
ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOLUTIONS LTD

**THE BISHOP'S STORTFORD HIGH SCHOOL,
BISHOP'S STORTFORD, HERTFORDSHIRE**

ARCHAEOLOGICAL DESK-BASED ASSESSMENT

Authors: Kate Doyle BA	
NGR: TL 4880 1972	Report No. 2065
Parish: Bishop's Stortford	Site Code: -
Approved: Claire Halpin MIFA	Project No. 2652
Signed:	Date: August 2006

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OASIS SUMMARY SHEET

Project details			
Project name	<i>The Bishop's Stortford High School, Bishop's Stortford, Hertfordshire</i>		
Project description (250 words)	<p><i>In July 2006, Archaeological Solutions Ltd (AS) carried out an archaeological desk-based assessment at The Bishop's Stortford High School, Bishop's Stortford, Hertfordshire (TL 4880 1972). The assessment was commissioned prior to the preparation of a redevelopment strategy for the existing site of The Bishop's Stortford High School. The site comprises two distinct, but adjacent, rectangular plots of land, roughly divided as the eastern and western sections of the site, and which are linked by a narrow footpath.</i></p> <p><i>Other than a gravel pit in the south-eastern corner, the site remained undeveloped until the establishment of The Bishop's Stortford High School, which dates from the 1950s onwards. The school buildings are located only in the eastern section of the site, whilst the western section comprises a grass playing field, and a modern pavilion. The western section of The Bishop's Stortford High School site is situated within an archaeological alert area, as designated by the local council. The archaeological alert area refers to Bronze Age pits, and a Romano-British cremation and occupation (HER 1090). The eastern part of the site has been truncated by a gravel pit, landscaping, and construction of the school buildings.</i></p>		
Project dates (fieldwork)	<i>July 2006</i>		
Previous work (Y/N/?)	<i>N</i>	Future work (Y/N/?)	<i>?</i>
P. number	<i>2652</i>	Site code -	
Type of project	<i>Archaeological desk-based assessment</i>		
Site status	<i>Partially within an Alert Area</i>		
Current land use	<i>School grounds and playing fields</i>		
Planned development	<i>TBC</i>		
Main features (+dates)	<i>n/a</i>		
Significant finds (+dates)	<i>n/a</i>		
Project location			
County/ District/ Parish	<i>Herts</i>	<i>East Herts</i>	<i>Bishop's Stortford</i>
HER/ SMR for area	<i>Hertfordshire HER</i>		
Post code (if known)			
Area of site	<i>c. 6.6 hectares</i>		
NGR	<i>TL 4880 1972</i>		
Height AOD (max/ min)	<i>70 - 80m AOD</i>		
Project creators			
Brief issued by	<i>HCC HEU</i>		
Project supervisor/s (PO)	<i>Archaeological Solutions Ltd</i>		
Funded by	<i>Countryside Properties (Special Projects) Limited</i>		
Full title	<i>The Bishop's Stortford High School, Bishop's Stortford, Hertfordshire. An archaeological desk-based assessment</i>		
Authors	<i>Doyle, K</i>		
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Date (of report)	<i>August 2006</i>		

THE BISHOP'S STORTFORD HIGH SCHOOL, BISHOP'S STORTFORD, HERTFORDSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL DESK-BASED ASSESSMENT

SUMMARY

In July 2006, Archaeological Solutions Ltd (AS) carried out an archaeological desk-based assessment at The Bishop's Stortford High School, Bishop's Stortford, Hertfordshire (TL 4880 1972). The assessment was commissioned prior to the preparation of a redevelopment strategy for the existing site of The Bishop's Stortford High School. The site comprises two distinct, but adjacent, rectangular plots of land, roughly divided as the eastern and western sections of the site, and which are connected by a narrow footpath.

Other than a gravel pit in the south-eastern corner, the site remained largely undeveloped until the establishment of The Bishop's Stortford High School in the 1950s. The school buildings are located only in the eastern section of the site, whilst the western section comprises a grass playing field and a modern pavilion. The western section of The Bishop's Stortford High School site is situated within an archaeological alert area, as designated by the local council. The designation refers to Bronze Age pits, and a Romano-British cremation and occupation (HER 1090). The site comprised six Late Bronze Age (LBA) pits and a boundary ditch that contained pottery. Post dating the LBA evidence was a Romano-British cremation with rough walling and 1st – 4th century pottery sherds.

The impact of the development for the existing site of The Bishop's Stortford High School will vary greatly between the eastern and western sections of the site. The designation of the site's western section as an archaeological alert area suggests that there may be further archaeological remains present, particularly associated with the occupation relating to the known Thorley Hill Late Bronze Age and Romano-British site. The former gravel pit, later landscaping and construction of the school buildings in the eastern section of the site, however, suggest that its future development would have a lesser archaeological impact.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 In July 2006, Archaeological Solutions Ltd (AS) carried out an archaeological desk-based assessment at The Bishop's Stortford High School, Bishop's Stortford, Hertfordshire (TL 4880 1972; Figs. 1 & 2). The archaeological desk-based assessment was commissioned by Countryside Properties (Special Projects) Limited prior to the preparation of a redevelopment strategy for the existing site of The Bishop's Stortford High School.

1.2 The desk-based assessment was conducted according to a specification prepared by AS (dated 23rd January 2006). The project also conformed to the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA) *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Desk-based Assessment* (1994, revised 2001). The project also adhered to the document *Standards*

for Field Archaeology in the East of England, East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers 14/ALGAO (Gurney 2003).

1.3 The archaeological desk-based assessment provided for the identification of areas of archaeological potential within the site. It also considered the site within its wider archaeological context. The likely extent, nature, condition and importance of the possible archaeology, which may be present at the site, have been described. The context of the development proposal for the site has also been examined.

2 DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE

2.1 The site of The Bishop's Stortford High School lies to the south of the settlement of Bishop's Stortford, which lies in the district of East Herts on the eastern edge of Hertfordshire; the town is bounded to the south-east by the county boundary between Hertfordshire and Essex (Fig. 1). The smaller settlement of Sawbridgeworth lies 6km to the south, the Essex town of Stansted Mountfitchet lies 5km to the north-east, and the Hertfordshire village of Much Hadham lies 6km to the west. The settlement of Bishop's Stortford is nucleated in plan, centred around its original medieval and post-medieval core; the River Stort flows through the town on an approximate north to south alignment.

2.2 The Bishop's Stortford High School site is situated to the south of the historic settlement core of Bishop's Stortford, c.400m north of the parish boundary between Bishop's Stortford and Thorley (Fig. 1). The site lies to the immediate west of the B1529, London Road, which forms its easternmost boundary. It comprises an irregular shaped plot of land, which may be described roughly as two rectangular plots of land, joined by a long footpath. Between the two sections of the site lies the site of the Thorley Hill Primary School (Fig. 2).

2.3 The majority of the properties surrounding the site are residential (Fig. 2). To the north, the site is bounded by the rear of properties attached to Nos. 1 – 15 Mitre Gardens, Nos. 2 – 36 (evens) Park Lane and Nos. 37 – 51 (odds) Thorley Park Road. The north-western section of the site is bounded by the large rear gardens associated with Nos. 15 – 17 Thornbera Close. The westernmost extent of the site is demarcated by an area of trees and vegetation that accompanies Park Avenue, as well as a small playground. To the south of the site lies Nos. 2 – 12 (evens) Grace Gardens, Nos. 2 – 50 (evens) Twyford Gardens and No. 4 Bishop's Avenue.

2.4 Overall, the site comprises an area of c. 6.6 hectares. The western section comprises a playing field associated with The Bishop's Stortford High School. Other than a large pavilion building, the western section of the site remains undeveloped, and is accessed by means of a gateway located at the junction between Grace Gardens and Twyford Gardens (Fig. 2).

2.5 The remaining eastern section of the site contains extant structures comprising The Bishop's Stortford High School. Thorley Hill Primary School does not form part of the site. The Bishop's Stortford High School comprises a large range of linked buildings surrounded by smaller standing structures, with a sports hall located towards the southern boundary of the site. The main entrance of the school is via London Road

at the eastern extent of the site; a second entrance lies in the north-western corner of the eastern section, along the drive of the primary school.

3 METHOD OF WORK

Information was sought from a variety of available sources, and reference was made to the Institute of Field Archaeologists' *Standard and guidance for archaeological desk-based assessments* (1994 revised 2001) and the relevant sections of the document *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England* (Gurney 2003). The following material was consulted as part of the assessment;

3.1 Archaeological databases

The standard collation of all known archaeological sites and spot-finds in the area is the Hertfordshire Historic Environment Record (HER). In order to provide a representative sample, the HER database was searched for all known entries within a 1km radius of the site. Entries within this approximate 1km radius of the site are listed in Appendix 1, and plotted in Fig. 3. Their significance, where relevant, is discussed in Section 5.

3.2 Historical & cartographic documents

The principal source for historical and cartographic documents was the Hertfordshire Archives and Local Studies (HALS), based at County Hall in Hertford, as well as the local studies library in Bishop's Stortford. Relevant cartographic sources are listed in Appendix 2 and reproduced in Figs. 4 - 13.

3.3 Secondary sources

The principal source of secondary material was the Hertfordshire Archives and Local Studies (HALS), based at County Hall in Hertford and the local studies library in Bishop's Stortford, as well as AS's own library. Relevant material relating to secondary sources is listed in the bibliography, and also listed in Appendix 2.

3.4 Geological/geotechnical information

A description of the superficial and solid geology of the local and surrounding area was compiled in order to assess the likely presence and potential condition of any archaeological remains on the site. This information was drawn from appropriate maps published by the Geological Survey of Great Britain (BGS 1978) and the Soil Survey of England and Wales (SSEW 1983).

3.5 Aerial photographs

Examination of aerial photographs (APs) may be beneficial to desk-based assessments as they are an important means of identifying buried archaeological features, evidenced by different patterns of crop growth or soil marks, though for areas which have been urbanised since the growth of this technique during WWII, their uses are far more limited.

3.6 Site inspection

On conclusion of the desk-based assessment, a physical walkover of the site was undertaken with the following purposes

- to examine the areas of archaeological potential identified during the desk-based assessment, in particular, with a view to gauging likely survival or condition of the archaeological remains, and;
- to consider the significance of the above ground structures (e.g. industrial archaeology), historic buildings, historic landscape features.

4 TOPOGRAPHY, GEOLOGY AND SOILS

4.1 The topography, geology and soils of an area have an important bearing on the presence, character and survival of archaeological sites. The topography of Bishop's Stortford is somewhat undulating and slopes away towards the River Stort, which flows on an approximate north to south orientation at *c.* 58m AOD. Situated on the western side of the river valley and *c.* 400m from the River Stort, the site ranges in height from 70m AOD at its north-eastern corner to *c.* 82m AOD at its north-westernmost extent. The site lies on gently sloping land, which respects the general lie of the land and declines by 10m down towards the north-eastern corner of the eastern section and towards the nearby River Stort.

4.2 The settlement of Bishop's Stortford is situated on a cusp of two different solid geologies comprising both Lower Eocene Reading Beds, comprising a complex of vertically and laterally varying gravels, sands, silts and clays, to the north and Eocene London Clay to the south, upon which the site lies (McDonald 1997; BGS 1978). Along the River Stort and to the immediate east of the site, however, is a narrow strip of Cretaceous Upper Chalk. Overlying the solid geology of Reading Beds, London Clay and Cretaceous Upper Chalk is mainly later drift geology of Boulder Clay, although the river valley of the Stort contains river terrace gravels of a younger age.

4.3 As is the case with the geology, the town of Bishop's Stortford lies across the junction between a number of different soil types. The majority of the East Hertfordshire district and most of the settlement of Bishop's Stortford lie on soils of the Hanslope association, which are described as slowly permeable, calcareous clayey soils with some slowly permeable non-calcareous clayey soils, all of which are at slight risk of water erosion (SSEW 1983). Such soils of the Hanslope association generally lie on a chalky till geology and are used in agriculture for winter cereals with some other arable crops and grassland.

4.4 The areas of Bishop's Stortford, however, within the valley of the River Stort, which probably includes the easternmost section of the site, comprise soils of the Melford association, which are described as deep, well-drained fine loamy over clayey, coarse loamy over clayey and fine loamy soils, some with calcareous clayey subsoils (SSEW 1983). Such soils of the Melford association also generally lie on a drift geology of chalky till; their common agricultural use is the growing of cereals, sugar beet and other arable crops.

5 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

5.1 Prehistoric

5.1.1 By comparison with the nearby Lea Valley to the south-west, few finds of prehistoric date have been found in the immediate vicinity of Bishop's Stortford and the corresponding section of the Stort Valley (Hunns 2000). A single Palaeolithic hand axe and a further flint axe were found on or near the bank of the River Stort during the late 19th century, and two possible Mesolithic sites were discovered in the 1960s to the north and north-east of the town, although no archaeological remains dated to the Palaeolithic, Mesolithic or Neolithic have been revealed in proximity to the site of The Bishop's Stortford High School.

5.1.2 Evidence of Bronze Age, late Bronze Age to early Iron Age and Iron Age activity in the Bishop's Stortford area is also sparse, although large scale excavations to the south of the town in the area around Thorley in 1994 (McDonald 1995) revealed substantial evidence for Bronze Age and Iron Age activity in the Stort Valley and barely 1km to the south-west of the site. Most of the known later prehistoric sites are thus located to the south and south-west of the town around Thorley, such as the group of Iron Age Halstatt pottery sherds found in 1912 in a disused gravel pit on the western side of Harlow Road, Thorley Hill, barely 100m from the south-eastern corner of the site (HER 2785).

5.1.3 Extensive evidence for occupation from the early Iron Age to the Romano-British period, comprising storage pits, ditches and a possible middle Iron Age round house drainage gully, has been identified further to the east of Bishop's Stortford, yet the late Iron Age is represented in the area immediately surrounding the site by a silver quarter stater coin of Cunobelin, which was found by a metal detectorist 600m to the south-west of the site (HER 6540). Bronze Age evidence found in proximity to the site comprises Bronze Age pits (HER 1090). These features are recorded in conjunction with Romano-British cremation and occupation evidence on Thornbera Road extension and, significantly, within the western part of the assessment site as part of the local council designated archaeological alert area (HER 1090). Further Bronze Age evidence takes the form of a tanged and barbed flint arrowhead found in 1962 along Piggott's Way, 600m northwards (HER 2835).

5.2 Romano-British

5.2.1 The earliest large-scale settlement at Bishop's Stortford dates from the Romano-British period, and was located at the point where Stane Street, the N/S Roman road from Braughing to Colchester and now comprising the A120/A1250, crossed the River Stort. Sections of Stane Street were excavated ahead of development in 1997, which revealed a probable early date *c.* 50 AD for the first phase of the road and a second constructional phase during the 2nd century when the settlement probably developed. The discoveries included pottery from the 2nd – 4th century; 4th century foundations for timber buildings; post holes and possible boundary ditches running perpendicular to the road.

5.2.2 The main focus of Romano-British occupation in Bishop's Stortford appears to have been in the area of the Cannons Close housing estate, to the north of Stane Street (and to the north of the later medieval and post-medieval core of the town), which was revealed buildings, rubbish pits, burials and large quantities of pottery and finds from the 1st – 4th century AD (Hunns 2000). A possible tile kiln site also lies to the north of the known settlement (Cooper 2005), within a brick field which was still being exploited in the 19th century, whilst several burials were also observed during construction works, and included a stone coffin burial and a group of cremations, which suggest that a cemetery probably exists on the eastern side of the settlement.

5.2.3 The current evidence suggests that the Romano-British occupation at Bishop's Stortford was a small roadside urban settlement in the form of a ribbon development along both sides of Stane Street between Cannon Close and Grange Paddocks. The majority of evidence for Romano-British occupation at Bishop's Stortford has been found to the north of the town, some distance from the site. Although chance finds of Romano-British material are still recovered sporadically from gardens in Cannons Close, closer to the site, Roman coins, including one of Maximian (c. 286 – 7 AD), have been found on London Road and 300m to the north-west (HER 2135).

5.2.4 Barely 750m to the east of the site, a rescue excavation at Thorley Park in 1983 – 84 produced evidence of Romano-British occupation of 3rd – 4th century, probably associated with clay digging and later transitional occupation (HER 4852). Also within close proximity of the site was the discovery of a small Romano-British bronze fibula with missing pin, which was found by a metal detectorist in 1983 600m to the south-west of the site (HER 6537). Similarly, nine bronze and one silver Roman coins found by a metal detectorist nearby, and comprised a silver seliqua of Gratian and bronze coins of Constants, Magnentius, Crispus and Theodosius (HER 6539).

5.3 Anglo-Saxon

5.3.1 By the 5th century, the present town of Bishop's Stortford was probably established adjacent to the fording point along the River Stort in the area of North Street, High Street and Market Street (Orton 1976). Orton also suggests that the parish church of St Michael, the earliest surviving part of which dates from the 15th century, stands on a pagan Saxon site, although he presents no evidence for this. Little is known of the Anglo-Saxon settlement, which formed part of the Braughing Hundred, and there are scarce archaeological remains dating to the Anglo-Saxon period known in any proximity to the site of The Bishop's Stortford High School.

5.3.2 It is known that the late Anglo-Saxon manor of Stortford was held during the reign of Edward the Confessor by *Eadgifu Swanneshals*, also known as Edith the Fair, and the purported mistress of King Harold (Hunns 2000). Following the Conquest in 1066, Edith the Fair was effectively dispossessed of her lands and William I sold the manor to William, Bishop of London, who bought several estates from the new King. The Bishops of London retained the manor until 1868 (Page 1912, 296). Bishop's Stortford's Waytemore Castle, which lies c. 1.60km to the north of the site, was built in the 11th century as a motte and bailey castle, in a defensive position close to the ford of the River Stort.

5.3.3 The Domesday Book of 1086 assesses Stortford as six hides, with land for ten ploughs and woodland for three hundred pigs. It also had two mills and a resident priest with two knights (Morris 1976). The name for Bishop's Stortford in 1086 actually appeared as *Estereferd*, which may have arisen from the personal name, possibly *Steorta*, which is Old English for tail, of a family or small clan who lived in the vicinity of the ford during the Anglo-Saxon period and possibly controlled the crossing (Bishop's Stortford official town website). Once the town and its castle had been sold to the Bishops of London, the settlement became known as *Bishop's Estereferd*, which later became corrupted to the present spelling of Stortford.

5.3.4 As was the case until the 20th century, however, the site of The Bishop's Stortford High School formed part of the manor of Thorley, which lay to the south, rather than that of Bishop's Stortford. During the reign of Edward the Confessor, the manor of Thorley was held by Godid, a 'man' of Asgar the Staller. Following the Conquest, the manor of Thorley was also purchased from the King by William, Bishop of London (Page 1912, 374). Although by 1086 Thorley had been acquired by Geoffrey de Mandeville, one half-hide in Thorley still remained with the Bishop of London after 1086, and was tenanted by *Roderi*.

5.4 Medieval

5.4.1 In the early 13th century, the settlement of Bishop's Stortford became a pawn in the disputes between King John and the Pope (Bishop's Stortford official town website). The King seized the town from the Bishop and ordered the destruction of Waytemore Castle in 1208. Yet barely six years later the King had to finance the rebuilding of the castle. The motte and bailey Waytemore Castle, which lies *c.* 1.60km to the north of the site, was unusually sub-rectangular in plan and is scheduled as a Scheduled Ancient Monument (No. 20628). It lay in ruins by 1549 but the prison survived and was apparently used throughout the 16th century to hold religious dissenters and was known as '*The Convict's Prison*' until its demolition in 1649 (Cussans 1874, 110).

5.4.2 The medieval settlement of Bishop's Stortford, also known as *Stortford*, *Storfurde*, *Startford* and *Statford*, is known to have been a borough by around 1306 - 1336 and during the 14th century sent members to Parliament, as well as recording burgage rents (Cooper 2005). Market crosses were set up on the four major roads leading from the town, their probable locations were first suggested by Glassock (1905) and the possible locations for two are recorded in the relevant HER. The four crosses, however, appear to have been destroyed during either the Reformation or the Commonwealth (1645 - 60), although the market square and corn exchange are near the intersection of the four main streets and medieval buildings still survive.

5.4.3 Throughout the medieval period, the town of Bishop's Stortford developed into a thriving commercial centre, attested by a large number of inns in the town. Fairs were held three times a year on the feasts of St Michael, Ascension and Corpus Christi, and Session Rolls record that part of the fairs were held inside the churchyard until the end of the 16th century (Page 1912, 293; Hunns 2000). From the 15th century onwards, a successful tanning and leather industry developed rapidly in Bishop's Stortford, centred on Water Lane; medieval court rolls contain frequent references to

the surnames of Skinner and Tanner. Tanning required a ready supply of water and at this time the River Stort ran parallel to Water Lane (BSDLHS 1992; Page 1912, 292).

5.4.4 During the 17th century, the prison at Waytemore Castle was replaced by ‘*The Cherry Tree Inn*’, which re-used the medieval building materials and was later incorporated into ‘*Castle Cottage*’ (Page 1912, 299). Excavation relating to the demolition of the cottage in 1938 discovered three human skeletons in a row and three skulls thought to be medieval in date. Additional human skeletons have been found in various parts of the field surrounding the motte, including parts of six skeletons discovered in 1999, one of which was found to have suffered from rickets (Hunns 2000).

5.4.5 Also within the medieval core of Bishop’s Stortford lies the church of St Michael, which is stylistically dated to the early 15th century, although its earlier origins are indicated by the mention of a priest in the Domesday survey of 1086 and the indication that by 1243 the church was apparently in the gift of the Bishop of London (Page 1912, 303 - 5). However, despite the abundance of medieval occupation and settlement evidence towards the historic core of Bishop’s Stortford, no archaeological remains dating to the medieval period have been found within close proximity to the site.

5.4.6 As described above (see Section 5.3.4), it is notable that during the medieval period the site remained within the parish of Thorley, and would therefore have formed part of the manor of Thorley. Known variously as *Torlei* or *Thorleia* during the medieval period, Thorley was again mentioned as ‘manor of Thorley in Stortford’ when it was held of the Bishop of London in 1294 by Hugh de Birne (Page 1912, 375). There appears to have been no further trace of the manor or estate of Thorley in the documentary records of the later medieval period, and it is thus assumed that it was probably henceforth attached to the Bishop of London’s manor of Stortford.

5.5 Post-medieval

5.5.1 A significant event for the town during the post-medieval period was the opening of the Stort Navigation in 1769, which linked Bishop’s Stortford with London via the Lea Navigation, itself constructed in the 18th century. This provided a direct link to the markets of London and as a result, the prosperity of the town in the 18th and 19th centuries was fuelled by the brewing and malting industry as evidenced by the high number of maltings and inns recorded in the HER (Cooper 2005). Two former maltings are located along Southmill Road, which lies 900m to the north of the site, and date to 1856 and 1897 respectively (HERS 5359 & 5360).

5.5.2 A further former maltings building along Southmill Road is accompanied by a barley store (HER 5361). Two of three former maltings situated between the railway and the river, and within W. Hughes Timber Yard, also lie c. 800m to the north-east of the site (HERs 5362 & 5363). Malting was becoming an important source of employment in the area. There is a record of 1636 where the Justices of the Peace for Hertford state that the maltsters of Bishop's Stortford were mainly employed in making malt for the neighbouring gentry, who sent them their own barley for the purpose (Page 1912, 295).

5.5.3 The 18th century brought massive growth and transformation in the economy of Bishop's Stortford. Although it was still described as a considerable market town in 1770 (Munby 1977), its horse and cattle fairs had enabled an enormous expansion in leather-working by the 1750's through the tanners of Water Lane. It is believed that during the 18th century tanners and leather-workers, primarily glovers and shoemakers, comprised almost a quarter of the working population in Bishop's Stortford, yet by the end of the century the industry was already in decline (Hunns 2000).

5.5.4 Additional post-medieval industries in Bishop's Stortford have resulted in a number of extant industrial structures within proximity to the site. The former water mill, known as South Mill, on Mill Street and 800m north-east of the site, possibly dates from c. 1850 (HER 5775). A second former water corn mill, known as Twyford Mill, on Mill Street has been dated by means of documentary sources to at least 1852 (HER 5811), whilst the site of a post-medieval windmill is first shown on the Dury and Andrews' map of 1766 (HER 6797). Further industrial remains comprise two canal locks (HERs 5854 & 5858), Brick kiln fields and brick grounds on Rhodes Avenue (HERs 6795 & 6794) and the site of a barge-building yard on Southmill Road (HER 10775).

5.5.5 After 1744, the principal roads through Bishop's Stortford were greatly improved by the Essex and Herts Highway Trust. Orton (1976) notes that these improvements led to the demolition of some buildings in North Street and South Street to permit road widening, although this area lay some distance from the site itself. By the mid 19th century, however, connection to the railway laid the foundation for Bishop's Stortford's present importance as both a market town in its own right and as a favoured commuter area for the capital. Such development necessitated the construction of numerous post-medieval road bridges (HERs 5136 & 6788), and railway bridge (HERs 5639 & 5640) over the River Stort.

5.5.6 The post-medieval cemetery chapels on Apton Road, which are both Church of England and Nonconformist and built by G. E. Pritchett, lie within the 1855 cemetery to the south of the town, and are located approximately 1km to the north of the site. A number of post-medieval find spots also lie within the environs of The Bishop's Stortford High School. These include a Queen Anne medal, known as a 'touch piece', found in 1924 in Bishop's Stortford (HER 6086). An 18th century fob seal comprising a fine intaglio in gilt bronze of Neo-Classical design (HER 6538) and a post-medieval bronze buckle (HER 6544) were also found by metal detectorists in the area surrounding the site.

5.5.7 There are many buildings surviving in the town from the post-medieval period, including the post-medieval Twyford Bury Farm, which is a possible timber framed building located 600m to the south-east of the site (HER 12295). Similarly, the mid 17th century Twyford House on Pig Lane was possibly built for the Hale family who were owners from 1650, although the house was altered and refaced in red brick English bond in 1715 (HER 12208). Styleman's house on Hallingbury Road, however, is a timber-framed, two storey structure dating to c. 1500, with a post-medieval cast iron hand pump in the garden (HER 12281).

5.6 Modern

5.6.1 As was the case in the post-medieval period, from 1900 onwards the settlement of Bishop's Stortford expanded significantly in size, thus encompassing the former parish of Thorley lands within which the assessment site lies. Development necessitated the construction of communications, such as the modern road bridge carrying the road to Great and Little Hallingbury over the River Stort, which was rebuilt in 1922 approximately 500m south-east of the site (HER 5137), as well as those forming the county bridge 500m to the north-east (HER 5138) and that over the old GER main lane 450m to the north-east (HER 5139).

5.6.2 Other than the presence of the modern road bridges over the River Stort, the HER contains relatively few entries for modern features and structures within any proximity of the site. A World War II pillbox was listed near Twyford Mill and Pig Lane by Wills 500m south-east of the site, but is no longer extant (HER 6943). A second, similar, World War II pillbox was listed near London Road and Pig Lane by Wills only 150m from the site (HER 6944). Despite the growth of modern Bishop's Stortford, the retention of over 90 acres of parks and open spaces, such as the playing fields located within the site, as '*green wedges*' from the surrounding Metropolitan Green Belt has prevented excessive urbanisation (Bishop's Stortford official town website).

6 THE SITE

6.1 The HER database reveals that the whole of the western section of the site is situated within an archaeological alert area, as designated by the local council. The archaeological alert area, which also incorporates areas of Thornbera Close, Thornbera Gardens and the Thornbera Road extension, refers directly to Bronze Age pits, and Romano-British cremation and occupation evidence (HER 1090). As detailed in the HER database, the late Bronze Age occupation evidence comprised six rubbish pits and a boundary ditch which contained pottery. Only one of the pits was excavated, and it produced late Bronze Age sherds and a black ash layer containing flint and bone. Overlying was a Romano-British cremation with rough walling and 1st – 4th century pottery sherds.

6.2 The *Hertfordshire Archaeology* report of the archaeological alert area, known as the Thorley Hill site, records that prehistoric remains had been found in a gravel pit at Thorley Hill, barely 50m south of The Bishop's Stortford High School site, as early as 1912, but the site of the late Bronze Age and Romano-British activity was not discovered until 1955 – 58 (Ellcock 1968). During the mechanical excavation of sewers and roads associated with the Thornbera Road extension, a significant pit was sectioned, and its fill was found to contain small quantities of late Bronze Age pottery sherds and a large quantity of black ash. Subsequent investigation revealed a large boundary ditch, six late Bronze Age pits, a section of rough walling, and a large quantity of Romano-British pottery.

6.3 The archaeological report on the Thorley Hill site reveals that it was occupied in the late Bronze Age and was later re-occupied in the Romano-British period during the 1st – 4th centuries. Due to its shape and dimensions, it has been suggested that the

excavated late Bronze Age pit was originally dug as a kiln, which was later reused as a rubbish pit (Ellcock 1968). The two excavated sections of the boundary ditch suggest it lay on an east-north-east to west-south-west orientation, whilst it is possible that the rough walling lay on a north-west to south-eastwards alignment. The rough walling also appears to have been robbed, and appeared similar to another deposit at the Romano-British settlement site at Cannons Close, located to the north-east and beyond Stane Street.

6.4 Despite the significant archaeological potential in the western section of the site for the Bronze Age and Romano-British periods, documentary sources reveal relatively little about the site during the historic period. The survey of Thorley Hall Manor, for example, dates to 1687 – 88 and provides details of field and personal names, yet there is no mention of The Bishop’s Stortford High School site in particular (Ref. 76028). Despite being situated within the parish of Thorley, the photocopy of a plan of Thorley estate, which dates to 1825, did not include the site (Ref. 71022B), and the Bishop’s Stortford prospectus for The Bishop’s Stortford High School and prospectus for a leaflet inviting subscribers to the Nonconformist Grammar School at Bishop’s Stortford, both of which were dated 1869, do not concern the site (Ref. D/ECU/2 P22 – 27).

6.5 The sketch plan of Thorley dating from 1906, and which clearly labels the relevant field names also does not include the site of The Bishop’s Stortford High School, possibly due to its proximity to the parish boundary separating Thorley from Bishop’s Stortford (Ref. 76160). As also revealed by the 2nd edition Ordnance Survey Herts sheet XXIII.10, which dates to 1898 (Fig. 7), the 1909 map showing that part of Thorley parish transferred to Bishop’s Stortford (Ref. RDC6/28) indicates that prior to the boundary change the site lay within the parish of Thorley, with the northern extent of the site located along the same parish boundary. As discussed below (see Section 7.6), it was not until *c.* 1939 that the site was incorporated into the parish of Bishop’s Stortford (Fig. 9).

6.6 Despite the 1939 extension of Bishop’s Stortford parish further southwards to incorporate the present site of The Bishop’s Stortford High School, the site was not developed during that period. As shown by the cartographic sources (see Section 7, below), the site remained undeveloped until the establishment of The Bishop’s Stortford High School, the original buildings of which date from the 1950s (TBSHS website). The numerous school buildings all post-date the 1950s and have been extended and enlarged during the later 20th century. In 1990, for example, the school was enlarged by the addition of a sixth form centre, and the extension of the school library (TBSHS website).

6.7 Later phases of modern development to enlarge and improve The Bishop’s Stortford High School have included the construction of the two storey building, known as Newton, which was added to the school’s science department in 1995 (TBSHS website). More recently, the school has benefited from the establishment in 1998 of a Yamaha School of Music within its building complex, as well as the formation of the Jobbers Wood sports complex, which was opened in 2001 at a site some distance from The Bishop’s Stortford High School site. The school also has a gymnasium, a sports hall and on-site sports fields with a modern pavilion, the latter located in the western section of the site (TBSHS website).

7 CARTOGRAPHIC SOURCES

7.1 A topographical map of Hertfordshire; Dury & Andrews's map, 1766

7.1.1 The Dury and Andrews' 1766 map is the first detailed cartographic source of Hertfordshire to depict the settlement of *Bishop Stortford* in any detail, although it is evident that at that time the site of The Bishop's Stortford High School lay some distance from the town itself (Fig. 4). Whilst the settlement of Bishop's Stortford appeared to be relatively large in size, it lay only to the west of the River Stort, and was separated from '*the Castle*' to the east. The town in 1766 thus comprised little more than properties fronting on to four main roads, although the parish church in the north-western corner of the town is clearly depicted.

7.1.2 The site in 1766 extended across three large fields beyond the southernmost extent of Bishop's Stortford and to the immediate west of the London Road. Although the Dury and Andrews' map is depicted in a relatively small scale, the site appears to have lain undeveloped at the end of the 18th century, and is thought to have comprised a small section of a significantly larger agricultural field. Immediately to the south of the site and fronting the London Road stood a single rectangular structure, whilst on the eastern side of the River Stort stood '*Sow Mill*', and to the west of the site in 1766 stood '*Haver*'.

7.2 The county of Hertford, from actual survey; Bryant's map, 1822

7.2.1 The Bryant's map of Hertfordshire from 1822 (Fig. 5) depicts the expansion and growth of the settlement of '*Bishops Stortford*', which has begun to extend particularly to the east of the River Stort, possibly as the separate settlement of '*Hockerhill*', and southwards along the London Road. The majority of the town in 1822 remained between a network of smaller roads located to the west of the River Stort, and some distance northwards of the site.

7.2.2 Despite their similarities, Bryant's map of 1822 appears to depict significantly more detail in terms of the rural areas of Hertfordshire than the earlier Dury and Andrews' map. It is thus possible to pinpoint the location of the site with greater accuracy than previously, and although located along the London Road to the south of Bishop's Stortford, the site lay southwards of both '*Sow Mill*' and '*Havers Farm*'. '*Twyford Mill and House*' lay to the south-east of the site, and the small settlement of '*Thorley Street*' to the south. The site itself comprised part of an undeveloped agricultural field.

7.3 Tithe map of the parish of Thorley, 1845

7.3.1 Although no enclosure award was made for the parish of Thorley, within which the site then lay, there are known to have been common fields when the tithe commutation award (Ref. D/EX/52/P4A) and the tithe map of the parish of Thorley (Fig. 6; Ref. D/EX/52/P4) were made in 1845. The site in 1845 lay to the west of the London Road, in the northernmost section of Thorley parish, close to the boundary with Bishop's Stortford. From the 1845 tithe map, it appears that the site comprised the majority of a single, rectangular shaped field (western section), and the northern sections of two further fields (eastern section).

7.3.2 The title award reveals that the western section of the site, comprising a single field (#286), was owned by *The Right Honourable Lord Ellenborough*, and occupied by a tenant by the name of *Thomas Green*. Although described as the *Vine yard*, the field was in use as arable land comprising 10 acres one rood and 22 perches, with a rent of £3 9s. 6d. payable to the Rector. The eastern section of the site comprised parts of two further arable fields (#284 & #285), both of which were owned by George Frere, the lord of the manor of Twyfordbury, and tenanted by William Digby.

7.4 2nd edition Ordnance Survey Herts sheet XXIII.10, 1898

7.4.1 The 2nd edition Ordnance Survey Herts sheet XXIII.10, which dates to 1898, is the first cartographic source to depict the site in detail (Fig. 7). The map indicates that the site lay within the parish of Thorley even following the U.D. boundary extension of 1909 – 10, although the later boundary formed the northernmost extent of the site. To the north-north-east of the site lay the southern section of Bishop's Stortford, comprising *South Lodge*, *South House* and a number of *Malthouses* positioned along the eastern bank of the River Stort. To the north-west of the site lay *Great Havers*, presumably *Havers* and *Havers Farm* depicted in previous cartographic sources.

7.4.2 The site comprised two distinct sections of two agricultural fields, with the two easternmost fields depicted in the previous title map reformed as a single field. Thus the eastern boundary of the site is demarcated by the London Road and the northern and eastern extent formed by field boundaries, although no field boundaries lay at the south of the site. The majority of the site in 1898 comprised farm land, but in the south-western corner of the site lay part of a large, roadside *Gravel Pit*, which was the likely location of the prehistoric artefacts found in a gravel pit in 1912 (Ellcock 1968).

7.5 3rd edition Ordnance Survey Herts sheet XXIII.10, 1921

7.5.1 The 3rd edition Ordnance Survey Herts sheet XXIII.10, which dates to 1921, is drawn to the same scale as the previous cartographic source and shows a significant degree of change in the preceding twenty-three years (Fig. 8). To the north-east of the site, the settlement of Bishop's Stortford has continued to expand. In addition to *South Lodge*, *South House* and a number of *Malthouses*, rows of terraces, including *Hugh Villas* have been constructed along London Road and neighbouring streets, whilst *Thorley Works (Engineering)* lay further southwards.

7.5.2 Unlike previous cartographic sources, by 1921, the northern extent of the site was demarcated by a large area of covert, known as *Thorley Hill Plantation*, which had been established to the west of the London Road between the site and the settlement of Bishop's Stortford. The northern and western boundaries of the site were thus in 1921 delineated by the covert or avenue of trees, although the southern boundaries remained undefined. As previously, the majority of the site comprised agricultural land, although the south-eastern corner comprised the northern and enlarged section of the *Gravel Pit*.

7.6 4th edition Ordnance Survey Herts sheet XXIII.10, 1939

7.6.1 The 4th edition Ordnance Survey Herts sheet XXIII.10, which dates to 1939, was drawn up only eighteen years after the last, yet depicts a huge amount of change in the area surrounding the site (Fig. 9). By 1939, the southernmost extent of the settlement of Bishop's Stortford has reached the northern boundary of the site, and the *Thorley Hill Plantation*, as shown in the previous cartographic source, has given way to residential developments along *Thorley Park Road*, *Thorley Hill* and *Park Lane*. On the eastern side of the London Road, however, lay the enlarged *Thorley Works (Engineering)* and houses along *Burley Road*.

7.6.2 Despite the range of developments to the north of the site, and the extension of the Bishop's Stortford parish boundary further southwards into the parish of Thorley, very little development had taken place within the site as late as 1939. As with the previous cartographic sources, the majority of the site remained agricultural land, whilst the south-eastern section comprised part of the 19th century *Gravel Pit*. Unlike previously, however, further earthworks/terracing are shown on the eastern part of the site, reflecting the access to the site today.

7.7 Ordnance Survey sheets TL 48 19 NE & TL 49 19 NW, 1968

7.7.1 The two Ordnance Survey sheets TL 48 19 NE and TL 49 19 NW, both of which date from 1968, are the earliest cartographic sources to depict any development within the site (Fig. 10). In addition to the development within the site, the 1968 maps are also the first to show the site surrounded by modern residential developments representing the southern outskirts of Bishop's Stortford, particularly the semi-detached dwellings along *Grace Gardens* to the south of the site. To the west of the site, however, the immediate area remained relatively undeveloped, with the 1968 maps depicting a playground and area of covert.

7.7.2 The western section of the site remained undeveloped, comprising a playing field with a small, rectangular structure located in its north-eastern corner. The eastern section of the site, in contrast, had by 1968 been developed to contain '*The Bishop's Stortford Boys' High School*', as well as tennis and netball courts and playing fields, with the *Thorley Hill County Primary School* between the two sections of the site. The modern school complex comprised a wide range of structures located in the central and northern areas of the eastern section of the site.

7.8 Ordnance Survey sheet TL 48 19, 1969

7.8.1 The Ordnance Survey sheet TL 48 19, which dates to 1969, post-dates the previous cartographic source by only one year and it is thus unsurprising that no further development has occurred within the site, or within its environs (Fig. 11). Although drawn to a smaller scale, the 1969 map clearly depicts that the western section of the site comprised a playing field associated with '*The Bishop's Stortford Boys' High School*', which lay in the eastern section of the site and towards the main access point into the site via the London Road, whilst the *Thorley Hill County Primary School* lay between the two sections of the site.

7.8.2 As shown on the previous cartographic source, the extensive complex of ‘*The Bishop’s Stortford Boys’ High School*’ towards the eastern extent of the site comprised a range of modern structures that were developed at some point between the issuing of the 1939 and the 1968 maps. As with the previous cartographic source, by 1969, ‘*The Bishop’s Stortford Boys’ High School*’ consisted of a large, roughly linear structure located on a north-north-west to south-south-east alignment fronting onto the London Road entrance of the site, which had been landscaped significantly. To the immediate west and rear of the main school building lay a series of adjoining structures, along with ‘*tennis and netball courts*’, a small ‘*tank*’ structure, and a rectangular greenhouse.

7.9 Ordnance Survey sheet TL 48 19 NE, 1978

7.9.1 The Ordnance Survey sheet TL 48 19 NE, which dates to 1978, clearly differentiates between the eastern and western sections of the site, but is the first cartographic source to show the narrow footpath to the south of the ‘Thorley Hill County Primary School’ which links the two sections of the site (Fig. 12). The 1978 map depicts the western section of the site as a large area of playing field with a small rectangular structure, as seen previously, in the north-eastern corner. Also located in the western section of the site by 1978 was a larger rectangular building labelled as a ‘*pavilion*’, which lay close to the central eastern boundary and beside the footpath joining the two sections of the site.

7.9.2 The eastern section of the site mainly comprised the buildings of ‘*The Bishop’s Stortford Boys’ High School*’, as well as significant landscaping at the easternmost end, close to the London Road entrance. Much of the school building complex remained as it was in the 1969 map with the main school building adjoined to a range of smaller structures to the rear, as well as short rows of small buildings along the northern boundary of the site’s eastern section. Towards the western boundary of the eastern section, the former greenhouse has been demolished to make way for a large extension of the school buildings, particular to the rear of the main building.

7.10 Ordnance Survey sheet TL 49 19 NW, 1990

7.10.1 The Ordnance Survey sheet TL 48 19 NE, which dates to 1990, depicts only the easternmost section of the site, namely the main building of The Bishop’s Stortford High School and the London Road entrance to the school (Fig. 13). As seen on previous cartographic sources, the entrance route to the school had been landscaped significantly to create two driveways flanked by large earthen banks on either side. The main building of the school, however, appeared to comprise a large linear building, probably comprised of several different structures, located on a north-north-west to south-south-east alignment.

8 SITE VISIT

8.1 A site visit was undertaken (01/08/06). The topography of the site’s two sections differed with the western section noticeably, sloping downwards towards its south-eastern corner, and towards the nearby River Stort. The eastern section of the

site, however, had a more uniform relief and sloping gently, although the area close to London Road has been clearly landscaped/terraced (as shown on the later 20th century cartographic sources; DP 1).

8.2 As revealed by the cartographic sources (Section 7.7 above), the two buildings directly to the rear of the main school building formed part of the original development, whilst the single storey structure with internal quads, located further westwards, was constructed *c.* 1978 (DPs 5 & 6). At the southern boundary of the site stands a two-storey, brick built structure, the 'Newton' extension to the science department dating from 1995 (DPs 15 & 16). The irregularly shaped structure to the east comprises the Yamaha School of Music established in 1998 (DP 14).

8.5 The majority of the area surrounding the school buildings comprises areas of hard-standing (DPs 2, 5, 9 & 11). This includes large areas of car park close to the northern and southern boundaries, as well as the two drives from London Road, although the landscaped banks to either side are grassed and support a small number of established trees. In the north-western corner of the site's eastern corner there is a large, fenced tarmac playground/courts backing onto the Thorley Hill Primary School drive (DPs 7 & 8). To the immediate east is a modern 'porta cabin' classroom, located temporarily on an area of hard-standing (DPs 9 & 10).

8.6 The western section of the site comprises almost entirely a grass-covered playing field, containing only a single pavilion structure (DP 13). Located close to the central eastern boundary, the pavilion building is a brick-built, two storey and roughly rectangular shaped structure built in the recent modern period with a first-floor balcony. The pavilion faces west-north-westwards to look out over the remainder of the playing field. To the south and east of the pavilion is an area of hardstanding, providing car parking and also containing a number of manhole covers, probably relating to the existing gas, water and electric pipes running from the main school buildings (Fig. 2).

8.7 It was noted during the course of the site visit that in the north-western corner of the site's playing field was a possible earthwork. The grass covered earthwork was rectangular in shape with three straight, almost horse-shoe shaped sides forming adjoining banks approximately 400mm in width and 60mm in height. Although it is likely that the earthwork represents nothing more than a former modern feature such as an athletics sand pit, it lies close to the Thorley Hill site of late Bronze Age and Romano-British occupation. The remainder of the playing field, however, did not reveal any noticeable earthworks or grassmarks, and was mainly demarcated by established trees, particularly along its northern, western and southern boundaries.

9 DISCUSSION

9.1 Archaeological potential

9.1.1 Few finds of prehistoric date have been found in the immediate vicinity of Bishop's Stortford and the corresponding section of the Stort Valley (Hunns 2000). No archaeological finds pre-dating the Bronze Age were found within 1km of the site, but the potential for archaeological remains dating from the late Bronze Age onwards

are significant. Large scale excavations to the south of the town in the area around Thorley, for example, (MacDonald 1995) revealed substantial evidence for Bronze Age and Iron Age activity in the Stort Valley and barely 1km to the south-west of the site, whilst Iron Age Halstatt pottery sherds and a silver quarter stater coin of Cunobelin were found nearby.

9.1.2 The highest archaeological potential for remains within The Bishop's Stortford High School site is associated with the archaeological area to the west of the site, and which also includes the whole of the site's western section. As described previously (Section 6, above), in 1955 – 58 the Thorley Hill site (HER 1090) revealed late Bronze Age pits, including a likely kiln, a late Bronze Age boundary ditch and pottery sherds post-dated by a Romano-British cremation, rough walling and occupation evidence. Although the main part of the Thorley Hill site was subsequently removed when the modern housing estate was constructed, it was noted in the original excavation report that there were possibilities of further finds in the surrounding locality (Ellcock 1968), and the western section of the site contains the greatest potential.

9.1.3 Furthermore, Romano-British artefacts have been found in close proximity to The Bishop's Stortford High School site and similarly point to the likelihood of a Romano-British settlement to the immediate west of, and possibly within, the site itself. Nearby Romano-British remains and finds include Roman coins, one of Maximian (c. 286 – 7 AD) found on the London Road, and nine bronze and one silver Roman coins, as well as a small Romano-British bronze fibula with missing pin. A rescue excavation at Thorley Park produced evidence of Romano-British occupation of 3rd – 4th century, probably associated with clay digging and later transitional occupation, and possibly forming part of the settlement identified at the Thorley Hill site.

9.1.5 Unlike the late Bronze Age and Romano-British period, there is little potential for the site to reveal archaeological remains dating to the post-Roman period. Although the present town of Bishop's Stortford was probably established in the 5th century, little is known of the Anglo-Saxon settlement. Consistent with the scarcity of Anglo-Saxon archaeology in Bishop's Stortford, there are no known archaeological remains dating to the Anglo-Saxon period known in any proximity to the site. The lack of Anglo-Saxon remains, however, is possibly due to the fact that the site then lay close to the parish boundary between Bishop's Stortford and Thorley.

9.1.6 Similarly, the lack of medieval remains in proximity to The Bishop's Stortford High School site is due to its presence on the periphery of the contemporary settlement of Bishop's Stortford. It is known that medieval Bishop's Stortford had close ties to the Bishops of London and that Waytemore Castle existed prior to 1208, when it was destroyed by King John. Although Bishop's Stortford developed into a thriving commercial centre during the medieval period, it appears the settlement was focused to the immediate west of Waytemore Castle and close to the crossing point of the River Stort, and thus the site of The Bishop's Stortford High School would have lain beside a navigable road, which became the London Road, but still some distance from the medieval urban focus.

9.2 Landscape characterisation

9.2.1 As stated previously (Section 4, above), the topography, geology and soils of an area have an important bearing on the presence, character and survival of archaeological sites. The Bishop's Stortford High School site lies within the valley of the River Stort and would therefore have represented an advantageous location, in terms of water sources, defence and agriculture, during the prehistoric and historic periods. During the later prehistoric period in particular, and following the emergence of farming in the Bronze Age, the location of the western section of the site, which slopes noticeably downwards towards its south-eastern corner and towards the nearby River Stort, would have been ideal for occupation and settlement (Ellcock 1968).

9.2.2 The character of the local landscape will clearly have affected the potential for previous occupation and settlement. As noted in the research framework for the eastern counties (Brown & Glazebrook 2000), the Stort valley and its numerous small tributaries offer good opportunities for finding environmental sequences and/or intact sites, and thus there is a potential for such evidence to be found within the site itself, particular in the western section close to the Thorley Hill late Bronze Age and Romano-British site. Late Bronze Age unenclosed settlement, for example, has been recorded at a number of locations in the south and west of the region including Foxholes, Cole Green and along the Berkhamsted/Kings Langley Bypass, all in Hertfordshire (Glazebrook 1997).

9.2.3 The relevant research framework note that settlements of the earlier Bronze Age are nationally rare, and some of the best examples come from East Anglia (Brown & Glazebrook 2000). For the late Bronze Age, however, there are a considerable number and variety of known settlement sites in Essex, although there is a bias towards investigation of enclosed rather than unenclosed settlements. The site's western section may therefore provide an important opportunity to establish whether there was a similar density and range of settlement sites throughout the region, particularly in Hertfordshire, or whether differential development of settlement patterns took place (*ibid.* 2000). The pottery assemblages revealed at the Thorley Hill site also present possibilities, particularly since pottery of the late Bronze Age is now well known in the region (Glazebrook 1997).

9.2.4 There is also a potential for the site and the immediately surrounding area to have been occupied during the Romano-British, as indicated by the Thorley Hill site and associated archaeological alert area. The relevant research agenda reveals that while there have been numerous excavations of Romano-British rural sites within the region, these tend to have been concentrated on high status settlements; the villas (Glazebrook 1997), and thus any Romano-British finds revealed in the western section of the site may prove to be of regional importance. Furthermore, there has been little attempt to look at inter-relationships between urban and rural landscapes during the Romano-British period, and in the rural landscape there is a lack even of classification systems for settlements other than the typical 'villa' (Brown & Glazebrook 2000).

9.2.5 It is noted that the arable landscape of eastern England enables rapid identification of Roman sites because of the prolific artefacts (*ibid.* 2000), yet it was the quantity of Romano-British pottery, consisting of Samian and coarse wares, as well as small finds, that dated the later occupation phase of the Thorley Hill site to the

4th century. Although Roman buildings are remarkably uncommon in the eastern region, the potential of structural remains to be found within the western section of the site should not be underestimated, thus making it possible to restore the external appearance of some rural structures dating to the Romano-British period (Glazebrook 1997).

9.3 Previous ground disturbance

9.3.1 Despite the abundance of post-medieval HER entries located within the 1km radius of the site, the cartographic evidence (Sections 7.1 – 7.6.2; Figs. 4 – 9) reveals that The Bishop’s Stortford High School site remained relatively undeveloped until the mid 20th century. The site was south of the post-medieval settlement of Bishop’s Stortford and close to the numerous maltings, mills, canal locks and extant post-medieval buildings, but it was not until the time of the 4th edition Ordnance Survey map in 1939 that the residential suburbs of Bishop’s Stortford reached the site of The Bishop’s Stortford High School (Fig. 9). The modern period, however, saw the incorporation of the site into the parish and settlement of Bishop’s Stortford, as evident today.

9.3.2 The 2nd edition Ordnance Survey map reveals that part of a gravel pit was situated in the south-easternmost corner of the site, close to the London Road, as early as 1898 (Fig. 7). It is likely that the gravel pit is the same as the one from which prehistoric remains were purportedly found as early as 1912 (Ellcock 1968), thus further emphasising the potential for archaeological remains to be found within the site, but also that at least parts of the site will have been significantly previously truncated. Later cartographic sources (Figs. 8 & 9) indicate that during the early 20th century the gravel pit extended towards the north-eastern corner of The Bishop’s Stortford High School site.

9.3.3 Given the previous ground disturbance caused by the gravel pit and subsequent landscaping in the easternmost section of the site, it is unlikely that archaeological remains will be found in the same area. For the remaining eastern section of the site previous ground disturbance will have occurred on a large scale during the many phases of construction associated with the development of the school buildings.

9.3.4 In contrast, the western section of The Bishop’s Stortford High School site is likely to have been affected by only a limited amount of previous ground disturbance. Although the recent construction of the pavilion building and the associated hard standing may have disturbed archaeological remains or deposits, the majority of the site’s western section has been retained as a grass playing field, probably ever since it was an agricultural field. The designation of the site’s western section as an archaeological alert area is likely to have restricted previous development, and was possibly influential in the siting of the school buildings further eastwards. Other than the drain on the northern boundary, previous ground disturbance in the western section of the site has been minimal, further endorsing the potential for late Bronze Age and Romano-British remains.

9.3.5 Further archaeological significance in the western section of the site may relate to its north-western and western boundary, which is demarcated by a covert or avenue of trees (Fig. 2). Although there was not documentary sources referring to the north-east to south-west aligned avenue and the ride contained within, cartographic sources reveal that it had been established by 1921. According to the 3rd edition Ordnance Survey map, the avenue originated from ‘*Thorley Hill Plantation*’ which lay to the north-west of the site and ran perpendicular to the north-west to south-east aligned road leading to ‘*Thorley Works (Engineering)*’. None of the avenue of trees, the road nor ‘*Thorley Hill Plantation*’ existed in the map of 1898, and by 1939 the plantation had been removed to make way for housing developments along Park Lane and Thorely Hill. It is possible that the avenue and ride was established to provide access to the plantation from the south.

10 CONCLUSION

The impact of development relating to the redevelopment strategy for the existing site of The Bishop’s Stortford High School will vary greatly between the eastern and western sections of the site. The designation of the site’s western section as an archaeological alert area suggests the potential presence of further occupation and settlement relating to the known Thorley Hill late Bronze Age and Romano-British site. The former gravel pit, later landscaping and development of the school buildings in the eastern section of the site suggest that its future development will have a lesser archaeological impact.

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Bishop's Stortford official town website
<http://www.bishopsstortford.org>

The Bishop's Stortford High School website
<http://www.tbshs.herts.sch.uk>

APPENDIX 1
ARCHAEOLOGICAL DATABASE (HER)

HER	NGR TL	Description
Prehistoric (until AD 43)		
1090	487 197	Bronze Age pits and Romano-British cremation and occupation evidence on Thornbera Road extension
2785	490 196	A group of Iron Age Halstatt pottery sherds found in 1912 in a disused gravel pit on the western side of Harlow Road, Thorley Hill
2835	485 203	Bronze Age tanged and barbed flint arrowhead found in 1962 along Piggott's Way
6540	481 193	Late Iron Age silver quarter stater of Cunobelin found by a metal detectorist in 1983
Romano-British (AD 43 to 410)		
2135	4909 2005	Roman coin of Maximian (c. 286 – 7 AD) found on London Road
4852	4779 1962	Rescue excavation at Thorley Park in 1983 – 84 produced evidence of Romano-British occupation of 3 rd – 4 th century, probably associated with clay digging and later transitional occupation
6537	481 193	Small Romano-British bronze fibula with missing pin found by a metal detectorist in 1983
6539	481 195	Nine bronze and one silver Roman coins found by a metal detectorist in 1983, and comprising a silver siliqua of Gratian and bronze coins of Constants, Magnentius, Crispus and Theodosius
Post-medieval (1500 to 1900)		
5136	4919 1949	Post-medieval road bridge carrying the road to Great and Little Hallingbury over the old GER main lane
5359	4907 2066	Former maltings comprising three floors of red brick along Southmill Road dates to 1856
5360	4908 2064	Former maltings comprising four floors of red brick along Southmill Road, with a date on the hopper heads marked as 1897
5361	4911 2064	Former maltings comprising three arcaded floors of red brick along Southmill Road, along with a barley store
5362	4934 2030	One of three former maltings situated between the railway and the river, and within W. Hughes Timber Yard, badly damaged by fire c. 1920 and not repaired
5363	4934 2027	One of three former maltings situated between the railway and the river, and within W. Hughes Timber Yard, with an adjacent furnace dating to c. 1936
5639	4935 2019	Post-medieval railway bridge over the River Stort and along Twyford Road
5640	4936 2018	Post-medieval railway bridge over the River Stort and along Twyford Road
5775	4928 2041	Former water corn mill, known as South Mill, on Mill Street possibly dates from c. 1850
5811	4935 1930	Former water corn mill, known as Twyford Mill, on Mill Street dated by means of documentary sources to at least 1852
5854	4948 1995	Canal lock, known as South Mill Lock, comprising stone and brick, and dating to 1879
5858	4939 1928	Canal lock, known as Twyford Lock, comprising metal gates and arms
6086	48 20	A Queen Anne medal, known as a 'touch piece' was dug up in 1924 in Bishop's Stortford
6538	481 195	18 th century fob seal comprising a fine intaglio in gilt bronze of Neo-Classical design, found by a metal detectorist in 1983
6544	481 195	Post-medieval bronze buckle found by a metal detectorist in 1983
6788	4938 1920	Small, post-medieval brick built road bridge over a stream and to the south of

		the River Stort
6794	4889 2060	Brick grounds on Rhodes Avenue located from the 1938 tithe, site now occupied by modern houses and gardens
6795	4905 2060	Brick kiln fields on Rhodes Avenue located from the 1938 tithe, site now occupied by modern houses and gardens
6797	4960 2130	Site of a post-medieval windmill first shown on the Dury and Andrews' map of 1766
10767	4860 2069	The post-medieval cemetery chapels on Apton Road, which are both Church of England and Nonconformist and built by G. E. Pritchett, lie within the 1855 cemetery to the south of the town
10775	4924 2051	Site of a barge building yard on Southmill Road was shown on the 1898 map, but is now occupied by depot buildings
12208	4932 1930	Mid 17 th century Twyford House on Pig Lane was possibly built for the Hale family who were owners from 1650, although the house was altered and refaced in red brick English bond in 1715
12281	4955 2005	Styleman's house on Hallingbury Road is a timber framed, two storey structure dating to c. 1500, with a post-medieval, cast iron hand pump in the garden
12295	4934 1946	Post-medieval Twyford Bury Farm is a possible timber framed building
Modern (1900 to present)		
5137	4937 1927	Modern road bridge carrying the road to Great and Little Hallingbury over the River Stort and rebuilt in 1922
5138	4925 2028	Modern road bridge forming the county bridge in 1839, but rebuilt in 1913, and more recently
5139	494 203	Modern road bridge over the old GER main lane and rebuilt in 1913
6943	4940 1930	Modern World War II pillbox listed near Twyford Mill and Pig Lane by Wills, but no longer extant
6944	4910 1950	Modern World War II pillbox listed near London Road and Pig Lane by Wills, but no longer extant

APPENDIX 2 CARTOGRAPHIC EVIDENCE

Date	Description	Fig. No.	Scale	Location
1766	A topographical map of Hertford-shire; Dury & Andrews's map	4	1 mile : 1.95 inches	AS
1822	The county of Hertford, from actual survey; Bryant's map	5	7/8 mile : 1 inch	AS
1845	Tithe map of the parish of Thorley	6	-	HALS
1898	2 nd edition Ordnance Survey Herts sheet XXIII.10	7	25"	HALS
1921	3 rd edition Ordnance Survey Herts sheet XXIII.10	8	25"	HALS
1939	4 th edition Ordnance Survey Herts sheet XXIII.10	9	25"	HALS
1968	Ordnance Survey sheets TL 48 19 NE & TL 49 19 NW	10	1:10,000	HALS
1969	Ordnance Survey sheet TL 48 19	11	1:2,500	HALS
1978	Ordnance Survey sheet TL 48 19 NE	12	1:10,000	HALS
1983	Soil Survey of England & Wales Soil Map of England & Wales	N/A	1:250,000	AS
1990	Ordnance Survey sheet TL 49 19 NW	13	1:10,000	HALS
1996	Detailed site location plan	2	1:1,250	Client
1999	Ordnance Survey Explorer Series 194; site location	1; 3	1:25,000	AS

Documents consulted at HALS;

- Sketch plan of Thorley, field names given, 1906 Ref. 76160
- Survey of Thorley Hall Manor, field and personal names given, 1687 – 88
Ref. 76028
- Photocopy of Thorley estate, 1825 Ref. 71022B
- Map showing part of Thorley transferred to Bishop's Stortford, 1909
Ref. RDC6/28
- Printed copy of the tithe map of the parish of Thorley, 1845 – 1936
Ref. D/EX/52/P4
- Parish of Thorley tithe award, 1845 Ref. D/EX/52/P4A
- Bishop's Stortford prospectus for Bishop's Stortford High School and prospectus for a leaflet inviting subscribers to the Nonconformist Grammar School at Bishop's Stortford, 1869
Ref. D/ECU/2 P22

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**APPENDIX 3
THORLEY PARISH TITHE APPORTIONMENT, 1845**

#	Land Owner	Occupier	Plot Name	Land Use	Area (a.r.p.)	Rent (£.s.d.)*
284	George Frere	William Digby	Great New Field	Arable	10/2/22	3 19 -
285	George Frere	William Digby	Further High Field	Arable	10/1/1	1 8 -
286	The Right Honourable Lord Ellenborough	Thomas Green	Vine yard	Arable	10/1/22	3 9 6
Total=					31 acres 1 rood 5 perches	£8 16s. 6d.

*Payable to the Rector

**APPENDIX 4
SITES AND MONUMENTS RECORD SUMMARY SHEET**

Site name and address:	The Bishop's Stortford High School, Bishop's Stortford, Hertfordshire
County: Hertfordshire	District: East Hertfordshire
Village/Town: Bishop's Stortford	Parish: Bishop's Stortford
Planning application reference:	
Client name/address/tel:	Countryside Properties (Special Projects) Limited
Nature of application:	Redevelopment strategy
Present land use:	School grounds and playing fields
Size of application area:	Size of area investigated c. 6.6 hectares
NGR (8 figures):	TL 4880 1972
Site Code:	
Site director/Organization:	Archaeological Solutions Limited
Type of work:	Archaeological desk-based assessment
Date of work:	July 2006
Location of finds/Curating museum:	None/Hertford
Related SMR Nos:	Periods represented: -
Relevant previous summaries/reports: -	
Summary of fieldwork results:	<p>In July 2006, Archaeological Solutions Ltd (AS) carried out an archaeological desk-based assessment at The Bishop's Stortford High School, Bishop's Stortford, Hertfordshire (TL 4880 1972). The archaeological desk-based assessment was commissioned prior to the preparation of a redevelopment strategy for the existing site of The Bishop's Stortford High School. The site comprises two distinct, but adjacent, rectangular shaped plots of land, roughly divided as the eastern and western sections of the site, and which are joined by a narrow footpath.</p> <p>Other than a gravel pit in the south-eastern corner, the site remained undeveloped until the establishment of The Bishop's Stortford High School, which dates from the 1950s onwards. The school buildings are located only in the eastern section of the site, whilst the western section comprises a grass playing field and a modern pavilion. The western section of The Bishop's Stortford High School site is situated within an archaeological alert area, as designated by the local council. The archaeological alert area refers directly to Bronze Age pits and Romano-British cremation and occupation evidence (HER 1090). The impact of development relating to the redevelopment strategy for the existing site of The Bishop's Stortford High School will thus vary greatly between the eastern and western sections of the site.</p>
Author of summary: K. Doyle	Date of Summary: July 2006