Archaeological observation, investigation recording and analysis of land at Lings Primary School, Hayeswood Road, Northampton May-July 2014

Report No 14/160

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Illustrator: James Ladocha

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REGISTERED ORGANISATION IfA

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Site Code: NOR LPS 13
NGR: SP 79820 63620

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***OASIS* REPORT FORM**

PROJECT DETAILS	**OASIS No: molanort1-189750**	
Project title	Archaeological observation, investigation, analysis and recording of land at Lings Primary School, Hayeswood Road, Northampton, May-July 2014	
Short description	An archaeological observation, investigation, recording and analysis was carried out by MOLA, during construction work at Lings Primary School, Hayeswood Road, Northampton. No archaeological features were present and no finds were recovered.	
Project type	Watching Brief	
Previous work	None	
Current land use	School grounds	
Future work	None	
Monument type and period	None	
Significant finds	None	
PROJECT LOCATION		
County	Northamptonshire	
Site address	Lings Primary School, Hayeswood Road, Northampton.	
Easting Northing	SP 79820 63620	
Area (sq m/ha)	425sqm	
Height aOD	80mOD	
PROJECT CREATORS		
Organisation	MOLA	
Project brief originator	Northamptonshire County Council	
Project Design originator	MOLA	
Director/Supervisor	Tim Sharman (MOLA Northampton)	
Project Manager	Liz Muldowney (MOLA Northampton)	
Sponsor or funding body	Interserve Ltd	
PROJECT DATE		
Start date	02/05/2014	
End date	16/07/2014	
ARCHIVES	**Location (Accession no.)**	**Contents**
Physical	NORLPS 13	Watching brief forms, permatrace plans
Paper		
Digital		Client report PDF
BIBLIOGRAPHY	Unpublished client report	
Title	Archaeological observation, investigation, analysis and recording of land at Lings Primary School, Hayeswood Road, Northampton, May-July 2014	
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Abstract

An archaeological observation, investigation, recording and analysis was carried out by MOLA, during construction works at Lings Primary School, Hayeswood Road, Northampton. No archaeological features were present.

1 INTRODUCTION

Interserve Construction, on behalf of their clients Northamptonshire County Council, commissioned MOLA to carry out archaeological observation, investigation, recording, analysis and reporting on land at Lings Primary School, Hayeswood Road, Northampton (NGR SP 79820 63620; (Fig 1)). Planning permission had been granted by Northamptonshire County Council for the construction of a new two storey building, a car park and associated works.

A condition on the planning consent stated there was a requirement for archaeological investigation in accordance with Section 12, paragraph 128 and Appendix 2 of the *National Planning Policy Framework* (DCLG 2012). A written scheme of investigation was prepared by Northamptonshire Archaeology (Now MOLA, NA 2013) in response to a brief from the Archaeological Advisor at Northamptonshire County Council setting out the requirements for works (NCC 2013).

MOLA is a member of the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA). This document has been prepared in accordance with the current best archaeological practice as defined in the Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and Guidance for an archaeological watching brief* (IfA 2008a) and the procedural document *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)* (EH 2009).

2 BACKGROUND

2.2 Location and geology

The site is located within the suburb of Lings on the eastern side of Northampton. The school site is bounded on all other sides by residential development and is accessed from Hayeswood Road to the north. The area to be developed slopes down from the west from approximately 85m aOD to approximately 75m aOD. The bedrock geology has been mapped by the British Geological Survey as comprising Northampton Sand Ironstone and Upper Lias clay (BGS Geoindex http://www.bgs.ac.uk/geoindex).

2.2 Historical and archaeological background

Prehistoric

Prehistoric settlement evidence (MNN764) was recorded at Lings Way, approximately 250m to the north-east of the development area.

Iron Age/Romano-British

Two Iron Age sites were recorded in the 1970s in the Blackthorn area, 1km to the north-west (Williams 1974).

Within the Nene Valley basin, evidence for Romano-British settlement is widespread. At the former Cherry Orchard School site, 2km to the west, excavations revealed evidence for early Roman settlement and pottery production (Upson-Smith and Walker 2012). Roman settlement was recorded at Booth Rise, a kilometre to the north-west of the subject area (Muldowney 2013).

Anglo-Saxon

Evidence is sparse for Anglo-Saxon occupation to the east of the burh in Northampton. During excavations at Booth Rise, a kilometre to the north-west of the subject area, a single sunken featured building, dating from the early 6th century AD, was recorded (Muldowney, 2013). Anglo-Saxon finds were seen during the construction of the Weston Favell Centre, 250m to the south-west.

Medieval

Approximately 300m to the north-west of the development area in Thorplands, a medieval settlement site (MNN6253) was recorded.

Post-medieval

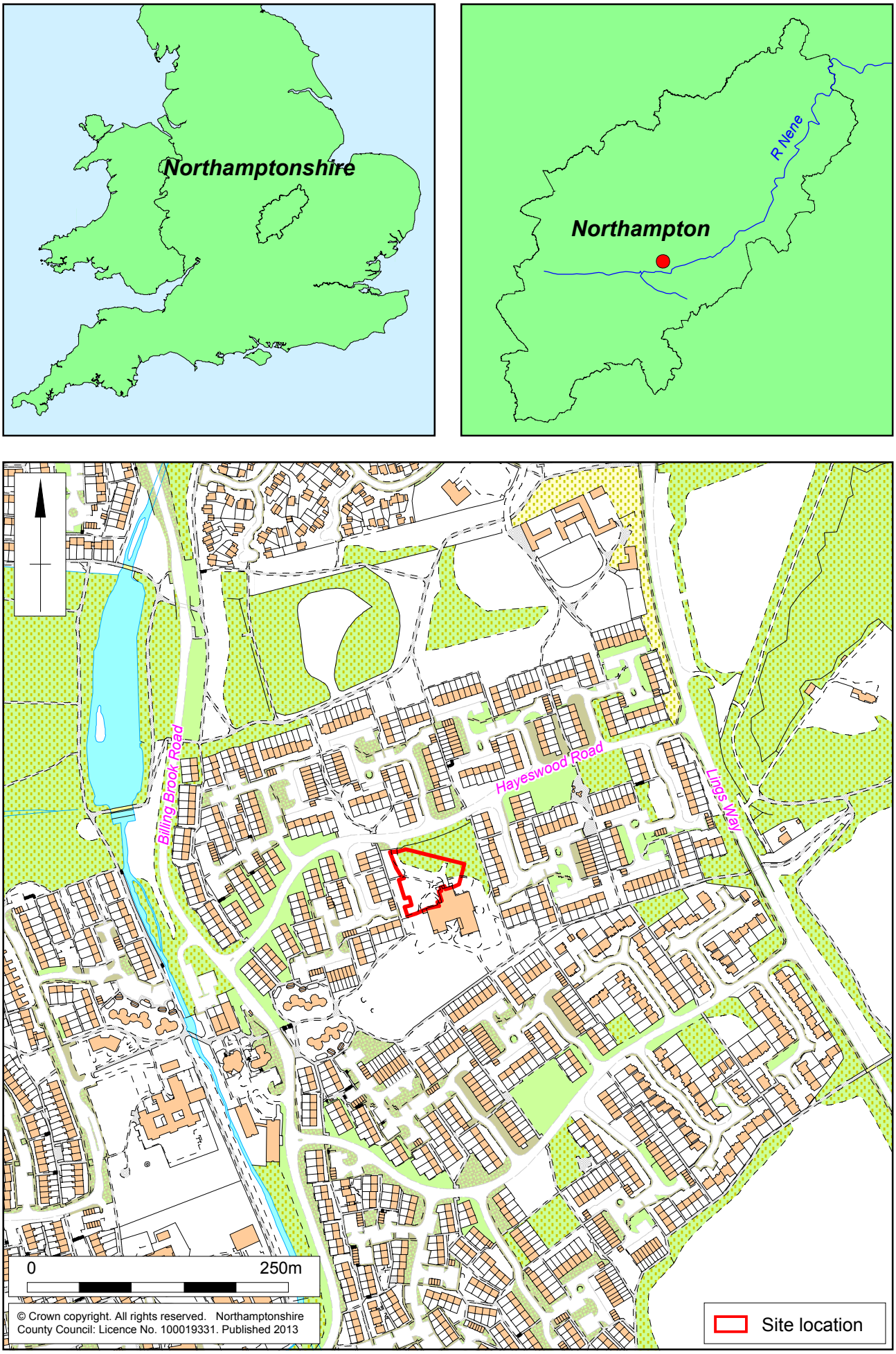
A post-medieval leat (MNN 129681), associated with use of the Billing Brook was recorded 300m to the south-west. In the 1st edition Ordnance Survey map of 1885, the area of the proposed development is shown as part of a series of field parcels to the north of the village of Great Billing. This landscape remained fairly static until the late 1960s to 1970s when the area was developed during development associated with the eastern expansion of Northampton. The school appears on the 1979 Ordnance Survey map.

3 OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Objectives

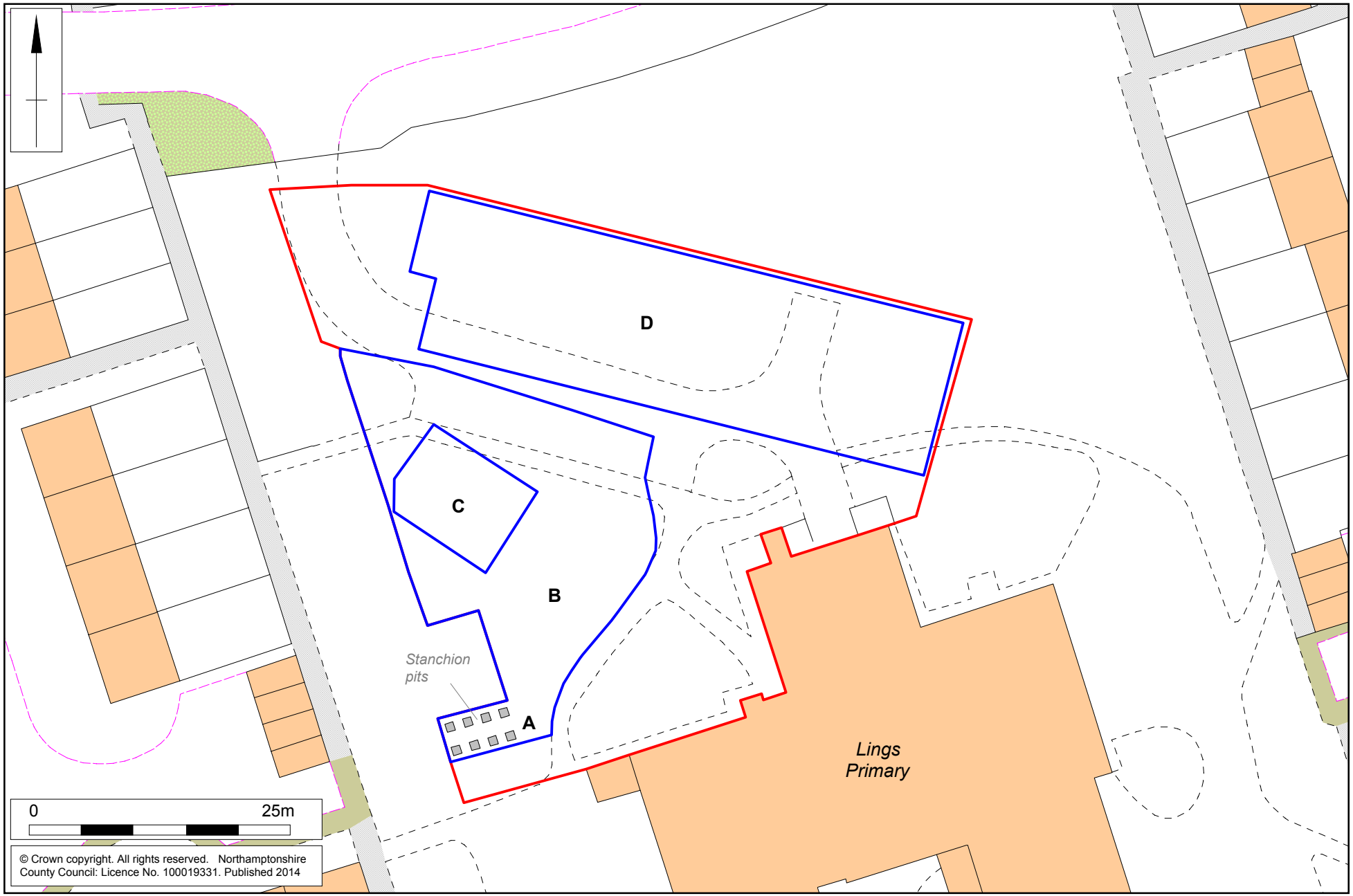
The objectives of the investigation were to:

- Identify, investigate and record all archaeological deposits exposed during the excavation for the new two-storey building, car park and any associated below ground works;
- Determine and record the date, extent, character, state of preservation and depth of burial of any archaeological deposits;
- Create a permanent archive and record of the archaeological information collected during the course of the fieldwork and analysis.



Scale 1:5,000

Site location Fig 1



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Areas of archaeological observation

Fig 2

Area A

Area B

Area C

Area D

Areas A to D during monitoring Fig 3

4 THE EXCAVATED EVIDENCE

No archaeological features were encountered during the monitoring, in some areas shallow excavations did not impact upon the geological horizon because the site had been landscaped when the school was built. Elsewhere, three different types of natural substrata were observed:

Within the eight stanchion trenches in Area A for the re-located kitchen pod the substrate was a compacted mid brown sand/sandy clay with occasional small ironstone particles. Due to the previous removal of topsoil in places, it was between 0.5 and 1.0m below the present surface. Overlying this was a loose yellowish brown sandy loam layer with numerous ironstone inclusions together with fragments of modern building debris. The topsoil was a mid brown sandy loam. In the base of Trench 8, a modern storm drain was visible (Fig 4)

Within the former car park (Area B), the only location where excavation cut through the modern make-up layer was within the trench excavated for the insertion of the rainwater attenuation tank (Area C, Fig 3). This trench (T9) was excavated to a depth of approximately 2m below the former car park surface. Two layers of natural substrata were visible: a compacted yellowish-brown sand with ironstone brash inclusions, 1.6m below the surface and overlying this was a mid brown sand and ironstone layer approximately 0.3m in thickness. Overlying this was a 0.3m thick layer of dark yellowish-brown sandy clay loam with a few ironstone inclusions (903). Above which was an 0.6m thick layer of loose yellowish-brown sandy loam with numerous fragments of ironstone and modern building material (902), above which was a 0.4m thick layer of crushed, limestone rubble sub-base (901) for the car park (Fig 5).

Storm drain in base of Trench 8 in Area A Fig 4

Area C, layers in attenuation tank trench Fig 5

Within the large trench excavated for the new two-storey building (T11, Area D), a compacted layer of greyish-brown clay was noted during the construction of the footing trenches for the new building. This was overlain by up to 3m of loose yellowish-brown sandy loam with numerous fragments of ironstone and modern building debris Fig 6).

Area D, excavation through mound Fig 6

5 THE SITE ARCHIVE

The site archive comprises:

Record	Number
Watching brief logs	21 sheets
Photographic record sheets	6
Black and white contacts and negatives	96
Digital photographs	143

6 DISCUSSION

Archaeological observation, investigation and recording on the construction works within the school grounds revealed no archaeological features or finds. The only potential for archaeological survival may be associated with the 0.3m thick layer of dark yellowish-brown sandy clay loam found in the rainwater tank attenuation trench (T9, Area C). One sherd of abraded pottery, probably Romano-British in date, was found within this layer, which may indicate the presence of a buried topsoil sealed by the extensive layer of modern make-up material spread throughout the school grounds as a 'levelling-up' or landscaping layer, possibly in 1974 during the construction of the existing school buildings. Beneath the layer no archaeological features were visible in the trench sides.

Apart from the survival of a possible soil horizon in Trench 9, the absence of archaeological evidence within the observed area probably reflects both a general absence of archaeological remains and the extensive disturbance caused during landscaping and terracing works associated with the construction of the school.

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