West Lulworth School, School Lane, West Lulworth

Archaeological Observations and Recording

Report No. 53431/3/1

May 2015

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Project Report Summary Page

Project Details			
OASIS Reference	terraina1-210395		
Project Title	West Lulworth School, School Lane, West Lulworth, Dorset		
Short Description of Project	Terrain Archaeology carried out a programme of archaeological observations and recording during groundworks associated with the construction of a new primary school at School Lane, West Lulworth, Dorset. Observations were undertaken during the stripping of the topsoil from the new school site and an adjacent temporary construction compound and also during the excavation of the underlying colluvium in areas of deeper ground reduction. Only one archaeological feature was seen, probably the remains of a truncated cross-slope field boundary. Whilst not closely datable, this feature is probably of later post-medieval or recent origin. A background scatter of worked flint was also noted in the topsoil and colluvium.		
Project Dates	Start: 24-03-2015	End: 30-04-2015	
Previous/Future Work	No		
Project Code	53431		
Monument Type and Period	Boundary ditch (post-medieval)		
Significant Finds	Flake (Late Prehistoric)		
Project Location			
County/District/ Parish	Dorset/ Purbeck District/West Lulworth		
Site Address	School Lane, West Lulworth, BH20 5SA		
Site Coordinates	SY 8315 8061		
Site Area	6540 m^2		
Height OD	51-58m aOD		
Project Creators			
Organisation	Terrain Archaeology		
Project Brief Originator	None		
Project Design Originator	Terrain Archaeology		
Project Supervisor	Mike Trevarthen		
Project Manager	Peter Bellamy		
Sponsor or Funding Body	Dorset County Council		
Project Archive			
Archive Type	**Physical**	**Digital**	**Paper**
Location/Accession No	None	Terrain Archaeology offices, pending deposition with Dorset County Museum.	Terrain Archaeology offices, pending deposition with Dorset County Museum.
Contents		Digital photography	context sheets, diary, photographs, plans, report

West Lulworth School, School Lane, West Lulworth, Dorset

Archaeological Observations and Recording, March-April 2015

1. Introduction

1.1 Project introduction

Terrain Archaeology was commissioned by Dorset Property, Dorset County Council, to undertake a programme of archaeological observations and recording during groundworks associated with the construction of a new primary school on School Lane, West Lulworth (Purbeck District Council Planning Application 6/2014/0410). The work did not form a condition of the scheme's planning consent, but was requested subsequent to granting of consent by Steve Wallis, Senior Archaeologist (Advice and Management) in accordance with the heritage protection policies laid out in the *National Planning Policy Framework* (DCLG 2012).

1.2 Definition and purpose of Archaeological Observations and Recording

Archaeological Observations and Recording are also known as an Archaeological Watching Brief.

The Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) definition of an archaeological watching brief is "*a formal programme of observation and investigation conducted during any operation carried out for non-archaeological reasons. This will be within a specified area or site on land, inter-tidal zone or underwater, where there is a possibility that archaeological deposits may be disturbed or destroyed. The programme will result in the preparation of a report and ordered archive*." (CIfA 2014a).

The purpose of Archaeological Observations and Recording as set out by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists is as follows:

a. *to allow, within the resources available, the preservation by record of archaeological deposits, the presence and nature of which could not be established (or established with sufficient accuracy) in advance of development or other potentially disruptive works*

b. *to provide an opportunity, if needed, for the watching archaeologist to signal to all interested parties, before the destruction of the material in question, that an archaeological find has been made for which the resources allocated to the watching brief itself are not sufficient to support treatment to a satisfactory and proper standard*

A watching brief is not intended to reduce the requirement for excavation or preservation of known or inferred deposits, and it is intended to guide, not replace, any requirement for contingent excavation or preservation of possible deposits. (CIfA 2014a).

Fieldwork was carried out between the 24th March and the 30th April 2015 by Mike Trevarthen BA (Hons) ACIfA.

Terrain Archaeology wishes to acknowledge the assistance and cooperation of Mark Penny (ISG Site Manager), Colin Eversden (Dorset Property) and Steve Wallis (Senior Archaeologist, Dorset County Council).

1.3 Brief

No written brief for the scheme of works was issued by, or on behalf of Purbeck District Council, but the proposed programme was discussed with Steve Wallis, Senior Archaeologist (Advice and Management, Dorset County Council, prior to commencing the fieldwork.

1.4 Site Location and Topography

The site (Figures 1 and 2) comprises a parcel of undeveloped pasture land at the far eastern end of School Lane, immediately east of the Youth Hostel Association (YHA) buildings, and is centred at Ordnance Survey NGR SY 8315 8061. Ground levels within the site range from about 51 m to 58 m above Ordnance Datum, with the land surface sloping generally from the east and north towards School Lane. The southern edge of the site lies on the lowest north-facing slopes of Bindon Hill.

1.5 Geology

Solid geology is mapped as Portsdown Chalk Formation (http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/ geologyofbritain /home. html). Superficial deposits of Head occur on or close to the site.

1.6 Archaeological and Historical Background

There has been very little research into the archaeology around West Lulworth. There are eighteen recorded Bronze Age round barrows in the parish including four possible examples on Bindon Hill south of the site (RCHME 1970, 445-6). Also on Bindon Hill are a series of earthwork dykes and other earthworks forming a large complex enclosure of Iron Age date (RCHME 1970, 489). On the northern slopes of the hill there are fragmentary traces of prehistoric fields (RCHME 1970, 629).

Lulworth probably existed as a settlement in the Early Medieval period, but it is not easy to determine which of the several 'Lulworths' listed in the Domesday survey is West Lulworth. West Lulworth was certainly a separate settlement from East Lulworth by the thirteenth century, and was originally part of the lands of Bindon Abbey. It became part of the Weld Estate in the seventeenth century

1.7 Previous Archaeological fieldwork

There have been no archaeological investigations on or in the immediate vicinity of the site.

1.8 Aims and Objectives

The aim of the Archaeological Observations and Recording was to establish and make available information about the archaeological resource existing on the site.

Its objectives were:

- To observe and record all the *in situ* archaeological deposits and features revealed during the groundworks to an appropriate professional standard.
- To present the results in a report to the appropriate standard.

1.9 Methods

All archaeological works were undertaken in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) *Code of Conduct* and *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief* (CIfA 2014).

Topsoil stripping of the site (approximately 6540 m^2, Figure 2) was undertaken using a tracked 360° tracked excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket and supported by a 30 tonne wheeled dumper. Approximately two-thirds of the topsoil strip for the school was directly monitored by the attending archaeologist. As the informational value of this exercise was found to be limited, the approval of the Dorset County Council Senior Archaeologist (Advice and Management) was obtained to concentrate site resources on areas of deeper ground-reduction, where greater potential archaeological impacts might occur. The southernmost third of the topsoil strip was inspected by the attending archaeologist once machining was complete. Subsequently, topsoil stripping of the temporary construction compound area immediately north of (upslope from) the main site was also monitored.

Areas of secondary ground reduction (see also Figure 2) were machined under archaeological observation using both toothless- and toothed buckets as appropriate to the groundworks programme.

All deposits revealed during the groundworks, irrespective of their apparent archaeological significance, were recorded using components of the Terrain Archaeology recording system of complementary written, drawn and photographic records. These have been compiled in a stable, cross-referenced and fully indexed archive in accordance with current guidelines (AAF 2007) and the requirements of the receiving museum. A photographic record of the work was maintained in digital format, and includes aspects of its setting, conduct and technical detail.

The site plan was derived from the contractors' scale site plans and supplemented by taped measurements from mapped features. The site plan has subsequently been tied to the Ordnance Survey National Grid.

1.10 Archive and Dissemination

The project archive, comprising written, graphic and photographic records, and appropriate background documentation, is currently stored by Terrain Archaeology under the project code 53431. In due course it is anticipated that it will be accessioned for long-term curation by the Dorset County Museum, Dorchester.

A paper copy of this report will be lodged with Dorset County Council's Historic Environment Record (HER). The HER is a publicly funded and accessible resource, and deposition of the report will place it, and the project results, in the public domain.

A digital summary of the archive will be placed with the OASIS project (www.oasis.ac.uk) under the reference code *terraina1-210395.* A digital copy of this report will be uploaded for inclusion in the Archaeological Data Service (ADS) online 'grey literature' library.

A brief report of the project will be published by Terrain Archaeology in the *Proceedings of the Dorset Natural History and Archaeological Society*.

2. Results

2.1 Natural deposits

Natural deposits, where seen, comprised Chalk bedrock (103), overlain in places, particularly on the southern slopes of the site, by Quaternary coombe rock (106). This deposit is a form of soliflucted calcareous head, defined as "a structureless accumulation of chalk rubble and flints in a chalky paste, which may be cemented or not" (Institute of Geological Sciences 1982, 12).

2.2 Colluvium

Colluvial soils (101) were seen in all lower-lying parts of the site. Their full thickness over natural deposits remains unknown, but exceeded 1.4m where deeply excavated for pile-head pits in the central part of the site. Variation in the composition of the colluvium were not differentiated or mapped in detail for the purposes of the archaeological programme, but the layer ranged from highly calcareous light yellow-brown clay-silt differing only marginally from coombe rock, and potentially of Late Pleistocene or early Holocene date, in the lowest exposures, through moderately calcareous mid yellow-brown clay-silt, to an upper unit of reworked weakly- to non-calcareous mid-dark yellow brown clay-silt which mantled the lowest lying areas of the site, and contained quantities of nodular and brecciated flint gravel as well as worked flint flakes.

2.3 Other soils

Removal of topsoil over the most elevated north eastern corner of the site exposed an approximately 0.15-0.2 m thickness of homogenous chalky and stony mid grey-brown loamy silt (102) overlying chalk bedrock. This soil was not removed by construction works and was subsequently reburied under reinstated topsoil.

2.4 Topsoil and modern overburden

Topsoil (100) across the site comprised improved grass pasture over up to *c*. 0.4 m thickness of homogenous mid-dark yellow-brown clayey or loamy silty, with occasional chalk, nodular flint and brecciated flint. The layer was less thick over elevated parts of the site.

Along the northern edge of the school site, some erosion and reconsolidation of a longstanding agricultural access way was seen, including a layer of redeposited chalk and an area of redeposited flint cobbles.

Adjacent and parallel to the east boundary of the YHA property, ground levels had been raised by laying down of a layer of compacted chalk, up to about 0.2 m thick, and extending up to *c.* 5 m into the site. A thin topsoil layer had been reinstated over this chalk.

2.5 Feature 104

A single archaeological feature was identified. Feature 104 comprised a shallow linear cut aligned NNW-SSE and traced for a distance of at least 35 m, just below the modern 54 metre contour. A single one metre wide segment of the feature was excavated, showing an asymmetric profile, mainly flat-based except at its easterly edge, which was gently sloping. The feature was clearly significantly truncated, surviving to a depth of only 80 mm below the stripped surface. It contained a single fill (105) of mid-dark yellow-brown loamy silt with occasional chalk, nodular flint and brecciated flint. No finds came from the excavated segment, but a small group of artefacts was retrieved from the exposed surface of the feature, collectively suggesting a post-medieval or recent date.

3. Finds

3.1 Finds Assemblage

The artefacts collected during the archaeological programme are quantified in Table 1. None of the finds were securely stratified in sealed contexts. .

Context	pottery	flint	Burnt flint	Slate	Clay tobacco pipe	Marine shell
100	20/283g	79/2872g	2/68g	3/24g	2/7g	4/56g
101	2/8g	14/846g	--	--	--	--
105	1/6g	1/15g	--	--	1/4g	--
Total	**23/297g**	**94/2872g**	**2/68g**	**3/24g**	**3/11g**	**4/56g**

Table 1: Quantification of finds by context (count/weight in grams)

3.2 Pottery

The pottery recovered from the site comprised twenty-three sherds weighing 297g (Table 1), the majority dating to the post-medieval period, with a small quantity of medieval pottery.

3.2.1 Medieval

Five small abraded sherds of medieval pottery were recovered. All are coarsewares and consist of four body sherds of unglazed quartz sand fabric and one jug strap handle sherd in a sandy oxidized fabric with a reduced grey core and a thin apple-green external glaze.

3.2.2 Post-medieval

The remaining 18 sherds are post-medieval and are dominated by coarse redwares, including ten sherds from the kilns of the Verwood area of East Dorset, which were operating from at least the mid 17th century until the mid twentieth century. One sherd of slipware of West Country type was also present in the assemblage. The remaining sherds were factory-produced whitewares of nineteenth and twentieth century date, including a brown-glazed tea or coffee pot lid of nineteenth or twentieth century date from context 105.

3.3 Flint

Ninety-four pieces (3734g) of worked flint and two pieces of unworked burnt flint (68g) were recovered. Of the worked flint, the great majority (79/2872g) came from topsoil 100 and from the mixed interface with colluvial subsoil (14/846g). All of the flint appears to derive from locally available nodules, which, whilst relatively abundant, are of variable and often low quality.

Context	flake	Broken flake	blade	Broken blade	core	tools	burnt unworked
100	57	15	--	1	3	3	2
101	5	8	--	--	--	1	--
105	1	--	--	--	--	--	--
Total	63	23	0	1	3	4	2

Table 2: Quantification of flint by category

Most of the group (Table 2) comprised thick and/or irregular hard hammer-struck waste flakes, sometimes large, struck opportunistically and sometimes deeply from unprepared cores. Assemblages of this type are typical of Later Bronze Age flint working traditions in Dorset. The majority of the material (70 pieces, or about 74% of the assemblage) was primary or secondary waste, retaining some significant degree of nodule cortex. Post-depositional battering and edge damage was common and most of the material was white or blue-white patinated with orange-brown ferrous surface blooms. A minor, if unquantifiable, component of the material comprised thinner blade-like flakes and a possible broken thin trapezoidal blade, all with slightly heavier white (rather than blue-white) patination and sometimes with evidence for core-edge preparation: these may be of earlier date – potentially belonging to the Neolithic or Early Bronze Age.

Three cores were recovered. Two were polygonal multi-platform flake cores showing opportunistic hard hammer flaking of expedient platforms and one was a worked-out single platform blade flake core with a dressed core edge. The polygonal cores are characteristic of the Later Bronze Age, whereas the single platform core is more plausibly Neolithic.

Four possible flake tools were noted. Three were probably scrapers, including one possible denticulate side-scraper. The other tool was possibly a crude flake knife.

3.4 Other finds

Three fragments of plain, unmarked clay tobacco pipe stem (11g) were recovered. Two were from topsoil 100 and one was recovered from unexcavated lynchet fill 105.

Four pieces of marine shell (56g) from topsoil 100 comprised one oyster, two small fragments of scallop and one limpet. In light of the overall absence of archaeological features within the site, these are all likely to be of comparatively modern in date.

Three small broken pieces of roofing slate (24g) came from topsoil 100. These are all relatively thin (<6mm) and are likely to be post-medieval or modern in date.

3.5 Artefact Discard statement

None of the finds recovered from the site are considered to be of greater than low- to negligible archival value. None were recovered from securely stratified primary contexts, and neither individual finds nor elements of the overall finds assemblage possess sufficient intrinsic, spatial or analytical value to warrant accession for long-term archival deposition. The finds have therefore been discarded in line with the terms of the Written Scheme of Investigation (Terrain Archaeology 2013, 6, section 8.2) and with widely accepted professional practice.

4. Discussion and Conclusions

4.1 Discussion

Only one archaeological feature was identified during the works. Truncated cross-slope boundary or negative lynchet 104 was an isolated feature and is therefore unlikely to be part of a more extensive system of medieval terraced fields. It may instead represent livestock- or plough erosion of soils immediately downslope from a field boundary. The feature produced only occasional post-medieval finds, and a post-medieval date is suggested for its origin. However, any such boundary must have been relatively ephemeral, or have been removed by the later 19th century, as no land-division is marked on the 1889 or later Ordnance Survey 1:2500 scale maps.

The presence of struck flint in residual settings across the site is indicative of human activity during the later prehistoric period, although there is no evidence for corresponding occupation or settlement, or for monumental associations. The high incidence of primary and secondary flakes, the relative paucity of tools or reworked pieces and the near-absence of burnt flint or prehistoric pottery suggests this material instead derives from opportunistic field-knapping or flint acquisition and testing over a long period of time.

4.2 Conclusions

The archaeological potential of the site was unknown prior to commencement of groundwork. Although producing largely negative results, the precautionary observations and recording programme has been successful in offsetting the impact of the development on the site's heritage value to a level commensurate with its significance, and has gained information on artefact groups and local soil sequences that contribute to wider archaeological understanding and characterisation of the West Lulworth area.

5. References

AAF	2007	*Archaeological Archives. A guide to best practice in creation, compilation, transfer and curation*. Archaeological Archives Forum.
DCLG	2012	*National Planning Policy Framework.* Department of Communities and Local Government. London, HMSO.
CIfA	2014	*Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief.* Chartered Institute for Archaeologists.
Institute of Geological Sciences	1982	*British Regional Geology: The Hampshire Basin and Adjoining Areas (Fourth Edition)*. London, HMSO
RCHME	1970	*An Inventory of Historical Monuments in the County of Dorset. Volume Two, South East.* HMSO; London.
Terrain Archaeology	2015	*West Lulworth School, School Lane, West Lulworth: Written Scheme of Investigation for Archaeological Observations and Recording*. Unpublished client report, reference 3431/0/1 March 2015

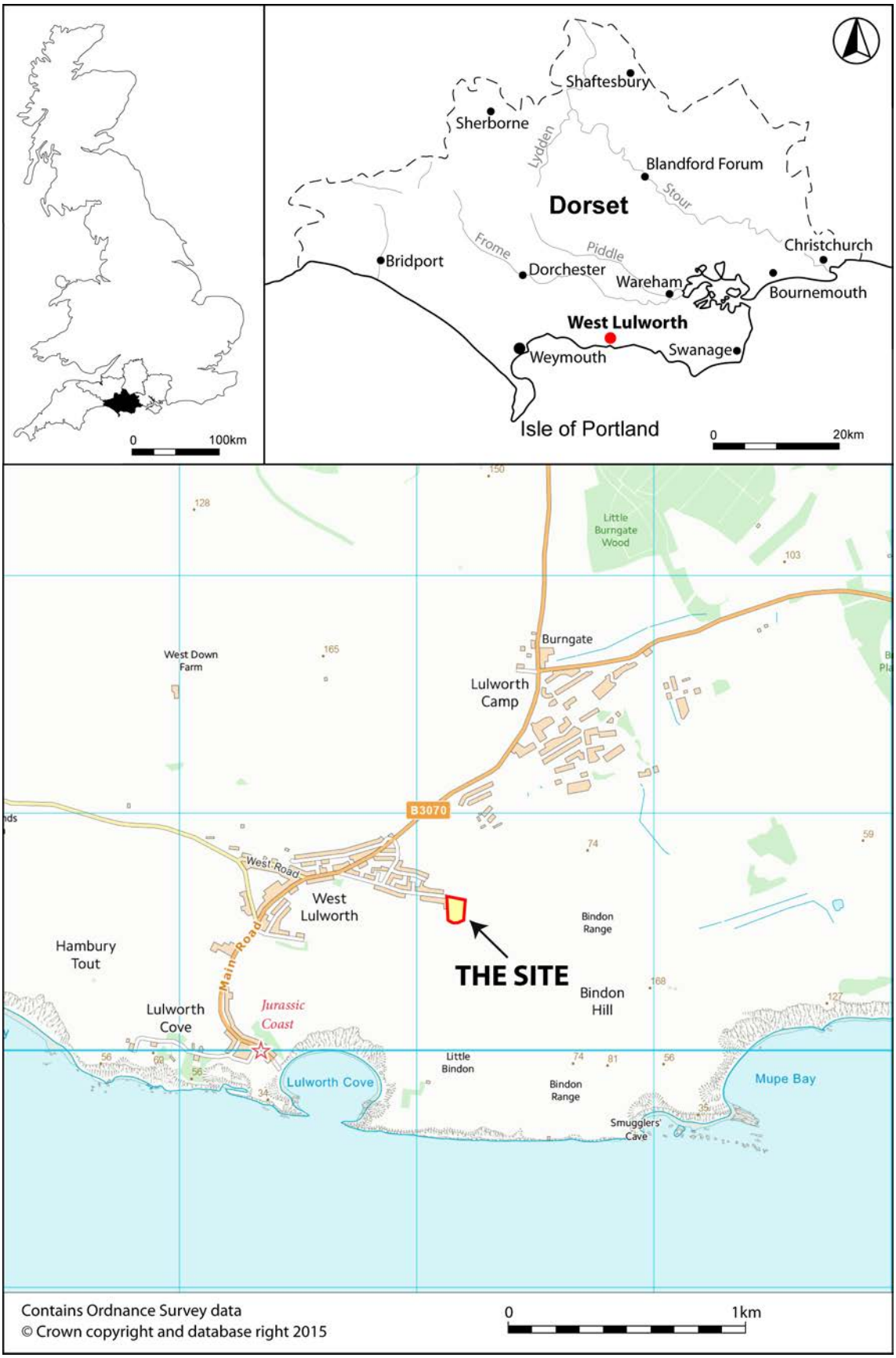

Figure 1 Location map.

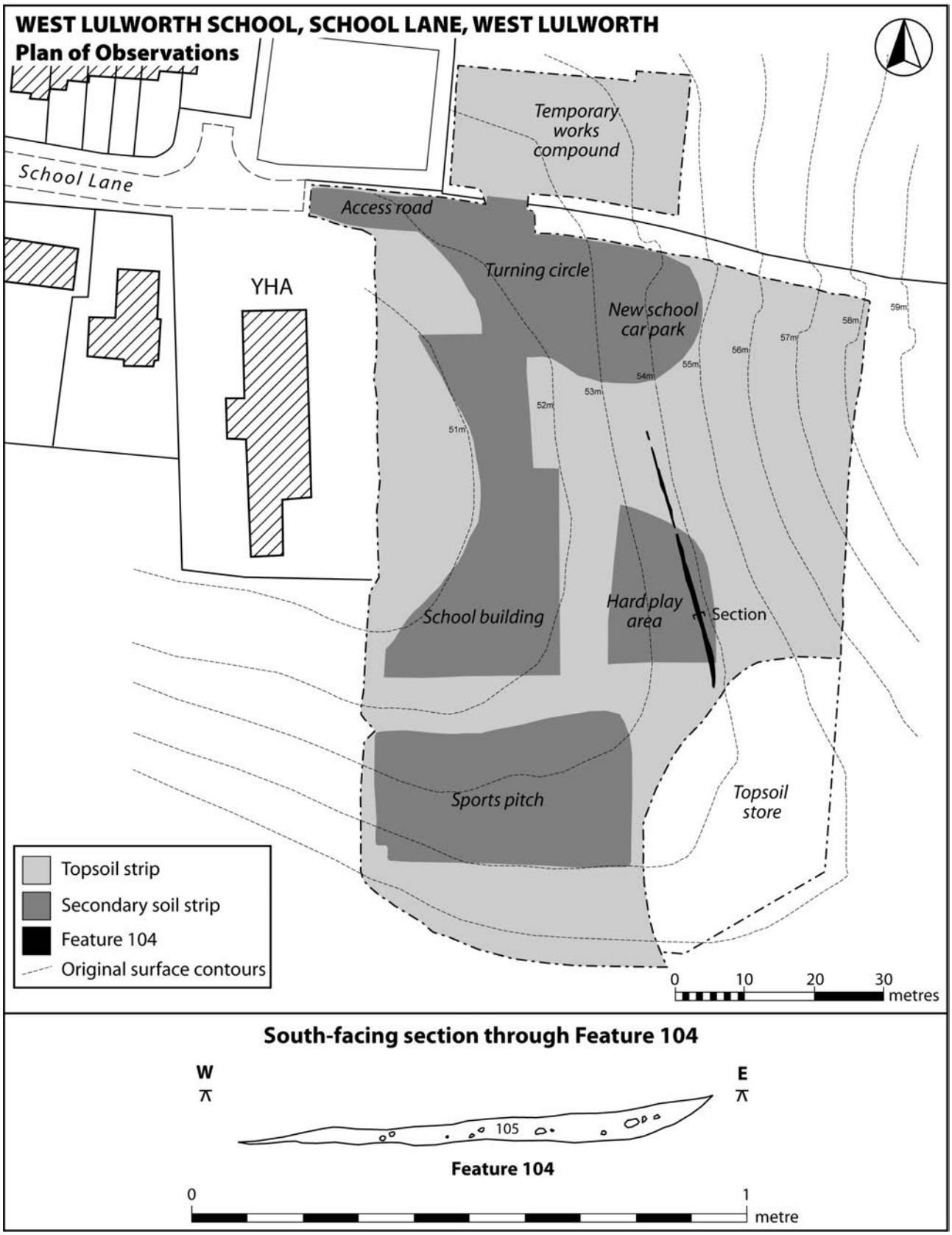

Figure 2: Site plan with section of Feature 104.

Plate 1: Southern area of site after topsoil stripping. View from east.

Plate 2: Central area of site after topsoil stripping. View from south east.

Plate 3: Eastern area of site after topsoil stripping. View from south.

Plate 4: Secondary ground reduction works for the new school building. View from south.

Plate 5: 'Turning circle' area after secondary ground reduction. View from south west.

Plate 6: Coombe rock deposits at the southern end of the site, with Bindon Hill beyond. 1m scale. View from south

Plate 7: Colluvium 101 above chalk at northern edge of the site. 1m scale. View from south east.

Plate 8: Temporary works compound after topsoil stripping. View from east.