

Witham Archaeology

A Report to Pellings

November 2021



BROOKLANDS PRIMARY SCHOOL, ALEXANDER ROAD, REIGATE, SURREY

Archaeological Monitoring & Recording

C. J. Moulis

**BROOKLANDS PRIMARY SCHOOL,
ALEXANDER ROAD, REIGATE,
SURREY**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING
AND RECORDING**

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BROOKLANDS PRIMARY SCHOOL, ALEXANDER ROAD, REIGATE, SURREY

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Archaeological Monitoring and Recording

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BROOKLANDS PRIMARY SCHOOL, ALEXANDER ROAD, REIGATE, SURREY

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING AND RECORDING

SUMMARY

This report presents the results of archaeological monitoring and recording carried out during groundworks relating to the development of Brooklands Primary School on Alexander Road, Reigate, Surrey.

Potential for the site to contain remains of archaeological interest was indicated in an archaeological desk-based assessment carried out in 2020. A requirement for archaeological monitoring and recording was, therefore, included as a condition of planning permission for the development.

No finds were recovered and no deposits or features of archaeological significance were revealed during the investigation. Evidence of modern dumping in Area A, and of modern truncation in Area B probably reflect previous construction and landscaping episodes associated with the existing group of school buildings.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This report presents the results of archaeological monitoring and recording carried out during groundworks relating to re-development of the former Chartwood School on Alexander Road, Reigate, Surrey. The re-development will form a new school called Brooklands Primary; a planning application for the development put to the Surrey County Council under reference 21/00189/CON includes construction of a new classroom at the southern edge of the site, and of a new admin building west of the existing range near the northern boundary.

The site was considered of potential archaeological interest based on the results of an archaeological desk-based assessment carried out in 2020 to assess the potential impact of the proposed development. The assessment identified a low to moderate potential for Prehistoric remains to be present on the site and a low potential for post Prehistoric buried remains (Shaikhley 2020).

The archaeological adviser to the local planning authority, taking account of the results of the assessment, recommended the implementation of a programme of archaeological monitoring and recording during development groundworks.

In response to this recommendation, Witham Archaeology was commissioned by Pellings to prepare a Written Scheme of Investigation (hereafter WSI) designed to comply with the usual requirements of the local planning authority and also with guidelines set out in the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) standards. The WSI was submitted for approval to Nick Truckle, Archaeological Officer of the Historic Environment Planning Team, Surrey County Council.

Monitoring was undertaken in accordance with the approved WSI on 20th August 2021, 23rd August 2021, and 25th August 2021.

The information in this document is presented with the proviso that further data may yet emerge. Witham Archaeology cannot, therefore, be held responsible for any loss, delay or damage, material or otherwise, arising out of this report. The document has been prepared in accordance with the Code of Conduct of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists.

2.0 SITE LOCATION, TOPOGRAPHY & GEOLOGY (see Fig. 1 & Fig. 2)

The town of Reigate is located in the administrative district of Reigate and Banstead Borough Council, approximately 9km to the south of Banstead and 14km to the north of Crawley. The site is in the south-western part of the town, approximately 1.5km south of its historic core, and is situated on land sloping gently down to the south, centred at NGR 525340 148888.

The precise areas of development comprise the locations of two new buildings within the current school grounds; one lies near the southern boundary at an elevation of approximately +77.6m OD, and the other near the northern boundary at an elevation of around +80m OD. The entire school site occupies an area of approximately 0.66ha.

The bedrock geology of the area is of the Atherfield Clay Formation. There are no records of the superficial deposits in the area (British Geological Survey website).

3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL & HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The place-name Reigate, first recorded in the later 12th century, derives from Old English and means 'Roe-deer gate' (Eckwall, 1960). In Domesday Book (1086) Reigate is recorded as Cheresfelle, which means 'hill/barrow open land' (Key to English Place-Names website), and is listed as held by King William, with a population of 78 households and two mills (Open Domesday website).

An archaeological desk-based assessment has been carried out to assess the potential impact of the proposed development on heritage assets located within a radius of 500m around the site (Shaikhley, 2020). The summary presented here is based on the results of that assessment.

The assessment did not identify any heritage assets within the proposed area of development and considered that the proposed development will not impact any built heritage assets within the 500m radius area. However, it identified a significant overall potential for archaeological buried remains to be present on site, with a low to moderate potential for Prehistoric buried remains and a low potential for post Prehistoric buried remains.

The earliest evidence of human occupation in the area of the site consists of a single late Acheulian type Palaeolithic hand axe found to the south-east of the proposed area of development (ibid).

The Lower Greensand area, in which the site is located, has been prolific in finds of Mesolithic flintwork. The evidence suggests that areas of heathland in West Surrey were only occupied until the first half of the Mesolithic period, and as such are comparable to the Folkestone Beds in Hampshire. This pattern of occupation probably results from the destruction of the environment during the early Mesolithic by deliberate burning of woodland to create open pastures. With the expansion of the heathland, the hunter gatherer communities moved to the more calcareous area of the Lower Greensand (ibid).

Several small assemblages of Mesolithic flints have been discovered in the Reigate town centre, but the only find in the immediate area of the site is a flint core-scraper from near Smoke Lane Housing (ibid).

Evidence of occupation during the Neolithic period is very limited, but there is evidence of probable land clearance on the Lower Greensand area. Neolithic flints have been found in the town centre and in the Mead Vale, approximately 880m east-north-east of the site (ibid).

The Bronze Age saw an intensification of occupation in the area and brought about further land clearance for agriculture. Seven barrows have been identified in the Reigate Heath area, approximately 2.2km to the west of the proposed area of development. To the north of the site, at Priory Park there have been several Bronze Age finds, including spearheads and a socketed axe. In the same area, a magnetometry survey identified anomalies that possibly represent enclosure boundaries and roundhouses, possibly dating to the Bronze Age period (ibid).

The evidence for Iron Age occupation is limited, but occupation during the Roman period is much better represented, with villa sites found along the Greensand belt. A 1st century tile kiln was found at Doods

Way, North of Reigate, and a Roman pedant was recovered during metal detecting at Priory Park to the north of the site (ibid).

Evidence of Saxon occupation at Reigate dates from the end of the period. Large quantities of Saxo-Norman finds were recovered from an excavation at the Old Vicarage, approximately 1.5km to the north-east of the site. These finds represent the settlement of Charchesfelle, recorded by Domesday Book, which preceded Reigate (ibid).

The medieval settlement of Reigate probably came about in the 12th century as a planned town, but the area south of Priory Park and Park hill remained a rural landscape. South-east of the proposed area of development, the placename Woodhatch derives from Old English and means 'gate to the wood'; it suggests that there was woodland during the medieval period and that there might have been a small settlement or some level of occupation on the area (ibid).

Cartographic evidence dating to the late 18th century shows the area of the site within large agricultural fields. Alexander Road, the extant school and the residential development surrounding it were established by 1934 (ibid).

4.0 AIMS & OBJECTIVES

The principal objectives of the project, as outlined in a Witham Archaeology WSI of 23rd March 2021, were to:

- *allow the preservation by record of any surviving archaeological deposits and artefacts exposed by the development groundwork within the constraints imposed by the contractor's working methods, programme and development design.*
- *produce a project archive for deposition with the appropriate museum together with a client report.*
- *provide information for accession to the Surrey Historic Environment Record.*

5.0 METHODOLOGY

The monitoring was conducted in accordance with the directions laid out in the Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI), and approved by the curatorial archaeologist. The most recent deposits were removed mechanically, using a 360° tracked excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket. All mechanical excavation was undertaken under archaeological supervision. Mechanical excavation was discontinued when archaeological deposits were exposed, or when undisturbed natural deposits were revealed. Exposed surfaces, both vertical and horizontal, were then cleaned by hand to define the archaeological remains.

Potential archaeological features were further investigated by manual excavation in line with the sampling guidelines outlined in the WSI.

A record of the investigations was compiled through:

- *Notes detailing the progress of archaeological fieldwork.*
- *Individual written descriptions of archaeological contexts made on pro-forma recording sheets and indexed appropriately.*
- *Measured section drawings showing specific archaeological contexts as well as general stratigraphic sequences, produced at scales 1:10 or 1:20 as appropriate.*
- *Measured plans of archaeological contexts (individual and/or multiple) at scale 1:20*
- *Sequences of colour digital photographs showing individual archaeological features and overall site circumstances.*

The trenches, the features and the sample hand-excavated slots were located using survey grade GPS equipment, referenced to the Ordnance Survey National Grid.

6.0 RESULTS

The results of the investigations are described below, with reference to numbers assigned in the field to the various archaeological contexts. The numbers in square brackets refer to cut features, whereas those in parentheses describe deposits. Appendix A, the Context Summary, provides full descriptions of the contexts.

6.1 Area A (Fig. 4)

Area A describes excavations for the foundations of a new classroom at the southern edge of the site. Initial area excavations were undertaken to level the site of the new building, as existing ground level at the northern edge of the structure was significantly higher than at the southern edge (Plate 1 & Plate 2). Conventional trench foundations were then excavated from the levelled surface. The foundations included detached square holes for column bases at the east end of the building and at the north-western corner.

No artefacts, features or deposits of archaeological significance were revealed by excavations in Area A. Natural silty sand (004) was sealed by greyish brown subsoil (003) above which lay dark greyish brown former topsoil deposit (002) (Fig. 6, Section 1 & Section 2. Plate 3 & Plate 4). The former topsoil was sealed by 0.86m thick dark to mid brownish grey silty sand (001), which included modern rubble and was interpreted as a dumped deposit, presumably associated with previous construction activity at the school (Fig. 6, Section 2. Plate 4. Plate 5).

6.2 Area B (Fig. 5)

Area B describes excavations for the foundations of a new administration building on the western side of the existing range towards the north end of the site. As in Area A, a preliminary area excavation levelled the site for the new building before the foundation trenches were dug (Plate 6).

No artefacts, features or deposits of archaeological significance were revealed by excavations in Area B. Above natural silty sand (008) lay 0.34m thick dark brown silty sand (007), interpreted as subsoil. Deposit (007) was observed to include occasional rubble fragments considered as possibly intrusive. Immediately above (007), 0.12m thick aggregate deposit (006) formed the base for 0.06m thick modern tarmac surface (005) (Fig. 6, Section 3. Plate 7). The inclusions noted in deposit (007), together with the apparent lack of a defined former topsoil deposit between (007) and (006) may be interpreted to indicate a degree of truncation in this part of the site during construction of the existing school buildings.

No finds were recovered during the project.

7.0 DISCUSSION & CONCLUSIONS

No deposits or features of archaeological significance were revealed within the areas monitored during the construction groundworks. Evidence for modern dumping in Area A, and for a degree of modern truncation in Area B probably reflect previous construction and landscaping episodes associated with the existing group of school buildings.

No finds were recovered during the investigation.

8.0 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Witham Archaeology thanks Pellings for commissioning the fieldwork and this report. The role and cooperation of Nick Truckle, Archaeological Officer of the Historic Environment Planning Team, Surrey County Council is also acknowledged and appreciated.

9.0 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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10.0 PROJECT/ ARCHIVE DETAILS

10.1 Project Details

SITE CODE: RGAR21

PLANNING APPLICATION No.: 21/00189/CON

FIELD OFFICER: F. Santos

NGR: TQ 2535 4889

CIVIL PARISH: N/A

SMR No.:

DATE OF INTERVENTION: 20th August 2021 to 25th August 2021

TYPE OF INTERVENTION: Archaeological Monitoring and Recording

UNDERTAKEN FOR: Pellings

10.2 Archive Details

PRESENT LOCATION: Witham Archaeology Ltd, 2 High Street, Ruskington, Lincolnshire, NG34 9DT

FINAL LOCATION: Surrey History Centre

ARCHAEOLOGY DATA SERVICE ID: 20011503

ACCESSION DATE: -TBC

The Site Archive Comprises:

Context Register	1 Sheet
Context Records	8 Sheets
Section Register	1 Sheets
Section Drawings at Scale	1 Sheets -Drawing film

Photographic Register	1 Sheets
Digital Photographs	16 Shots (16 image files)
GPS digital survey data	1 data file
Daily Record Sheets	3 Sheets

It is intended that transfer of the archive in accordance with current published requirements will be undertaken following completion of this project.

COLOUR PLATES



Plate 1: Area A, looking east north-east



Plate 2: Area A, looking west



Plate 3: Area A. Section 1, looking east north-east



Plate 4: Area A. Section 2, looking north north-west



Plate 5: Area A. Completed excavations, looking west south-west



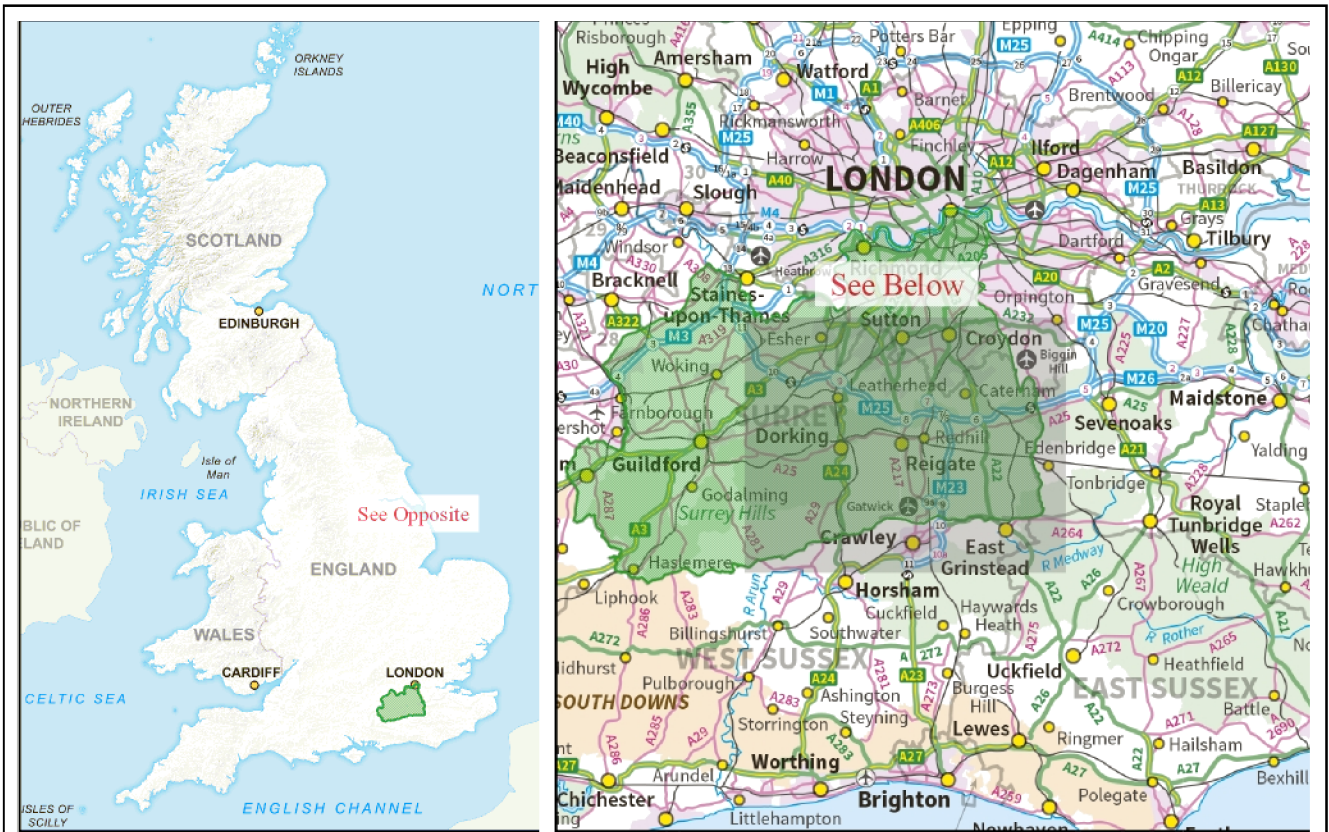
Plate 6: Area B, looking north



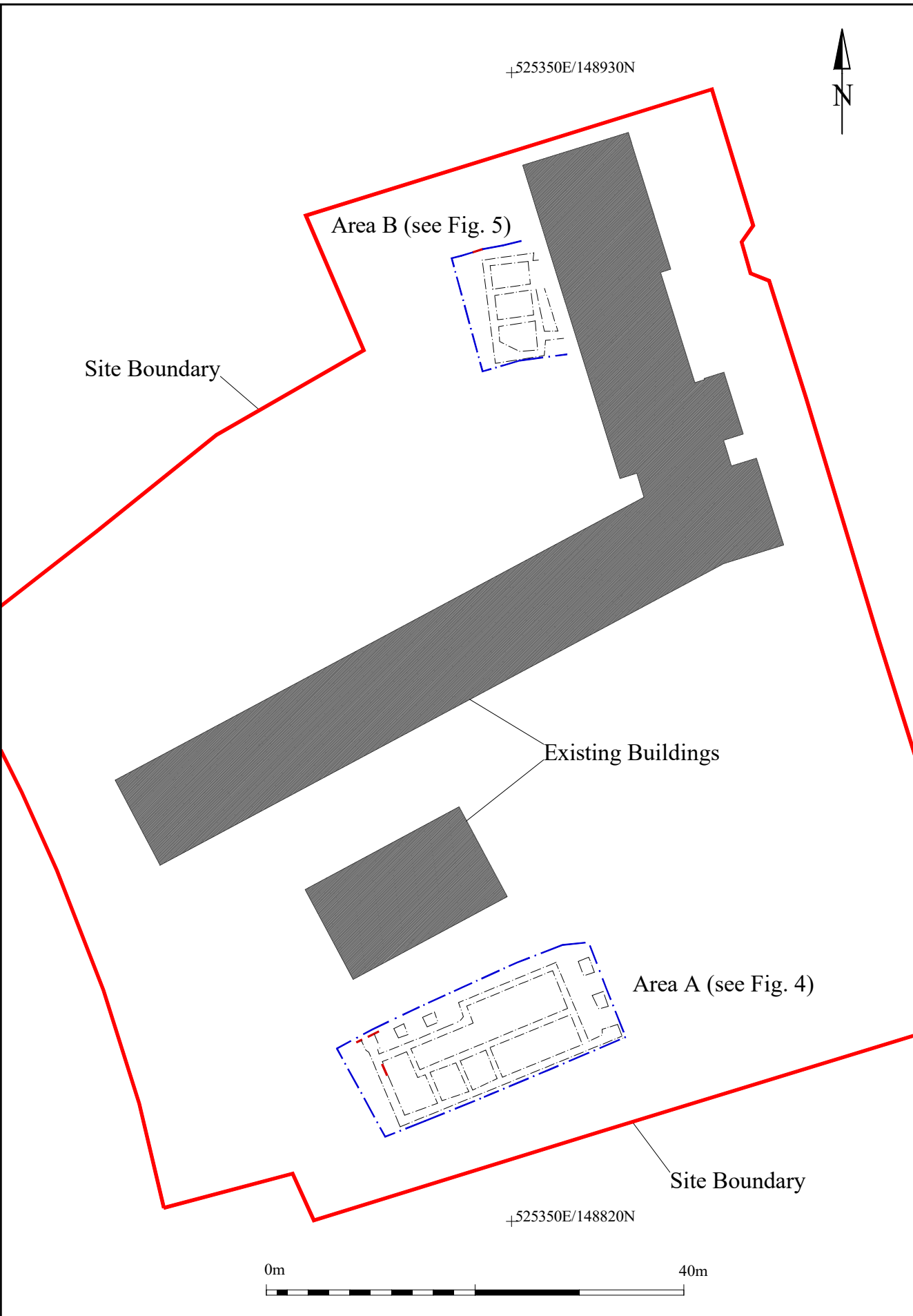
Plate 7: Area B. Section 3, looking north north-west

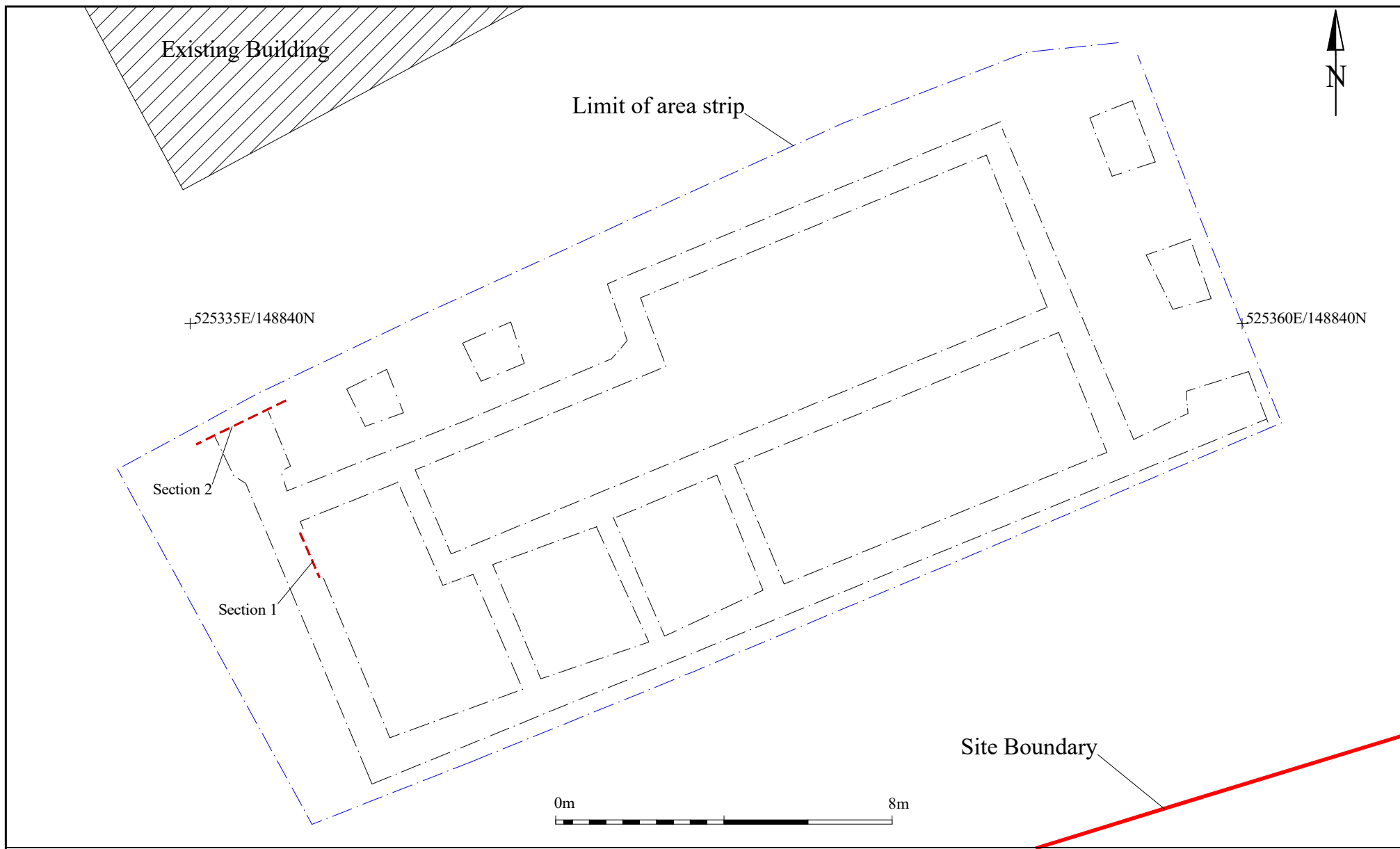


Plate 8: Area B. Completed excavations, looking south











+525350E/148918N

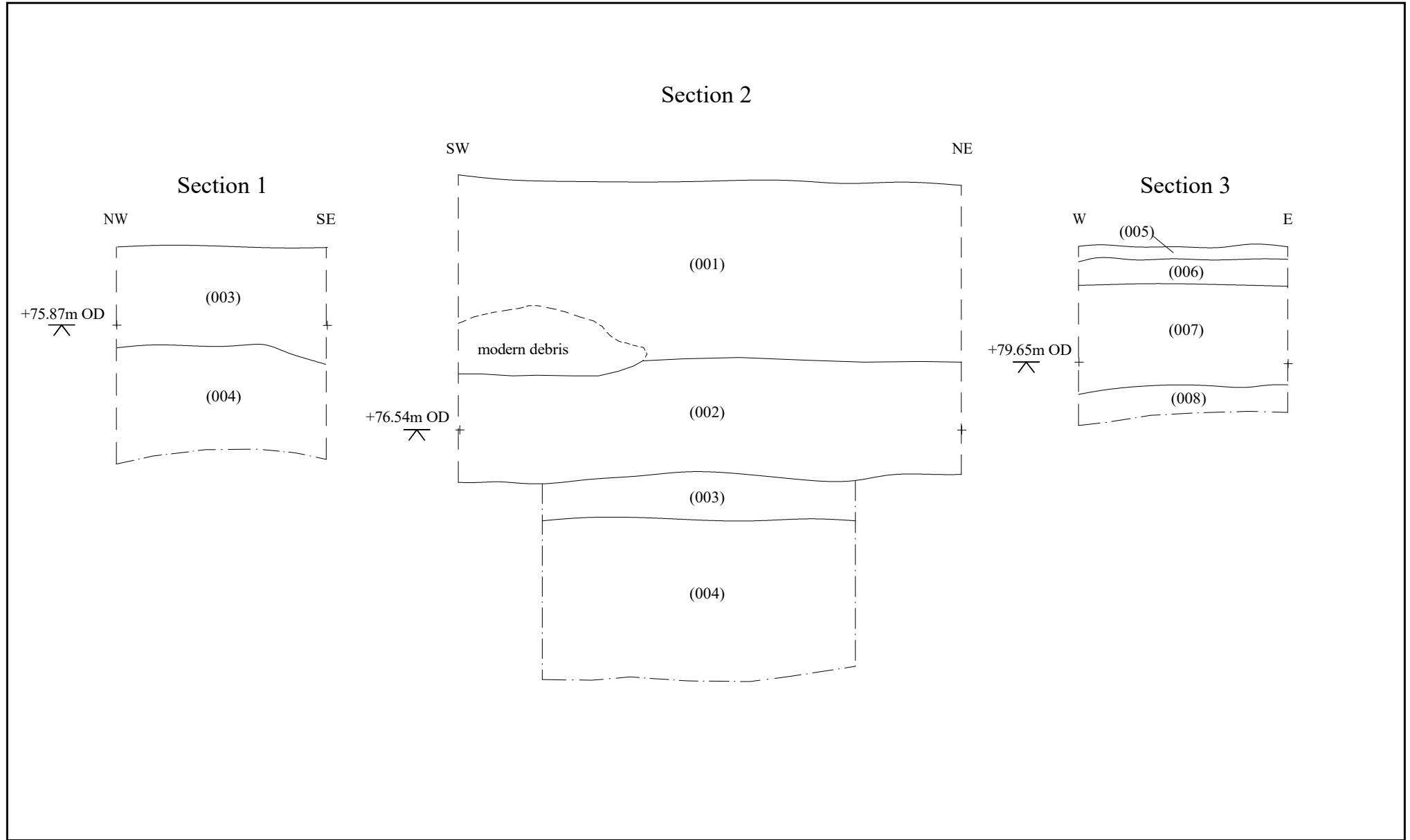
Existing Buildings

Section 3

Limit of area strip

+525350E/148901N





Appendix A. Context Summary

Context	Area	Description	Interpretation
001	A	Compact dark to mid brownish grey silty sand with modern rubble. Up to 0.86m thick	Deposit dumped to raise ground level
002	A	Firm dark greyish brown silty sand. Occasional small brick or tile fragments. Up to 0.54m thick	Former topsoil
003	A	Firm mid 'orangey' greyish brown silty sand with occasional small stone fragments. 0.55m to 0.22m thick	Subsoil
004	A	Friable mid greyish brown mixed with mid yellowish/orange grey silty sand. At least 0.8m thick	Natural deposit
005	B	Tarmac, 0.06m thick	Modern playground surface
006	B	Aggregate, 0.12m thick	Bedding for (005)
007	B	Firm dark brown silty sand with occasional (possibly intrusive) modern rubble fragments. Up to 0.34m thick	Subsoil
008	B	Friable mixed mid yellowish grey, mid orange-grey and mid greyish brown deposit. Silty sand with small natural stone fragments	Natural deposit

APPENDIX B
OASIS SUMMARY FORM

Summary for withamar1-502735

OASIS ID (UID)	withamar1-502735
Project Name	Watching Brief at Brooklands Primary School, Alexander Road, Reigate, Surrey
Activity type	Watching Brief
Project Identifier(s)	
Planning Id	21/00189/CON
Reason For Investigation	Planning: Post determination
Organisation Responsible for work	Witham Archaeology
Project Dates	20-Aug-2021 - 25-Aug-2021
Location	Brooklands Primary School, Alexander Road, Reigate, Surrey NGR : TQ 25340 48888 LL : 51.2254316438276, - 0.206416288730101 12 Fig : 525340,148888
Administrative Areas	Country : England County : Surrey District : Reigate and Banstead Parish : Reigate and Banstead, unparished area

<p>Project Methodology</p>	<p>The monitoring was conducted in accordance with the directions laid out in the Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI), and approved by the curatorial archaeologist. The most recent deposits were removed mechanically, using a 360° tracked excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket. All mechanical excavation was undertaken under archaeological supervision. Mechanical excavation was discontinued when archaeological deposits were exposed, or when undisturbed natural deposits were revealed. Exposed surfaces, both vertical and horizontal, were then cleaned by hand to define the archaeological remains.</p> <p>Potential archaeological features were further investigated by manual excavation in line with the sampling guidelines outlined in the WSI.</p> <p>A record of the investigations was compiled through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">•Notes detailing the progress of archaeological fieldwork.•Individual written descriptions of archaeological contexts made on pro-forma recording sheets and indexed appropriately.•Measured section drawings showing specific archaeological contexts as well as general stratigraphic sequences, produced at scales 1:10 or 1:20 as appropriate.•Measured plans of archaeological contexts (individual and/or multiple) at scale 1:20•Sequences of colour digital photographs showing individual archaeological features and overall site circumstances. <p>The trenches, the features and the sample hand-excavated slots were located using survey grade GPS equipment, referenced to the Ordnance Survey National Grid.</p>
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Project Results	<p>Archaeological monitoring and recording was carried out during groundworks relating to the development of Brooklands Primary School on Alexander Road, Reigate, Surrey.</p> <p>Potential for the site to contain remains of archaeological interest was indicated in an archaeological desk-based assessment carried out in 2020. A requirement for archaeological monitoring and recording was, therefore, included as a condition of planning permission for the development.</p> <p>No finds were recovered and no deposits or features of archaeological significance were revealed during the investigation. Evidence of modern dumping in Area A, and of modern truncation in Area B probably reflect previous construction and landscaping episodes associated with the existing group of school buildings.</p>
Keywords	
HER	Surrey HER - noRev - LITE
HER Identifiers	
Archives	

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