

ST LAWRENCE CE PRIMARY
SCHOOL, ALTON,
HAMPSHIRE

ARCHAEOLOGICAL
WATCHING BRIEF REPORT

REPORT NO: R12202

AUGUST 2015



PRE-CONSTRUCT ARCHAEOLOGY

**ST. LAWRENCE PRIMARY SCHOOL, ALTON, HAMPSHIRE
ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF REPORT**

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Site Code: SLAH15

Local Planning Authority: Hampshire County Council

Commissioning Client: Property Services, Hampshire County Council

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1 NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd (PCA) was appointed by Hampshire County Council Property Services to carry out an archaeological watching brief during the erection of fencing and during a geotechnical site investigation at St Lawrence CE Primary School, Alton, Hampshire. Four site visits were made between the 5th and 7th August 2015.

No archaeological deposits, features, artefacts or environmental remains (significant or otherwise) were observed during the course of the watching brief. The average depth to natural deposits across the site was observed to be between 0.30m and 0.40m. None of the fencing postholes or the single geotechnical test pit reached natural deposits or a discernible archaeological horizon. Although human remains associated to the church are very likely to be present on site, the depth of interventions did not reach a level at which they would be encountered.

2 INTRODUCTION

2.1 Project Background

- 2.1.1 Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd (PCA) was appointed by Hampshire County Council Property Services to carry out an archaeological watching brief during the erection of fencing and during a geotechnical site investigation at St Lawrence CE Primary School, Alton, Hampshire, and hereafter 'the site'. The proposed new fencing will enclose part of the former churchyard of St Lawrence Church as a safe play area for the school, whilst the geotechnical site investigation is intended to inform foundation proposals for the construction of a mezzanine classroom in the school.
- 2.1.2 The archaeological watching brief on the installation of fencing was required by Hampshire County Council's Archaeology Officer (CAO), advisor to HCC Property Services. The requirement was secured by a condition of planning permission for the new fencing (Planning Application reference 29870/009 & HCC reference EHE042). The watching brief was intended to ensure that, in the event archaeological resources were affected by the excavation of pits for new fence posts, those resources would be investigated and recorded. Simultaneously, the watching brief on geotechnical investigations was intended to ensure archaeological resources, if present, would be investigated and recorded.
- 2.1.3 The required Written Scheme of Investigation (PCA 2015) was submitted to the LPA in July 2015. This report sets out the results of the archaeological watching brief, which took place between the 5th and 7th of August 2015.
- 2.1.4 This document has been prepared in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief (IfA 2008) and *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment* (English Heritage, 2006).

2.2 Location, Geology and Topography

- 2.2.1 St Lawrence CE Primary School, Church Street, Alton, Hampshire, lies in the historic core of Alton, north of St Lawrence Church and partially over the church's former churchyard and burial ground.
- 2.2.2 The topography of the site is fairly flat, typical of the valley floor of the River Wey, which flows some 200m to the west. Ground level within the site lies at approximately 110m above OD.
- 2.2.3 Underlying natural deposits comprised of superficial Head deposits overlying Chalk at between 3m and 5m below ground level.

2.3 Archaeological and Historical Background

2.3.1 The site lies within the former extensive churchyard and burial ground of St Lawrence. The Church was established in the 11th century by the monks of New Minster, Winchester, and forms a focus, along with the market place, of the historic medieval core of Alton, which developed to the north of the strategic route from Winchester to London. The Alton Extensive Urban Survey (English heritage) identifies the area are of St Lawrence Church as of High archaeological Importance.

3 AIM

3.1 Archaeological Watching Brief

3.1.1 The aim of the archaeological watching brief was to monitor groundwork for the proposed geotechnical investigation and fence erection and investigate and record archaeological resources that are identified, taking account of the date, nature, extent, bio-archaeological and palaeo-environmental potential of the resources and the research aims and questions that have been identified.

3.1.2 The aim of this report is intended to satisfy the Local Planning Authority that the watching brief was carried out in accordance with the approved Written Scheme of Investigation and in satisfaction of the relevant condition of planning permission.

4 METHODOLOGY

4.1 Watching Brief

4.1.1 The watching brief comprised monitoring visits, which observed the excavations for the proposed works including two borehole starter pits, one geotechnical test pit and 11 postholes. Arrangements were put in place so that all ground work was effectively monitored by PCA as part of the ground work program.

4.1.2 Areas of the site that were monitored and found to be of no archaeological interest were identified by PCA to the main contractor.

4.1.3 A digital photographic archive was maintained throughout archaeological monitoring, providing a record of works and observed ground conditions. This was accompanied by drawings where necessary. This will form a permanent archive that will be collated and preserved.

5 RESULTS

5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 The following summary of results is based upon the site archive, which comprises the site diary and digital photographs. The archive is held at PCA's Winchester office under the PCA site code **SLAH15** and will in due course be deposited with the Hampshire Cultural Trust.

5.2 Observations

- 5.2.1 No archaeological deposits, features, artefacts or environmental remains were observed during the course of the watching brief.
- 5.2.2 Across all interventions there was an average depth to natural deposits of approximately 0.40m. Many interventions were not required to be dug to that depth and others only encountered modern disturbed ground.
- 5.2.3 The new fence line (Appendix 1, Plate 1) required the excavation of nine postholes, measuring 0.25m by 0.15m, and two gate posts, measuring 0.40m by 0.30m. None of these interventions went below 0.30m below ground level and as such did not reveal any archaeological features, deposits, artefacts or ecofacts.
- 5.2.4 The two BH starter pits, were approximately 0.25m by 0.25m deep, neither of which revealed any evidence for archaeological resources, possibly a result of disturbed ground owing to the construction of the adjacent school building.
- 5.2.5 Of the two planned test pits, only one (HP2) was excavated, located against the outside of the south-west wall of the school hall (Appendix 1, Plate 2). Owing to the location of the test pit, immediately to the west school hall building, the investigation came down on modern foundation and construction material.

5.3 Conclusion

- 5.3.1 The archaeological watching brief did not observe any archaeological resources and, in particular, did not uncover any human remains relating to the historic churchyard of St. Lawrence church. Although human remains are very likely to be present on site, the depth of interventions did not reach a level at which they would be encountered.

6 ARCHIVE PREPARATION AND DEPOSITION

6.1 The Site Archive

- 6.1.1 The Site archive, to include all project records and cultural material produced by the project, will be prepared in accordance with 'Guidelines for the Preparation of Excavation Archives for Long-term Storage' (UKIC 1990) and the Institute for Archaeologists 'Standard and Guidance for the creation, compilation, transfer and deposition of archaeological archives' (IfA 2009). On completion of the project PCA will arrange for the archive to be deposited in accordance with the provisional arrangements made at the onset of the watching brief. Any alternative arrangements will be agreed with the Historic Environment Officer and the Local Planning Authority.

7 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd. would like to thank Hampshire County Council Property Services for commissioning PCA to carry out the watching brief.

The author would like to thank Katherine Marshall for carrying out the Watching Brief and Paul McCulloch for his project management and editing of this report.

APPENDIX 1: SITE PHOTOGRAPHS



Plate 1: Line of fencing, St Lawrence Churchyard. View to East.



Plate 2: Geotechnical pit HP2 against south-west wall of School hall.

APPENDIX 2 – OASIS FORM

OASIS ID: preconst1-222310

Project details

Project name	ST. LAWRENCE PRIMARY SCHOOL, ALTON, HAMPSHIRE
Short description of the project	Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd (PCA) was appointed by Hampshire County Council Property Services to carry out an archaeological watching brief during the erection of fencing and during a geotechnical site investigation at St Lawrence CE Primary School, Alton, Hampshire. Four site visits were made between the 5th and 7th August 2015. No archaeological deposits, features, artefacts or environmental remains (significant or otherwise) were observed during the course of the watching brief. The average depth to natural deposits across the site was observed to be between 0.30m and 0.40m.
Project dates	Start: 03-08-2015 End: 07-08-2015
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	SLAH15 - Sitecode
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	None
Current Land use	Community Service 1 - Community Buildings
Monument type	NONE None
Significant Finds	NONE None
Investigation type	"Watching Brief"
Prompt	National Planning Policy Framework - NPPF

Project location

Country	England
Site location	HAMPSHIRE EAST HAMPSHIRE ALTON ST. LAWRENCE PRIMARY SCHOOL, ALTON, HAMPSHIRE
Postcode	GU34 2BY
Study area	0.5 Hectares
Site coordinates	SU 71660 39614 51.150768062387 -0.975325985644 51 09 02 N 000 58 31 W Point

Project creators

Name of Organisation	PCA West
Project brief originator	Hertfordshire County Council
Project design originator	Paul McCulloch
Project director/manager	Paul McCulloch

Project supervisor	Katherine Marshall
Type of sponsor/funding body	Local Authority
Name of sponsor/funding body	Property Services, Hampshire County Council

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	Hampshire Cultural Trust
Digital Archive ID	SLAH15
Digital Contents	"none"
Digital Media available	"Database", "Images raster / digital photography", "Spreadsheets"
Paper Archive recipient	Hampshire Cultural Trust
Paper Archive ID	SLAH15
Paper Contents	"none"
Paper Media available	"Correspondence", "Diary", "Notebook - Excavation", ' Research', ' General Notes', "Unpublished Text"

Project bibliography 1

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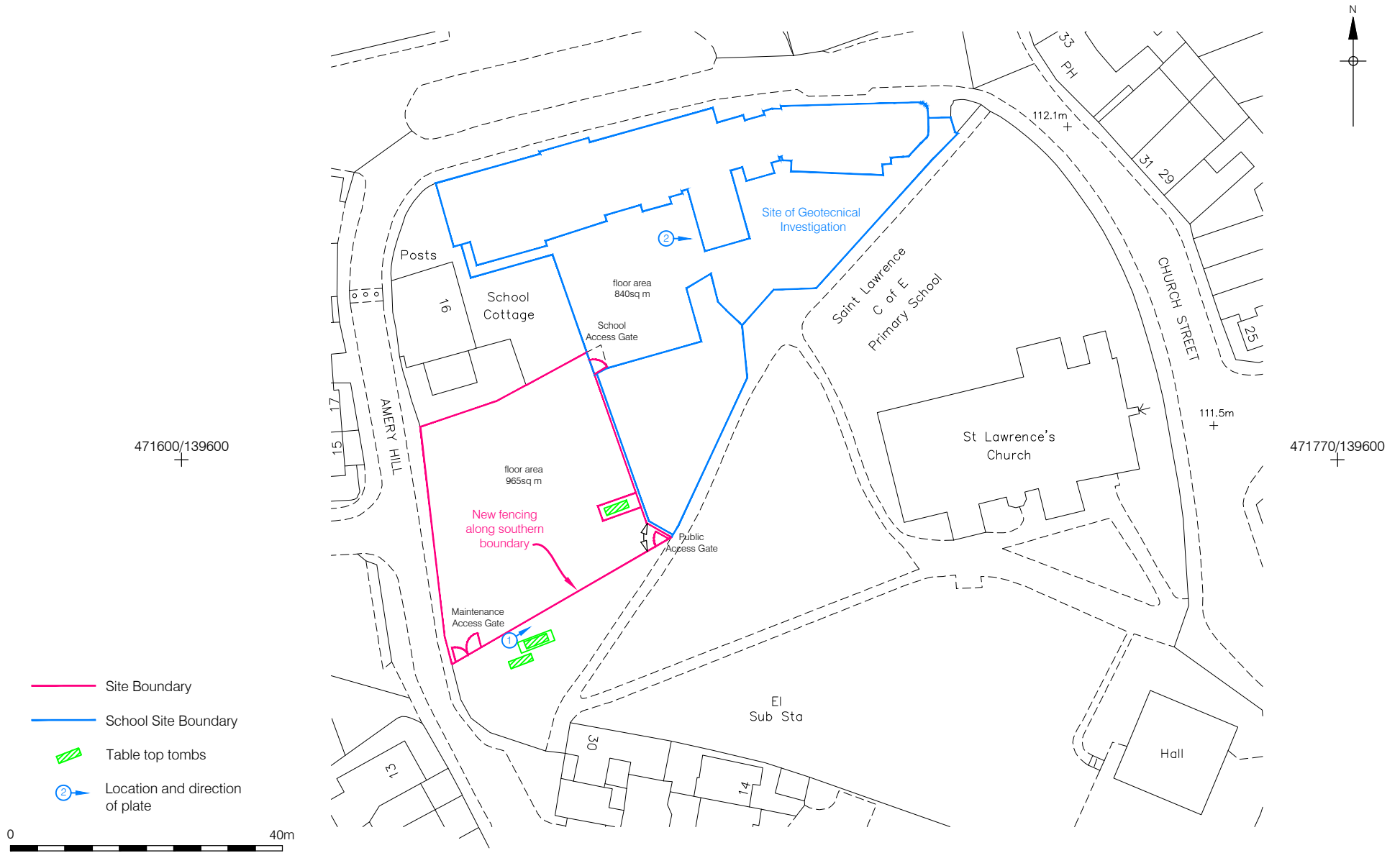


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28/07/15 HB

Figure 1
 Site Location
 1:2,000,000; 625,000 & 25,000 at A4



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Figure 2
 Detailed Site Plan
 1:800 at A4

PCA

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