

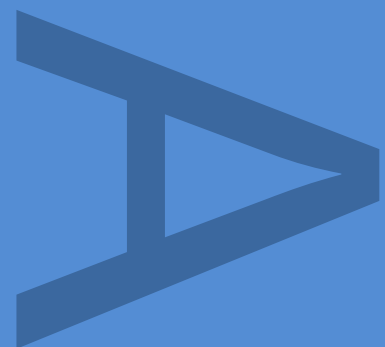
**AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL
EVALUATION AT ST MARY'S
PRIMARY SCHOOL,
SAFFRON WALDEN**

SITE CODE: SW57

PLANNING REFERENCE

NUMBER: UTT/0832/10

SEPTEMBER 2010



PRE-CONSTRUCT ARCHAEOLOGY

DOCUMENT VERIFICATION

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St Mary's Primary School, Saffron Walden

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**AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION AT ST MARY'S CHURCH OF
ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL, SAFFRON WALDEN, ESSEX CB10 1BQ**

SITE CODE: SW57

CENTRAL NATIONAL GRID REFERENCE: TL 5385 3880

PLANNING REFERENCE NUMBER: UTT/0832/10

WRITTEN AND RESEARCHED BY RICHARD HUMPHREY

PRE-CONSTRUCT ARCHAEOLOGY LTD. SEPTEMBER 2010

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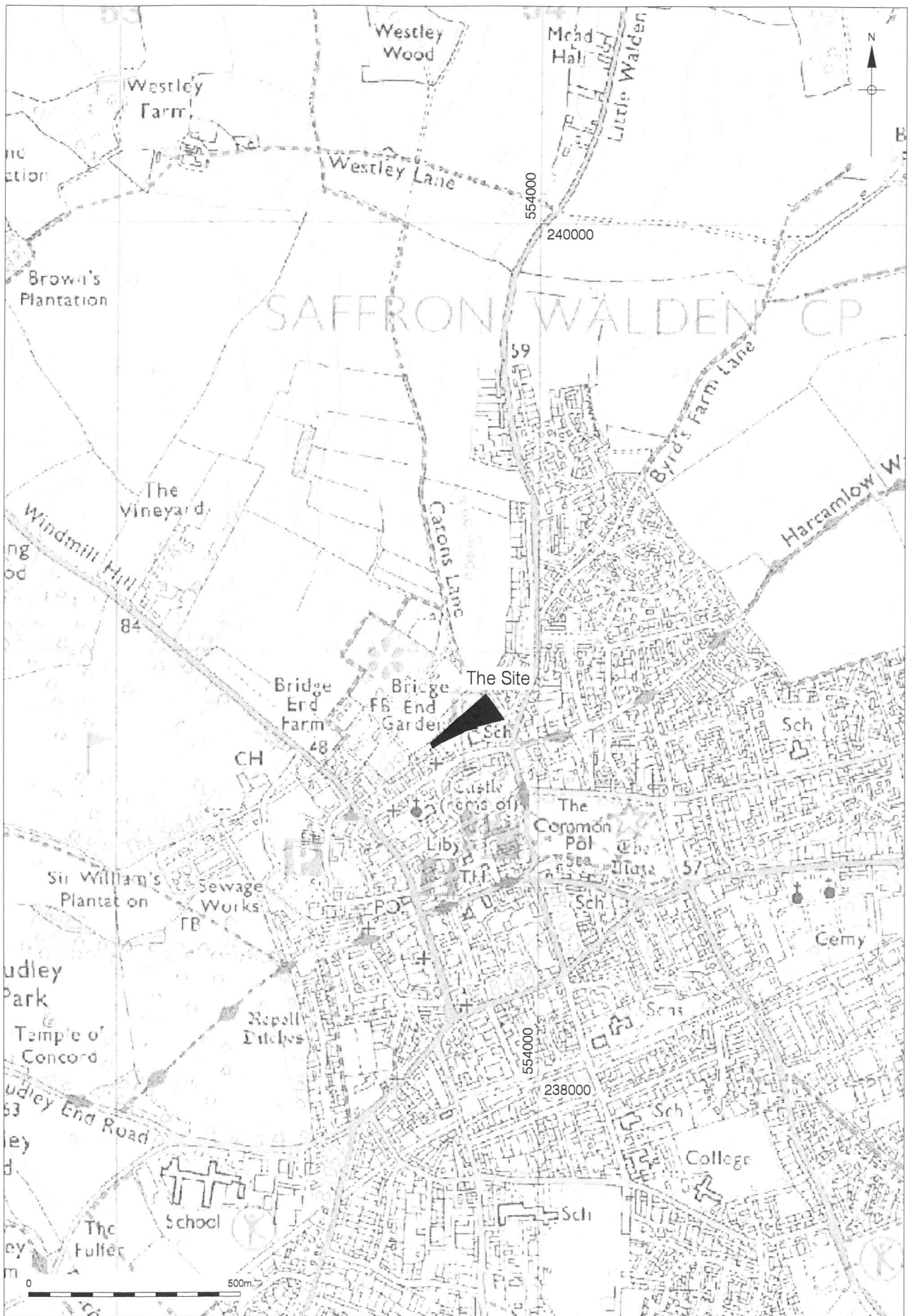
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1 ABSTRACT

- 1.1 An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd on land at St Mary's Church of England Primary School, Saffron Walden, Essex, in advance of redevelopment, between 13th and 14th September 2010. The work was commissioned by Wilby and Burnett as part of the planning application for the construction of a new pre-school building. Two trenches positioned in a cross formation across the footprint of the proposed structure were investigated.
- 1.2 Previous archaeological investigations in the area have identified what has been interpreted as the outer bailey or town-ditch that relates to the 12th century castle within which the medieval town was initially established (Ennis 2005). These were to the southwest of the study site detailed in this report. The projected course of the town ditch from these previous investigations suggest it would have extended to the south of the new pre-school structure on an approximate east to west alignment.
- 1.3 Naturally occurring chalk bedrock was observed in a deeper test sondage excavated at the southern end of the southeast to northwest aligned evaluation trench. This was approximately 1.80m below the top of the ground surface. Excavation to this depth throughout the rest of the trench was not pursued owing to health and safety considerations. A possible cut feature was seen made through this chalk horizon. This was seen on the southwest-facing side of the deeper test sondage and potentially represents a northeast to southwest aligned incision. Two different fills of this incision were observed although dating evidence was not retrieved from either.
- 1.4 Sealing the fills of this possible cut were multiple horizons of late post-medieval to modern ground raising layers. These were observed to contain modern ceramic building material and metal inclusions. It is probable that these deposits relate to the widespread landscaping of the site in the 1960s when St Mary's Primary School was extended and the playing fields raised in height. Demolition material may have been the product of the removal of the houses of School Row that once ran across the area.
- 1.5 In light of the apparent extensive mechanised landscaping of the site in the mid-twentieth century and the absence of dating evidence seen from within the fills of the incision made through the chalk bedrock, it is not possible to say with any degree of certainty that the cut feature represents the medieval town-ditch.

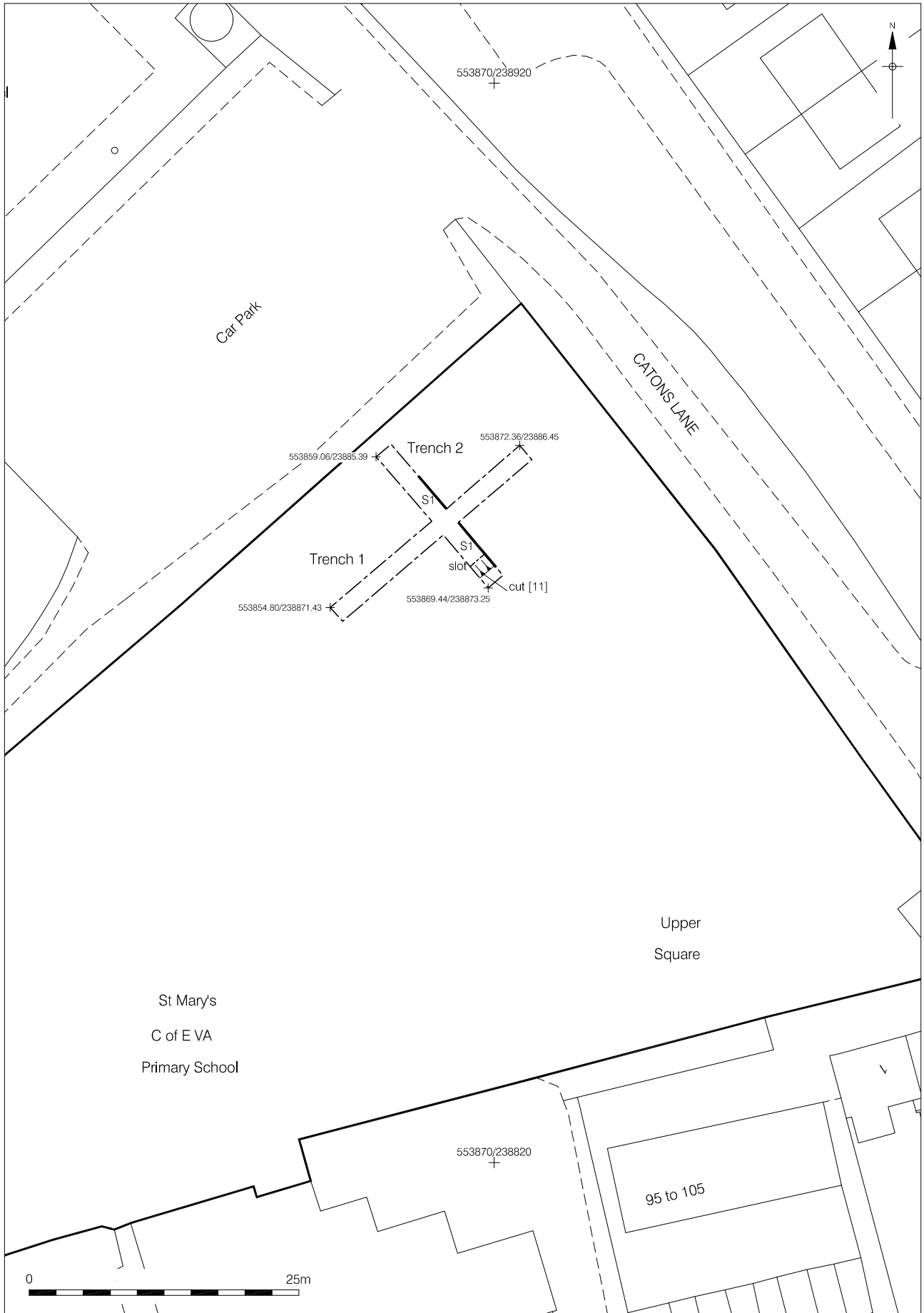
2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 An archaeological evaluation was conducted between 13th and 14th September 2010 by Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd (PCA) on land at St Mary's Church of England Primary School, Saffron Walden, Essex, in advance of redevelopment. The National Grid Reference of the site is TL 5385 3880.
- 2.2 The evaluation was commissioned by Wilby and Burnett and was monitored by Richard Havis, Essex County Council Archaeological Officer. The field investigation was supervised by Richard Humphrey and project managed by Helen Hawkins for Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd. All work was undertaken following the appropriate English Heritage (GLAAS) guidelines.
- 2.3 A summary of the town's history is provided in the archaeological brief produced by Essex County Council (Havis 2010). This describes the development of the town around the castle that was founded in the 11th century by the de Mandevilles. In 1141 Geoffrey de Mandeville was given permission to remove Newport's market and transfer it to his castle at Saffron Walden. It is assumed that by this date the castle's keep and its earthworks were well advanced if not completed. In the early to mid 13th century a large area to the south of the castle bailey was enclosed with new streets laid out. Construction of a football ground to the north of the study area in the mid 20th century revealed large numbers of metal trading tokens found by metal detectorists, suggestive of a market place or trading-fair activity in this area.
- 2.4 The development site is positioned in the northeast corner of St Mary's Church of England Primary School playing fields. It is bounded to the north by a car park and by Catons Lane to the east. The site measures approximately 394m² with its centre at national grid reference TL 5385 3880. The ground level slopes downwards from the south to the north with a suggestion of terracing apparent from the stepped appearance of the slope. The development area lies to the northwest of the scheduled castle and the town ditch is thought to run through the grounds of the school.
- 2.5 The evaluation comprised of two test trenches which were archaeologically excavated and recorded. These measured 22m x 1.8m and 15m x 1.8m forming a cross shape over the footprint of the proposed building (Figure 2). The depth to which the trenches could be machine excavated was limited by health and safety considerations to 1.20m below the top of the ground surface. In order to ascertain the height of naturally occurring deposits, a deeper test sondage was excavated at the southern end of one of the trenches where it was thought that ground raising horizons would be less extensive.
- 2.6 The evaluation aimed to address the following research questions contained within the brief (Havis 2010):
- To identify surviving evidence relating to the medieval and post-medieval town and nature of its occupation
 - To define the longevity of the settlement
 - To examine the economy of the medieval settlement including industrial, domestic and commercial production
 - To study samples from any surviving organic deposits
- 2.7 No previous geotechnical investigations are known from within the redevelopment site.
- 2.8 The completed archive comprising written, drawn and photographic records and artefactual material will be deposited with Saffron Walden Museum under the site code SW57.



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Figure 1
 Site Location
 1:12,500 at A4



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Figure 2
 Trench Location
 1:500 at A4

3 PLANNING BACKGROUND

- 3.1 In March 2010 the Department for Communities and Local Government issued Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment (PPS5), which provides guidance for planning authorities, property owners, developers and others on the investigation and preservation of archaeological remains.
- 3.2 In considering any planning application for development, the local planning authority will be guided by the policy framework set by government guidance, in this instance PPS5, by current Unitary Development Plan policy and by other material considerations.
- 3.3 At a local level, the Uttlesford Local Plan (saved policy December 2007) contains the following policies relating to archaeology:

Ancient Monuments and Sites of Archaeological Importance

5.7. Within Uttlesford District, approximately 3000 sites of archaeological interest are recorded on the Heritage Conservation Record (EHCR) maintained by Essex County Council. These sites are not shown on the proposals map and inquiries should be made to the County Archaeologist. Scheduled Ancient Monuments of which there are 73 in the District (December 2001) are shown on the proposals map. The EHCR records represent only a fraction of the total. Many important sites remain undiscovered and unrecorded. Archaeological sites are a finite and non-renewable resource. As a result it is important to ensure that they are not needlessly or thoughtlessly destroyed.

5.8. The desirability of preserving an ancient monument and its setting is a material consideration in determining planning applications whether the monument is scheduled or unscheduled. There is a presumption in favour of the preservation of nationally important sites and their settings. The need for development affecting archaeological remains of lesser importance will be weighed against the relative importance of the archaeology.

Policy ENV4 Ancient Monuments and Sites of Archaeological Importance.

Where nationally important archaeological remains, whether scheduled or not, and their settings, are affected by proposed development there will be a presumption in favour of their physical preservation in situ. The preservation in situ of locally important archaeological remains will be sought unless the need for the development outweighs the importance of the archaeology. In situations where there are grounds for believing that sites, monuments or their settings would be affected developers will be required to arrange for an archaeological field assessment to be carried out before the planning application can be determined thus enabling an informed and reasonable planning decision to be made. In circumstances where preservation is not possible or feasible, then development will not be permitted until satisfactory provision has been made for a programme of archaeological investigation and recording prior to commencement of the development

- 3.4 A Planning Condition was placed on the site (Planning Ref. UTT/0832/10/FUL) which stated:

'Before development commences or preliminary groundworks of any kind take place the applicant shall secure the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted by the applicant, and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.'

REASON: The Essex Historic Environment Record and Historic Town Report identify the proposed development lying just outside the medieval town of Saffron Walden (HER408) in between the town and the probable site of the fair'

4 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

4.1 Geology

4.1.1 Saffron Walden is located in an area of Gault clay and/or upper Greensand that underlies chalk bedrock laid down in the Cretaceous Period dating from between 99 and 65 million years ago (www.geo-east.org.uk).

4.2 Topography

4.3 The site is positioned in the northeast corner of the playing fields of St Mary's Primary School. The site slopes down from the south to the north and although some modern landscaping and terracing appears to have taken place at the same time as the school redevelopment in the 1960s, it would appear that this exploits a natural gradient to the land. The castle to the south is built upon a high point in the landscape and overlooks the study site.

4.4 A benchmark positioned on the eastern side of the modern school building of value 63.53m OD was traversed onto the site to give a temporary benchmark of value 60.17m OD. This height was confirmed by a GPS device used to locate the trenches.

5 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

5.1.1 The following is taken from the Historic Town Survey of Saffron Walden (English Heritage 1999):

5.2 Prehistoric to Roman

5.2.1 There is evidence for prehistoric and Roman activity in and around the town, but nothing to suggest that it was urban in nature.

5.3 Saxon

5.3.1 There is a gap in the evidence until the Middle to Late Saxon period when there was a small Saxon settlement in the south-west quadrant of the present town around Abbey Lane. A Saxon cemetery was excavated in 1876. The pottery found on this site dated from the ninth to the thirteenth centuries.

5.4 Medieval

5.4.1 After the Norman Conquest Saffron Walden was granted to the de Mandevilles, becoming the centre of their Essex and Suffolk estates. They built a castle on the chalk peninsula between the two streams of the Slade (King's Ditch and Madgate Slade). The castle was built to dominate the area and its plan determined the subsequent street layout. The inner bailey was oval in plan and contained the domestic and defensive buildings of the de Mandevilles, of which only the flint rubble keep survives. The outer bailey was also ovoid in plan, fully enclosing the inner bailey and the original town. The church was built and two streets, Church Street and Castle Street, laid out within the outer bailey. In 1141 the de Mandevilles acquired the right to move the market which had been held at Newport to Saffron Walden. At that date a Benedictine priory, which became an Abbey in 1190, was built on the site of the later Audley End House.

5.4.2 By the 13th century the town had passed from the de Mandevilles to the de Bohuns. In the early to mid 13th century a large town enclosure was laid out to the south and west of the outer bailey and the outer bailey ditch back-filled. The date of this work may correspond to the granting of a new charter in 1236. The town enclosure ditches, known as the Battle or Repell Ditches enclosed a total area of 20 hectares. Within this were laid out new streets, principally High Street and its back lane Gold Street, and a new marketplace. Only the market area and the High Street were actually built-up by the end of the 14th century, the remainder being under agricultural use.

5.4.3 Excavations at 63a Castle Street in 2005 revealed a 6.4m wide by 4.0m deep ditch aligned on a northeast to southwest axis. This has been interpreted as relating to the outer bailey of the 12th century castle. The ditch remained in use in the 13th and 14th centuries when it was incorporated within the enlarged circuit of the later town enclosure. No pottery evidence was retrieved from the earliest fills but that from later fills was dated to the 12th and 14th centuries with most diagnostic pottery dated to the first half of the 13th century. The projected course of the outer bailey from these works appears to follow the line of the back wall of the properties that front Castle Street and is therefore some distance to the south of the study site detailed in this report (Ennis 2005).

5.4.4 In the late medieval period Saffron Walden became the major English centre for the production of the saffron crocus which was used to produce dye (hence the town's name). It also played an important role in the East Anglian wool industry, with the keeping of sheep and manufacture of cloth. The magnificent parish church reflects the prosperity of the town in this period.

5.4.5 The open area to the north of the town enclosure and the site is thought to have been a market area during the late medieval and post medieval period. Metal detecting in the area during the construction of a football ground found a large number of metal artefacts associated with market trading.

5.5 Post-medieval

5.5.1 In the post-medieval period the economic emphasis of Saffron Walden changed, as the saffron crocus was replaced by other dye-stuffs and the woollen industry shifted elsewhere. The town became a major centre of the Essex malt industry in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. However, an 18th century map shows that Saffron Walden had still not expanded beyond its medieval limits. During the late 19th century the railway station to the south of the medieval town emerged as the centre of an important manufacturing area with the erection of goods sheds, maltings, a cement works, iron foundry and steam-driven corn mill.

5.6 Modern

5.6.1 Extension of the 19th century school buildings in the 1960s coincided with the demolition of the dilapidated buildings of School Row that extended to the north from Castle Street across the area of the current playing fields. The height of the ground was also raised across the playing fields during this time (*pers. comm.* Bob McKinlay, Caretaker).

6 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

- 6.1 The methodology for evaluating the site is laid out in the Written Scheme of Investigation (Hawkins 2010). The evaluation consisted of two trenches positioned in a cross formation across the site (Figure 2). The trenches were located so as to be evenly distributed across the footprint of the new building.
- 6.2 The longer axis of the new building footprint was covered by a trench measuring 22m long by 1.8m wide and was positioned on a northeast to southwest alignment (Trench 1). This was crossed at 90° approximately half way through its length by a trench measuring 15m long by 1.8m wide on a northwest to southeast alignment (Trench 2).
- 6.3 A JCB machine fitted with a flat-bladed grading bucket was used under archaeological supervision to remove topsoil, overburden and low-grade archaeological deposits.
- 6.4 Machine excavation ceased at a height of approximately 1.20m below ground level in accordance with relevant health and safety guidelines concerning safe working conditions in unshored trenches. The stratigraphy observed at this height was still very much reflective of late post-medieval ground raising. A deeper test sondage was excavated at the southern end of the northwest to southeast aligned trench in order to gauge the depth of natural stratigraphy. A similar sondage was excavated at the southwestern end of Trench 1.
- 6.5 A metal detector was used to scan the base of Trenches 1 and 2 as well as spoil that came out of the trench.
- 6.6 The base of the trenches and a representative section were cleaned and recorded by hand with the objective of the evaluation to define remains rather than to remove them.
- 6.7 The archaeological deposits were assigned individual context numbers and recorded onto pro-forma sheets and recorded in plan and section as appropriate. A photographic record was also made.
- 6.8 A temporary bench mark was transferred from the side of St Mary's Primary School (value 63.53m OD) to a temporary bench mark near the eastern end of the trenches (value 60.17m OD).

7 THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SEQUENCE

7.1 Phase 1: Natural

7.1.1 Hard, white natural chalk with occasional flint nodule inclusions, [12] was seen in the base of the deeper test sondage dug at the southern end of the trench positioned on a northwest to southeast alignment (Trench 2). This was seen to be archaeologically sterile with no culturally modified inclusions within its matrix. It was seen at a level ranging from 57.58m OD to 58.14m OD

7.1.2 A test sondage was excavated at the southwest end of Trench 1 to gauge the depth of the natural chalk. A level of 57.64m OD was recorded although the chalk did not appear as clean as where observed previously, with flecks of soil within it.

7.2 Phase 2: Medieval/Post-Medieval Feature

7.2.1 The southwest facing side of the Trench 2 test sondage revealed a possible southern side of a cut made through natural chalk (Plate 2). This was recorded as feature [11] and proposed to extend on a northeast to southwest alignment. Its side was recorded as being concave and was noted as being cleanly cut through chalk [12]. The lowest point (not necessarily the base) was seen at a height of 58.76m OD and the highest point of the cut seen at 58.79m OD. A maximum observed depth of the feature was 1.18m.

7.2.2 Two deposits were recorded as filling cut [11]. The primary fill [10] was composed of friable light orangey-brown silty-sand with frequent chalk fragments and pebbles. It measured 0.43m deep at a height ranging from 57.87m OD to 58.01m OD. No dating evidence was retrieved from this fill. The secondary fill, [9] was of a similar appearance to [10] although with a marginally higher sand content. This measured 0.88m deep at levels ranging from 58.76m OD to 58.79m OD. Again, no dating evidence was seen within the fill.

7.3 Phase 3: Late Post-Medieval to Modern Made Ground/Plough soil

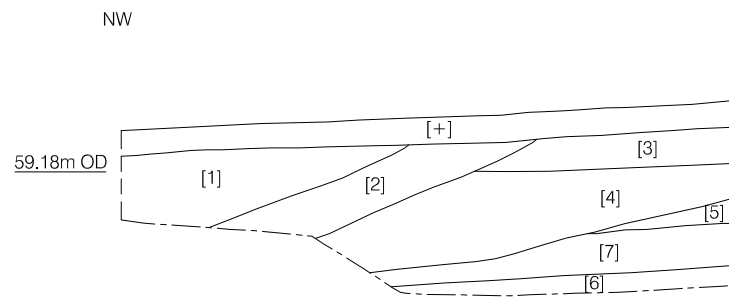
7.3.1 Section 1 (Figure 4) which represents the southwest-facing side of Trench 2 revealed a series of ground raising horizons that sealed fill [9] of cut [11]. The first of these was deposit [8]. This was composed of friable mid grey-brown silty-sand with occasional inclusions of chalk and ceramic building material fragments and small pebbles. It measured approximately 0.25m thick at heights between 58.74m OD and 58.98m OD. This layer represents the maximum depth to which both trenches 1 and 2 (barring the test-sondages) were machined down to, at a height of approximately 1.20m below the ground surface. It was notably different from overlying made ground horizons in that it wasn't seen to contain any modern material such as tarmac, concrete or metal fittings. However, it might still date to the twentieth century ground-raising event across the site.

7.3.2 Layer [8] was sealed by layer [6]. This was a friable dark grey-brown layer of silty sand with occasional chalk and charcoal flecks and sub-rounded pebbles. It was seen throughout the Trench 2 section at a thickness of 0.30m and at levels of between 58.43m OD and 59.18m OD. Modern metal fittings were seen in this layer and most likely represents the product of mid 20th century ground raising across the site.

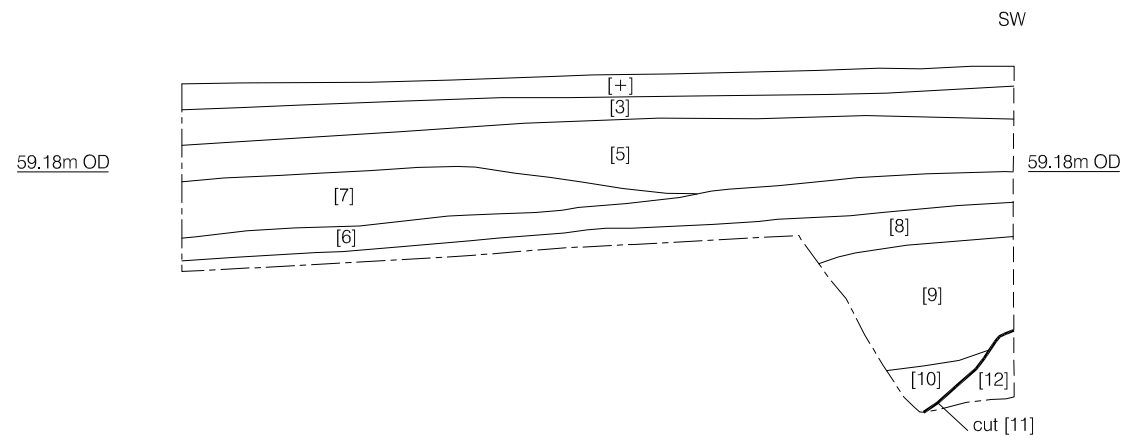
7.3.3 Above layer [6], layer [7] was recorded as containing concrete and tarmac fragments, potentially from the demolition of the buildings of School Row or dumped demolition rubble from elsewhere. This was approximately 0.40m thick at a maximum height of 59.23m OD. It is representative of mid 20th century ground raising.

7.3.4 A hard layer of redeposited dirty chalk was recorded as context [5] and sealed layer [7]. Its thickness varied from between 0.10m and 0.40m at heights of between 58.78m OD and 59.50m OD. It was seen throughout both Trench 1 and 2 and was noted as sloping down towards the north.

- 7.3.5 Mixed modern ground-raising layer [4] was seen sealing layer [5] in the northern end of Trench 2. It was composed of mid grey-brown silty sand with frequent inclusions of brick, pebbles and occasional concrete and flint fragments. It measured a maximum of 0.65m thick at a height of between 59.18m OD and 59.24m OD.
- 7.3.6 Layer [3] was a loose dark grey-brown horizon measuring approximately 0.25m thick at a height of between 59.40m OD and 59.74m OD. It contained tarmac and burnt slag inclusions and represents another phase of modern ground raising, and overlay layer [4].
- 7.3.7 A light orange-brown layer composed of silty-clay, [2], was seen to seal [3]. It was 0.30m thick at a maximum height of 59.40m OD and contained frequent fragments of brick and chalk. This was in turn sealed by horizon [1] that was composed of firm white-brown silty-sandy-chalk with occasional flint nodule inclusions. This was a maximum of 0.52m thick at 59.36m OD and represented the last phase of modern ground raising prior to topsoil covering the study area.



Section 1
Trench 1
Southwest Facing



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Figure 3
Section 1
1:50 at A4

Plate 1: North-facing view of Trench 2 with 1m scale prior to the excavation of the sondage



Plate 2: East-north-east view of cut [11] with 2m scale in the Trench 2 test sondage



8 CONCLUSIONS

- 8.1 Natural stratigraphy was observed as hard compacted chalk at a maximum height of 58.14m OD approximately 1.80m below ground level, in the base of a test sondage. It was not seen throughout the rest of the trench owing to health and safety considerations limiting the safe working depth of unshored trenches.
- 8.2 A feature possibly representative of the south side of a northeast to southwest aligned cut was seen in the southwest facing side of the test sondage. The cut was cleanly made through the chalk bedrock with a curved side. Two distinctive fills were seen within this cut although neither contained any dating evidence.
- 8.3 The function, nature and date of this feature are uncertain. The absence of dating material can neither confirm nor deny it to be relating to the medieval town-ditch or merely part of twentieth century landscaping activity seen across the site. Its full extent is also unknown preventing its comparison with the ditch seen at the 63a Castle Street excavation. Also, its position with regards to the projected course of the ditch seen from the earlier works is significantly further to the north.
- 8.4 Seen to seal the fills of this feature were several late post-medieval to modern ground raising horizons. The presence of metal, ceramic building material, tarmac and concrete from within these layers suggests they date from the demolition of the dilapidated buildings of School Row, which is known to have partially extended across the playing field to the south of the site. It is thought that this activity dates to the 1960s when the school building to the north was extended and the playing fields raised and landscaped as part of the works.
- 8.5 No other significant archaeological finds, features or deposits were observed in the test trenches. Notably, the metal detector survey failed to find any trading tokens that may have related to a market as proposed by those seen to the north of the site.

9 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- 9.1 Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited would like to thank Stuart Pelan of Wilby and Burnett for commissioning this project and Richard Havis for monitoring the work for Essex County Council.
- 9.2 The author would also like to thank Paw Jorgensen for survey work and Mark Roughley for illustrations. Many thanks also to Neil Hawkins for his efficient and thorough recording work and general assistance on site. Thanks also go to Helen Hawkins for project management.

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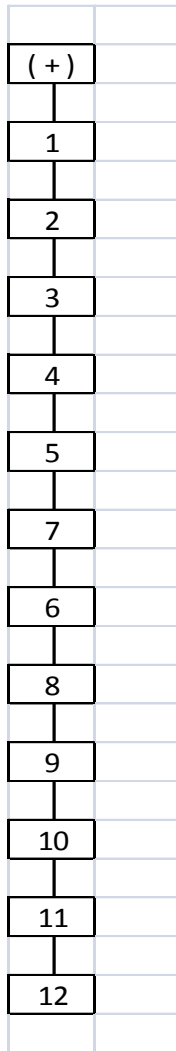
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APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT INDEX

Number	Type	Comments	
1	Layer	Re-deposited chalk made ground	
2	Layer	Mixed clay made ground	
3	Layer	Slaggy made ground	
4	Layer	Made ground	
5	Layer	Mixed chalk made ground	
6	Layer	Dark brown sandy made ground	
7	Layer	Mixed made ground	
8	Layer	Light brown made ground	
9	Fill	Fill of feature [11]	
10	Fill	Fill of feature [11]	
11	Layer	Possible cut, only seen in section	
12	Layer	Natural Chalk.	

APPENDIX 2: HARRIS MATRIX



APPENDIX 3 OASIS FORM

OASIS ID: preconst1-83302

Project details

Project name An Archaeological Evaluation at St Mary's Church of England Primary School, Saffron Walden, Essex CB10 1BQ

Short description of the project work was commissioned by Wilby and Burnett as part of the planning application for the construction of a new pre-school building. Two trenches positioned in a cross formation across the footprint of the proposed structure were investigated. Previous archaeological investigations in the area have identified what has been interpreted as the outer bailey or town-ditch that relates to the 12th century castle within which the medieval town was initially established (Ennis 2005). These were to the southwest of the study site detailed in this report. The projected course of the town ditch from these previous investigations suggest it would have extended to the south of the new pre-school structure on an approximate east to west alignment. Natural occurring chalk bedrock was observed in a deeper test sondage excavated at the southern end of the southeast to northwest aligned evaluation trench. A possible cut feature was seen made through this chalk horizon. This was seen on the southwest-facing side of the deeper test sondage and potentially represents a northeast to southwest aligned incision. Two different fills of this incision were observed although dating evidence was not retrieved from either. Sealing the fills of this possible cut were multiple horizons of late post-medieval to modern ground raising layers. These were observed to contain modern ceramic building material and metal inclusions. It is probable that these deposits relate to the widespread landscaping of the site in the 1960s when St Mary's Primary School was extended and the playing fields raised in height. In light of the apparent extensive mechanised landscaping of the site in the mid-twentieth century and the absence of dating evidence seen from within the fills of the incision made through the chalk bedrock, it is not possible to say with any degree of certainty that the cut feature represents the medieval town-ditch.

Project dates Start: 13-09-2010 End: 14-09-2010

Previous/future work No / Yes

Any associated project reference codes SW57 - Sitecode

Type of project Field evaluation

Site status Local Authority Designated Archaeological Area

Current Land use	Other 14 - Recreational usage
Monument type	NONE None
Significant Finds	NONE None
Methods techniques	& 'Sample Trenches'
Development type	Public building (e.g. school, church, hospital, medical centre, law courts etc.)
Prompt	Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPS
Position in the planning process	After full determination (eg. As a condition)

Project location

Country	England
Site location	ESSEX UTTLESFORD SAFFRON WALDEN St Mary's Church of England Primary School
Postcode	CB10 1BQ
Study area	394.00 Square metres
Site coordinates	TL 5385 3880 52.0257952126 0.242705789105 52 01 32 N 000 14 33 E Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 57.58m Max: 58.14m

Project creators

Name of Organisation	of PCA
Project originator	brief Essex County Council
Project originator	design Helen Hawkins
Project	Helen Hawkins

director/manager

Project supervisor Richard Humphrey

Type of School
sponsor/funding
body

Name of Wilby and Burnett
sponsor/funding
body

Project archives

Physical Archive No
Exists?

Digital Archive LAARC
recipient

Digital Contents 'none'

Digital Media 'Images raster / digital photography', 'Survey', 'Text'
available

Paper Archive LAARC
recipient

Paper Contents 'none'

Paper Media 'Context
available sheet', 'Drawing', 'Map', 'Matrices', 'Photograph', 'Plan', 'Report', 'Section', 'Survey '

Project bibliography 1

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

Title An Archaeological Evaluation at St Mary's Church of England Primary School,
Saffron Walden, Essex CB10 1BQ

Author(s)/Editor(s) Humphrey, R.

Date 2010

Issuer or publisher PCA

Place of issue or London
publication

Entered by Helen Hawkins (hhawkins@pre-construct.com)

Entered on 28 September 2010

APPENDIX 4 ESSEX HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT RECORD/ESSEX ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORY

SUMMARY SHEET

<i>Site name/Address:</i> St Mary's School, Saffron Walden	
<i>Parish:</i> Saffron Walden	<i>District:</i>
<i>NGR:</i> TL 5385 3880	<i>Site Code:</i> SW57
<i>Type of Work:</i> Archaeological Evaluation	<i>Site Director/Group:</i> Richard Humphrey Pre-Construct Archaeology
<i>Date of Work:</i> 13-14 September 2010	<i>Size of Area Investigated:</i> 394 sq m
<i>Location of Finds/Curating Museum:</i> no finds	<i>Funding source:</i> Wilby and Burnett
<i>Further Seasons Anticipated?:</i> No	<i>Related HER No.s:</i>
<i>Final Report:</i> An Archaeological Evaluation at St Mary's Church of England Primary School, Saffron Walden, Essex CB10 1BQ Humphrey R 2010 Pre-Construct Archaeology grey literature	
<i>Periods Represented:</i> unknown	
SUMMARY OF FIELDWORK RESULTS: Archaeological evaluation work was commissioned by Wilby and Burnett as part of the planning application for the construction of a new school building. Two trenches positioned in a cross formation across the footprint of the proposed structure were investigated. Previous archaeological investigations in the area have identified what has been interpreted as the outer bailey or town-ditch that relates to the 12th century castle within which the medieval town was initially established (Ennis 2005). These were to the southwest of the study site detailed in this report. The projected course of the town ditch from these previous investigations suggest it would have extended to the south of the new school structure on an approximate east to west alignment. Naturally occurring chalk bedrock was observed in a deeper test sondage excavated at the southern end of the southeast to northwest aligned evaluation trench. A possible cut feature was seen made through this chalk horizon. This was seen on the southwest-facing side of the deeper test sondage and potentially represents a northeast to southwest aligned incision. Two different fills of this incision were observed although dating evidence was not retrieved from either. Sealing the fills of this possible cut were multiple horizons of late post-medieval to modern ground raising layers. These were observed to contain modern ceramic building material and metal inclusions. It is probable that these deposits relate to the widespread landscaping of the site in the 1960s when St Mary's Primary School was extended and the playing fields raised in height. In light of the apparent extensive mechanised landscaping of the site in the mid-twentieth century and the absence of dating evidence seen from within the fills of the incision made through the chalk bedrock, it is not possible to say with any degree of certainty that the cut feature represents the medieval town-ditch.	

<i>Previous Summaries/Reports:</i> none	
<i>Author of Summary:</i> H Hawkins	<i>Date of Summary:</i> 12.10.10

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