



KDK ARCHAEOLOGY LTD

Archaeological Observation and Recording Report

Merchant Taylors School
Sandy Lodge Lane
Moor Park
Hertfordshire



Quality Check

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CONTENTS

Summary.....	1
1. Introduction	1
2. Aims & Methods	5
3. Archaeological & Historical Background	6
4. Results.....	9
5. Conclusions	17
6. Acknowledgements.....	18
7. Archive	19
8. References	20
Appendices:	
1. Photograph List	22
2. OASIS and Site Data.....	23
3. Hertfordshire Historic Environment Record Sheet.....	24
Figures:	
1. General location.....	2
2. Site layout	3
3. Development plan.....	4
4. Excavation plan	11
5. Site stratigraphy.....	12
Plates:	
1. Development footprint, general view	13
2. Pad 1, looking east	13
3. Pad 2, looking north	13
4. Pad 3, looking northeast	13
5. Pad 4, looking south.....	13
6. Pad 5, looking south.....	13
7. Pad 6, looking east	14
8. Pad 7, looking east	14
9. Pad 8, looking east	14
10. Pad 9, looking east	14
11. Pad 10, looking north.....	14
12. Pad 11, looking west	14
13. Pad 12, looking west	15
14. Pad 13, looking west	15
15. Pad 14, looking west	15
16. Pad 15, looking north.....	15
17. Pad 16, looking west	15
18. Pad 17, looking east	15
19. Pad 18, looking east	16
20. Pad 19, looking west	16
21. Pad 20, looking north.....	16



Summary

In April 2021 KDK Archaeology Ltd undertook a programme of Observation and Recording at the Merchant Taylors School, Sandy Lodge Lane, Moor Park, Hertfordshire, in order to fulfil planning conditions for the development of the site. The excavation of 20 pits for the placement of foundation pads for the construction of a two storey biology classroom extension and an external lift revealed only made ground deposits and a large modern concrete soakaway with a related drainpipe. The made ground contained a great deal of red brick and other modern debris, which was probably deposited during the construction of the extant building, and subsequent landscaping, in the early 20th century. This may have disturbed or destroyed any potential archaeological remains, though it is also possible that the footprint of the development was either situated outside of any settlement activity, or it was located between widely dispersed features within the local landscape.

1 Introduction

1.1 In April 2021 KDK Archaeology Ltd undertook a programme of Observation and Recording at Merchant Taylors School, Sandy Lodge Lane, Moor Park, Hertfordshire. The project was commissioned by John Mulligan, and was carried at the request of the Hertfordshire Historic Environment Team (HHET), on behalf of the Local Planning Authority (LPA), Three Rivers District council. The relevant planning application reference is 20/0516/FUL.

1.2 *Planning Background*

This project has been required under the terms of National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Condition 3 of the planning permission for the development of the site.

1.3 *The Site*

Location

Merchant Taylors School is situated within the unparished settlement of Moor Park which is part of the administrative district of Three Rivers Borough Council. The site is centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) TQ 0931 9406 (Fig. 1).

Description

The school is situated on 283 acres (115ha) of land to the north of Moor Park. It is bounded to the north and east by the River Colne and Hampermill Lake with residential housing and the Sandy Lodge Golf Course to the south. The Metropolitan Tube line is located to the west of the school grounds (Fig. 2).

Geology & Topography

The geology of the site consists of a superficial deposit of Shepperton Gravel Member sand and gravels. These deposits were formed up to 2 million years ago in the Quaternary Period and are indicative of an environment previously dominated by rivers. The bedrock comprises Seaford Chalk Formation (<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>).

Development

This consists of the construction of a two storey Biology classroom extension and provision of external lift to be installed (Fig. 3).



Figure 1: General location (scale 1:25,000)

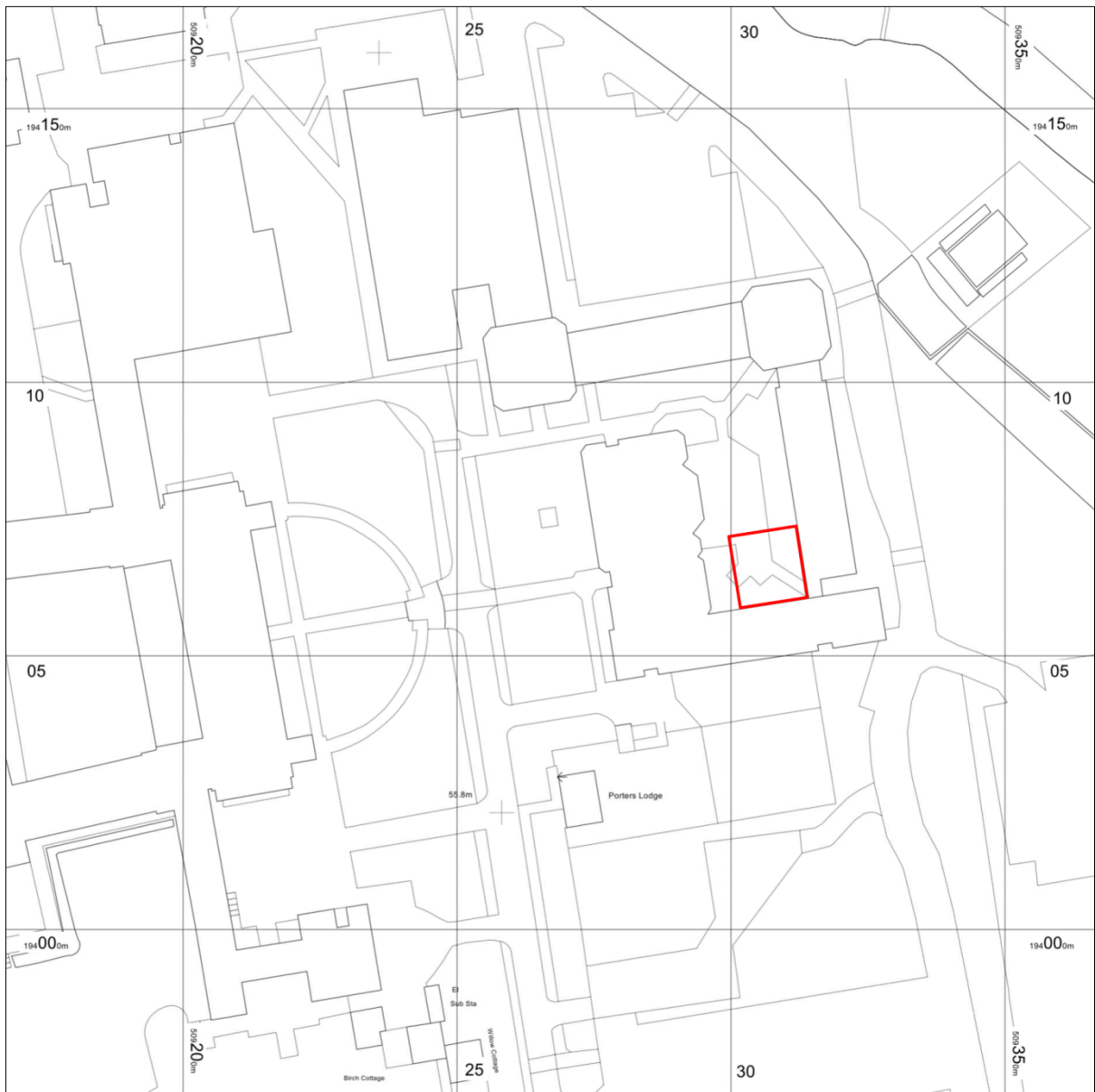


Figure 2: Site location (scale 1:1,250)

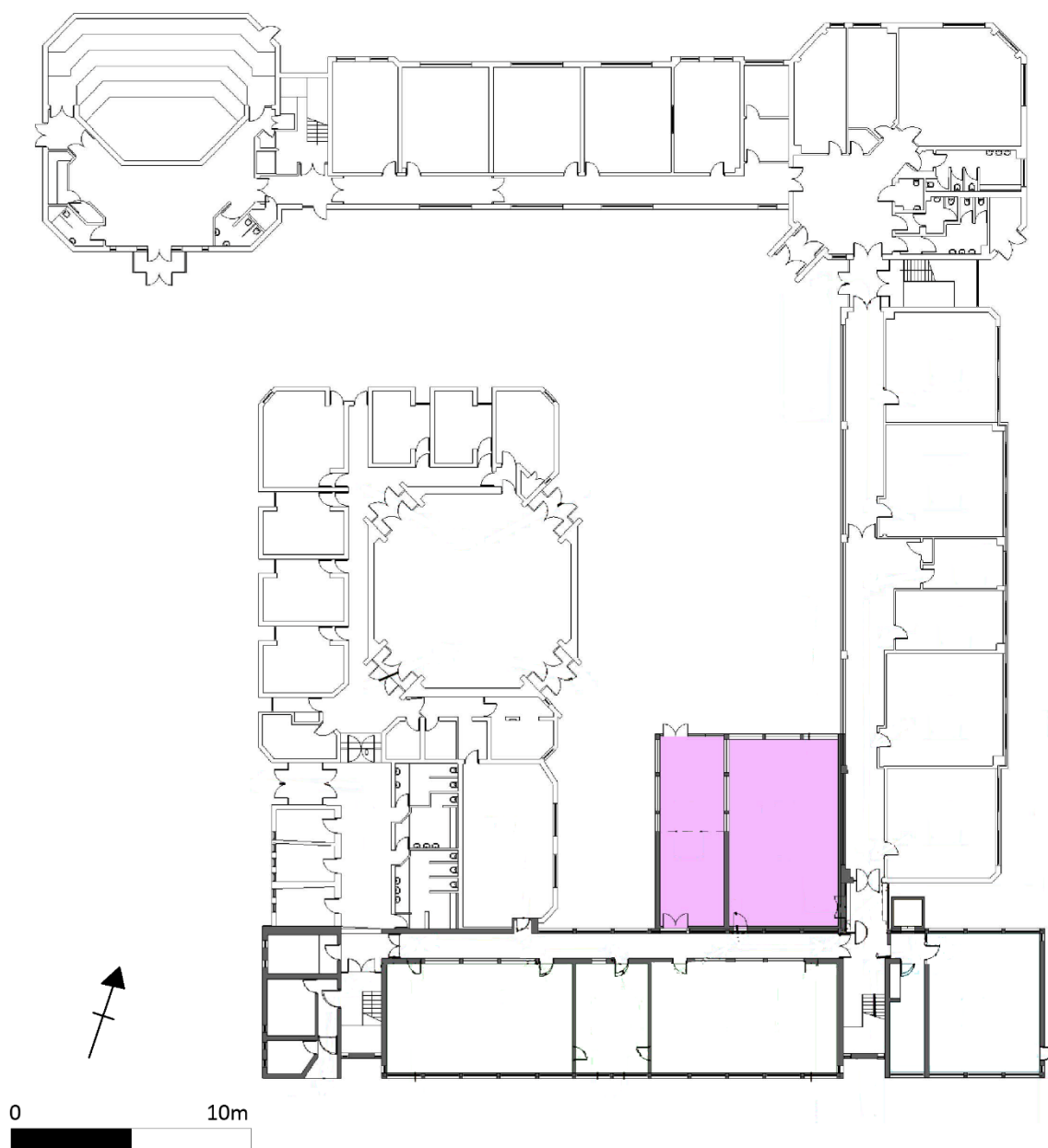


Figure 3: Development plan (scale as shown)



2 Aims & Methods

2.1 Aims

The aims of the project were:

- To establish the date, nature and extent of activity or occupation within the development area
- To establish the relationship of any remains found to the surrounding contemporary landscape
- To recover palaeo-environmental remains to determine local environmental conditions.

2.2 Methods

The methods used were as follows:

- The continuous archaeological monitoring of all groundworks related to the development, including foundation trenches, service trenches, ground reduction, landscaping and any other ground impact.

2.3 Standards

The work conformed to the following requirements:

- The relevant sections of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard & Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief* (CIfA 2020)
- The Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct* (CIfA 2019)
- Current English Heritage guidelines (HE 2015, EH 2008)
- The Association of Local Government Archaeological Officers East of England Region *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England* (ALGAO 2003)
- Data Protection Act 2018



3 Archaeological & Historical Background

3.1 Moor Park is a private residential estate within the Three Rivers District of Hertfordshire. Situated 25km northwest of London, Moor Park is roughly 6 square miles in size has been a residential community since the early 20th century. Although greatly developed at this time, human activity has been recorded in the area continually from the Upper Palaeolithic period.

Much of the estate lies within a conservation area; however, Merchant Taylors School is situated just beyond the conservation boundary to the north.

This section has been compiled with information from the Hertfordshire Historic Environment Records (HER Ref:173/21), Historic England and other reliable internet sources, and KDKs own library (Watson 2020; Shlasko 2016).

3.2 *Prehistoric* (before 600BC)

The prehistoric landscape around Moor park is widespread with evidence for human occupation being considered as far back as the Upper Palaeolithic period (c50,000-12,000 years ago). A flint knapping site from this period was discovered at Sandy Lodge Golf Club (HER 9686). This activity appears to have continued into the Mesolithic period to the south of the club where struck and burnt flints were uncovered (HER 842, HER 4942). In addition to worked flint, a single piece of Mesolithic pottery was also discovered at the Golf Club (HER 4943).

Flint tools appear in abundance throughout the surrounding landscape. Mesolithic (7000-4500 BC) and Neolithic (4500-2500 BC) worked flints have been discovered in a number of places such as South Approach (HER 4963), Askew Road (her 4939, HER 13451), Lodge farm (845) and Sandy Lodge Lane (HER 4943, HER 4342, HER 4936). Two Mesolithic axes have also been discovered: one during excavations at Bathend Clump (HER 967) and the other at the Sandy Lodge Golf Course (HER 4940). Bone tools and flints have also been recovered adjacent to the river Colne (HER 202).

A Neolithic enclosure was excavated by the Merchant Taylors School Archaeological Society at Bathend Clump in the late 1950s which produced a large quantity of flint and sherds of possible Neolithic pottery (HER 840). Bronze Age material was also discovered during this excavation with later Bronze Age activity noted to the north of the Sandy Lodge Golf Club (HER 633). The finds from this site included a hearth, sixty sherds of pottery, two loom weights and a section of a clay 'grilling plate'. A potsherd of a cinerary urn was discovered c.200m to the south. Further areas of activity have been identified including an undated prehistoric ditch feature (HER 6027).

3.3 *Iron Age* (600BC - AD43)

Iron Age activity within the area is sparse being limited to a small number of potsherds found on the Sandy Lodge Golf Course (HER 4944) and near Sandy Lodge station approximately 500m to the southwest of the development site (HER 1546).

3.4 *Roman* (AD43 - c.450)

Although evidence for activity in the Iron Age is scant within Moor Park, activity seemed to have flourished in the Roman period. A Roman villa (HER 82; Scheduled Monuments Listing 1005246) was discovered west of the development area at Moor Park Golf course. Believed to have been built c.130AD, the initial occupation of this building was relatively short lived as it was deserted around the turn of the 3rd century AD. The villa was reoccupied sometime in the 4th century where the building was modernised to include a hypocaust. A bronze early



Christian finger ring engraved with two doves and a palm leaf were found within the hypocaust itself (Henig 1987: 184). Further Roman buildings have been documented to the east of the estate at the eastern corner of Sandy Lodge Golf Course during excavations in the 1960s. The earliest of these two buildings was dated to the 1st and 2nd century AD (her 4918) and the later was believed to have been constructed in the 4th century BC (HER 4919).

An abundance of Roman material including pottery, amphora, brick and tiles were documented during the construction of Sandy Lodge Golf course at the beginning of the 20th century (HER 851). Further artefacts including pottery, mortaria, a jug, white ware, a Samian base and fine and coarse black wear were recovered during the construction of a bunker in 1930. Pottery has also been discovered near the club house (HER 849, 4855), to the south of Sandy Lodge Lane (HER 4945), near Merchant Taylors School (HER 847) and at other sites within the estate (HER 1543, HER 4572, HER 4958 and HER 4959). Other artefacts include a coin of Faustina discovered in 1911 (HER 850) and Constantinian coins (HER 963, 4934), tile (HER 959) and glass.

3.5 **Saxon** (c.450 - 1066)

Little is known about local activity during the Saxon period. Although Moor Park is not mentioned in the Domesday Survey, the area it is documented in the late 8th century as being part of Offa's grant of the parish of Rickmansworth to St Albans Abbey (trmt.org.uk) of grass tempered pottery found during the 1960s on the Sandy Lodge Golf Course (HER 4941).

3.6 **Medieval** (1066 - 1500)

The Manor of Moor (or la More) first appears in the documentary records in the 12th century; however, it is possible that a manor existed on the site as early as the Saxon period. The manor itself is situated 1.3km to the west of the development site (HER 10909, HER 829). In the 1950s the manor was partially excavated revealing a 13th century double emoted enclosure (HER 826), a kitchen building dating from c. 1300 -1350, and many well preserved wooden beams in the waterlogged soil. A living area associated with these features has not been identified. The earthworks of the 12th century manor is now a Scheduled Monument (List Entry 1015595; Historic England.gov.uk).

3.7 **Post-medieval** (1500 - 1900)

During the 1520s the Manor of the Moor came into the possession of Cardinal Wolsey who invested heavily in both the house and gardens. Following Wolsey's downfall, the manor was seized by Henry VIII to would later grant the house and lands to Catherine of Aragon as part of their divorce agreement. Over the subsequent years, the manor house was neglected and by the end of the 16th century was considered to be in ruin. Being deemed not worth restoring, the building was finally demolished in 1661 (*ibid*). The manor house was quickly replaced by Moor house which was constructed between 1661-3 close to the site of the original manor (HER 30621). This in time would become Moor Farmhouse (HER 10920) and it too would eventually be demolished in the 1820s. The Grade II listed park and garden belonging to Moor Park (HER 4134) still remains although greatly altered from its original grandeur and much of the park has been converted into golf courses. The gardens once featured an ornamental lake, temple and an Italian formal garden dating from the 1830s. In the 18th century a grand country mansion was constructed on land which once formed part of the park (HER 4133).

Other features and items of archaeological significance include Sandy Lodge farm (HER 16638), although none of the original 19th century remains on the site, two gravel pits (Her 16259 and 10704) off Wolsey Road and pottery sherds.



3.8 **Modern** (1900 - present)

The estate of Moor Park Manor was disbanded in the early 20th century after the death of the mansions last inhabitant. A large portion of the grounds became a golf club and residential homes were erected at Temple Gardens on the site of the ornamental lake and the Temple of the Winds (HER 16303). More residential buildings would follow over time as well as the Merchant Taylors' School, which is a Grade II listed building constructed in the neo-Georgian/Swedish Modern style.

3.9 **Known History of the Site**

The Merchant Taylors' Company, originally known as the Fraternity of St John the Baptist, were one of the 'Great Twelve' livery companies in the city of London. The company received their first royal charter in 1327, followed by their charter of incorporation in 1408. It wasn't until 1503, when they were granted a charter of Henry VII that the company became known as the Merchant Taylors. Through charitable and cooperate means, the Company acquired extensive landed estates and built a number of alms houses. In 1561, the company established the Merchant Taylors School for boys and the Company continues to govern the school to this day (lma.gov.uk).

Originally located at Suffolk Lane, London, the school was moved to Charterhouse Square in 1875 before it was again relocated outside of central London to its current position at Sandy Lodge in 1933 (britannica.com). Throughout its long history, the Merchant Taylors School has been host to many notable individuals such as poet Edmond Spencer and play write Thomas Kyd in the 16th century, through to more recent artist such as actor Boris Karloff and comedian Michael McIntyre (mtsn.org.uk).



4 Results

4.1 Introduction

In April 2021 KDK Archaeology Ltd undertook a programme of Observation and Recording at Merchant Taylors School, Sandy Lodge Lane, Moor Park, Hertfordshire. The archaeological watching brief comprised the monitoring of the excavation of 20 pits for the placement of foundation pads, in order to construct a two-storey biology classroom extension and an external lift. The approved WSI (Dodd 2021) stated that 25 pits were to be excavated, but the number was reduced to 20 before groundworks began. Prior to the excavation of the pits, an existing patio was removed leaving a footprint reduced by approximately 0.1m. The pits, which were excavated utilising a 3-tonne tracked digging machine fitted with a 0.4m toothless bucket, were then excavated from this level. They varied greatly in size, from 0.65 x 0.65m to 2.6 x 2.6m and in depth from 0.6m to 1.8m; the larger pads were located at the southern end of the development. A short service run on the north side of the footprint was not monitored following consultation with the CAO, as no archaeological features had been found in the pads and the service trench was only 15cm deep. A complete list of the pit dimensions is shown in Table 1 and a plan of the excavations is shown in Figure 4.

Pad	Dimensions (m)			Orientation	Description
	W	L	D		
Pad 1	1.2	1.7	0.9	E-W	
Pad 2	0.7	1.2	0.7	E-W	Partly contained concrete footing of existing building
Pad 3	0.7	1.1	0.7	E-W	
Pad 4	0.7	1.2	0.7	E-W	
Pad 5	1.2	1.2	0.85	E-W	
Pad 6	1.2	1.9	1.2	E-W	
Pad 7	2.6	2.6	1.8	E-W	
Pad 8	0.65	0.9	0.8	N-S	Drainpipe in NE corner
Pad 9	0.75	0.9	0.85	N-S	
Pad 10	1.2	1.2	0.6	E-W	
Pad 11	1.2	1.9	1.2	E-W	
Pad 12	2	2	1.6	E-W	Contained a clay lens
Pad 13	0.8	1	0.7	E-W	
Pad 14	0.65	0.65	-	E-W	Superseded by concrete soakaway chamber. 3m deep and at least 2m in diameter
Pad 15	1.2	1.3	0.7	N-S	
Pad 16	0.9	1.5	1.2	E-W	
Pad 17	1.3	1.7	1.7	E-W	
Pad 18	0.8	1	0.5	N-S	
Pad 19	0.7	1.2	0.8	E-W	
Pad 20	1.1	1.1	0.8	N-S	

Table 1: Dimensions of excavations



4.2 *Description*

The stratigraphy revealed across the excavated area was uniform and comprised (Figs. 5; Plates 1-21):

- Made-ground (001): Mixed brownish grey topsoil with gravel and modern debris. This layer was 0.3m in depth
- Natural (002): Brownish orange, gravel and clayey sand with some clay lenses.

Various modern features and detritus were revealed in some of the pits, including part of a concrete footing in Pit 2 (Plate 3), a drainpipe in the northeast corner of Pit 8 (Plate 9) and a 3m deep concrete soakaway chamber, c.2m in diameter in the location of Pit 14 (Plate 15). In addition, the remains of red brick debris could be seen in Pit 19 (Plate 20), possibly leftover building materials from the construction of the school buildings. On completion of the fieldwork, no significant archaeological features, finds, or deposits were revealed within any of the pits.

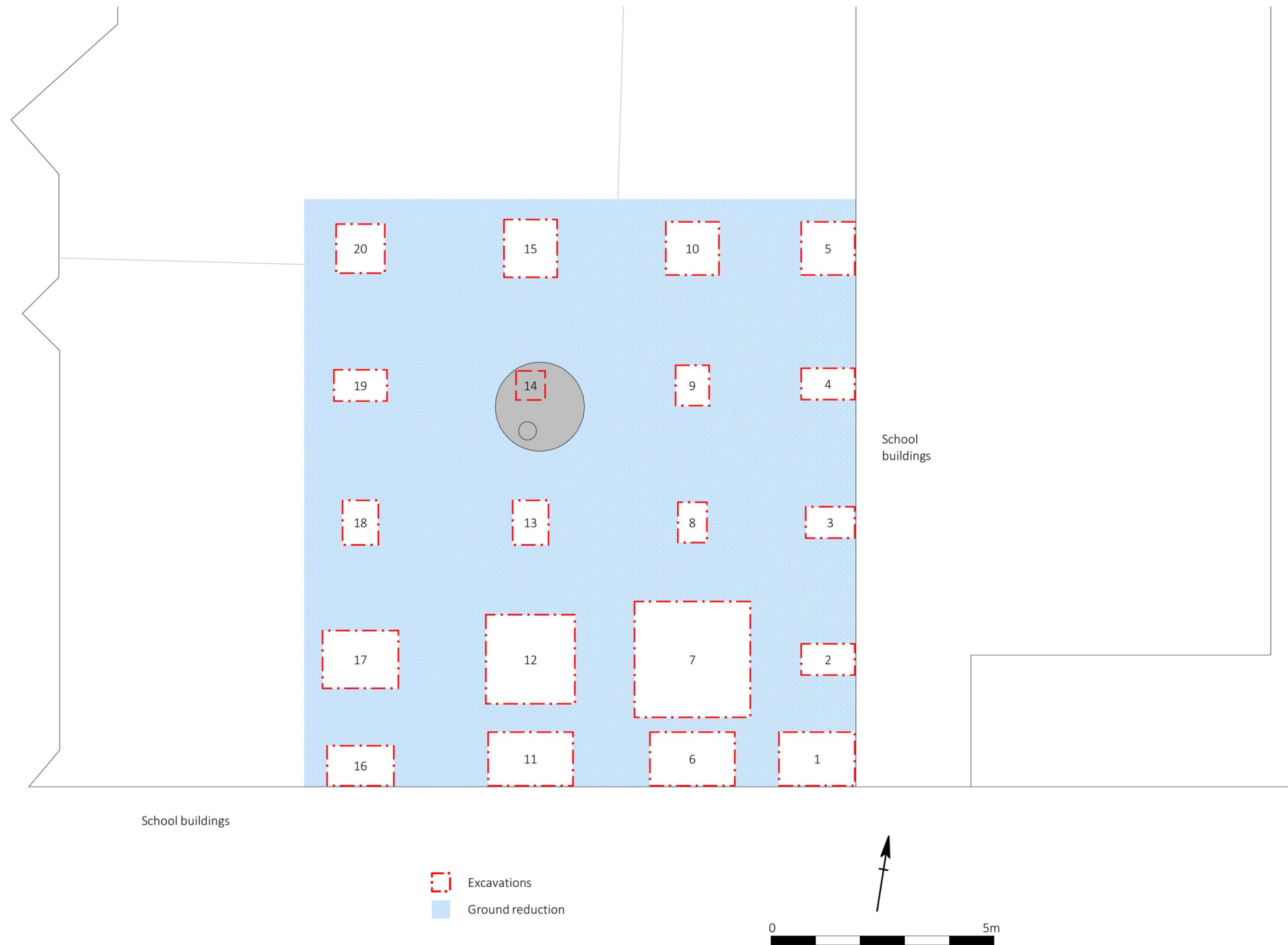


Figure 4: Excavation plan (scale 1:100)

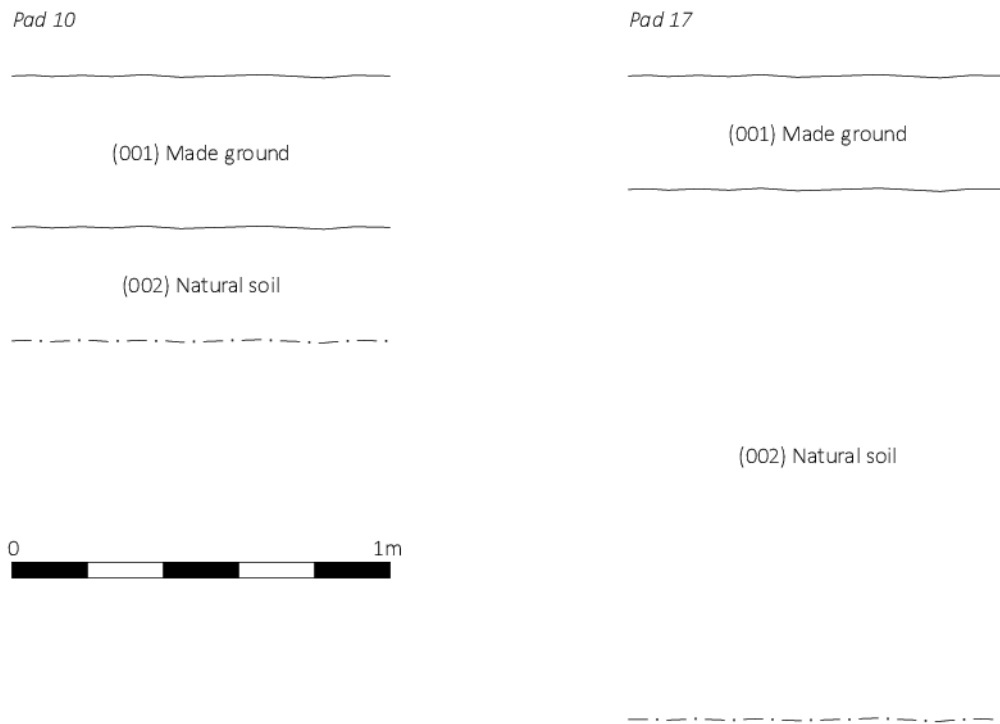


Figure 5: Site stratigraphy (scale 1:20)



Plate 1: Development footprint, general view, looking southeast



Plate 2: Pad 1, looking east



Plate 3: Pad 2, looking north



Plate 4: Pad 3, looking northeast



Plate 5: Pad 4, looking south



Plate 6: Pad 5, looking south



Plate 7: Pad 6, looking east



Plate 8: Pad 7, looking east



Plate 9: Pad 8, looking east



Plate 10: Pad 9, looking east



Plate 11: Pad 10, looking north



Plate 12: Pad 11, looking west



Plate 13: Pad 12, looking west



Plate 14: Pad 13, looking west



Plate 15: Concrete chamber in place of pad 14, looking west



Plate 16: Pad 15, looking north west



Plate 17: Pad 16, looking west



Plate 18: Pad 17, looking east



Plate 19: Pad 18, looking east



Plate 20: Pad 19, looking west



Plate 21: Pad 20, looking north



5 Conclusion

The excavation of 20 pits for the placement of concrete pads as footings for a two storey biology classroom extension at Merchant Taylors School, Sandy Lodge Lane, Moor Park did not reveal any significant archaeological features, deposits or artefacts. Despite the proximity of archaeological remains in the general area, only a modern soakaway and layer of made ground containing modern debris were revealed within the excavated pads. Consequently, it appears that the natural soil profile (top- and sub-soil) was probably truncated during preparation of the area for the construction of the extant buildings, and subsequent landscaping, in the 20th century. This may have disturbed or destroyed any potential archaeological remains. It is also possible that the footprint of the development was either situated outside of any settlement activity, or it was located between widely dispersed features within the local landscape.



6 Acknowledgements

KDK Archaeology is grateful to John Mulligan for commissioning this report on behalf of Task Space. Thanks are also due to the Hertfordshire Historic Environment Team for providing the historic environment records and for monitoring the project.

The fieldwork was carried out by Chris Martin-Taylor BSc. The report was written by Chris Martin-Taylor BSc & Derek Watson PhD, and edited by Karin Kaye MA MCIfA



7 Archive

7.1 The project archive will comprise:

1. Written Scheme of Investigation
2. Initial report
3. Monitoring sheets
4. Site drawings
5. Client's site plans
6. List of photographs

7.2 The archive will be deposited with The Three Rivers Museum (Accession number: TRMT/02/27/72 2021).



8 References

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Merchant Taylors School (MTSN) <https://www.mtsn.org.uk/about-us/old-boys> [accessed 11.02.2021]

Three Rivers Museum Trust (TRMT) <http://trmt.org.uk/research-edu/historic-buildings/moor-park/> [accessed 11.02.2021]



Appendix 1: Photograph List

SITE NO/CODE: 579/MTS		Site Name: Merchant Taylor School, Moor Park, Hertfordshire
Shot	View	Description
1	SE	Overall reduced footprint
2	S	Pad 1
3	E	Pad 1
4	N	Pad 2
5	N	Pad 3
6	S	Pad 3
7	S	Pad 4
8	S	Pad 5
9	E	Pad 6
10	E	Pad 7
11	E	Pad 8
12	E	Pad 9
13	W	Pad 11
14	E	Pad 12
15	E	Pad 12 stratigraphy
16	W	Pad 16
17	E	Pad 17
18	S	Pad 17 stratigraphy
19	W	Pad 13
20	W	Pad 14 concrete chamber
21	W	Pad 14 concrete chamber
22	E	Pad 18
23	W	Pad 19
24	N	Pad 20
25	N	VOID
26	N	Pad 15
27	W	Pad 15 stratigraphy



Appendix 2: OASIS and Site Data

PROJECT DETAILS			
Project Name & Address	Merchant Taylor School, Moor Park, Hertfordshire	Project Site Code	579/MTS
OASIS reference	Kdkarcha1-415186	Event/Accession no	TRMT/02/27/72 2021
OS reference	TQ 0931 9406	Study area size	163.68m ²
Project Type	Archaeological Observation, Investigation & Recording	Height (mAOD)	40m
Short Description	In April 2021 KDK Archaeology Ltd undertook a programme of Observation and Recording at the Merchant Taylors School, Sandy Lodge Lane, Moor Park, Hertfordshire, in order to fulfil planning conditions for the development of the site. The excavation of 20 pits for the placement of foundation pads for the construction of a two storey biology classroom extension and an external lift revealed only made ground deposits and a large modern concrete soakaway with a related drainpipe. The made ground contained a great deal of red brick and other modern debris, which was probably deposited during the construction of the extant building, and subsequent landscaping, in the early 20th century. This may have disturbed or destroyed any potential archaeological remains, though it is also possible that the footprint of the development was either situated outside of any settlement activity, or it was located between widely dispersed features within the local landscape.		
Previous work	None	Site status	None
Planning proposal	Construction of two storey Biology classroom extension and provision of external lift	Current land use	School
Local Planning Authority	Three Rivers District Council	Planning application ref.	20/0516/FUL
Monument type	None	Monument period	None
Significant finds	None	Future work	Unknown
PROJECT CREATORS			
Organisation	KDK Archaeology Ltd		
Project Brief originator	-	Project Design originator	KDK Archaeology Ltd
Project Manager	Chris Martin-Taylor BSc	Director/Supervisor	Karin Kaye MA MCIfA
Sponsor/funding body	Task Space, Infinity House, Unit 11, Commerce Way, Leighton Buzzard		
PROJECT DATE			
Start date	12.04.2021	End date	14.04.2021
PROJECT ARCHIVES			
	Location	Content (e.g. pottery, animal bone, files/sheets)	
Physical	Three Rivers Museum/Archaeological Data Service (ADS)	None	
Paper		WSI, report	
Digital		Report, digital photographs, fieldwork sheets	
BIBLIOGRAPHY (Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report)			
Title	Archaeological Observation and Recording Report: Merchant Taylors School, Sandy Lodge Lane, Moor Park, Hertfordshire		
Serial title & volume	KDK Archaeology 579/MTS/2.1		
Author(s)	Chris Martin-Taylor BSc & Derek Watson PhD		
Page no's	27	Date	06.05.2021



Appendix 3: Hertfordshire Historic Environment Record Sheet

Site name and address: Merchant Taylor School, Moor Park	
County: Hertfordshire	District: Three Rivers District Council
Village/Town: Moor Park	Parish: Rickmansworth
Planning application reference: 20/0516/FUL	
Client's name, address, & tel. no: John Mulligan, Task Space, Infinity House, Unit 11, Commerce Way, Leighton Buzzard	
Nature of application: Construction of a two storey Biology classroom extension and provision of external lift.	
Present land use: School	
Size of application area: 163.68m ²	Size of area investigated: 163.68m ²
NGR (to 8 figures): TQ 0931 9406	Site code: 579/MTS
Site director: Karin Kaye MA MCIFA	Organization: KDK Archaeology Ltd
Type of work: Archaeological Observation, Investigation & Recording	
Date of Work: Start: 12.04.2021	Finish: 14.04.2021
Curating museum: The Three Rivers Museum	
Related HER no's: N/A	Periods represented: None
Relevant previous summaries/reports: N/A	
Summary of fieldwork results: In April 2021 KDK Archaeology Ltd undertook a programme of Observation and Recording at the Merchant Taylors School, Sandy Lodge Lane, Moor Park, Hertfordshire, in order to fulfil planning conditions for the development of the site. The excavation of 20 pits for the placement of foundation pads for the construction of a two storey biology classroom extension and an external lift revealed only made ground deposits and a large modern concrete soakaway with a related drainpipe. The made ground contained a great deal of red brick and other modern debris, which was probably deposited during the construction of the extant building, and subsequent landscaping, in the early 20th century. This may have disturbed or destroyed any potential archaeological remains, though it is also possible that the footprint of the development was either situated outside of any settlement activity, or it was located between widely dispersed features within the local landscape.	
Author: Chris Martin-Taylor BSc & Derek Watson PhD	Date: 06.05.2021