



**Report on Archaeological Works at
29 Bedhampton Road, Havant, Hampshire**

May 2013

NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

This document sets out the results from archaeological works carried out by West Sussex Archaeology Ltd. during development works, on behalf of the owner, at the former Bedhampton Arts Centre, 29 Bedhampton Road, Havant, Hampshire. The site lies immediately adjacent to the presumed course of a Roman road. No archaeological remains were revealed by these works, the only features present being associated with the use of the existing 19th century school building.

BACKGROUND

Topographical Background

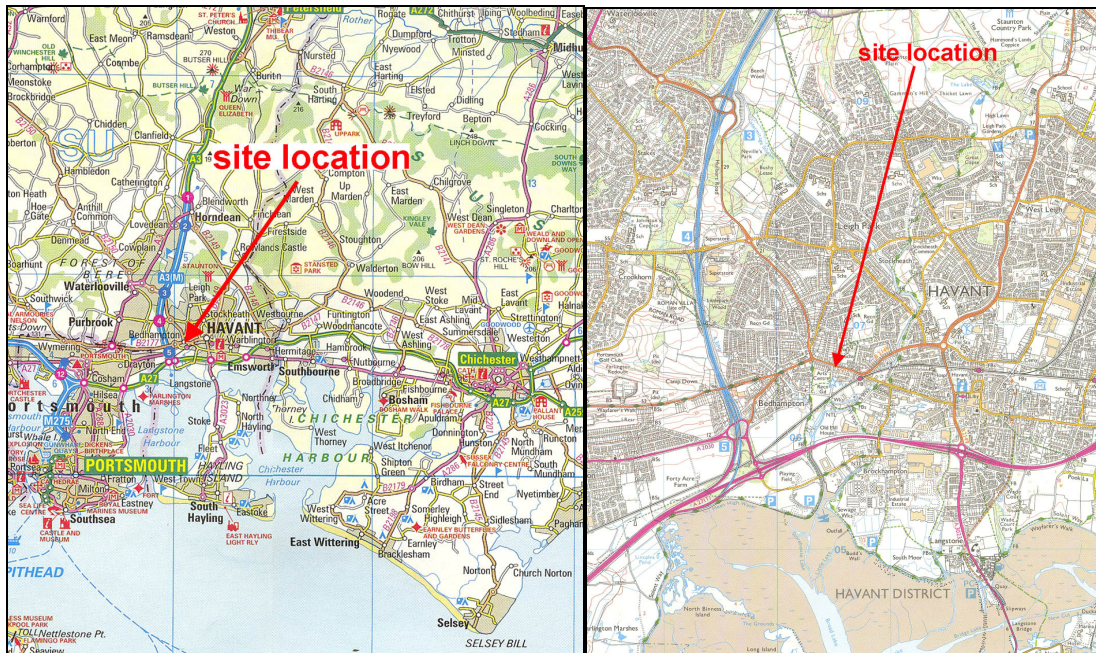


Figure 1 Site location. © Crown copyright. All rights reserved. License number: AL100036068

1. 29 Bedhampton Road lies in the angle between King's Croft Lane and Bedhampton Road (B2177) on the west side of what is now part of the town of Havant in Hampshire (see Fig. 1). The site lies at c. 11.5m aOD and is centred at OS grid reference SU 7050 0661. The underlying geology of the site is the clay, silt, sand and gravel of the Lambeth Group.

Planning Background

1. The owner of 29 Bedhampton Road obtained planning permission (APP/12/01105) from Havant Borough Council for the conversion of the existing building to form four dwellings, with associated internal and external works with part demolition and landscaping and car parking with new access. Condition 2 of that planning permission states that: "No development which leads to works below existing ground or floor levels shall take place until the applicant has secured the implementation of an archaeological monitoring and recording action (watching brief) in accordance with a specification that has been submitted to and approved by the Planning Authority."
2. West Sussex Archaeology Ltd. (WSA) was appointed by the owner of 29 Bedhampton Road to carry out the archaeological works required to meet this condition. A Written Scheme of Investigation, drawn up by WSA, set out the methodology used in order to fulfil the terms of the condition (WSA 2013).

3. This report details the results of that archaeological work, which was carried out on 21st May 2013 by George Anelay of West Sussex Archaeology Ltd. The project archive, which consists solely of paperwork, will be deposited with Hampshire County Council's Museum Service.

Historical Background

1. Bedhampton Road is presumed to follow the line of the Roman road that runs between Chichester and Clausentum (Bitterne). The historic village of Bedhampton lay to the south of the road, grouped around the 12th century church, and c.300m to the south-west of the development site. Historic mapping indicates that the site itself, in the late 18th century and for much of the 19th century, formed part of a field. In 1868 the current building was erected to serve as a school.

RESULTS

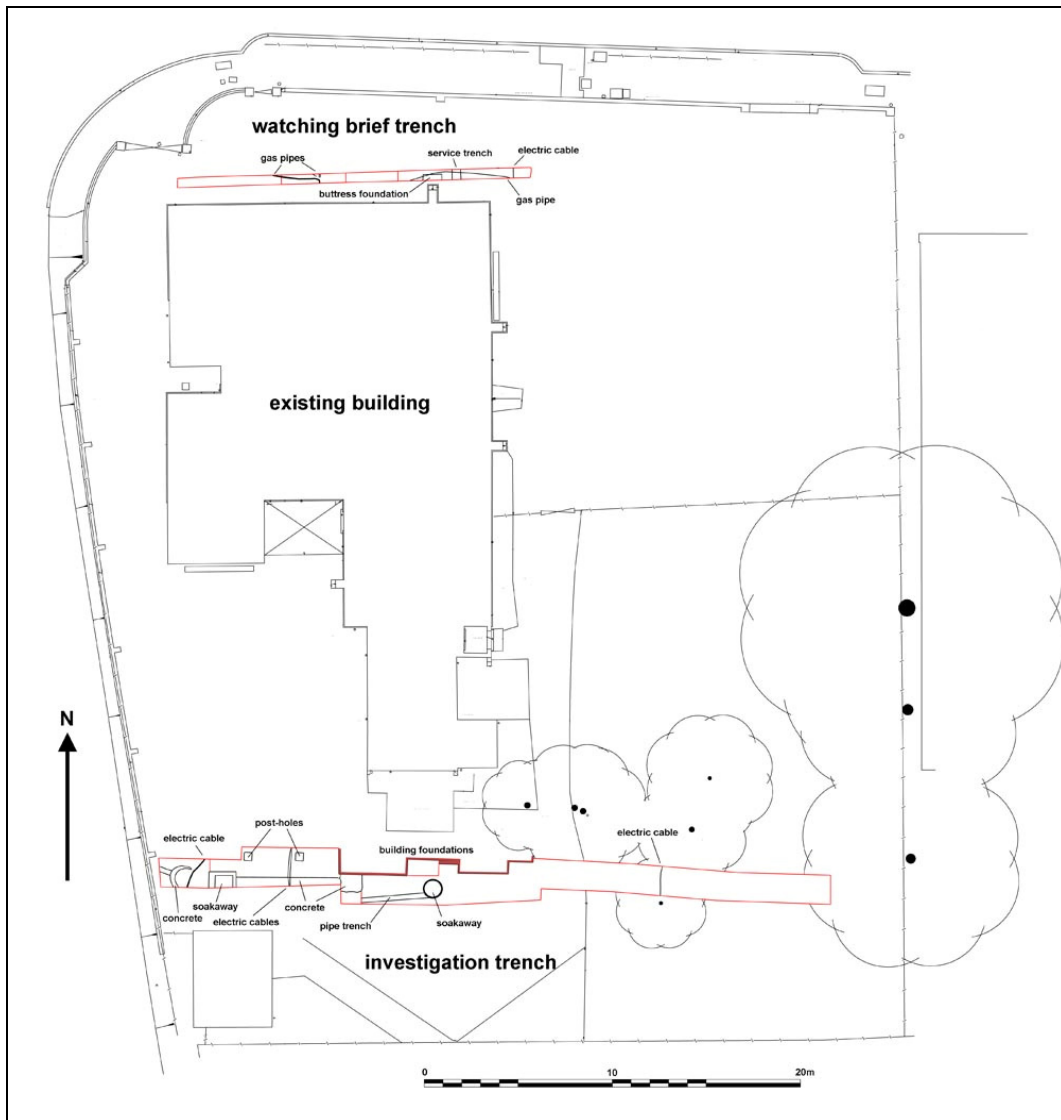


Figure 2 Site plan indicating position of trenches in relation to the existing school building.

Watching Brief Trench

1. In the northern part of the site, due to the limited nature of the works to be undertaken and the disturbance already caused by the erection of the 19th century school, archaeological works were limited to a watching brief carried out during the excavation of the northern arm of the foul water service trench with the purpose of investigating any potential roadside settlement (see Figs.2 & 4).
2. The service trench ran approximately parallel to the north wall of the old school at a distance of c.1m. At its eastern end it overshot the corner of the building by c2.5m, while at the western end it stopped just short of the corner due to the presence of a live water main.



Figure 3 The watching brief trench looking east along its length. The scale is 2m.

3. No archaeological deposits were encountered in the trench. Below the modern tarmac surface and its associated make-up layer, was a layer of mid brown clay silt containing frequent chalk flecks, the base of which lay 0.4m below the current ground level. This silt layer would appear to be the old ploughsoil of the field within which the school was built. The chalk flecks are probably a result of the agricultural practice of spreading chalk on the fields to improve soil fertility.
4. Beneath this ploughsoil was the undisturbed geology composed of yellow, orange and grey clays with patches of flint gravel. Within the trench were a number of service pipes and cables, including one probable service trench backfilled with soil and brick rubble the base of which was not reached (see Fig.4). The presence of all these modern services meant that, in those areas of the trench where they existed, the full depth of 1m was not reached, however excavation was always taken to surface of the undisturbed geology to check for any surviving archaeological features.

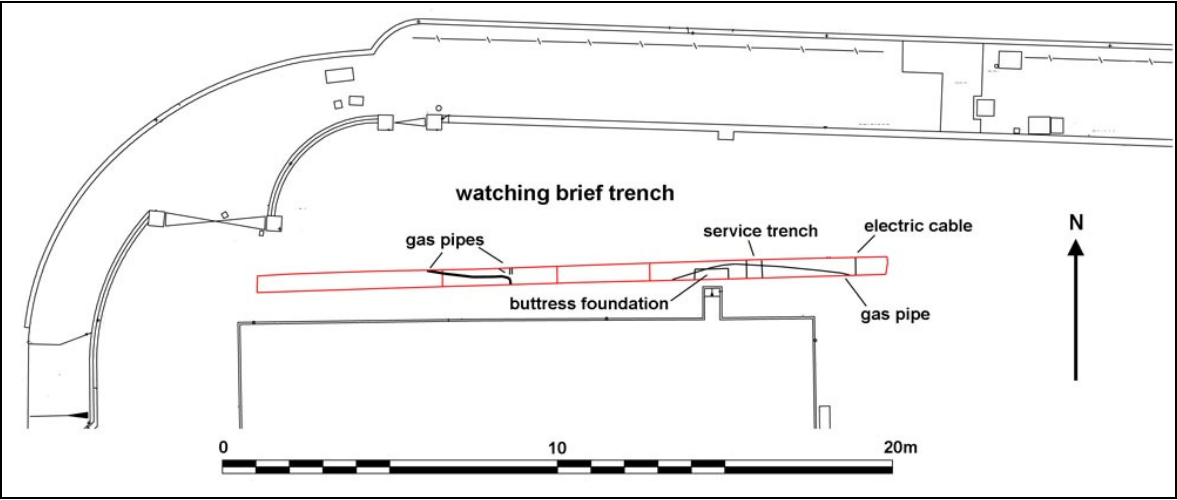


Figure 4 Plan of the watching brief trench

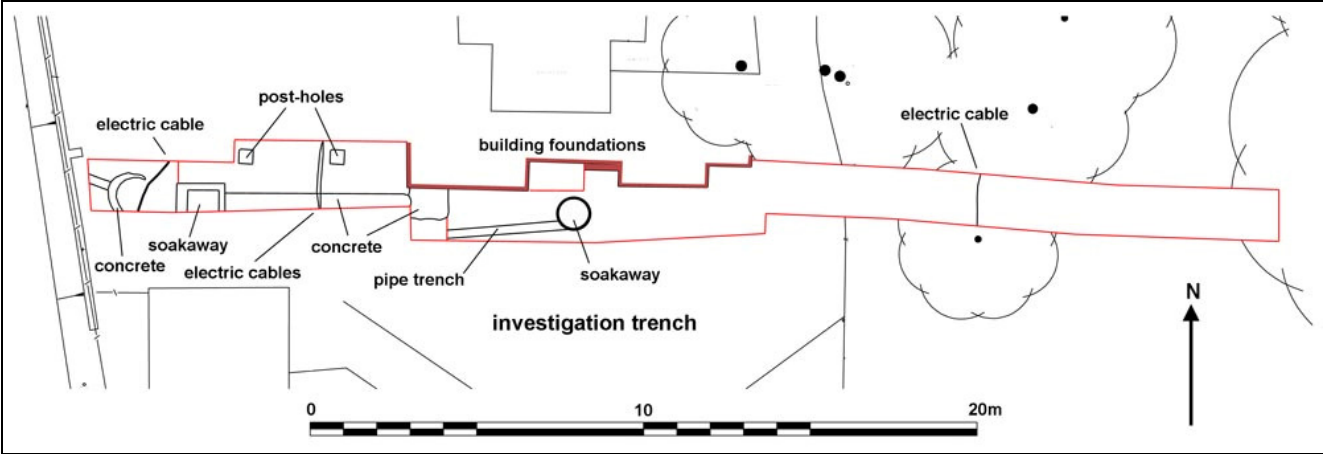


Figure 5 Plan of the investigation trench

Investigation Trench

1. In the southern part of the site, where the impact of the development due to the re-grading of the ground surface for a car park was to be greater, a single archaeological investigation trench was excavated to ascertain whether any archaeological remains are likely to exist in area to be affected.
2. The trench was intended to be 40m long, 1.5m wide and in a straight line from east to west. In the event, the presence of a tree protection zone at the eastern end of the trench led to its being shortened by c.4m, and the discovery of numerous modern brick and concrete structures led to it changing alignment in several places (see Figs. 2 & 5).



Figure 6 The investigation trench; the image to the left is taken from its west end, looking east; the image to the right is taken from its east end looking west. The scale is 2m.

3. No archaeological deposits were encountered in the trench. Below the modern tarmac and make-up layer in the western part of the trench, and the modern grass and topsoil in the eastern part, was the same layer of historic ploughsoil found in the watching brief trench above the undisturbed geology. Here it extended to a depth of 0.55m below current ground level as a result of the deeper layer of modern material above, but with the same overall thickness of c.0.25m. As in the watching brief trench there were a number of service pipes and cables crossing or running along the investigation trench (see Fig.5).

4. In the north face of the trench, towards its centre, a brick wall foundation was revealed. An examination of historic mapping reveals that this formed a part of the original school building demolished in the second half of the 20th century. The lowest two courses of the foundations have been built two brick's width wider than the wall above and sat within the surface of the clay/gravel geology.



Figure 7 The brick foundations, looking north-west.

5. Immediately to the south of these foundations, and positioned approximately centrally to them, was a c.1m diameter circular brick-lined soakaway. Feeding into it from the west were two ceramic pipes, while other pipes entered from other directions at a slightly higher level and were removed during the excavation of the trench. It is probable, based upon its position and appearance, that this soakaway formed part of the original drainage system for the school.



Figure 8 The brick soakaway, looking north. The scale is 2m.

6. This circular soakway had clearly been replaced with a more modern drainage system at a later date, the remains of which were visible to the west of the soakaway in the form of pipes set in concrete and a square brick soakaway or drain surround (see Fig.5). To the north of these two 0.45m square post-holes were revealed, both filled with soil containing modern brick fragments. It is not clear what the purpose of these was, but they are probably linked to the use of the school.

CONCLUSION

1. No evidence was found during these excavations for any Roman activity on the site. It would therefore appear that, for this stretch of the roadside at least, there was no associated settlement. It is of course instead quite possible that the agricultural use of the land seen on 18th and 19th century mapping extended back in time into the medieval and earlier periods.
2. The only features revealed in the trenches subsequent to the historic ploughsoil relate to the school building constructed in 1868. Much of these were services in one form or another, with the exception of the south wall foundation of the school, which had been demolished and tarmaced over in the second half of the 20th century.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

West Sussex Archaeology. 2013. *Written Specification for Archaeological Works at 29 Bedhampton Road, Havant, Hampshire*. Unpublished.