



HPS

Professional Archaeological Services

The Former Blackheath Bluecoat School, Old Dover Road, London, SE3 8SY

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Client: HSP Consulting

Project: Desk-Based Assessment



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Non-Technical Summary

In August 2017, Heritage Planning Services Ltd was commissioned by HSP Consulting (the agent) to prepare an archaeological desk-based assessment (DBA) for land at the former Blackheath Bluecoat School, Old Dover Road, London, SE3 8SY (the Study Area). Planning permission is being sought for the demolition of the present school buildings and the construction of a new academy on the site.

The Study Area includes the grounds and buildings of the former Blackheath Bluecoat School (closed 2014). The Bluecoat school was founded 1700, in Greenwich, as a charity for girls, while the former Blackheath and Kidbrook school was founded on a site adjacent to the present, in 1854, as the St John's National School. The latter moved to the present site when a purpose-built building was opened in 1911. The majority of this original building is preserved on site, though there have been extensive building additions in the 1960s and 1970s; the two schools merged in 1959.

The Study Area stands on the north side of the Old Dover Road, which follows the line of Watling Street, the Roman Road from Dover to London and the North West. As such there is the potential for the presence of buried archaeological remains, particularly of the Roman period, to be preserved within the Study Area.

1. Introduction

Background

- 1.1. In August 2017, Heritage Planning Services Ltd was commissioned by HSP Consulting (the agent) to prepare an archaeological desk-based assessment (DBA) for part of the former Blackheath Bluecoat School, Old Dover Road, London, SE3 8SY (hereafter referred to as the Study Area).
- 1.2. Planning permission is being sought for the demolition of the present school buildings and the construction of a new academy on the site.
- 1.3. The document has been prepared following a request from the Agent for a Desk-Based Assessment, due to the possible historic environment implications of redeveloping the site.
- 1.4. This document has been compiled by David Etheridge BA, Mphil and managed by Sam Driscoll BA, MA, MCIfA. The Project has been completed under HPS project reference HPS 230/17.



Figure 1. Location of the Study Area.

The Project Site and Study Area

1.5. The Study Area lies within the London Borough of Greenwich, which lies to the south and east of Central London, south of the River Thames. It is located on the north side of the Old Dover Road, the B211, formerly the route of the A2, which followed the route of Watling Street, the Roman Road from London to Dover, via Rochester and Canterbury. A little way to the east of the Study Area the Old Dover Road merges with Shooters Hill Road, the present A207.



- 1.6. The majority of the Study Area is located between 41 and 48m aOD, on fairly level ground, sloping down towards the north and the lower reaches of the River Thames, c. 2km to the north. The Study Area lies within sight of Shooters Hill, a natural eminence of some significance in the local landscape.
- 1.7. The underlying geology of the Study Area is comprised of Palaeogene sand and gravel of the Harwich Formation; no superficial deposits are reported (BGS 2017).

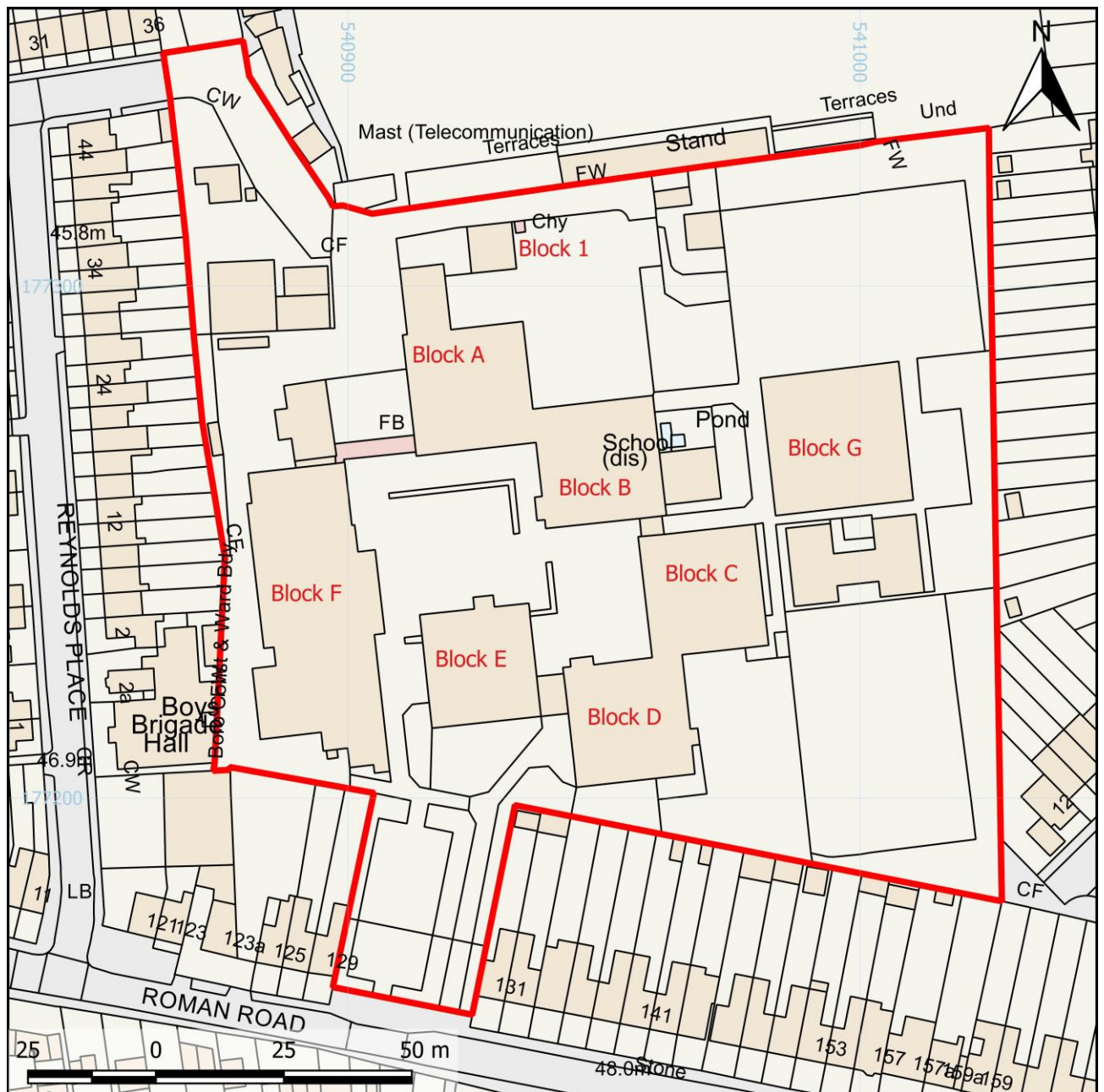


Figure 2: Project Site Detailed Location. Approximate boundary of the Study Area outlined in red.



Site Visit

- 1.8. A site visit was carried out on 29th August 2017. At present the Study Area comprises the grounds of a school, part in use, but with many of the buildings and outdoor activity areas currently redundant.
- 1.9. In plan the Study Area is an irregular polygon enclosing c. 20455m², with a c. 185m long axis at the longest point, aligned roughly NNW-SSE. The width varies from c. 16m at the relatively narrow northern end, c. 149m across the central section and c. 28m across the Old Dover Road frontage at the southern end of the Study Area.
- 1.10. The Study Area is surrounded on three sides by mostly residential housing: to the east, houses fronting the west side of Rectory Gardens Crescent and Keats Close; to the south, houses fronting the north side of Old Dover Road; and to the west houses fronting Reynolds Place. Adjoining the southwest corner of the Study Area is a car repair garage, with the Boys Brigade Hall just to the north of it. Towards the northwest corner are a group of three buildings, which appear to have had a light industrial purpose, while just to the north of this is a detached residential property adjoining the western entrance to the school. Land to the north of the Study Area is occupied by the Rectory Field, a recreation ground for cricket and football, with terraces and stands along the southern side adjoining the Study Area.
- 1.11. There are two entrances to the Study Area, though at the time of this visit only one appeared to be in use. This is the main school entrance on the north side of Old Dover Road, which is the southernmost extent of the Study Area.



Photo 1. The main entrance and frontage on the Old Dover Road, looking northwest.



Photo 2. The Lizban Street entrance, looking east from the junction with Lizban Street with Reynolds Place.



Photo 3. Block 1 with chimney, and part of the eastern face of Block A, looking west.



1.12. The second entrance is located on the west side of the Study Area where it adjoins Lizban Street. This is also an entrance it appears to share with the Rectory Field, a well-known local sports field of some age, which lies immediately to the north of the Study Area.



Photo 4. A view of the main quad looking north, with Block F to the left, Block A centre, and Block B to the right.

1.13. Nothing was observed during the site visit that would indicate the presence of buried archaeological remains. The site appears to have undergone extensive landscaping, especially since the addition of the later 20th century buildings, with associated services. There is a significant change in ground level in the south-eastern part of the Study Area, indicating the present buildings have been constructed in a partial terrace. However, this does not exclude the possibility that buried archaeological remains are still preserved within parts of the Study Area.



Photo 5. Blocks E (left) and D (right), looking NE from the visitor car park off Old Dover Road.

1.14. The site is extensive, with a significant number of buildings, of which the vast majority appear to be of later 20th century (post 1960) date and therefore of little long-term heritage interest, though doubtless they hold many memories for members of the local community. However, there is one building of note which appears to be a survivor of an older school, and by appearance probably dates from the last decade of the 19th century or the first two decades of the 20th century. This building and the perambulation of the grounds will be described in further detail in the following paragraphs.



Photo 4. North and west faces of Block F.1, with parts of F.2 (left) and F.3 (far right).

1.15. Buildings of the Study Area have previously been divided into lettered blocks (A-G) with the addition of Block 1. While this scheme will be followed here for ease of cross-reference, it does not allow for all the structures currently present on site.

1.16. Block 1 (see Photo 3) is a two or three storey rectangular brick-built structure, located on the north side of the Study Area with a rectangular brick-built chimney attached to the east face. There is one window in the south face of the ground



floor of the building, which is accessed from entrances on the ground floor and first floor (via external staircase) in the west face. Without further information this would appear to be a boiler room, and suggests there is an extensive underground pipe network to supply hot water from this building to the various other buildings on site. Block 1 is set in an area of extensive tarmac surfaced car parking.



Photo 5. Showing part of the east face of Block F, looking NW. Scale 2m.

1.17. Between Block 1 and the northern boundary of the Study Area is a tarmac surfaced driveway. The

boundary opposite is defined by a brick wall of similar appearance to the block. Where it does not adjoin one of the Rectory Field stands, the wall is surmounted by a high green-painted metal fence.



Photo 6. Interior of the central hall, section F.1 ground, looking NW.

1.18. Blocks A-F are set about a paved and surfaced quadrangle area. Block A is on the north side with Block B adjoining on the northeast. Block C is on the east side, with a narrow walkway between B and C. Block D is on the southeast side with Block E adjoining it on the south side of the quad. Block F stands alone on the west side. The overall effect is currently disrupted by the presence of hoarding in place to prevent access from those areas still in use to those areas currently not used.



Photo 7. Interior view of a classroom, looking south. Scale 2m.

1.19. Block A is a flat roofed brick-built two-storey rectangular building with a flat roofed single-storey extension to northward (see Photo 3 and Photo). Block B is a rectangular brick-built two-storey flat-roofed structure adjoining Block A at the latter's southeast corner. Adjoining the east side of Block B is a smaller flat-roofed single-storey structure.

1.20. Block C is in the same style and general external footprint as the previous blocks, but with the addition of a first-floor corridor between it and Block B. The corridor passes over one of the pathways in to the main quad. Block D, again of similar design, adjoins Block C on the latter's southwest corner.



- 1.21. Block E, located to the west of Block D (see Photo), is of the same two-storey rectangular brick-built design. Between the two blocks is a two-storey linking structure that appears to act as a corridor and throughway between the two. This is also built of brick, with a flat roof, and double-doors that open onto the quad.
- 1.22. Located to the east of Block B is Block G, a slightly larger flat-roofed brick-built structure of two storeys, with windows located on the east face. Given the location, with sports grounds adjoining to the north, it seems likely this structure was the school gym.
- 1.23. To the south of Block G is a group of single storey temporary classrooms (terrains) arranged in an H-formation. These are gable-ended with very low pitch roofs. They do not appear to have a formal designation.
- 1.24. Block F is located on the west side of the quad, towards the western boundary, with a fairly broad tarmac strip between the block and the boundary. Block F can be divided into three sections; the central section is obviously the oldest (F.1), while two sections, one on the north side (F.2) and one on the south side (F.3) are much later extensions that are probably contemporary with the majority of the school buildings.
- 1.25. Section F.3 is substantial three-storey building, brick built with a flat roof, but with a more irregular plan, rather than a strict rectangle, including a ground floor extension that joins with the southern end of Section F.1. Section F.2 is a rectangular two-storey extension on the north side, with long axis aligned roughly N-S. It is brick-built, with a gable ended roof of shallow pitch. At ground floor level there is a narrow external access corridor between F.1 and F.2, so that the physical join between both takes place at first floor level.
- 1.26. Section F.1 is a brick-built gable ended two-storey rectangular structure (see Photo 4), with long axis aligned just a little west of north. Unlike the majority of the structures on site, this building utilises mostly the traditional London yellow brick, with details picked out in red brick and/or Bath stone. The architectural style of the exterior is an understated Neo-Classical, with heavily simplified lines. Ceramic double-Roman tiles form the roofing material. In the east and west faces are two dormer bays each, while on the roof itself is a projecting shuttered ventilation louvre in an understated pagoda style.
- 1.27. In the northern bay of the west face, there is a rectangular double door entrance surround in a white stone (possibly Caen), in a style reminiscent of the Art Deco Neo-Classical of the 1930s, but probably foreshadowing, rather than following it. The doorway is located off-centre, with a rectangular window at ground floor level to the north of it. At first floor level there is a semi-



circular window picked out in red brick, with a central key in Bath stone. There is no similar bay on the opposing face, and no such doorway in the bays of the opposing face. Windows on both sides are tall, rectangular and frequent.

- 1.28. It was noted that the red brick details on the western side were, when within reach, popular for graffiti. A relatively small sample indicated two dates from the 1960s and two references to the popular culture of the period (Mods), together with a number of personal names and initials.
- 1.29. On the eastern side there is a rectangular stairwell with steps down to a basement area, possibly a former boiler room, which was not accessible at the time of this survey. Another possibility is that this was used as an air raid shelter, or was intended for such use, but the lack of ability to move a large number of children in and out at one time argues against this.
- 1.30. Due to the likely age of the building the author inspected it for signs of wartime reinforcement or damage, whilst also aware that air raid shelter provision may have been made in the school grounds (for example, see Moshenska 2007). However, nothing was seen to indicate that any wartime provision had been made or damage incurred.
- 1.31. At the far southern end on the eastern side of F.1 is a set of double doors, picked out in red brick across the top, but with no white stone surround. The interior of Block F was accessed through this door.
- 1.32. This interior was found to be in various states of dilapidation. Exploration was largely limited to the ground floor area of F.1. The upper floor of Section F.2 was accessed separately, since the door between the two sections had been sealed off. This section was, as expected, found to have a fairly modern classroom interior.
- 1.33. Section F.3 was accessed from doors on the south side of a connecting corridor leading inwards from the east door. Only the ground floor of this area was explored. The rooms here were found to be in a reasonable condition, and commensurate with a building of later 20th century construction.
- 1.34. Section F.1 was accessed from the north side of the connecting corridor. This opened onto a central rectangular room, long axis roughly N-S, poorly lit by natural daylight, with connecting double doors leading to classrooms on either side of the long walls (see Photo 6). The lack of natural lighting was partially due to the boarding up of clerestory windows, there being no first floor rooms that span the width of the building at this point.



- 1.35. It was noted that this central hall, and several of the classrooms, were surfaced with parquet flooring. However, the state of this floor had in places deteriorated significantly, possibly due to the ingress of water through the clerestory windows.
- 1.36. The western side of the ground floor appears to have been the least altered; here each of the two sets of double doors led to a separate classroom. Rather than describe each classroom in detail (which requires a separate report – see below), this report will focus on one classroom and add in specific details about the other rooms, where appropriate.
- 1.37. The classroom (T6) in the southwest corner of section F.1 is slightly untypical in being the only room painted a shade of green (see Photo 7). The walls are of painted brick throughout, with no use of plaster. The room is divided in two sections, north and south of a steel joist supported on brick piers at either side of the room. This appears to be an original design feature, as where it occurred there was only one set of original double doors into each room, with no obvious trace of a blocked doorway. Three windows lit the southern section while two lit the northern section. Suspended fluorescent strip lighting was provided throughout. Fitted work benches with sinks had been placed around the southern and western walls, indicating this room had an arts or science learning function in later use. A sealed doorway in the northern wall led into the next classroom on the western side (T5), but it is likely the standard mode of egress and ingress was via the double doors onto the central hall. A notable feature of many classrooms, including this, was the presence of a small wooden cross on one of the walls, thus indicating this was a church school.
- 1.38. A door in the north wall of T5 opened onto an E-W aligned brick-built corridor with many industrial power points, suggesting this had been a workshop area. The eastern end of this corridor opened onto a N-S aligned corridor running off the western side of the north wall of the central hall. The northern end of that corridor led to external double doors in the north wall of section F.1. Various rooms and storage areas were located off this corridor.
- 1.39. A doorway on the western side of the N-S corridor led to a straight staircase leading up to a first floor WC (retaining traditional cast iron cistern brackets) and two small office areas, which may have been for staff.
- 1.40. A flight of stairs off the eastern side of this corridor led to a small series of rooms, again probably for staff use. A hatch in the side of the corridor gave viewing access to part of the loft, showing a timber roof structure, while deliberate damage to the wall surface exposed traditional lath and plaster work.



- 1.41. A further two (smaller) classrooms were located off the western side of the N-S corridor, with one larger classroom off the eastern side. The two classrooms off the eastern side of the central hall were connected to each other by a set of functioning double doors. The southern room was fitted with work benches and sinks along the southern and eastern walls; the presence of paint splashes on the benches and student artworks indicated this had last been used as an art room.
- 1.42. At the time of inspection and writing up, no plans of the interior were available. It is suggested that before any significant work is undertaken to alter, modify or demolish all or parts of building F.1, that a full and through survey of the building is undertaken at Historic England Level 2 or above, including detailed photographic recording, where the location of the photographer and the direction of the camera are recorded for each photograph.

2. Planning Policy

NPPF

- 2.1. "In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum, the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary." Paragraph 128.

Local policy

- 2.2. Greenwich Borough has adopted the Greater London Archaeological Priority Area Guidelines (Booth and Kidd 2016); part of the Study Area falls within an Area of Archaeological Priority.

Aims

- 2.3. The aim of this study is to:
- Identify the presence of designated and non-designated cultural heritage assets within the Study Area;
 - Identify the potential of the Study Area to include archaeological deposits and to determine, where possible, their condition and likely level of survival;
 - Provide an assessment of the known or predicted heritage assets considering their archaeological, historic, architectural and artistic interests;



- Define the potential development impact to the archaeological resource.

3. Methodology

- 3.1. This document has been prepared in accordance with the CIfA Standard and Guidance for historic environment desk-based assessment (revised Dec 2014), which states that a DBA *'will determine, as far as is reasonably possible from existing records, the nature, extent and significance of the historic environment within a specified area'* and that in *'development context desk-based assessment will establish the impact of the proposed development on the significance of the historic environment (or will identify the need for further evaluation to do so), and will enable reasoned proposals and decisions to be made whether to mitigate, offset or accept without further intervention that impact'* (CIfA 2014: 4).
- 3.2. All work was carried out in line with the following standards and guidance-
- *Standard and guidance for historic environment desk-based assessment*. The Chartered Institute for Archaeologists Guidance Document, University of Reading, Reading;
 - *The Management of Archaeological Projects-2*. English Heritage, 1991;
 - *National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Paragraph 128*. Communities and Local Government 2012.
- 3.3. The aim was to produce a document that not only considered the potential for archaeological remains on the Project Site, but to also put these into their historical and archaeological context.
- 3.4. The primary repositories for information consulted comprised:
- Greater London Historic Environment Record;
 - National Heritage List for England (NHLE);
 - AMIE database/Pastscape
 - Geological Maps;
 - Ordnance Survey maps of the site and its environs;
 - Historical maps and documents held in the Metropolitan Archives and the National Archives;
 - Appropriate archaeological and historical journals and books;
 - Unpublished research reports and archives, including those held by relevant museums and local societies.



4. Archaeological and Historical Baseline Survey

Introduction

- 4.1. The information presented here is derived from sources including the Greater London Historic Environment Record, the Historic England National Monuments Record database (PastScape), the National Heritage List for England (NHLE), the Historic England Archive, and surviving cartographic resources, along with other published or documentary sources.
- 4.2. Trawls of the National Heritage List for England, Magic.gov.uk, PastScape, the Historic England Archive and the Greater London HER have revealed the following:



Statutory Constraints

4.3. No statutory constraints have been identified within the Study Area.

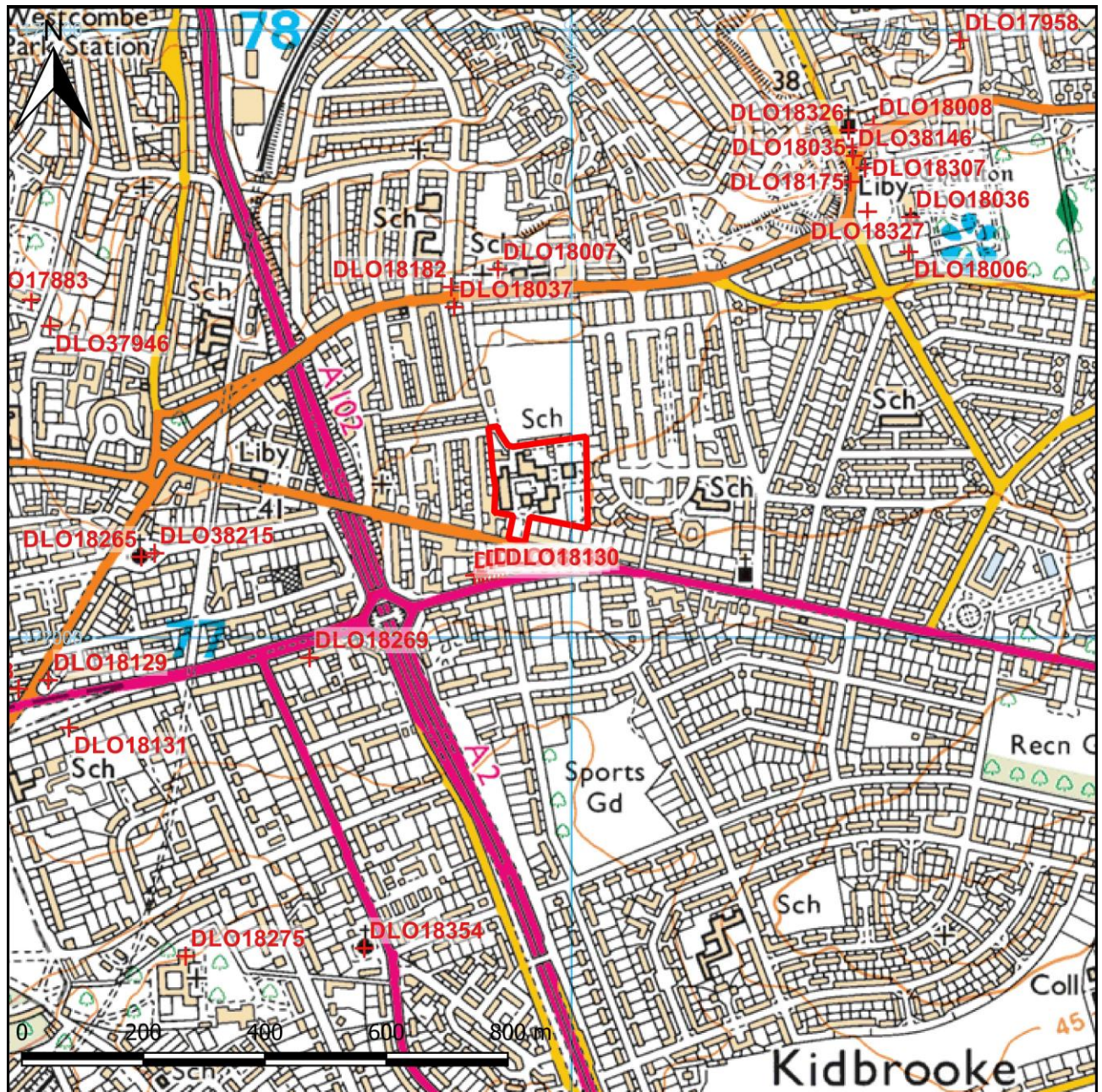


Figure 3. Listed Buildings, citing GLHER DUID number.

Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas

- 4.4. There are no listed buildings within the Study Area, which does not lie within a conservation area.
- 4.5. Immediately adjacent to the west of the Study Area is the Rectory Field Conservation Area, which, despite its name, does not encompass the Rectory Field to the north of the Study Area. Although



the Study Area does not lie within this conservation area, due to the presence of an entrance on Lizban Street, it is possible the conservation area could be a constraint on development. This could be due in part to the potential impact of views from, to and across it from the Study Area during the various building lifecycle phases.

- 4.6. During the construction and decommissioning phases the passage of construction/demolition traffic will (unless carefully managed) have an impact on the conservation area (e.g. access to site via Lizban Street or approaching the Old Dover Road frontage from the west), while during the primary usage phase there will be pressure on the conservation area from increased traffic and footfall from daily school traffic (e.g. drop-off and pick up at the start/end of the school day).



Photo 8. Part of nos. 141-155 Shooters Hill Road (frontage), looking west.

- 4.7. Careful consideration should be given to ensure that an increase in school related traffic does not impact negatively on the conservation area.
- 4.8. Immediately to the south of the Study Area, on the south side of the Old Dover Road, is the northern edge of the Sun in the Sands Conservation Area. This includes the nearest listed buildings to the Study Area, which are the Grade II listed terraced row, nos. 141-155 Shooters Hill Road (DLO18130, see Photo 8), located c. 45m south and west of the Study Area frontage on Old Dover Road, onto the south side of which the rear gardens of these buildings back onto.
- 4.9. As with the Rectory Field conservation area, views from, to and across may be impacted by development of the Study Area. The northern edge of the conservation area, where it encompasses the south side of the Old Dover Road, is most likely to be at risk from construction traffic and increased schools traffic.

Scheduled Ancient Monuments and other Heritage Statutory Constraints

- 4.10. The nearest Scheduled Ancient Monument to the Study Area is c. 1.58km to the west. This is the Romano Celtic Temple in Greenwich Park, which stands on the projected line of the Roman Road followed by Old Dover Road.
- 4.11. The Study Area lies c. 570m east of the western limit of the Maritime Greenwich World Heritage Site. Development that could have a significant visual impact on views from and too this area could therefore be impacted.



4.12. No other statutory constraints were located within a meaningful distance of the Study Area.

Non-Statutory National Constraints

4.13. The nearest registered park and garden is the Grade I listed Greenwich Park, located c. 1.24km west of the Study Area. The park is included in the World Heritage Site

4.14. The nearest registered battlefield is the site of the Battle of Barnet, 1471, located c. 25km to the northwest.

Events

4.15. No events are recorded within the Study Area.

4.16. The nearest recorded event is a 2011 heritage statement on no. 171d Shooters Hill Road (ELO12164), located on the angle between the junction of the latter with the Old Dover Road. The potential for the survival of Roman remains associated with the road was highlighted (ibid.).

4.17. Two events are recorded c. 167m west of the Study Area. In 2004 a desk-based assessment was undertaken on the site of the Sunfields Methodist church and nos. 1-6 Brunswick Terrace; the results have not been published (ELO2454). In 2006 a single evaluation trench was excavated on the site of the former church; this revealed earlier post-Medieval walls (ELO7138).

4.18. In 2007 an archaeological watching brief was held at the rear of nos. 56-58 Shooters Hill Road, c. 433m southwest of the Study Area; the results were negative (ELO7380).

4.19. A 2009 desk-based assessment of a 3.4km long cable route identified the potential for Roman remains along and in the vicinity of Shooters Hill Road (ELO12089).

4.20. Other events reported in the trawl are either negative or not relevant to this discussion.

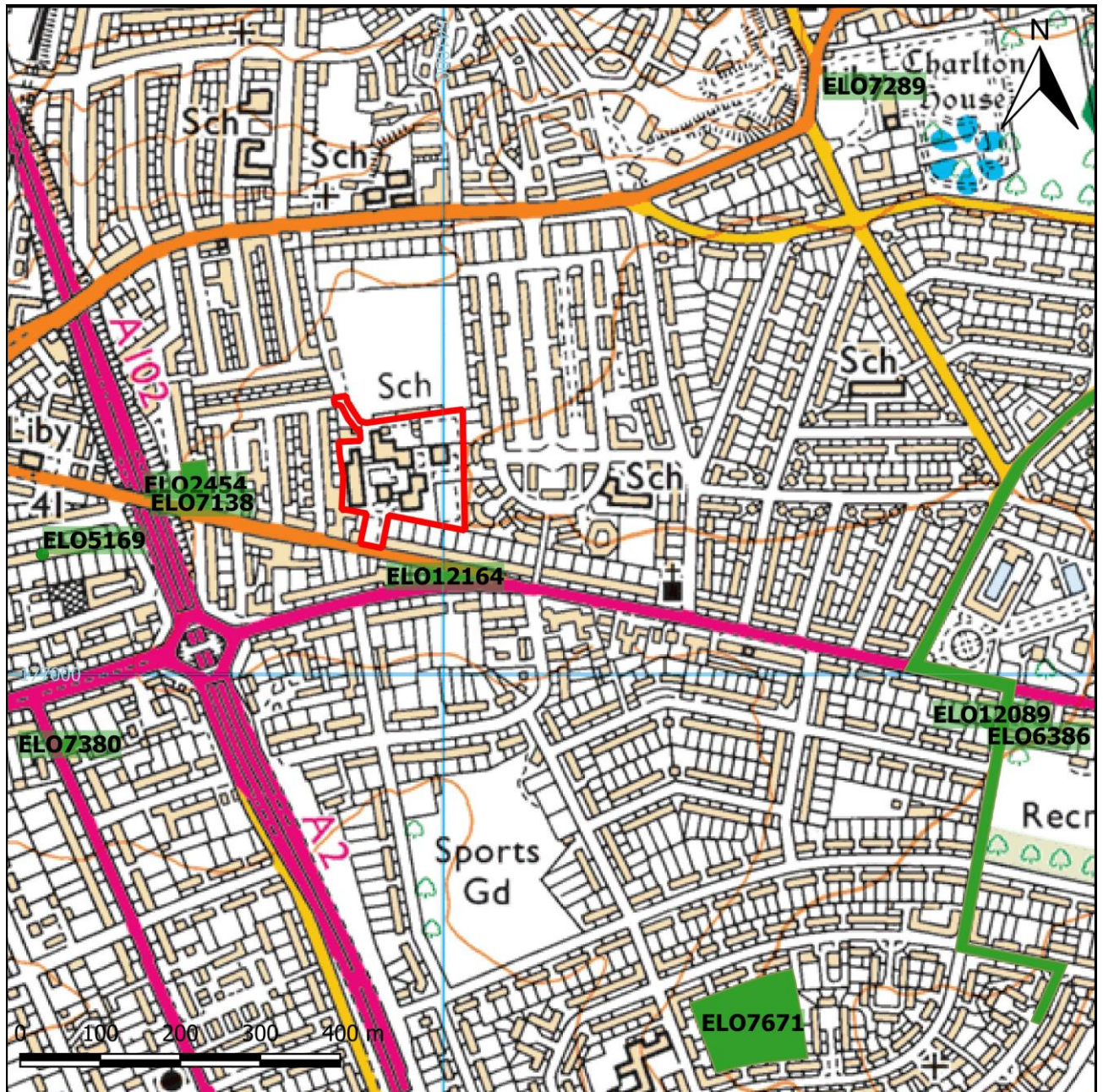


Figure 4. GLHER Event location map, citing EvUID number.

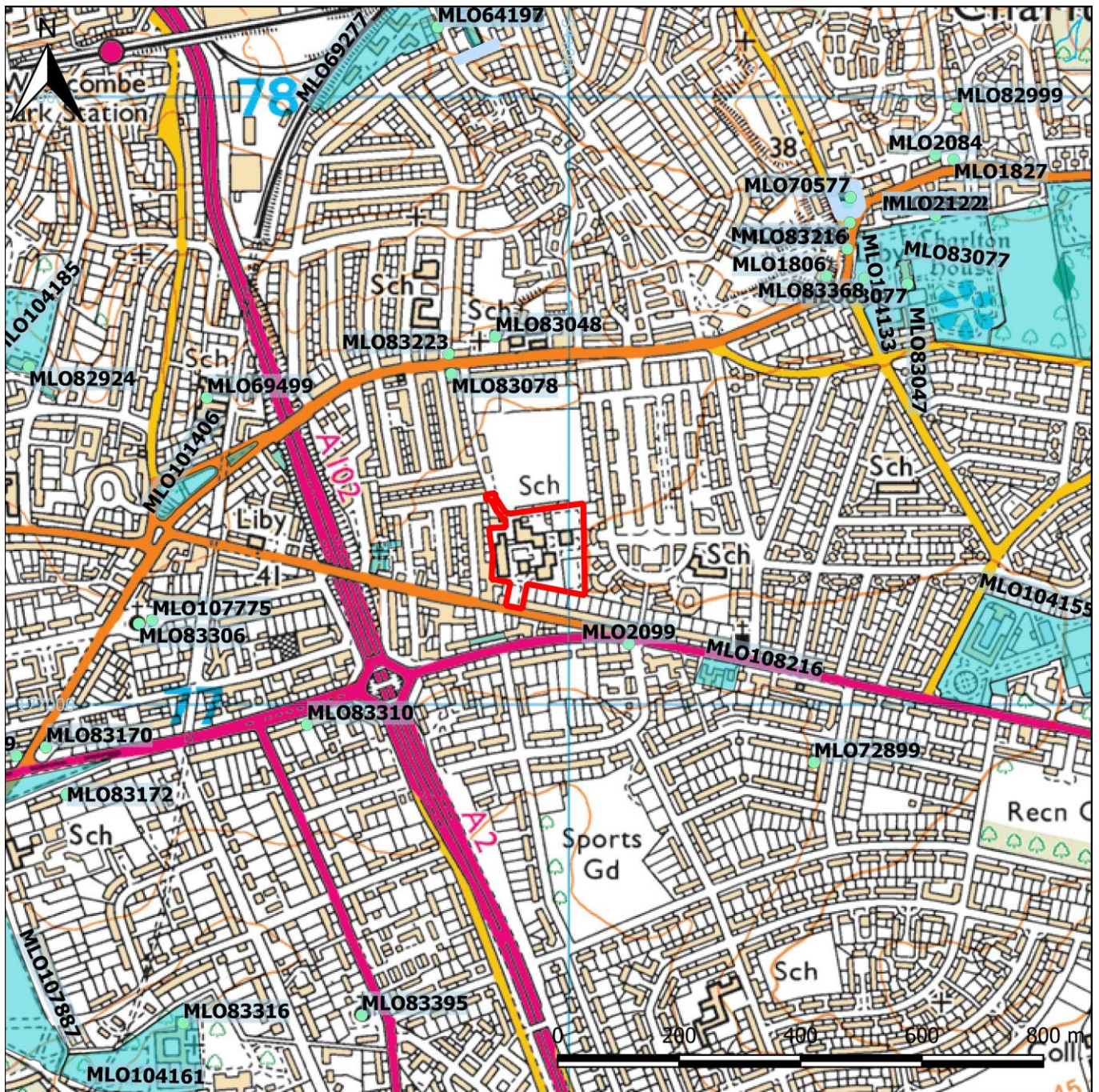


Figure 5: Monument Location Plan (HER MonUID)

Monuments

4.21. No HER monument records fall within the Study Area. However, record DLO33369 identifies land, including the Study Area, along the line of the Old Dover Road, as an Area of Archaeological Priority, due to the route of Watling Street, the Roman road from Dover to London and the North West.



Prehistoric

- 4.22. One site of later prehistoric flint finds is recorded from the trawl area, located some 850m north of the Study Area (MLO69277), indicating that the likelihood of encountering prehistoric remains within the Study Area is low.
- 4.23. Walford wrote that along the Roman road from Blackheath Hill to Shooters Hill were 'numerous tumuli' or burial mounds, which he states were mostly 'opened' in the 18th century and various artefacts were reported found (1878). Although he mentions some of these were in Greenwich Park, the location of the others is not given. From his reports it seems likely that some of these mounds were Prehistoric, while others may have been Roman or Early Medieval.

Romano-British (AD 44 AD 410)

- 4.24. The Study Area is located on the north side of the Old Dover Road, which follows the course of Watling Street, the Roman road from Dover to London (and the northwest). Margary notes that sections of the road were formerly visible on Bexley Heath and near Shooters Hill (Margary 1973, 53). HER Record MLO2099 notes the location of the Roman road at Shooters Hill.
- 4.25. Record MLO2084 notes the find of a Roman coin at 45 The Village; no further information is given.
- 4.26. The archaeological potential of the Study Area for Roman sites and finds is therefore high in close proximity to the road, but likely to fall off with distance.

Early Medieval (AD 410 – AD 1066)

- 4.27. Nothing of Early Medieval date is reported from the trawl; the potential for Early Medieval archaeology to survive on site should be considered very low. However, see above for the possibility of Early Medieval burial mounds along the route of the Roman road.

Medieval (AD 1066 – AD 1539)

- 4.28. There is a cluster of monument records located in the vicinity of Charlton House, c. 650m northeast of the Study Area, including the site of the medieval St Luke's Church. There is another cluster of records some 800m south of the Study Area, close to the Kid Brook in Kidbrooke. This includes the site of a deserted medieval village with associated church and chapel sites at Delme Crescent (MLO20135, MLO2122; MLO20839). None of these records indicate a high degree of medieval activity within the Study Area, therefore the potential for medieval remains within the Study Area is likely to be low.



Post-Medieval (AD 1540 – AD 1900)

- 4.29. The cluster of medieval activity around Charlton House continues into the post-Medieval period. There is also a small cluster of records on Charlton Road, north of Rectory Field.
- 4.30. With the exception of sites already mentioned under the events and listed buildings sections, c. 228m SSE of the Study Area, on the south side of Shooters Hill Road, is the site of the former Blackheath and Charlton Hospital, a cottage hospital opened in 1889 and formally closed in 1948.
- 4.31. Record MLO99328 notes the site of the former Particular Baptist Chapel at Sunfields Place, built c. 1848-69 and destroyed by enemy action, 1939-45. Other records relate to the spread of settlement into the area in the 18th and 19th centuries.

Modern (post 1900)

- 4.32. Records of modern features are not found particularly close to the Study Area and would appear to have no relevance to it.

Aerial Photographs

- 4.33. Historic aerial photographs of the Study Area were viewed at the Historic England Archives, Swindon (formerly the National Monuments Record), on 31 August 2017.
- 4.34. While the development history of the Study Area, as extracted from the aerial photographs, is summarised below, since the Study Area was not heavily developed before 1971, it was possible to observe potential cropmarks within the Study Area that would no longer be visible.
- 4.35. Unlike much of the adjoining land to the east, now developed for housing, the majority of the Study Area appears to have escaped conversion to wartime allotments and was probably retained as a school playing field.
- 4.36. On an aerial photograph from 1949 (RAF/58/261/V/5060) and faintly visible on a photograph from 1947 (RAF/CPE/UK/2103/V/5237), two parallel dark linear cropmarks are observed running across the Study Area from northeast to southwest. This aligns with a feature still visible on those photographs, a field boundary located further to the northeast. Historic Ordnance Survey maps and the Tithe Map of 1839, confirm this boundary ran up to the Study Area. It should be noted however that this boundary does not appear on the Rocque map of 1745. The Tithe Map shows a dark smudge on the alignment of the boundary where it would have crossed the Study Area, suggesting it was originally drawn onto the Tithe map and later removed, probably before the map was finalised. This suggests the boundary may have been extant across the Study Area as late as



1838 (although it is also possible the map was traced from an earlier map, then amended). Part of Charlton Lane, northeast of Charlton House, also appears to respect this alignment.

- 4.37. The boundary is of some interest, as the NE-SW alignment does not tally with any of the other local alignments. This suggests it is a fossilised boundary from an earlier period. The particularly straight route, and the implication it intersected with the Old Dover Road, may suggest this was the route of another, more local Roman road, especially since it does not tie in with the later enclosures, which also tend to be regular in form, but are not on the same alignment. Part of a trackway following the boundary is indicated on the 1st edition OS map. Were this feature to continue to the Old Dover Road, then the intersection would take place exactly where the school frontage meets the present road.
- 4.38. Broad parallel linear cropmarks on approximately the same NE-SW alignment as the field boundary, were seen in the Rectory Field on an aerial photograph from 2000 (OS/00279/V/129). Similar faint parch marks were seen at the same location on an aerial photograph from October 1945 (RAF/106G/UK/916/RVP2/6094) and May 1947 (RAF/CPE/UK/2103/V/5237). These indicate ridge and furrow cultivation was practiced in the vicinity, and probably within, the Study Area.
- 4.39. The author specifically inspected the aerial photographs for the presence of air-raid precautions, including shelters, and defences, or other obvious wartime use, but nothing could be identified.
- 4.40. To sum up the aerial photographic evidence: there is good evidence for Medieval or early Post-Medieval arable cultivation in what is now the Rectory Field; this may well have extended into the Study Area. There is good evidence that a Post-Medieval field boundary on a similar alignment as the arable cultivation, once extended into the Study Area. There is some evidence to suggest this boundary followed the route of a track way, the straightness of which and the unusual alignment in the landscape, suggest this feature might therefore represent a former Roman road, which intersected with the Old Dover Road within the Study Area frontage.

5. Historic Development of the Project Site

- 5.1. The Study Area lies in the historic parish of Charlton, but close to the boundary with the historic parish of Greenwich. Though now both are part of the Metropolitan Borough of Greenwich, they were previously in the County of Kent, before being absorbed into Greater London. There are no Victoria County Histories for the historic parishes of Kent.
- 5.2. In Domesday (1086), both the manor of Charlton and that of Greenwich were possessions of the Bishop of Bayeux (Morgan 1983). Greenwich was held from him by the Bishop of Lisieux; before



1066 it had been two manors, one in the possession of Earl Harold (ibid; Harold Godwinson, King of England 1066). Charlton had also been two manors before 1066, but held by two brothers; in 1086 it was held by William the son of Odger (ibid.).

5.3. Later in the 11th century Charlton was given to the priory of St Saviour, Bermondsey (Walford 1878). At the dissolution, it reverted to the Crown, and remained a Crown possession until James I and VI gave it to the Earl of Mar, who later sold it. The manor then went through a succession of private owners, some of whom were members of the nobility, until it passed to Sir Spencer Maryon-Wilson, lord of the manor in 1878 (ibid.).

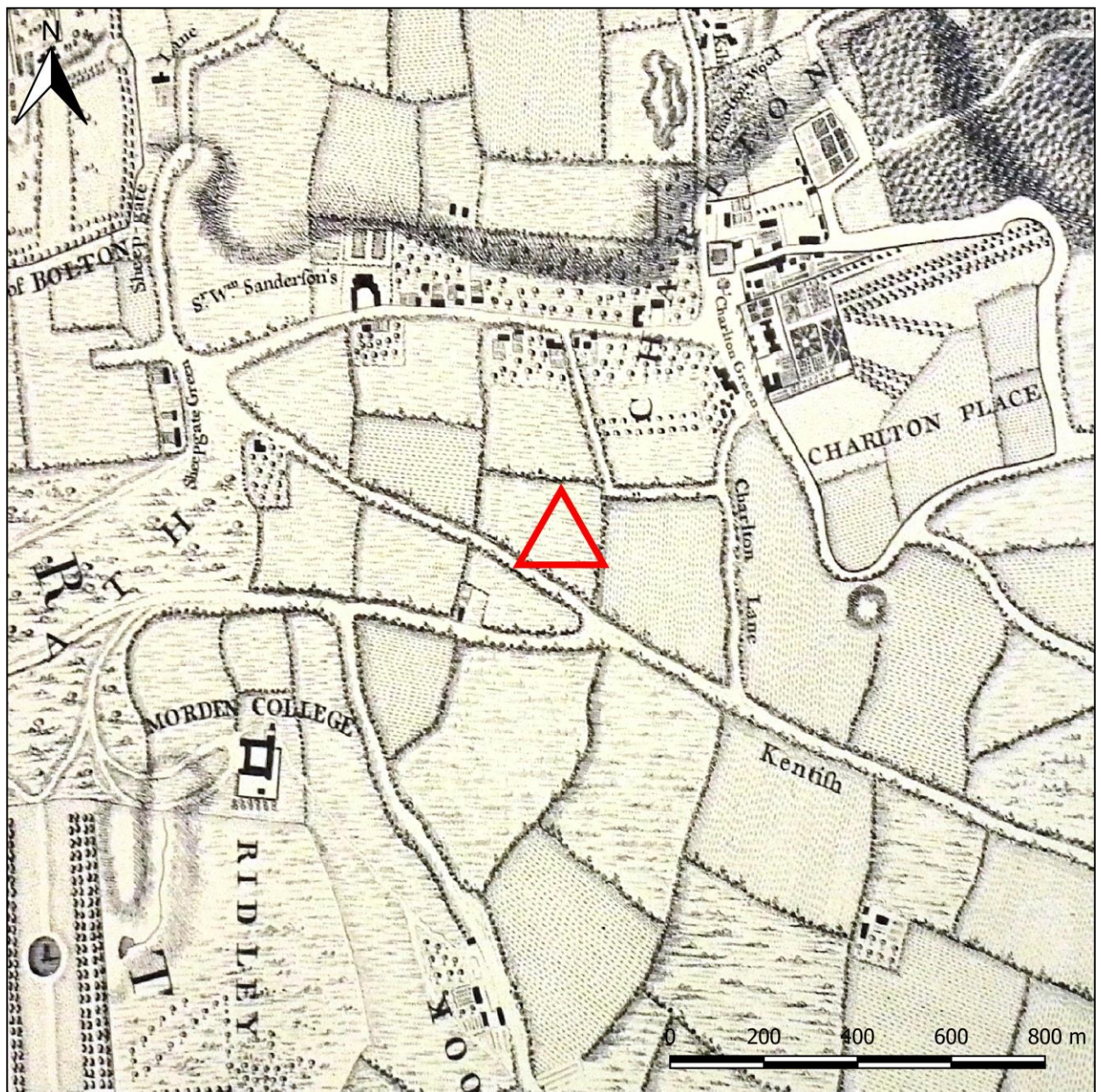


Figure 6. Extract from Jean Rocque's 1745 survey of the cities of London and Westminster, with the borough of Southwark. The approximate location of the Study Area is indicated in red.



- 5.4. The earliest detailed map of the Study Area that could be located is the 1745 Map of the cities of London and Westminster, with the borough of Southwark, by Jean Rocque (Figure 6). The Study Area is located in an enclosed field on the north side of the Kentish Road. No settlement was shown in the immediate vicinity, although it was noted that settlement on the north side of what is now Rectory Field was clearly indicated, but this was no longer extant at the time of the 1st edition OS map.
- 5.5. The 1839 Tithe Map for Charlton was consulted in The National Archives, Kew, under the reference IR 30/17/74 (see Figure 7). The accompanying apportionment has been transcribed and is available online.
- 5.6. The map confirms that while the Study Area was entirely within the parish of Charlton, it lay very close to the border with the parish of Greenwich. The vast majority of the Study Area lay in plot 161, while part of the northwest entrance lay in plot 159. All the Study Area, and all the plots illustrated above, were owned by the lord of the manor, Sir Thomas Maryon Wilson, Baronet. Plot 161 was under arable cultivation and was part of his personal holding, while plot 159 was meadow let to the Rector of the parish, the Revd. Arthur Drummond. To the east of the Study Area, plot 162 was occupied by Lady Fisher, and was identified as a house, buildings and garden; it was later known as Cherry Orchard.
- 5.7. Since land immediately adjacent to the Study Area was in Greenwich Parish, that Tithe Map was also consulted. All the adjoining land was owned by the trustees of Morden College, the Dean and Chapter of Westminster. None of the land was built on, all was in agricultural use.
- 5.8. By the 1st edition OS map of 1869 this had changed, with development of land for housing to the west and south of the Study Area (see Figure 8). In 1854 the neighbouring land to the west of the Study Area was transferred into the newly created parish of St John's Blackheath. Importantly, one of the buildings to the west was marked as St John's (National) School, for boys, girls and infants. This was on the site of the present day Boys Brigade hall (the latter may incorporate all or part of the earlier structure). The school dates from 1854 and was the first church school in the Blackheath area (Leader 2017).
- 5.9. A track ran northwards from the Old Dover Road, through the western side of the Study Area, along the inside of the western boundary.
- 5.10. By 1897 there had been further development for housing west of the Study Area, notably in the southwest angle fronting Old Dover Road; but probably the most important development was the conversion of the land north of the Study Area to a sports field, the Rectory Field, with pavilions.



Consequently, the track through the Study Area had been removed. St Johns School was still shown in its earlier location, but there had been significant building development on its site.

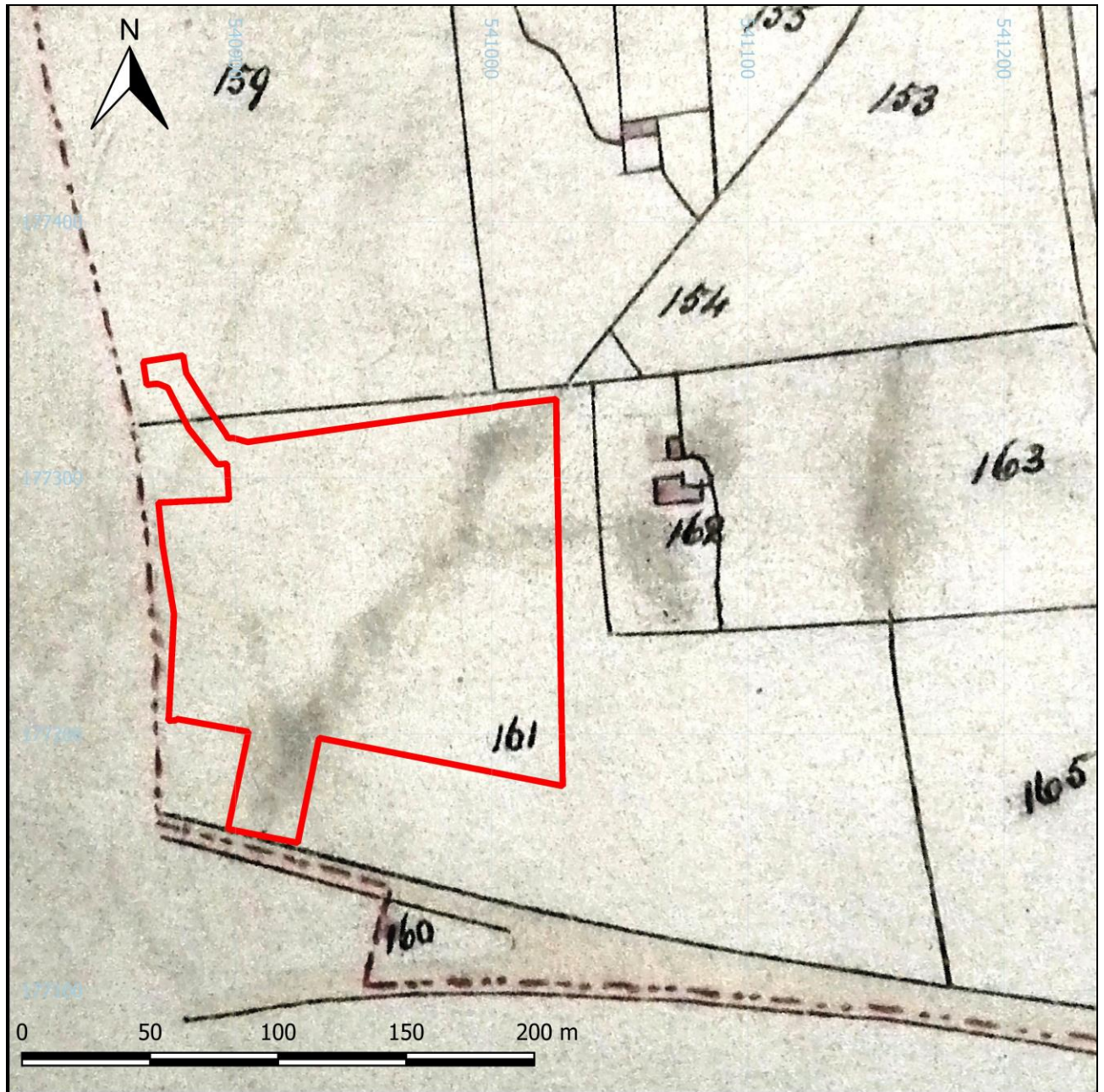


Figure 7. Extract from the 1839 Tithe Map of Charlton (TNA IR 30/17/74) reproduced by kind permission of The National Archives, Kew. Approximate boundary of the Study Area outlined in red.

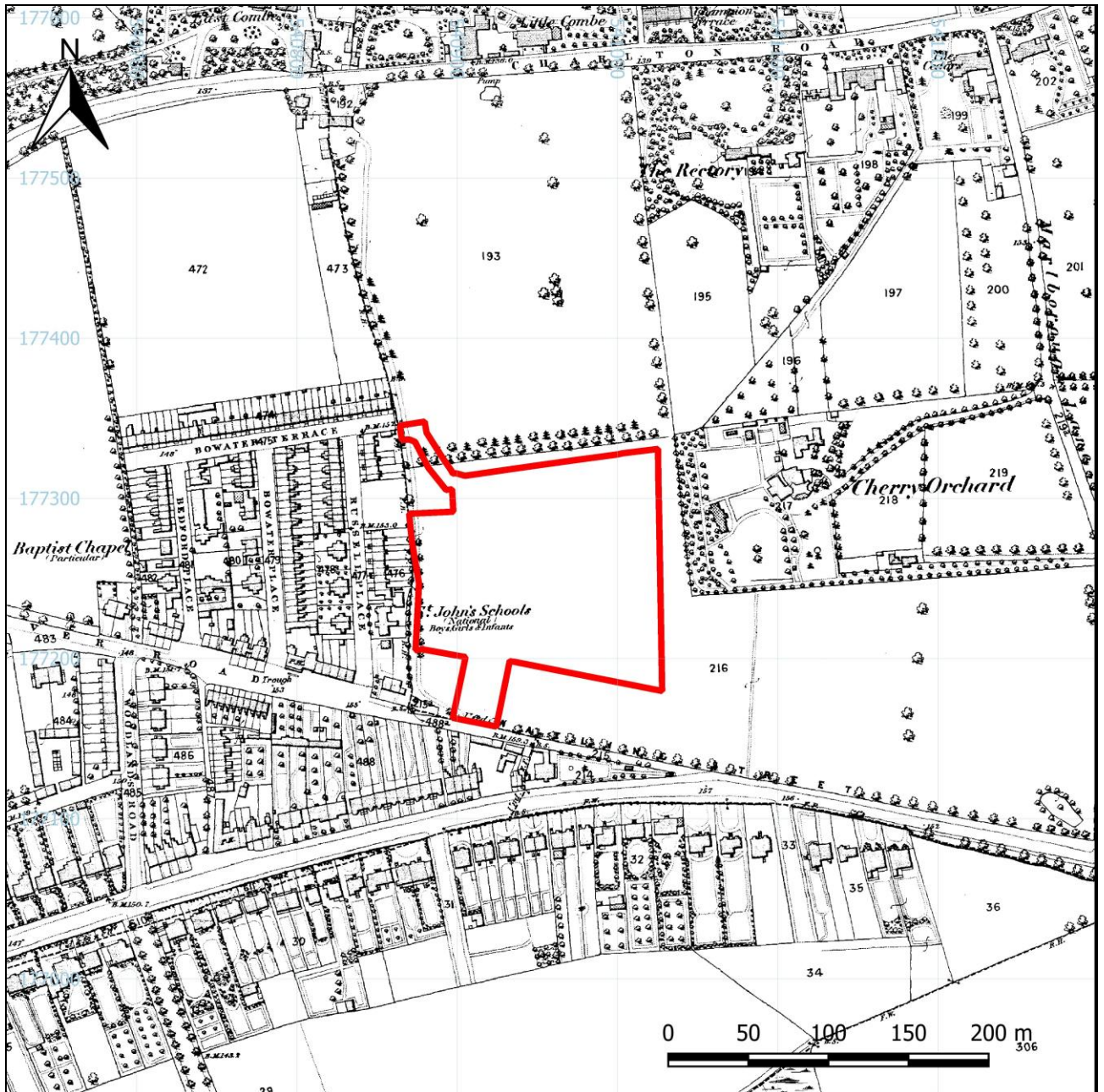


Figure 8 Extract from the OS 1869 1:2,500 scale map (approximate boundary of the Study Area outlined in red).

5.11. The OS map of 1916 (see Figure 10) shows a very significant development in the Study Area, with the construction of a school building within the present grounds. This is labelled on the map as 'School'. The site of the former St John's School was now labelled 'Club', thus indicating the former school had moved to a purpose built structure within the Study Area. This structure appears to be the core of Block F, referred to in this report as section F.1. The remainder of the present two grounds had been divided into two fields by an E-W aligned boundary.

5.12. The St John's National School had taken boys from 1883, but funding for the boys section was withdrawn by London County Council in 1907, due to the lack of facilities (Leader 2017). Rather



than improve the current site, the managers agreed to raise funds for a new building on a new site; this was formally opened on 6 April 1911 as the Blackheath and Kidbrook National Church of England School (ibid.). The school was designed for 400 pupils of infant and junior age (ibid).

5.13. To the east of the Study Area, along Old Dover Road, terraced housing had been constructed; however, Cherry Orchard, and the remaining land to the east, was still undeveloped.

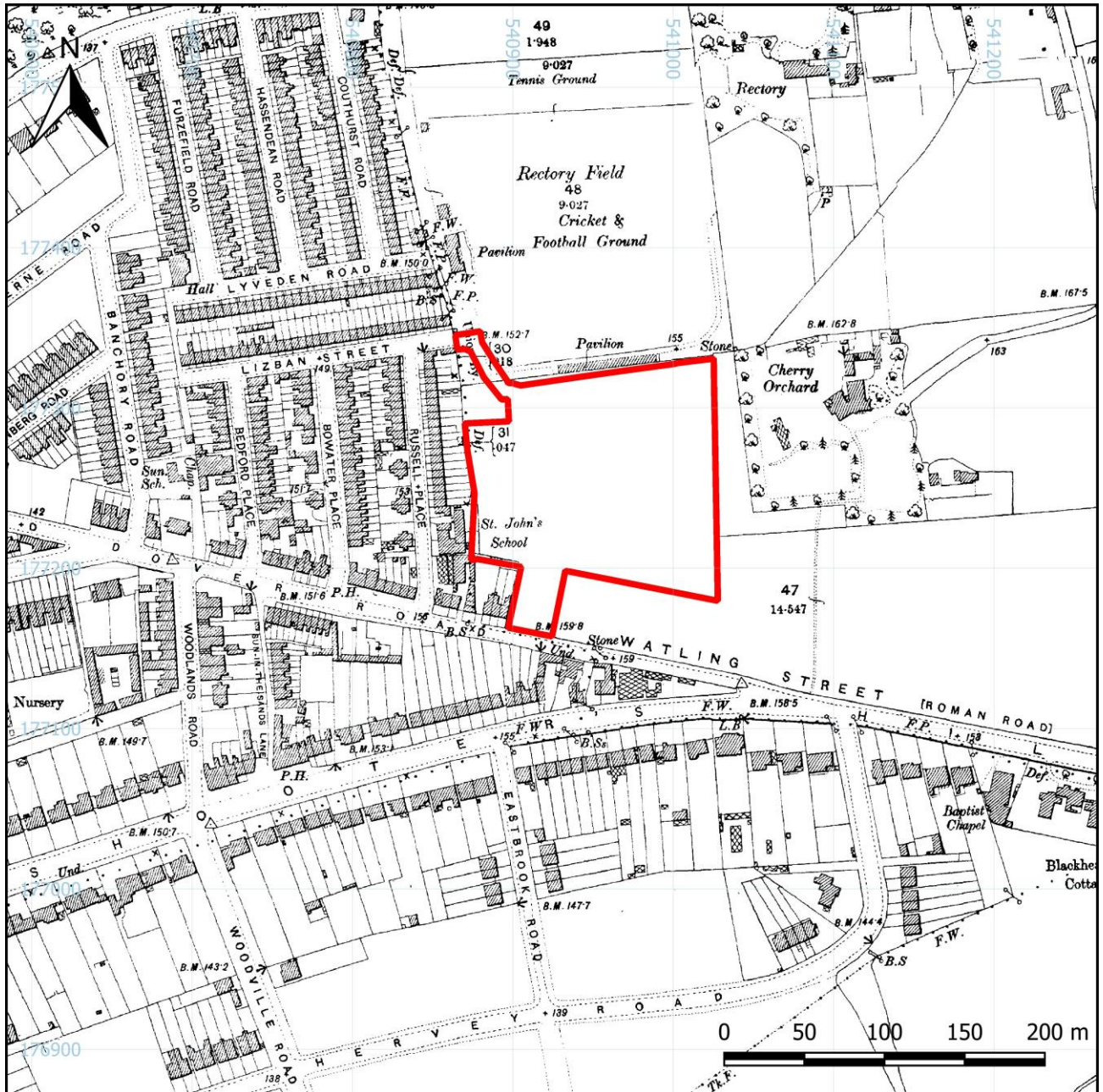


Figure 9 Extract from the OS 1897 1:2,500 scale map (approximate boundary of the Study Area outlined in red).

5.14. London County Council mapping from 1934-6 shows that the few remaining gap sites on Old Dover Road had been filled in. There were no new school buildings, but a small extension had been added to the south side of the school. Land to the east remained undeveloped.



5.15. Copies of these maps were used as the basis for plotting wartime damage during air-raids, 1939-45. No damage to the Study Area is indicated, but a small black circle shows that a V2 weapon fell on Sunfields Place, probably causing extensive damage as far as the east side of Russel Place.

5.16. The school manager's minute book of 1929-43, held in the Metropolitan Archives (P78/JNE/086) was consulted, to ascertain what had occurred at the site during WWII; however, from October 1939 until May 1942 there were no entries in the school minutes and no explanation why. The minutes resume in May 1942 with the request that the cost of repairing bomb damage to the roof be claimed from the government War Damages Committee. This implies the school had only recently returned to use. One possible scenario is that the school was closed for this period, since the majority of the children would have been evacuated (Leader 2017).

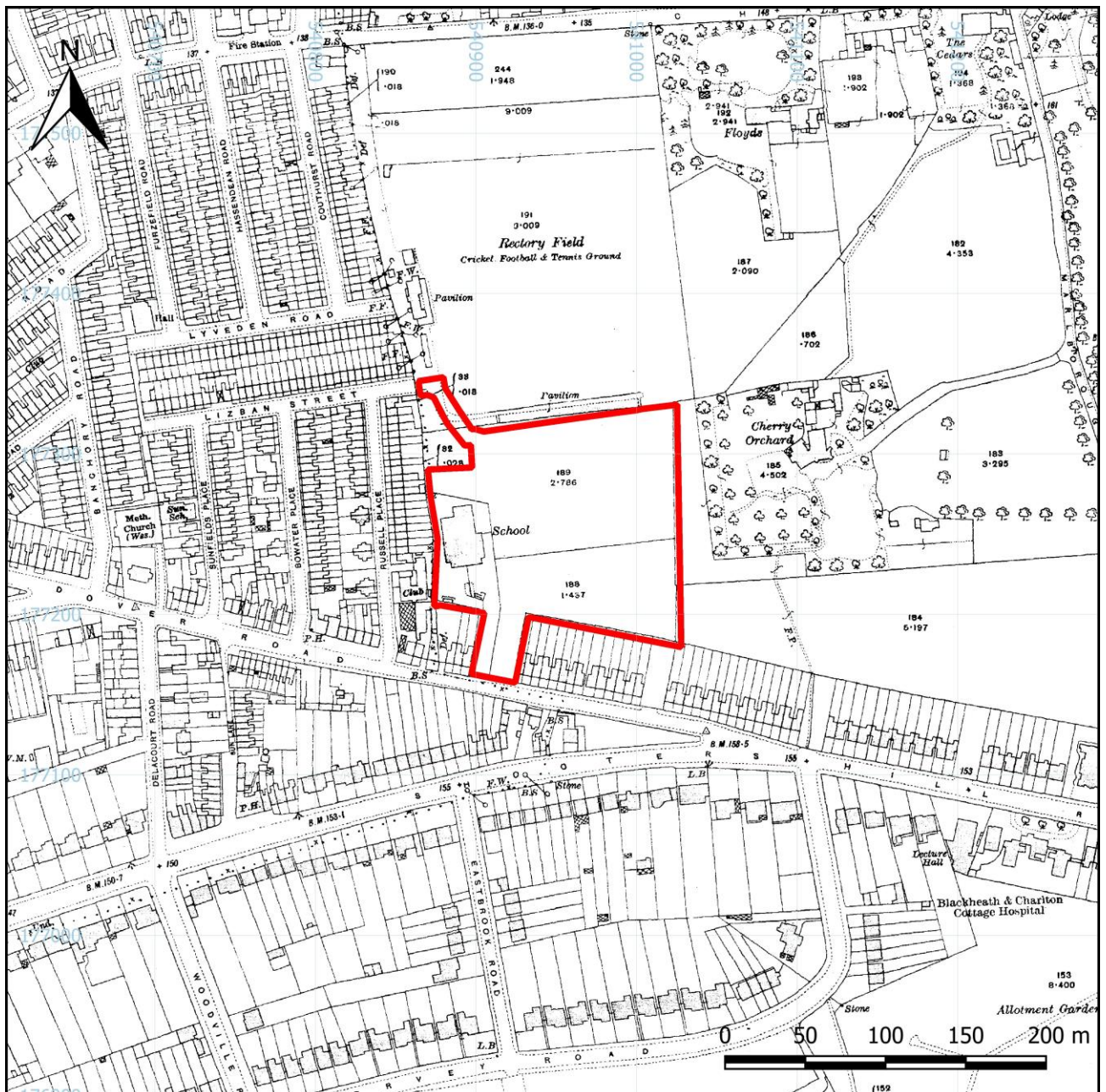




Figure 10 Extract from the OS 1916 1:2,500 scale map (approximate boundary of the Study Area outlined in red).

- 5.17. Aerial photographs from 1945 onwards record some of the development history of the Study Area and surrounds. Land to the east of the Study Area, including Cherry Orchard, had been extensively used for allotment gardening. However, by August 1945 the outline of Rectory Field Crescent and the associated street network had been laid out. By 1949 several of the present blocks of flats on the estate had been constructed, but housing immediately to the east of the Study Area appeared to be of single-storey 'prefabs'. Much of the estate had still not been developed. Prefabs along the western side of Rectory Field Crescent were still extant in 2004, but have since been removed. Consequently, the adjoining Keats Close has been remodelled.
- 5.18. Wartime damage on Sunfields and Bowater Place had been extensive, but by 1947 these had been cleared and replaced with further prefabs. They were replaced with more substantial housing between 1954 and 1960.
- 5.19. From 1956 the decision was taken to convert the school to secondary education only (Leader 2017). In 1957 talks were commenced with the Greenwich Blue Coat School, a charity school founded for girls in 1700 (ibid.). The two schools merged and opened as the Blackheath & Bluecoat School on the present site in 1959; the name was shortened to Blackheath Bluecoat School in 1966 (ibid.).
- 5.20. The Study Area itself appears to have undergone little outward change before 1960, but by 1971 section F.3 had been added to the southern end of Block F and section F.2 to the northern end. This proposed extensions are shown on architects plans dated 1961, held in the Metropolitan Archives (GLC/AK/BR/13/175460).
- 5.21. There was no available aerial photography for the 1980s and 90s. By 2000 the school had largely taken on its present appearance, with the addition of Blocks A-G. Architects plans for this layout date from 1971 (ibid.). Construction of the new blocks commenced in 1972 and the school opened as a comprehensive in 1973 (Leader 2017). The temporary classrooms south of the gym were added 2005-6 (ibid.)
- 5.22. The school closed in July 2014, following a decision by Greenwich Borough Council (ibid.).



6. Summary

- 6.1. The desk-based assessment has confirmed that there are no statutory heritage constraints within the Study Area. There have been no previous reports of buried archaeology within the Study Area. However, the course of Watling Street, a well-known Roman Road, follows the line of the Old Dover Road.
- 6.2. A substantial portion of the 1911 National school building remains standing, despite extensive redevelopment of the Study Area in the 1960s and 70s.

7. Conclusion

- 7.1. The Study Area has potential for the survival of buried remains from the Roman period. Roadside settlement and burial is known, and the Study Area falls within the zone of risk where this might have taken place. Cropmarks indicate that a former linear boundary ran across the Study Area from NE-SW; the association with a trackway now no longer extant, possibly indicates a Roman road that would have intersected with Watling Street at the present school gates. The potential for other buried archaeology within the Study Area has not been tested, but would appear to be low.
- 7.2. While the school site as a whole will be of some importance to the local community, the majority of the buildings are of low architectural value. The one exception to this is Block F, which includes most of the original National school built in 1911.
- 7.3. It is suggested that a programme of archaeological evaluation be undertaken to establish the presence and nature of any archaeological remains within the Study Area. Furthermore, any scheme that does not entail retention of the 1911 building should be mitigated with a programme of preservation by record, namely a building survey at Historic England Level 2 or above.



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Methodology

This DBA has been undertaken in accordance with the *Standard and Guidance for historic environment desk-based assessment* (CIfA 2014), which states that a DBA 'will determine, as far as is reasonably possible from existing records, the nature, extent and significance of the historic environment within a specified area' and that in 'development context desk-based assessment will establish the impact of the proposed development on the significance of the historic environment (or will identify the need for further evaluation to do so), and will enable reasoned proposals and decisions to be made whether to mitigate, offset or accept without further intervention that impact (CIfA 2014: 4).

Study Area

A 1km Study Area was established for the Study Area to contextualise the known and potential archaeological resource.

Data Collation

The DBA involved consultation of available archaeological and historical information from documentary, cartographic, photographic and historic environment record sources. The aim was to produce a document that not only considered the potential for archaeological remains on the Study Area, but to also put these into their historical and archaeological context.



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