

# New Brompton Academy, Gillingham, Kent:

## An Archaeological Watching

### Brief Report Phase 1

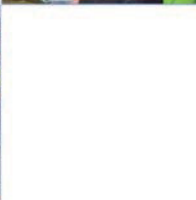
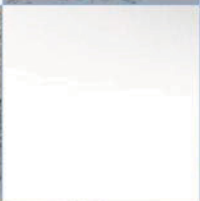
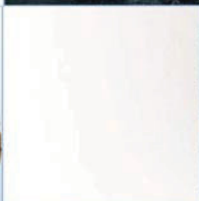
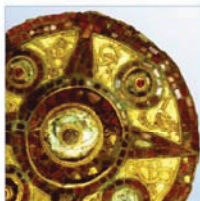
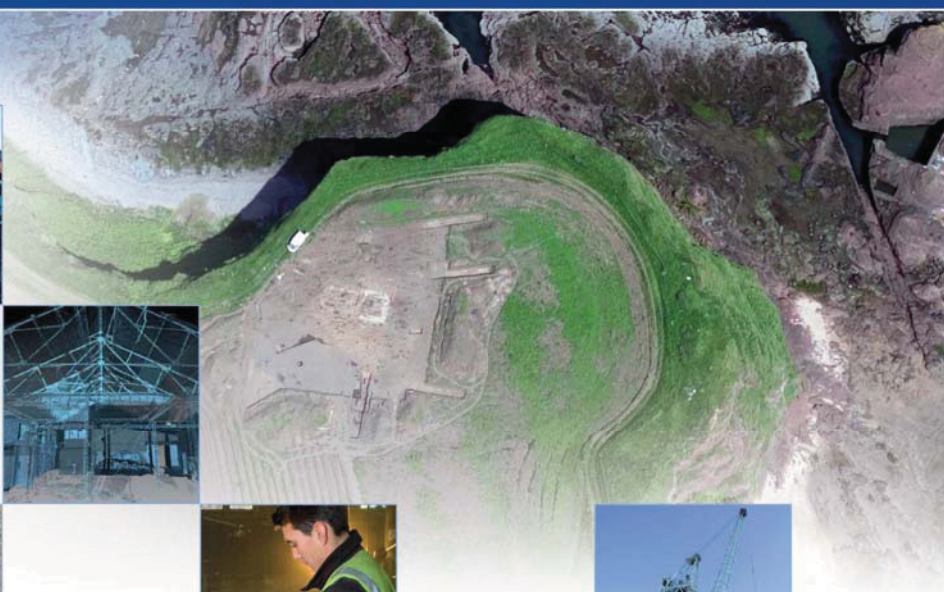
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# New Brompton Academy, Gillingham, Kent: An Archaeological Watching Brief Report Phase 1

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National Grid Reference (NGR):	TQ 7675 6786
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This document has been prepared in accordance with AOC standard operating procedures.

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## Non-Technical Summary

*Between the 9<sup>th</sup> January and 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2012, AOC Archaeology undertook a watching brief at New Brompton Academy Gillingham. The watching brief was commissioned by BAM Construction. The work comprised the monitoring of the grubbing out of existing foundation and the excavation of new foundations.*

*Natural deposits were identified across the site; in the south of the site these were overlain by an undisturbed sequence of topsoil and subsoil. In the centre and the north of the site, substantial horizontal truncation had taken place; this was almost certainly associated with the construction of the previous school buildings. No archaeological features were observed.*

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 New Brompton College is located in Gillingham within the district of Medway, Kent. The school site is situated on the western side of Marlborough Road, centred on national grid reference (NGR) TQ 7675, 6786 (Figure 1).
- 1.2 The school site is approximately 12.3ha in size and is defined by Marlborough Road to the east and Sally Port Gardens to the north. The open ground of the Great Lines bounds the western limit of the site, while the southern boundary is formed by a pathway leading across the Great Lines from Longhill Avenue.
- 1.3 The school buildings were clustered in the centre of the school site with asphalt playground / sports courts to the south and a car park to the north-east of the buildings. The northern and southern areas of the site are grassed playing fields with additional land to the south, outside the fenced boundary; at the time of writing this is currently overgrown and not in use by the school (Figure 2).
- 1.4 The current development scheme comprises the demolition of the existing buildings on the site and construction of a new suite of school buildings and facilities with associated access, car parking and sports pitches.

## **2 Planning Background**

- 2.1 The local planning authority is Medway Council. Archaeological advice to the borough is provided by Ben Found, Archaeological Officer with Kent Heritage Conservation Group.
- 2.2 The site is located within the Brompton Lines Conservation Area, designated by Medway Council due to the presence of the military infrastructure and landscape of barracks, bastions, forts and fields of fire associated with the defence of Chatham Dockyard from Tudor times onwards (Medway Council 2006).
- 2.3 There are no Statutory Listed Buildings within the bounds of the proposed development site. In addition the site does not contain, lie within or within the immediate vicinity of any Registered Parks and Gardens, Registered Battlefields or currently designated World Heritage Sites. However, the proposed development site does lie within the area of the Proposed Chatham World Heritage Site (Chatham World Heritage 2009).
- 2.4 Consultation with Ben Found, Archaeological Officer for Kent County Council, indicated that there are currently no areas or sites of archaeological priority / importance (as designated by Kent County Council or detailed in the Medway Local Plan) within or within the immediate vicinity of the proposed development site.
- 2.5 The current development scheme comprises the demolition of the existing buildings on the site and construction of a new suite of school buildings and facilities with associated access, car parking and sports pitches.
- 2.6 Following consultation with Ben Found of Kent Heritage Conservation Group, a desk-based assessment was decided as the most appropriate first stage in the archaeological process. The desk based assessment (AOC 2009) recommended a programme of archaeological evaluation and monitoring be undertaken within the areas of proposed groundworks. This programme of works would identify and record the nature and extent of the archaeological deposits and can be used to inform on a programme archaeological mitigation, such as archaeological watching brief or excavation, if the results indicate this is necessary.

- 2.7 The first phase of archaeological works was the production of a Written Scheme of Investigation detailing the methodology for an archaeological evaluation and watching brief (AOC, 2011a).
- 2.8 The evaluation focused on two areas to the south and north of the existing school buildings that were accessible and were within the footprint of future works. The evaluation comprised of 10 trenches, no significant archaeological remains were encountered during this phase of works (AOC 2011b). Following this a programme of watching briefs was to be conducted on the grubbing out of foundations.
- 2.9 This report details the results of the first phase of watching brief which focused on the grubbing out of foundations in the north of the site, and the subsequent soil stripping for the new foundation plan in this area (Figure 2). The archaeological watching brief conformed with current best archaeological practice and local and national standards and guidelines.
- English Heritage – Management of Archaeological Projects (EH 1991).
  - Institute for Archaeologists – Code of Conduct (IfA 2010).
  - Institute of Archaeologists – Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs (IfA 2008)
  - Communities and Local Government - Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 5: Planning for the Historic Environment (DCLG 2010).
- 2.10 A further phase of monitoring will be required on the grubbing out of the existing foundations of the southern school building during its demolition, scheduled for 2013.

### **3 Geology and Topography**

- 3.1 The site is located on higher ground overlooking the Old Bourne/Brook, which feeds into the River Medway to the west. River valleys were attractive areas due to the utilisation of their natural resources, their use in trade and communication and as sites for settlement, ritual and industrial activity.
- 3.2 The geology map provided by the Kent Historic Environment Record indicates that the underlying geology of the proposed development site is primarily formed of the Seaford Chalk Formation, comprising a firm white chalk deposit with seams of nodular and tabular flint, which was laid down in the Late Cretaceous Period between 88.5- 83 million years ago (British Geological Survey 2009). These chalk deposits were a valuable natural resource and was mined and exploited for use in the cement industry during the post-medieval period (Medway Council 2009). The presence of dene holes recorded in the surrounding vicinity suggesting some form of chalk mining in this area possibly during the Roman and medieval periods, if not earlier.
- 3.3 The evaluation trenching recorded natural deposits of mid orange-brown silty clay with frequent chalk nodule inclusions across the site at heights between 51.42mOD in the north to 60.92mOD in the south (AOC, 2011b).

### **4 Archaeological and Historical Background**

The following information is taken from the Desk-Based Assessment (AOC 2009).

#### **Prehistoric**

- 4.1 The proposed development site lies on the southern side of the Medway Valley, which has been subject to human settlement from the prehistoric period onwards. The site is located on higher ground overlooking the Old Bourne/Brook which feeds into the Medway to the west.

- 4.2 Some of the earliest remains of human activity have been recovered in Kent and many examples of Palaeolithic stone hand-axes have been recorded across the Medway area, including six Palaeolithic handaxes and debitage and other Lower / Middle Palaeolithic finds found in the area of the Chatham Lines. More implements dated to the Palaeolithic period have also been recorded in Chatham and Gillingham including 13 handaxes and a collection of flint flakes.
- 4.3 Within the wider area there is a potential that additional preserved Palaeolithic evidence survives within the river terrace gravels of the Medway Valley, although the nature and extent of this evidence is not known. Evidence of Mesolithic, Neolithic, Bronze Age and Iron Age activity, and the natural environments of these periods, may survive within the alluvial and peat deposits in this area; this could be associated with the utilisation of the marshy, flood plain environments that existed along the river valley.
- 4.4 Evidence for Bronze Age activity has been recovered in the form of metal implements. A middle Bronze Age rapier measuring approximately 36cm long was found in Chatham High Street, c. 350m to the south-west of the proposed development site and a bronze palstave was found at Chatham Hill, c. 450m to the south-east of the proposed development site. A gold armilla bracelet, thought to date from either the Bronze Age or Iron Age was discovered in 1872 near the Brompton Lines, c. 500m to the north-west of the proposed development.

## **Roman**

- 4.5 Julius Caesar led exploration parties into Kent in 55 and 54 BC and after Britain became part of the Roman Empire in AD 43, Kent was split into two halves; the western half was controlled from Medway's first walled town, Rochester, which was known as 'Durobrivae', meaning 'the stronghold by the bridges' (Medway Council 2009).
- 4.6 Watling Street, which followed the approximate route of the modern A2, c. 150m to the south of the proposed development site, originated as a Roman road leading from Rochester ('Durobrivae') to London ('Londinium'); this would have been a main trade route from the channel ports to the city of London.
- 4.7 Evidence of Roman settlement has been discovered some 650m to the north-west of the proposed development site and comprised of the foundations of three Romano-British buildings. The inside of these walls were covered in a painted fresco of fine white plaster. Large quantities of broken tiles, pottery and coins depicting Claudius, Vespasian, Domitian (1<sup>st</sup> century) and Faustina (2<sup>nd</sup> century) were also recovered, along with cremation remains. The painted walls and recovery of pottery and glassware indicates that it may have been a villa but Captain James Douglas, the original excavator, suggested that it may have been a watchtower, based on its prominent position (Baldwin 1998). It was probably occupied from the late first/early second century to the third century or later and may have been associated with burials found in the area (Kent County Council & English Heritage 2004, 2).
- 4.8 Further evidence of Roman funerary practises come from a Romano-British cemetery, c. 300m to the west of the proposed development site; here 11 inhumation burials were excavated in addition to pottery of Castor ware and Samian ware types. Romano-British cremation urns have also been discovered within the study area, c. 550m to the west and 550m to the north of the proposed development site.

## **Early Medieval and Medieval**



- 4.9 An early-medieval (Anglo-Saxon) barrow cemetery was discovered in 1756, during the construction of the defences at the Chatham Lines, c. 600m to the north-west of the proposed development site. Hasted (1798) records that initial excavation revealed 10 or 12 graves containing human skeletons, some of them buried with different pieces of armour, a part of a helmet, the head of a spear, the umbo of a shield, a large sword, and numerous coloured beads (Hasted, 1798a, 191-226). A 'tumuli' or barrow containing a cremation urn was also discovered. Further graves were excavated by Captain James Douglas in the following years, and by 1782 some 86 burials had been recorded including finds of swords, spearheads, brooches, buckles and glassware (Baldwin, 1998) Roman coins, were also found in the area.
- 4.10 Documentary evidence indicates that Douglas conducted his excavations not only alongside the ditches of the fortifications but also up on the hillside of the Great Lines, a 'short distance north east of the Naval War Memorial' (Baldwin, 1998).
- 4.11 Other isolated burials have been discovered in the Chatham area and are also believed to be early Christian in date. One of these is recorded beside Watling Street, between Woodlands Lane and Featherby Road, c. 1.5km to the south-east of the proposed development site (Baldwin, 1998).
- 4.12 The town of Chatham most likely originated as a mid-Saxon settlement (Kent County Council & English Heritage, 2004, 1). Chatham is first recorded in AD 880, as 'Cetham', taking its roots from the Saxon language either from 'cyte', (a cottage) or 'cet' (wood), and 'ham', (a village) meaning 'the village of cottages' or 'wood or forest settlement' (Hasted 1798a, 191-226; Kent County Council & English Heritage 2004, 3). By the end of the 9<sup>th</sup> century, Chatham was ranked as a half Hundred within the Hundred of Chatham and Gillingham, and by AD 947 a church is documented (Kent County Council & English Heritage 2004, 3-4).
- 4.13 The Domesday Survey of 1086 records a church, a mill, 16 carucates (c. 480 acres) of arable land, 20 acres of meadow, five fisheries and woodland for the pannage of one hog within the Hundred of 'Ceteham' (Hasted 1798a, 191-226). Chatham remained a small settlement based on an agricultural and fishing economy throughout the medieval period, although two merchant ships transporting wool from Chatham are mentioned in 1275. It was not until the dockyards and anchorage at Chatham were established in the Elizabethan period that the town really began to expand (Kent County Council & English Heritage 2004, 7-8).
- 4.14 The proposed development site is now located within the parish of Gillingham, which is recorded in the Domesday Survey of 1086, as the manor of 'Gelingeham' in the Hundred of Chatham. The lands of Gillingham at this time were held by the Archbishop of Canterbury, as they had been long before the Norman Conquest (Hasted 1798b, 191-226).
- 4.15 'Upbery' was a sub-manor in the western part of the parish of Gillingham and the manor house is thought to have been located in the area now occupied by the Naval War Memorial c. 350m to the west of the site. The manor was granted to the Benedictine nunnery of St. Sexburg on the Isle of Shepey in c. 1122, until the dissolution of the monasteries under Henry VIII in 1536. In 1602 the manor was left in a will to the principal and scholars of Brazen Nose College, in Oxford (Hasted 1798b, 226-249) in whose hands it remained, while being lease out, until it was destroyed as part of land clearance for the expansion of the Dockyard defences.
- 4.16 It is not known if there was a small settlement or hamlet associated with Upbery Manor, however Upbery rectory and church are mentioned by Hasted in 1798 (Hasted 1798b, 226-249); though this might be referring to a church at Gillingham. The proposed development site would likely have lain within the agricultural hinterland of the manor at this time. This manor later gave its name to 'Upbury Manor Secondary School', which was built within the proposed development site in 1957.



## Post-Medieval

- 4.17 The first documentation relating to the navy's use of Chatham for the storage of ships is dated 1547 and records the use of 'storehouses for winter storage of ships'. Chatham (or 'Gillingham' or 'Gillyngeham Water') was considered to be safer than Portsmouth in 1550 and in 1567 the Naval Headquarters were established at Chatham (Kent County Council & English Heritage 2004, 7 - 8).
- 4.18 Reclamation of land previously comprising intertidal marshland along the western bank of the Medway may have begun as early as the Late Middle Ages and this provided space for additional housing and wharves (Kent County Council & English Heritage 2004, 7 - 8). In 1580, a new wharf and crane were built in the area now known as Old Gun Wharf and in the following years many more wharves, mast ponds and storehouses were constructed. Chatham dockyard soon overtook Woolwich and Deptford in importance and during the Dutch Wars (1652-1674) Chatham dockyard became the most important Royal Yard in the country. (Kent County Council & English Heritage 2004, 7-8).
- 4.19 Given the importance of the Chatham Dockyards it became necessary for defences to be constructed to protect the naval ships and commercial interest of the docklands. Upnor Castle (outside the study area) was built on the western bank of the Medway in 1559 to protect the Chatham anchorage and the dockyard and in 1649 Gillingham Fort was built above the dockyard. Following the significant raid by a Dutch fleet in 1667, the fort was strengthened and acquired the name Gillingham Castle.
- 4.20 In the 18<sup>th</sup> century new fortifications were constructed on the hillside on the landward side of the dockyard to provide protection from landward attack. Work on the Brompton Lines defence system (also known as the Chatham Lines or Cumberland Lines) began in 1756 following the threat of invasion by the French during the Seven Years War.
- 4.21 During the late 18<sup>th</sup> century and Napoleonic period the dockyard was extensively rebuilt to cope with the expansion of the Navy and was subject to extension and fortification each time invasion threatened: including during the American Revolutionary War (1775-83) and the Napoleonic Wars (1803-15). The Lines were again extended in the 1890s with a series of forts (outside the study area) in a semi-circle approximately two miles outside Chatham; these comprise the last traditional fortifications to be constructed in Britain (Kent County Council & English Heritage 2004, 9; Medway Council 2006).
- 4.22 Fort Amherst, c. 650m to the north-west of the proposed development site, was formed from the (refortified) earlier Amherst Redoubt along with a series of batteries and bastions. A system of underground tunnels built between 1776 and 1805 linked different areas of the fort and was designed for protection should the fort be held under siege. Unlike many other forts built in this period, Fort Amherst was not subject to Victorian modernisation, and therefore, comprises a good surviving example of Georgian military architecture (Fort Amherst Online, 2009).
- 4.23 A large number of the structures in Chatham were built from timber and little survives of pre-19<sup>th</sup> century architecture as the town suffered considerable damage from a fire which swept through the streets in June 1800 and from another fire twenty years later (Kent County Council & English Heritage 2004, 4-6). However, occupation evidence from this period has survived in a collection of pits c. 800m to the west of the proposed development site, containing post-medieval artefacts including mid-18th century pottery and clay tobacco pipes from the early 17<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> centuries.
- 4.24 Evidence for chalk extraction and associated activities is recorded within 1km of the site in the form of limekilns, chalk pits and lime works recorded c. 650m and 550m to the south-west and 650m to

the south-east of the proposed development site. An undated dene hole was also discovered in 1884, less than 50m to the east of the site, in the grounds of the hospital; while there is no firm evidence from this dene hole, it is possible that it may have originated as a clay extraction pit.

- 4.25 A brickfield is recorded c. 450m to the south-west of the proposed development site. Agricultural activities are indicated by windmills and a maltings, which would have processed the crops produced in the surrounding fields.
- 4.26 Surviving 19th century architecture within 1km of the site includes 8 Grade II Listed buildings. The closest of these to the site are Thorney Lodge c. 200m to the south of the proposed development site, and the Medway Hospital Laundry Water Tower, c. 150m to the east of the proposed development site; while the majority of the Listed Buildings are located within the town of Chatham between 600-700m to the west / south-west of the proposed development site.
- 4.27 The Grade II Listed Medway Hospital Laundry Water Tower c. 150m to the east of the proposed development site is visible from within the site. This square brick tower with lead pyramidal roof was built around 1900 and was part of the former military hospital that stood on the site. The Royal Naval Hospital itself was constructed between 1899 and 1905, replacing the original naval hospital in Chatham. The hospital was transferred to the National Health Service in 1961 and since then many of the original buildings have been replaced.
- 4.28 The Brook Low Level pumping station c. 600m to the west of the proposed development site is a designated Scheduled Monument. The monument comprises a small pumping house constructed from brick with a slate roof. It was built in 1925 when the pumps were installed.
- 4.29 The Medway area was a prime target for attack during the both the First and Second World Wars due to its importance as a naval base and as it could be flown over by the Luftwaffe en-route to London; the river Medway would have been easy to follow from the air. Two communal air raid shelters are recorded c. 350m and 600m to the north-west of the proposed development site, but there would have been many more at the time.
- 4.30 The docklands and Brompton Lines barracks, along with an aircraft factory in Rochester comprised important strategic assets. As a result, a considerable number of defences were built in the area; a number of these military features survive within the study area, particularly in the area of the Brompton Lines; these include:
- Sentry Boxes, probably dating from the First World War, c. 50m to the east and 300m to the south-east of the proposed development site;
  - A line of spigot mortar anti-tank defences c. 500m to the north-west of the proposed development site;
  - A pillbox c. 500m to the north-west of the proposed development site;
  - Second World War anti-tank brickhouse / blockhouses with placements for two and six pounder guns, c. 600m to the west and c. 500m to the north-west of the proposed development site.
- 4.31 The Grade II Listed Naval war memorial c. 350m to the west of the proposed development site forms a striking landmark comprising an obelisk memorial by Sir Robert Latimer, built in 1920 and dedicated to those who lost their lives in the First World War. This is enclosed by a semi-circular stone crescent screen, which records the Royal Navy personnel killed during the Second World War (Medway Council, 2006).
- 4.32 There is a long history of rumours connected to the existence of tunnels relating to Fort Amherst and the dockyard defences which are said to underlie parts of the Great Lines, including the area of the proposed development site.

- 4.33 Consultation with archaeological officers at Kent County Council has confirmed that there are no known tunnels recorded on the Kent Historic Environment Record database as lying within or within the immediate vicinity of the proposed development site.
- 4.34 However, there are a number of bricked up or blocked tunnel entrance in and around the Great Lines areas which could indicate the presence of tunnels underlying this area. Of particular note are several bricked up / blocked entrances to tunnels noted c.120m to the south of the proposed development site on Chatham Hill.
- 4.35 The tunnels are described on a local history website as comprising of a large bricked-up entrance with two smaller tunnel entrances nearby; one of which has been blocked up with a large chalk bolder. The large bricked-up entrance is carved into the bottom of the chalk cliff under Mount Pleasant, is large enough for a train or tram and is thought to lead to the Medway Hospital (Ross, 2003).
- 4.36 Another entry on the website gives more detail about the two smaller entrances, as follows:
- 'I used to play in these tunnels which were also accessible via a farm that used to be on the lines known as Cheeseman's farm, long since gone and the expansion of Upbury Manor school has covered the original site of the farm. The farm had a spiralling stairway down to the network of tunnels under the lines, one of which came out at the bottom of Chatham Hill...There were tunnels that branched off in all directions, only a few could be explored that hadn't caved in. One led out to the Luton Arches, behind the Billboard [close to junction of Chatham Hill and the London, Chatham, and Dover railway line to the south of the proposed development site]...this one would gradually increase in accent, then open up in to a great big chamber, with lots of other tunnels coming off it, a hub so to speak....from the entrance at the Great Lines, there is a tunnel that goes South on a downward slope to a T junction that runs East/West. Off this tunnel there are chambers which had empty boxes/chests, but smelled of sulphur'* (Anon. 2005)
- 4.37 The location of Cheeseman's Farm is not known and is not shown or labelled on the available mapping data; however it could be a six sided enclosure shown on aerial photographs as lying in the south of the proposed development site.;
- 4.38 The provenance of this description has not, as yet, been confirmed through archaeological investigations. However, if accurate and relating to a site within the proposed development site, it would suggest a possible network of tunnels partly underlying the site; most probably in the southern area. The nature and extent of these tunnels are unknown at this stage.
- 4.39 Upbury Manor Secondary School was constructed within the proposed development site between 1957 and 1959 by Kent County Council and Gillingham Borough Council. When the school opened there were 650 pupils enrolled and by 1974 there were approximately 1700 (Gillingham Public Libraries, 1974).

### **Previous Work**

- 4.40 The first phase of fieldwork comprised the excavation of 10 evaluation trenches; no significant archaeological features were recorded, the only features noted were a series of plough scars and a single modern posthole (AOC, 2011b).

## **5 Aims of the Investigation**

5.1 The aims of the watching brief were defined as follows:

- To establish the presence/absence of archaeological remains within the site.
- To determine the extent, condition, nature, character, quality and date of any archaeological remains encountered.
- To record and sample excavate any archaeological remains encountered.
- To assess the ecofactual and environmental potential of any archaeological features and deposits.
- To determine the extent of previous truncations of the archaeological deposits.
- To enable Ben Found, Archaeological Officer for Kent County Council, to make an informed decision on the status of the condition, and any possible requirement for further work in order to satisfy that condition.
- To disseminate the results of the investigation to all interested parties.

5.2 The specific aims of the investigation were:

- To determine whether evidence for prehistoric activity is present within the development site.
- To determine whether the evidence for Roman activity in the locality extends into the site and, if present, to characterise the nature of this activity.
- To determine whether any evidence for early medieval activity in the locality extends into the site and, if present, to characterise the nature of this activity.
- To determine whether any evidence of 18<sup>th</sup> century - Second World War date relating to the anti invasion defences of the area survive within the development site (in particular the tunnels and stair well reputed to have been located at Cheesmans Farm)

5.3 The final aim was to make public the results of the investigation, subject to any confidentiality restrictions, through ADS OASIS website.

## **6 Methodology**

6.1 The watching brief was carried out between the 9<sup>th</sup> January and 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2012 and was focussed on the monitoring of the grubbing out of the existing foundations and the excavation of the new foundations (Figure 2).

6.2 Fieldwork procedures followed the Museum of London Archaeological Site Manual (3<sup>rd</sup> Edition) (MoL 1994).

6.3 The excavation, recording and reporting conformed to current best archaeological practice and local and national standards and guidelines:

- English Heritage – Management of Archaeological Projects (EH 1991).
- English Heritage – Archaeological Guidance Paper 3: Standards and Practices in Archaeological Fieldwork (EH 1998a).
- English Heritage – Environmental Archaeology: A guide to the theory and practice of methods, from sampling and recovery to post-excavation (EH 2002).
- Institute for Archaeologists – Standards and Guidance and Guidelines for Finds Work (IfA 2008a).

- Institute for Archaeologists – Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs (IfA 2008b).
- Institute for Archaeologists – Code of Conduct (IfA 2010).
- Rescue/United Kingdom Institute for Conservation – First Aid for Finds (Second Edition) (CBA 1998).
- United Kingdom Institute for Conservation – Conservation Guidelines No.2 (UKIC 1983).
- United Kingdom Institute for Conservation – Guidance for Archaeological Conservation Practice (UKIC 1990).

6.4 Archaeological recording consisted of:

- Limited hand cleaning of archaeological sections and surfaces sufficient to establish the stratigraphic sequence exposed.
- The collection of dating evidence from in-situ deposits and spoil scans.
- A scaled photographic recording of representative exposed sections and surfaces, along with sufficient photographs to establish the setting and scale of the groundworks.
- A record of the datum levels of archaeological deposits, where obtainable.

6.5 A unique site code, **MRG 11** was obtained prior to the commencement of fieldwork. This was used as the site identifier on all records.

6.6 The watching brief was undertaken by Ian Hogg, Project Supervisor under the overall direction of Alan Ford, Project Manager. The work was monitored by Ben Found on behalf of Kent County Council.

## 7 Results

Context Number	Thickness	Depth below ground level	Description/Interpretation
1	0.10m - 2.00m	0.00m	Demolition deposits
2	0.20m - 0.40m	0.00m	Topsoil
3	0.50m - 0.70m	0.40m	Subsoil
4	0.20m - 1.00m	0.40m – 1.00m	Natural clay
5	1.00m	0.60m – 1.50m	Natural chalk
6	0.80m	0.20m	Made ground

7.1 Natural white chalk (5) was observed in the south of the site at depths of between 1.50m and 0.20m. The chalk was overlain by firm mid orange-brown clay-silt containing frequent flint nodules (4), interpreted as natural head deposits, between 0.20m and 1.00m thick.

7.2 In the southern portion of the monitored area, the natural deposits were overlain by dark greyish brown clay-silt subsoil (3) between 0.50m and 0.70m thick. This deposit was sealed by topsoil deposit (2) consisting of dark brown clay-silt, between 0.20m and 0.40m thick.



- 7.3 To the north of the footprint of the previous building, the natural deposits were overlain by made ground deposits (6) consisting of firm, dark brown clay-silt with frequent rubble inclusions, 0.80m thick. In the footprint of the previous building the natural deposits were overlain by demolition deposits from the previous building (1), these consisted of loose, mixed rubble of brick, concrete and metal between 0.10m and 2.00m thick. The footprint of the previous building and the area immediately north of this appear to have undergone significant horizontal truncation, probably associated with the construction of the previous school.



**Plate 1. Sample section in the south of the site, looking south.**

## **8 Finds and Environmental Samples**

- 8.1 No finds were retained from the watching brief and no environmental samples were taken.

## **9 Conclusions**

- 9.1 The investigation confirmed the absence of archaeological features across the footprint of the new building. In the south, an undisturbed sequence of topsoil, subsoil and natural deposits was identified. To the north and under the footprint of the previous school building, significant truncation had taken place.
- 9.3 No archaeological features or finds were recorded and no further work is recommended; however, the final decision rests with Ben Found of Kent County Council.

## **10. Publication and Archive Deposition**

- 10.1 Due to the nature of the project, publication will be restricted to a summary of results in the Kent Archaeological Review and via the Archaeological Data Service (ADS) (Appendix B).
- 10.2 The archive, consisting of paper records, drawings, photographs, finds and digital records will be deposited with the local museum.



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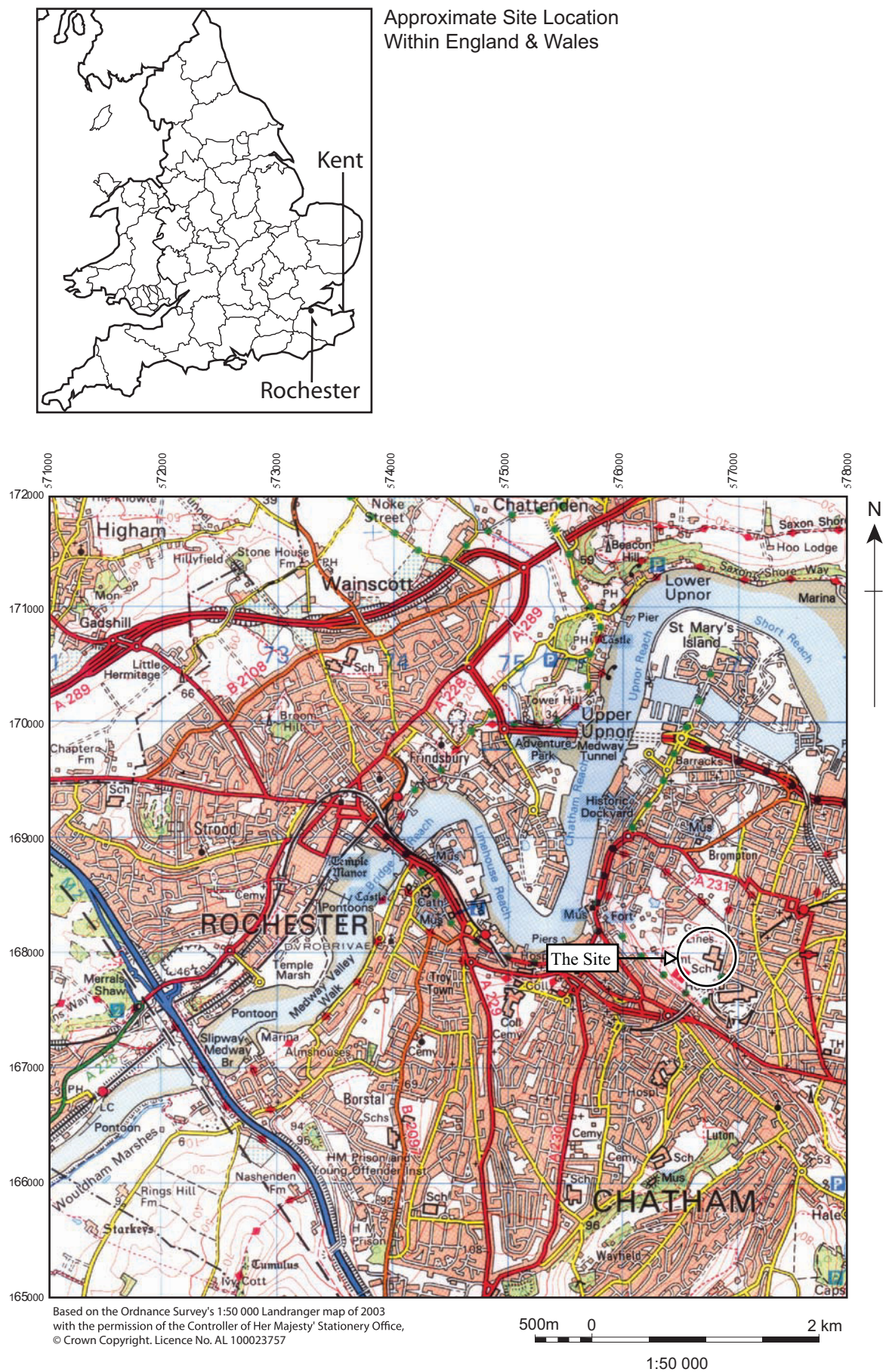
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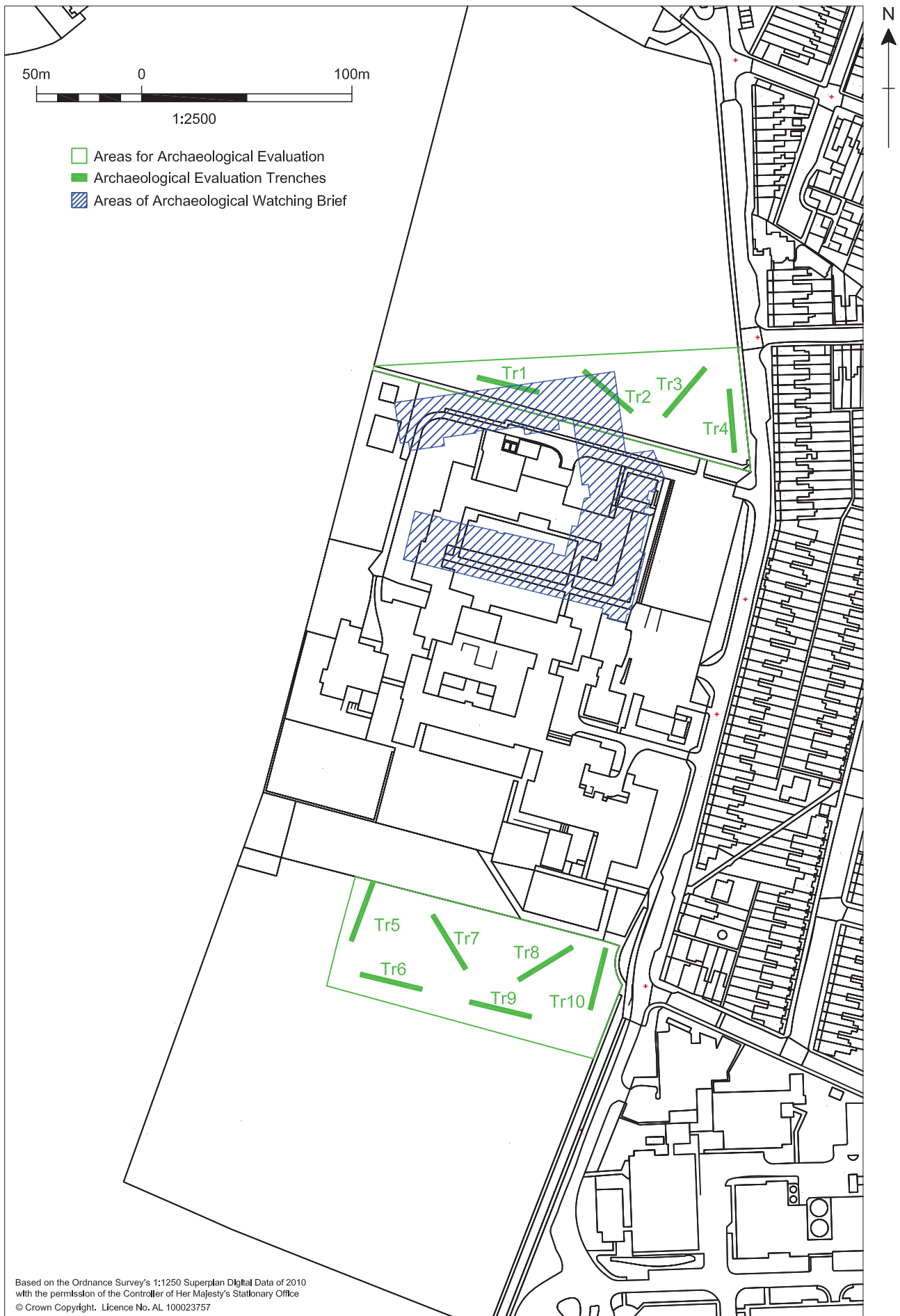
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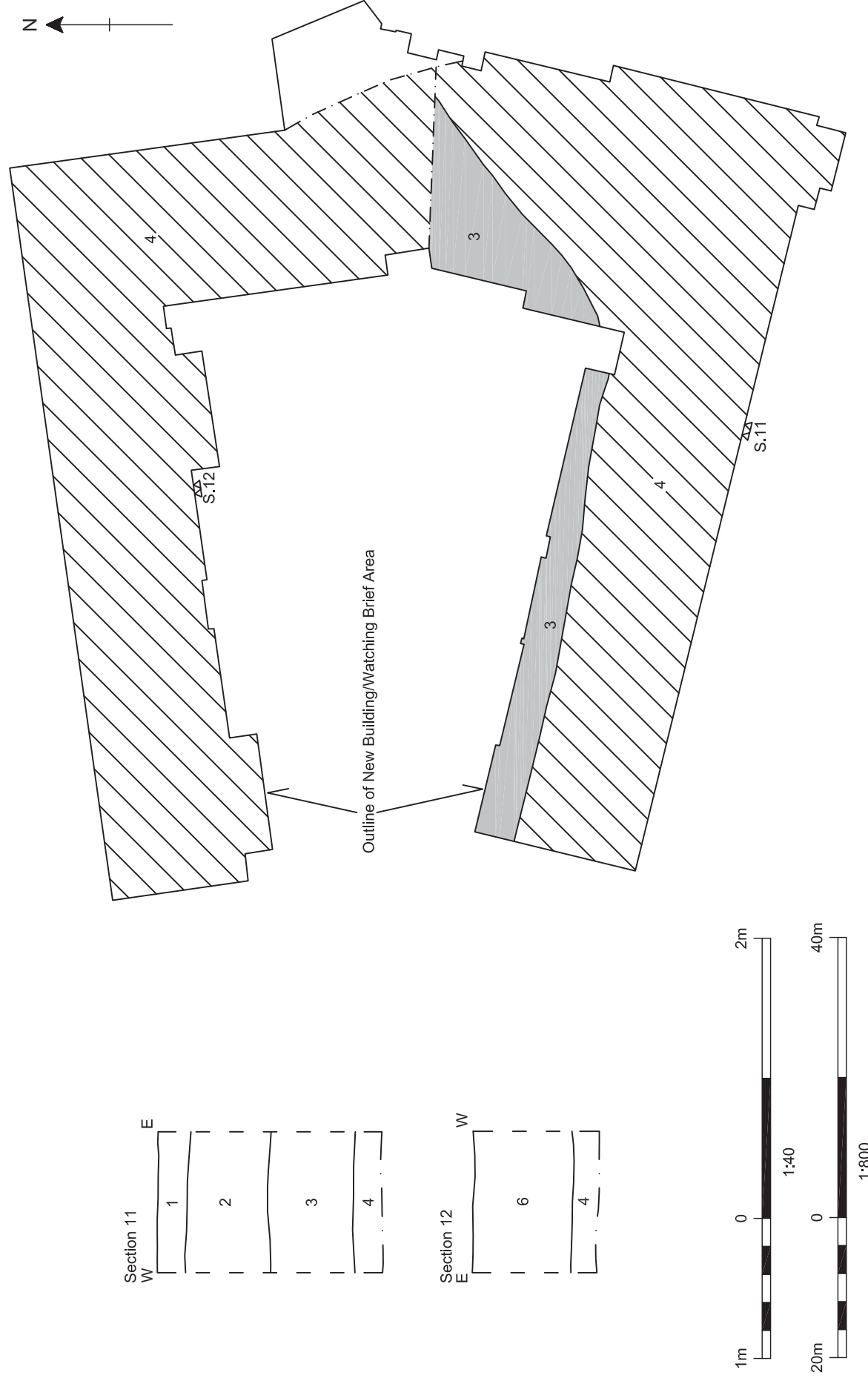


**Figure 1:** Site Location





**Figure 2:** Detailed Site / Watching Brief Location Plan



**Figure 3:** Watching Brief Area: Plan (1:800) and Sections (1:40)

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## Appendices



## Appendix A – Context Register

Context Number	Length	Width	Thickness	Description/Interpretation
1	88.00m	60.00m	0.10m - 2.00m	Demolition deposits
2	105.00m	25.00m	0.20m - 0.40m	Topsoil
3	105.00m	25.00m	0.50m - 0.70m	Subsoil
4	120.00m	105.00m	0.20m - 1.00m	Natural clay
5	120.00m	105.00m	1.00m	Natural chalk
6	105.00m	20.00m	0.80m	Made ground

## Appendix B – OASIS Form

### **OASIS ID: aocarcha1-105529**

#### Project details

Project name New Brompton Academy

An archaeological evaluation was carried out at the site of New Brompton College, Gillingham. The evaluation comprised of ten trenches located within areas of proposed sports pitches. Plough marks were recorded in one trench but no further significant archaeology was recorded.

#### Short description of the project

The first phase of a watching brief was subsequently undertaken on the grubbing out of existing foundations. Natural deposits were recorded across the site and were overlain by an undisturbed sequence of topsoil and subsoil in the south. In the north and centre of the site, significant truncation had occurred; made ground and demotion deposits overlay the natural.

Project dates Start: 27-07-2011 End: 03-02-2012

Previous/future  
work No / Yes

Any associated  
project reference 30772 - Contracting Unit No.  
codes

Any associated  
project reference MRG11 - Sitecode  
codes

Type of project Recording project

Site status Conservation Area

Current Land use Other 14 - Recreational usage

Monument type PLOUGH SCARS Uncertain

Monument type POST HOLE Modern

Significant Finds    NONE None

Investigation type   'Watching Brief'

Prompt                Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPS

Project location

Country                England

Site location           KENT MEDWAY GILLINGHAM New Brompton Academy

Postcode               ME7 5HT

Study area             12.30 Hectares

Site coordinates       TQ 7675 6786 51.3816822370 0.540222686242 51 22 54 N 000 32 24 E  
Point

Height OD / Depth    Min: 51.42m Max: 60.92m

Project creators

Name                   of  
Organisation           AOC Archaeology

Project                brief  
originator             Kent County Council

Project                design  
originator             AOC Archaeology

Project  
director/manager     Alan Ford

Project supervisor    Catherine Edwards

Project supervisor    Ian Hogg

Project supervisor    Chris Clarke

Type of  
sponsor/funding Contractor  
body

Name of  
sponsor/funding BAM Construction Ltd  
body

Project archives

Physical Archive As yet undetermined  
recipient

Digital Archive As yet to be confirmed  
recipient

Digital Contents 'Stratigraphic'

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

Paper Archive As yet undetermined  
recipient

Paper Archive ID MRG11

Paper Contents 'Stratigraphic'

Paper Media 'Context  
available sheet','Map','Microfilm','Photograph','Plan','Report','Section','Unpublished Text'

Project  
bibliography 1

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

Title NEW BROMPTON ACADEMY, GILLINGHAM, KENT: AN  
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Date 2011

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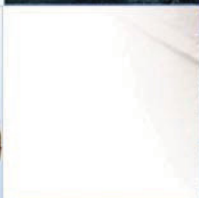
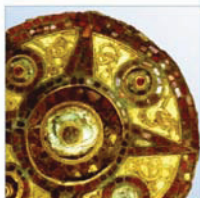
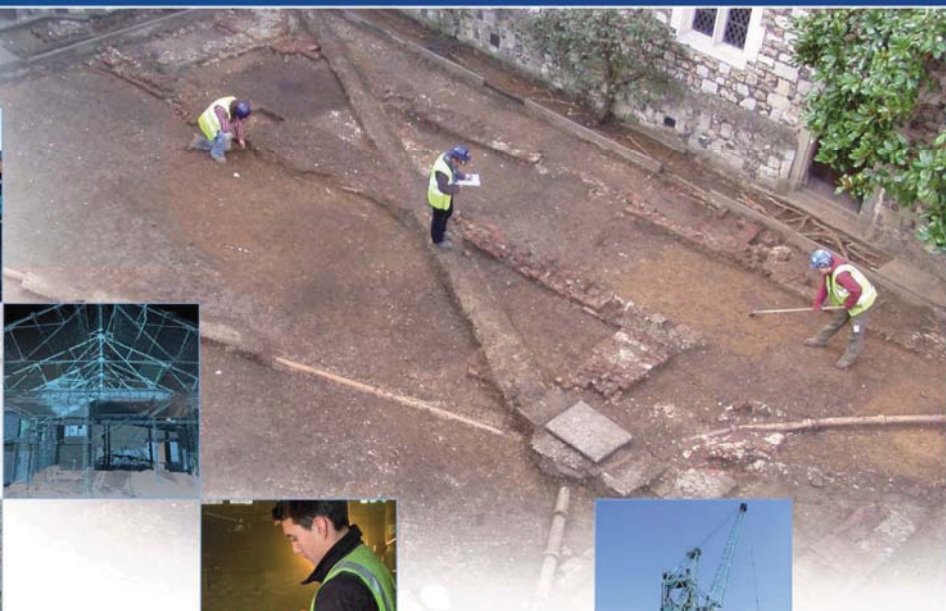
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## OASIS:

Please e-mail [English Heritage](#) for OASIS help and advice

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