

Wainscott Primary School, Medway, Kent: An Archaeological Evaluation Report

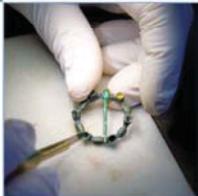
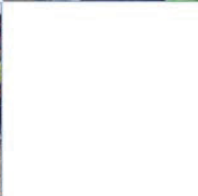
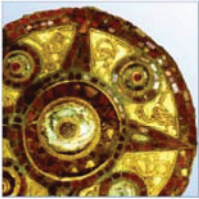
Planning Application: MC/12/2339

National Grid Reference Number: TQ 74886 70812

AOC Project No: 32238

Site Code: WPS12

Date: November 2012



ARCHAEOLOGY

HERITAGE

CONSERVATION

Wainscott Primary School, Medway, Kent:

An Archaeological Evaluation Report

On Behalf of: BAM Construction
Centrium
Griffiths Way
St Albans
Hertfordshire
AL1 2RD

And: Medway Council
Gun Wharf
Dock Road
Chatham
Kent
ME4 4TR

National Grid Reference (NGR): TQ 74886 70812

AOC Project No: 32238

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Date: November 2012

This document has been prepared in accordance with AOC standard operating procedures.

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Date: November 2012

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Date: November 2012

Draft Report Stage: Draft

Date: November 2012

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Non-Technical Summary

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by AOC Archaeology Group in November 2012 at the site of Wainscott Primary School, Medway, Kent. The work was undertaken on behalf of BAM Construction and Medway Council. The aim of the evaluation was to establish the presence/absence of archaeological remains within the site and determine the extent, condition, nature, character, quality and date of archaeological remains should they be encountered.

The evaluation comprised of four trenches measuring approximately 10.00m x 1.80m. The archaeological evaluation established the geological horizon across the site which sloped from 11.06m OD in the west of the site to 9.51m OD towards the east. Two shallow gullies and a possible pit were recorded during the investigation; however the size and character of these features were not suggestive of significant features of any antiquity. A sequence of colluvium, subsoil and topsoil was recorded across the site. The sequence of deposits recorded during the investigation is not suggestive of previous truncation. Due to the lack of significant archaeological remains, no further archaeological work is recommended.

Publication of the evaluation findings will be carried out through a short summary of the fieldwork submitted to the local fieldwork roundup. An OASIS form has also been completed and an electronic copy of the evaluation report will be deposited with the Archaeological Data Service (ADS). The site archive will be prepared in accordance with local and national guidance and will be deposited with the local recipient museum.

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This document presents the results of an archaeological evaluation at Wainscott Primary School, Wainscott Road, Medway, Kent. The archaeological work comprised a four trench evaluation conducted in November 2012.
- 1.2 The proposed development site is located at Wainscott Primary School, Wainscott, situated on high ground to the north-east and north of Strood and Rochester; National Grid Reference (NGR) TQ 7488 7081 (Figure 1). The site comprises the grounds and buildings of Wainscott Primary School and is roughly triangular in plan, measuring approximately 2500sqm in size. It is bound by adjacent pre-school and residential properties on the west, southwest, northwest and north; and the A289 dual carriageway on the south, southeast and east (Figure 2).

2 Planning Background

- 2.1 The local planning authority is Medway Council. Archaeological advice is provided by Ben Found, Archaeological Officer at Kent County Council.
- 2.2 The proposed development involves alterations and extensions to increase the existing primary school from 1 Form Entry to 2 Form Entry plus an integrated foundation stage. The proposed works include extensions to buildings, extension of school grounds to incorporate the triangle of land to the south, provision of a new vehicular and pedestrian access from Wainscott Road at the southern tip of the extended site, new staff and visitor parking and new play/sports facilities.
- 2.3 The application site does not lie within any designated Conservation Areas; although the Frindsbury and Manor Farm Conservation Area lies approximately 225m to the southwest of the site boundary. There are no Scheduled Monuments, Registered Parks and Gardens or World Heritage Sites within the study area.
- 2.4 The application site does not lie within a current Area of Archaeological Potential (AAP), as identified by Kent County Council. However, these are currently under review and it has been indicated (Croxford pers. Comm.) that the application site will most likely be included in an extended AAP, related to the multi-period archaeology recorded at Hoo Road and the Four Elms roundabout site.
- 2.5 The first stage of works involved the production of a Heritage Statement (AOC 2012a), which assessed the potential for the development to impact on the archaeological and built heritage assets of the site. The report recommended that due to the high levels of archaeological remains recorded on several sites nearby, it would be likely that an archaeological condition would be placed on any planning application.
- 2.6 Planning permission for the development (MC/12/2339) has been submitted to Medway Council for approval. This is currently being reviewed (to be decided January 2013). As such these archaeological works were carried out prior to planning permission in order to pre-empt any archaeological conditions.
- 2.7 A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) was completed by AOC Archaeology (2012b) which outlined the proposed works. This WSI was approved by Kent County Council and formed the scope of the works undertaken.

3 Geology and Topography

- 3.1 The British Geological Survey (BGS 2006) shows the site to be located on Clay and Silt head deposits overlying bedrock geology of Thanet Sand formations of sand, silt and clay.
- 3.2 The archaeological works to the northwest, on the Hoo Road southern site, recorded a general below ground sequence of 0.30m of ploughsoil overlying 0.10m of mid-brown clayey silt subsoil (often missing in the sequence) underlain by natural gravel or sand.
- 3.3 A colluvial layer, c. 0.55m in thickness, was recorded underlying the subsoil in a natural depression in the southeast corner of the Hoo Road site. This layer, or similar, may extend into the application site boundary.
- 3.4 Topographically, the application site is situated in a favourable location for early settlement activity, being close to a variety of natural resources and overlooking a dry river valley that would have formerly connected to a creek on the River Medway (AOC 2012a).

4 Archaeological And Historical Background

- 4.1 The information below has been extracted and summarised from the Heritage Statement (AOC 2012a).

The Prehistoric and Roman Periods

(Palaeolithic c. 500,000 – 10000 BC; Mesolithic c. 10000 to 4000 BC; Neolithic c. 4000-2200 BC; Bronze Age c. 2200-700 BC and Iron Age c. 700 BC - AD 43 Roman AD43 – AD 410)

- 4.2 The earliest evidence within proximity of the development site is from the works during the construction of the Wainscott Bypass at the Four Elms Roundabout site; just over 500m to the north of the application site. These works revealed gravel deposits thought to be of the 3rd or 2nd river terrace which, in other locations, has produced finds of Palaeolithic date. The Kent Historic Environment Record (KHER) also records the findspots of a mammoth tooth, c. 140m to the northeast of the application site boundary; a mammoth's tusk, c. 470m to the north and 'Lower / middle Palaeolithic finds' c. 260m to the north.
- 4.3 There is no significant evidence of Mesolithic or Neolithic settlement within close proximity to the site, although general land-use and activity is recorded on the KHER via a number of early prehistoric pits scattered across the east-facing slope of the northern Hoo Road site (thought to be Neolithic, but also producing Mesolithic material and carbon-dated charcoal).
- 4.4 Bronze Age activity is indicated through the Bronze Age pits c. 200m and 30m to the north-east of the applications site boundary, respectively; Early Bronze Age material and middle and late Bronze Age field systems recorded during the Hoo Road investigations; and a quantity of late Bronze Age struck flint and pottery at the Four Elms roundabout site. The four Elms evidence has been postulated to be indicative of nearby settlement activity (CgMs 2003); although no confirmed settlement site has yet been identified.
- 4.5 Iron Age activity has also been recorded within the study area, including a late Iron Age trackway cutting across the northern Hoo Road site, c. 390m to the north. This trackway may have continued in use into the Roman period and relate to Roman enclosures, possible temple, and other activity noted at the Four Elms Roundabout site. The KHER records findspots relating to Roman material recovered from metal detecting in the areas of both Hoo Road sites, however no Romano-British features were recorded within these areas.

The Early Medieval (AD 410 – AD 1066) and Medieval Periods (AD 1066 – AD 1538)

- 4.6 The most substantial archaeological evidence recovered in close proximity to the site is of early medieval date. At the Four Elms Roundabout site, evidence of a middle Saxon enclosed settlement was recorded (dating to c. AD 575-700) which included consecutive overlapping enclosures, a bow-fronted hall or barn; and a medieval field system (AOC 2012a). Within the Hoo Road sites, further evidence was recorded including sunken feature buildings, a wall trench structure, ditched compound, pits and ditches. Together with the evidence from Four Elms, this has been interpreted as evidence of a domestic settlement, possibly comprising a mixture of low status occupational and other evidence, radiating out of a higher status central focus – possibly an trading and estate centre (CgMs / Wessex Archaeology 2009, 33).
- 4.7 The nearest early medieval evidence to the application site itself was the enclosure, pits and sunken feature building, c. 200m to the northeast. The evaluation trenches and areas of excavation to the south of this did not record any similar evidence; indeed the majority of trenches in this area were negative. This could suggest the application site lay outside the core extent of this early medieval settlement zone which, based upon the available evidence, may have extended from the enclosure to the northeast (of the site) towards a focus in the north; possibly around the area of the Four Elms Roundabout investigations.
- 4.8 Medieval activity within the surrounding landscape is sparser, with no substantial medieval features recorded during the Hoo Road investigations. It is postulated in the post-excavation report (CgMs / Wessex Archaeology 2009, 33) that this area was under agricultural use, probably as strip fields, during this period.

The Post-Medieval (AD 1538 – AD 1900) and Modern Period (AD 1900 to present)

- 4.9 This activity would most likely have continued into the post-medieval, with no evidence of any substantial activity within the surrounding area until the development of the village of Wainscott. The Hoo Road sites did suggest an increase in general land-use and activity during the post-medieval as represented by find scatters / metal detecting finds. Of particular note were five small cannonballs and 84 pieces of lead shot (probable 17th – 18th century date) which were recovered during the course of the investigations and could be indicative of military activity – either training of local militias or some more significant altercations, although this is uncertain (CgMs / Wessex Archaeology 2009).
- 4.10 Wainscott lay within the larger parish of Frindsbury Extra and was probably a small hamlet focused around the junction of Wainscott and Hoo Road, for most of the post-medieval period. During the 19th century, the hamlet developed southwards along Wainscott Road and northwest along Higham Road. The hamlet mainly comprised small residential properties; although industrial activity (pottery works) are recorded on the 1840s Tithe Map and early Ordnance Survey (OS) mapping.
- 4.11 This area falls within Plot '345' on the Tithe map; recorded on the accompanying apportionment as '*Broad Field*'. This plot was an arable field (at the time of the survey), owned by the Dean and Chapter of Rochester and 'occupied' by a Mr. Ambrose Spong Junior. It stretched from the rear of the Wainscott Road properties on the west to modern day Upnor Road in the east / southeast and almost to Hoo Road in the north.
- 4.12 The original Wainscott Primary School is first shown on the 1897 OS map. The area of the application site, to the east and south of the school, is shown as undeveloped until labelled as a playing field on the 1933 OS map, with allotment gardens are marked to south, within the extent of the proposed habitat area.

- 4.13 The modern school buildings within the application site were constructed between 1984 and 2008. There is no evidence on any of the post-medieval and modern mapping of any other activities or development within the application site.

5 Aims of the Investigation

- 5.1 The aims of the evaluation were defined as being:
- 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 the archaeology advisor to the Medway 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 make available to interested parties the results of the investigation.
- 5.2 The specific aims of the evaluation were defined as being:
- Determine the presence of any prehistoric evidence on site.
 - To identify any evidence that may relate to the early medieval-medieval activities on site.
 - Determine the presence of any features which may relate to the post-medieval development of the area.
- 5.3 The final aim is to make public the results of the investigation, subject to any confidentiality restrictions.

6 Methodology

- 6.1 The evaluation consisted of the machine excavation of four trenches (10m by 1.8m), excavated under archaeological supervision.
- 6.2 The trenches were located as laid out in the Written Scheme of Investigation (AOC 2012b) (Figure 2). The work was undertaken on the 1st November 2012.
- 6.3 All machining was carried out using a tracked excavator with a smooth bladed ditching bucket, under the constant supervision of the archaeological Project Officer.
- 6.4 The site code (**WPS 12**) has been assigned to the project and will be used as the site identifier for all records produced.
- 6.5 All evaluation trenches were accurately located to the National Grid and their levels calculated using differential GPS.
- 6.6 All recording was in accordance with the standards and requirements of the Museum of London's *Archaeological Field Manual* (MoL 3rd edition 1994).
- 6.7 All of the work was carried out in line with:
- Archaeological Guidance Papers (AGP): 3-4, Standards and Practices in Archaeological Fieldwork (English Heritage 2009a & b)
 - IfA Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation (IfA 2008b).

- 6.8 A continuous unique numbering system was employed. For the single trench, a block of numbers in a continuous sequence was allocated. In this report the archaeological fills and layers are represented in curved brackets i.e. (), whilst the cut numbers are represented in square brackets i.e. [].
- 6.9 Written descriptions, comprising both factual data and interpretative elements, were recorded on standardised sheets.

7 Results

Trench 1

Table of the stratigraphic sequence

Context No	Thickness	Height of Deposit (mOD)	Description/Interpretation
100	0.30m	10.84m	Topsoil: dark brown sandy silt with modern inclusions and natural stone
101	0.30m	10.54m	Subsoil: mid grey brown sandy silt clay with frequent small gravel inclusions
102	0.60m	10.24m	Possible colluvium: light yellow brown clay sand with frequent small gravel inclusions
103	N.F.E	9.64m	Geology: dense orange brown silty clay with patches of gravel



Plate 1: Trench 1 - gully [105] (dir. east)

- 7.1 Trench 1 measured 10m x 1.80m and was aligned roughly east-west (Figures 2 and 3).
- 7.2 The lowest deposit recorded within Trench 1 was (103), a deposit of dense orange brown silty clay with patches of gravel interpreted as natural geology. A 0.80m wide and 0.24m deep, roughly northeast – southwest aligned gully [105] was recorded in the western end of the trench. The gully was filled with a light grey yellow brown clay sand with no cultural material (104). The matrix of the fill was very similar to the possible colluvial deposit (102) which overlay this feature. This was overlain by a 0.30m thick subsoil deposit (101) and a 0.30m thick topsoil deposit (100).

- 7.3 The character of the gully and fill are not suggestive of a substantial landscape feature of any antiquity.

Trench 2

Table of the stratigraphic sequence

Context No	Thickness	Height of Deposit (mOD)	Description/Interpretation
200	0.30m	10.81m	Topsoil: dark brown sandy silt with modern inclusions and natural stone
201	0.40m	10.51m	Subsoil: mid grey brown sandy silt clay with frequent small gravel inclusions
202	0.60m	10.11m	Possible colluvium: light yellow brown clay sand with frequent small gravel inclusions
203	N.F.E	9.51m	Geology: dense orange brown silty clay with patches of gravel

- 7.4 Trench 2 measured 10m x 1.80m and was aligned roughly north-south (Figure 2).
- 7.5 The earliest deposit was recorded as (203), a deposit of dense orange brown silty clay with patches of gravel interpreted as natural geology. Overlying the natural horizon was (202); a 0.60m thick layer of light yellow brown clay sand with frequent small gravel inclusions interpreted a possible colluvial. This was overlain by a 0.40m thick subsoil (201) and a 0.30m topsoil (200) deposit.
- 7.6 No significant archaeological remains were recorded in Trench 2.

Trench 3

Table of the stratigraphic sequence

Context No	Thickness	Height of Deposit (mOD)	Description/Interpretation
300	0.25m	11.50m	Topsoil: dark brown sandy silt with modern inclusions and natural stone
301	0.75m	11.25m	Subsoil: mid grey brown sandy silt clay with frequent small gravel inclusions
305	0.15m	10.50m	Possible colluvium: light yellow brown clay sand with frequent small gravel inclusions
302	N.F.E	10.35m	Geology: dense orange brown silty clay with patches of gravel

- 7.7 Trench 3 measured 10m x 1.80m and was aligned roughly north-south (Figures 2 and 3).
- 7.8 The lowest deposit recorded in Trench 3 was (302), a deposit of dense orange brown silty clay with patches of gravel interpreted as natural geology. A 0.30 – 0.40m wide and 0.33m deep, roughly north-south aligned gully [304] was recorded in the western end of the trench. The gully was filled with a light grey yellow brown clay sand with no cultural material (303). The matrix of the fill was very similar to the possible colluvial deposit (305) which overlay this feature (Figure 3). The light yellow brown clay sand colluvial deposit was 0.15m in thickness and was overlain by a 0.75m thick subsoil deposit (301) and a 0.25m thick topsoil deposit (300).



Plate 2: Trench 3 - sample section (dir. southwest)

- 7.9 The character of the gully and fill are not suggestive of a substantial landscape feature of any antiquity.

Trench 4

Table of the stratigraphic sequence

Context No	Thickness	Height of Deposit (mOD)	Description/Interpretation
400	0.30m	11.72m	Topsoil: dark brown sandy silt with modern inclusions and natural stone
401	0.36m	11.42m	Subsoil: mid grey brown sandy silt clay with frequent small gravel inclusions
402	N.F.E	11.06m	Geology: dense orange brown silty clay with patches of gravel

- 7.10 Trench 4 measured 10m x 1.80m and was aligned roughly north-south (Figures 2 and 3).
- 7.11 The lowest deposit recorded in Trench 4 was (402), a deposit of dense orange brown silty clay with patches of gravel interpreted as natural geology. A 0.46m by 0.66m and 0.13m deep sub-circular possible pit feature [404] was recorded in the southern end of the trench. This was filled with a mid to light brown silty clay with occasional flint inclusions with no cultural material (403). The matrix of the fill was very similar to the subsoil (401) which overlaid this feature. The mid grey brown sandy silt clay subsoil (401) was 0.36m in thickness and was overlain by a 0.30m thick topsoil deposit (400).



Figure 3: Trench 4 - pit [404] (dir. southwest)

7.12 No significant remains were recorded in Trench 4.

8 Finds

8.1 No finds or environmental samples were retrieved during the archaeological investigations.

9 Discussion

9.1 The archaeological evaluation established the geological horizon across the site which sloped from 11.06m OD in west of the site to 9.51m OD towards the east. Two shallow gullies and a possible pit were recorded during the investigation; however the size and character of these features were not suggestive of significant features of any antiquity. As one might expect with the natural slope the low lying areas were overlain with a colluvial deposit (0.15m – 0.60m in thickness) which was not observed within the higher areas of the site (Trench 4). A subsoil deposit (0.30m – 0.75m in thickness) was recorded across the site overlain by a 0.25m – 0.30m thick topsoil deposit.

9.2 The archaeological investigation established no significant archaeological remains pertaining to prehistoric to post-medieval land-use. The sequence of deposits recorded during the investigation is not suggestive of previous truncation.

10 Recommendations

10.1 Due to the lack of significant archaeological remains on site, it is recommended that no further work is required. The final decision rests with Ben Found, Archaeological Officer for Kent County Council.

11 Publication

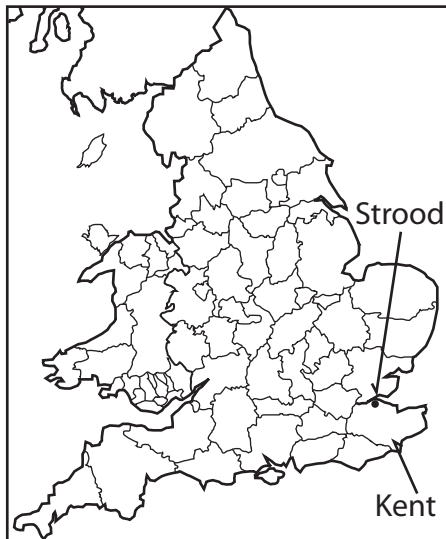
11.1 Due to the nature of the project, initial publication is expected to be limited to a summary in the Kent Round-up and publication via the Archaeological Data Service (ADS) (Appendix B).

12 Archive deposition

12.1 On completion of the project, the archive, consisting of paper records, drawings, and digital photographs, will be deposited with the local museum.

13 Bibliography

- AOC Archaeology (2012a), Wainscott Primary School, Medway, Kent: Heritage Statement
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Approximate Site Location
Within England & Wales



Based on the Ordnance Survey's 1:50 000 Landranger map of 2008 with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office, © Crown Copyright. Licence No. WL100023757

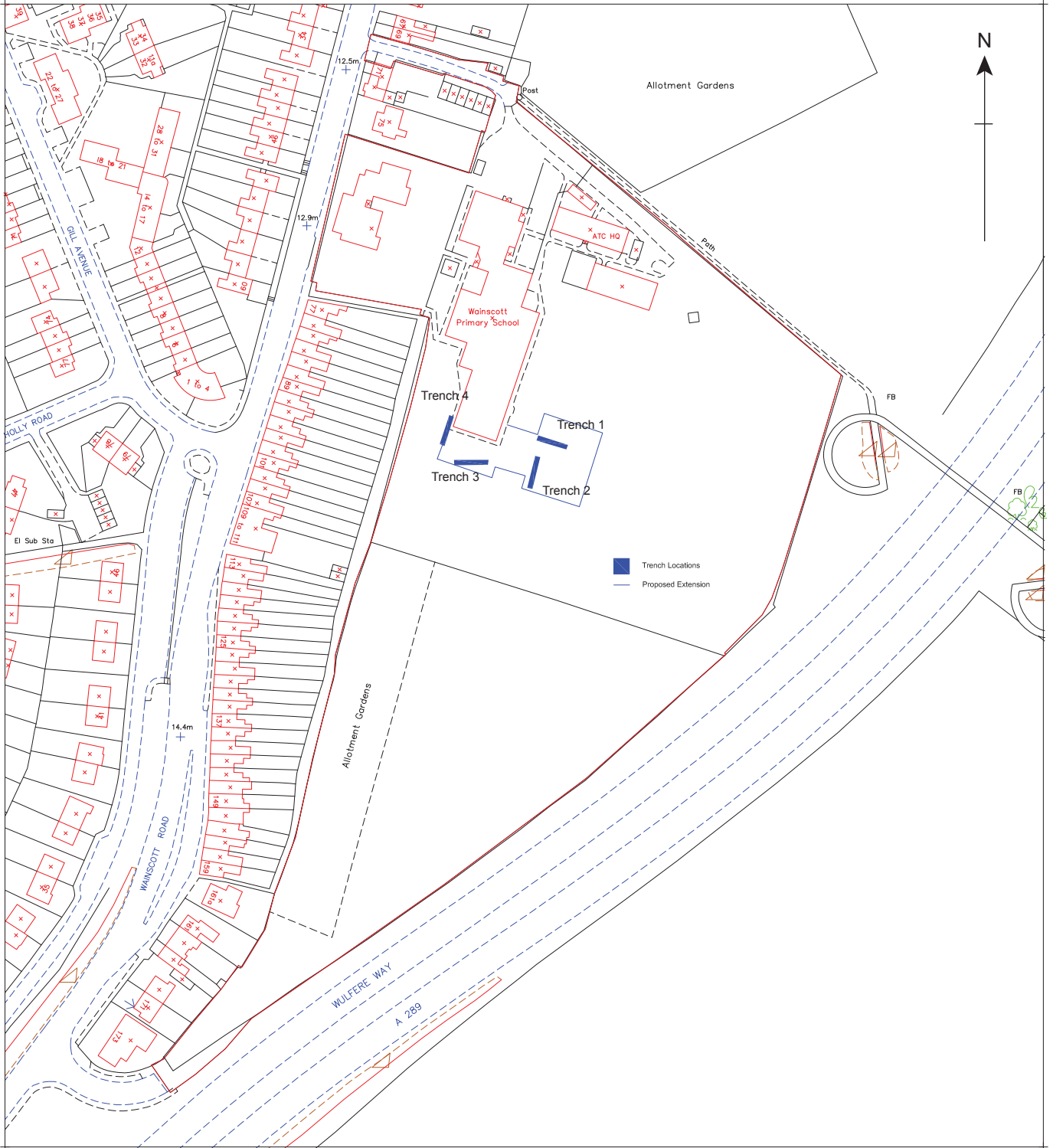
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Figure 1: Site Location

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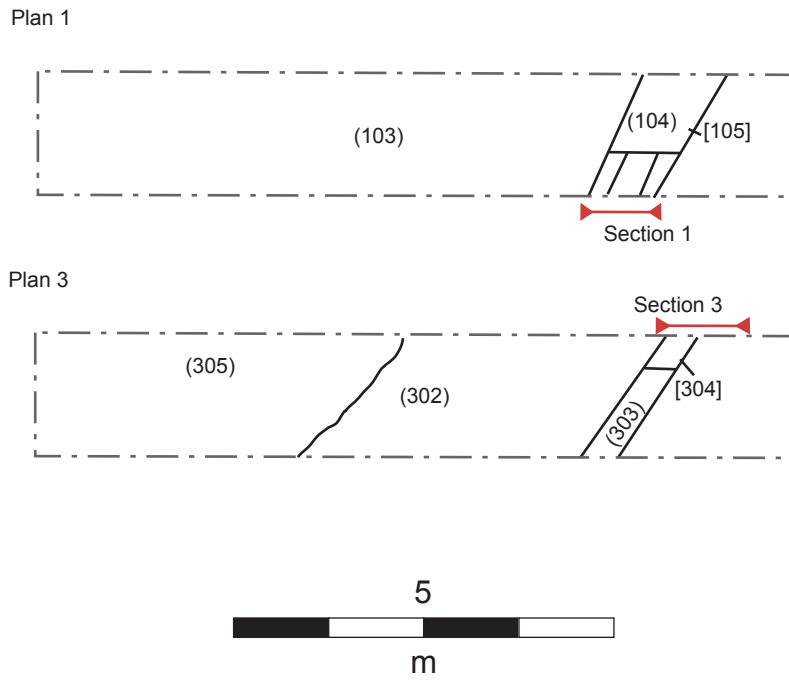


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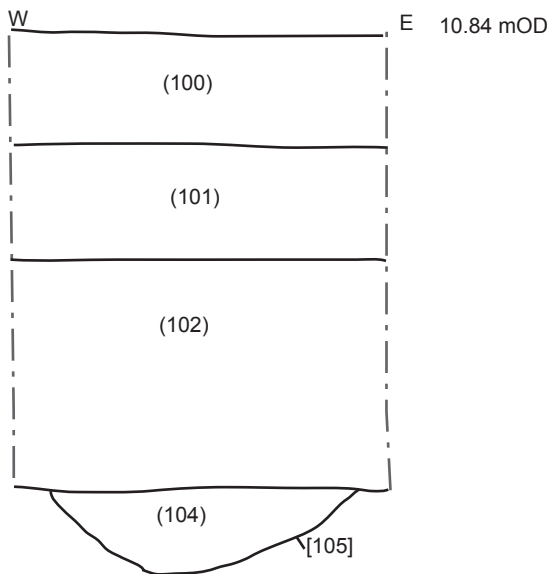
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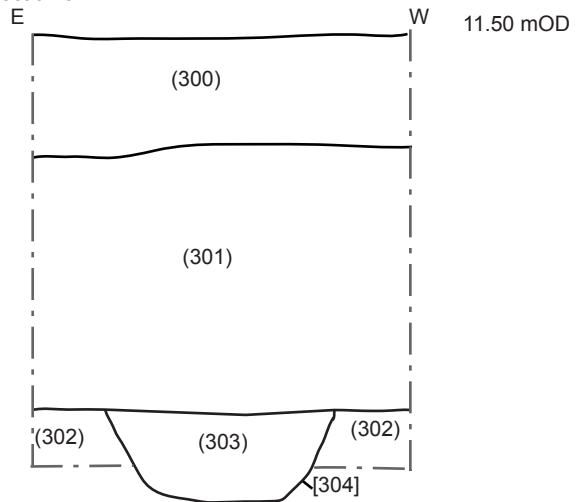
Figure 2: Trench Plan



Section 1



Section 3



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Figure 3: Trench 1 and 3 Plans and Sections

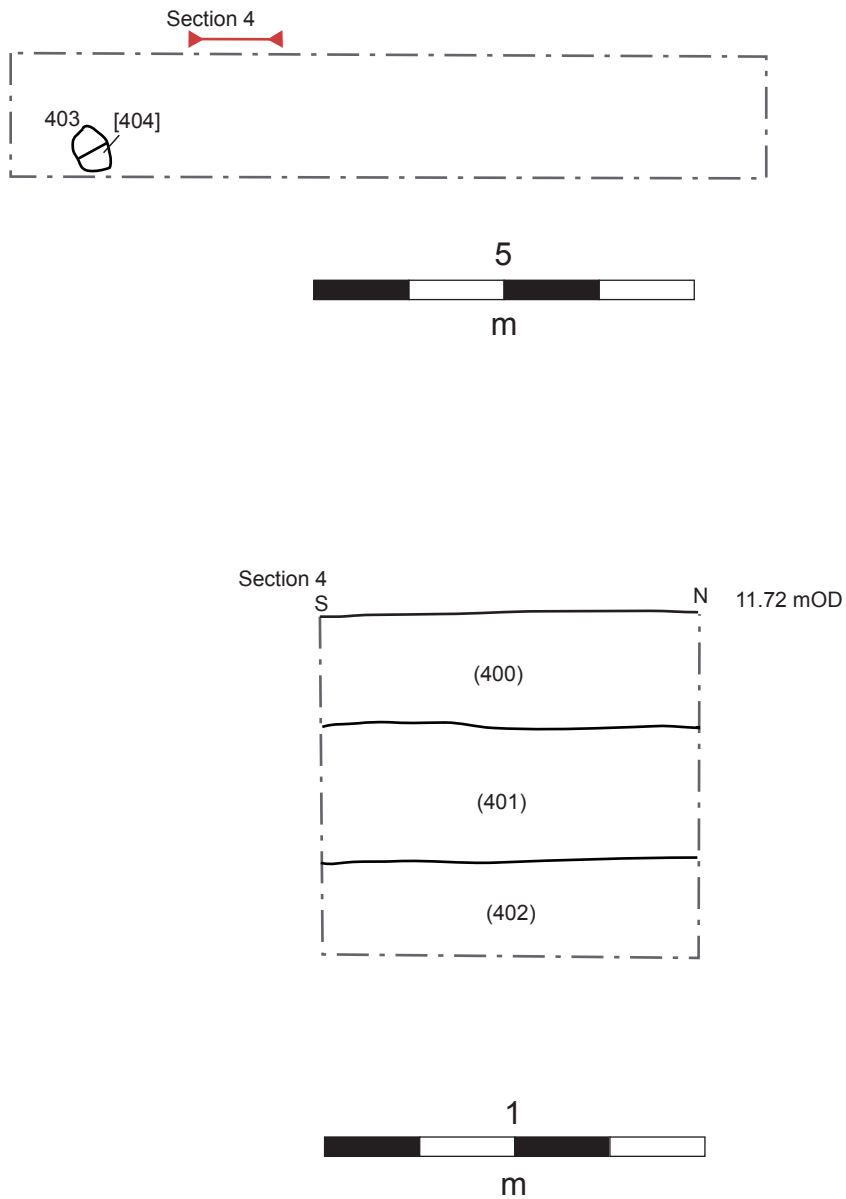


Figure 4: Trench 4 Plan and Section

Appendices

Appendix A- Context Register

Context	Description	Length	Width	Thickness
100	Topsoil	>10.00	>1.8m	0.30m
101	Subsoil	>10.00	>1.8m	0.30m
102	Possible colluvial deposit	>10.00	>1.8m	0.60m
103	Geology	>10.00	>1.8m	N.F.E.
104	Fill of possible gully	>1.70m	0.80m	0.24m
105	Cut of possible gully	>1.70m	0.80m	0.24m
200	Topsoil	>10.00	>1.8m	0.30m
201	Subsoil	>10.00	>1.8m	0.40m
202	Possible colluvial deposit	>10.00	>1.8m	0.60m
203	Geology	>10.00	>1.8m	N.F.E.
300	Topsoil	>10.00	>1.8m	0.25
301	Subsoil	>10.00	>1.8m	0.75
302	Geology	>10.00	>1.8m	0.15
303	Fill of possible gully	>1.70m	0.30 – 0.40m	0.33m
304	Cut of possible gully	>1.70m	0.30 – 0.40m	0.33m
305	Possible colluvium	>10.00	>1.8m	0.15m
400	Topsoil	>10.00	>1.8m	0.30m
401	Subsoil	>10.00	>1.8m	0.36m
402	Geology	>10.00	>1.8m	0.10m
403	Fill of possible pit	0.66m	0.46m	0.13m
404	Cut of possible pit	0.66m	0.46m	0.13m

Appendix B - OASIS Form

OASIS ID: aocarcha1-136526

Project details

Project name Wainscott Primary School

Short description of the project Four trench evaluation ahead of the development of the site.

Project dates Start: 01-11-2012 End: 02-11-2012

Previous/future work Yes / Not known

Any associated project reference codes WPS12 - Sitecode

Any associated project reference codes 32286 - Contracting Unit No.

Type of project Field evaluation

Site status None

Current Land use Community Service 1 - Community Buildings

Methods & techniques "Sample Trenches"

Development type Large/ medium scale extensions to existing structures (e.g. church, school, hospitals, law courts, etc.)

Prompt Voluntary/self-interest

Position in the planning process Between deposition of an application and determination

Project location

Country England

Site location KENT MEDWAY ROCHESTER Wainscott Primary School

Site coordinates TQ 748 708 51 0 51 24 31 N 000 30 49 E Point

Height OD / Depth Min: 9.51m Max: 11.06m

Project creators

Name of Organisation AOC Archaeology

Project brief originator AOC Archaeology

Project design originator AOC Archaeology

Project director/manager Melissa Melikian

Project supervisor Catherine Edwards

Type of sponsor/funding Developer
body

Name of sponsor/funding BAM Construction
body

Project archives

Physical Archive recipient Kent Museum Service TBC

Digital Archive recipient Kent Museum Service TBC

Paper Archive recipient Kent Museums Service TBC

Entered by Helen MacQuarrie (helen.macquarrie@aocarchaeology.com)

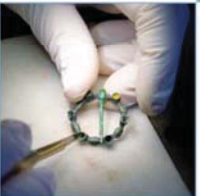
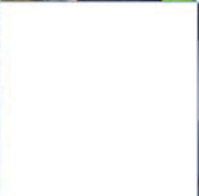
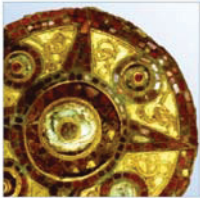
Entered on 9 November 2012

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