

**NEW TEACHING BLOCK, PERSE SCHOOL  
PORSON ROAD,  
CAMBRIDGESHIRE**

*AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION REPORT*

**TL 4497 5586**

**Planning Application No.: C/0174/FUL**

**MAY 2007**

**National Grid Reference:** TL 4497 5586

**Site Code:** ECB2604

**On behalf of:** Arup Project Management  
13 Fitzroy Street  
London  
W1T 4BQ

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Charly Vallance

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**Project Officer:** Andy Leonard

**Timing:** Evaluation Fieldwork: 12<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> May 2007  
Post-excavation and report production: May 2007

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## 1 ABSTRACT

*An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by AOC Archaeology Group in May 2007 at Perse School, Hills Road, Cambridge on behalf of Arup. The aim of the evaluation was to assess the impact of the proposed development on any surviving archaeological remains.*

*The evaluation comprised the excavation of a single trench, measuring 15.00m x 2.00m.*

*Natural chalk was observed in the base of the trench. Three tree boles were recorded cutting into the natural deposit, overlaid by two layers of redeposited subsoil used as ground make up and topsoil.*

*No archaeological remains were present.*

## **2 SITE LOCATION**

- 2.1 The site is centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) TL 4497 5586, and is within land bounded by Porson Road to the north, present school buildings to the east, North Cottages to the south and Trumpington Road to the west, (Figure 1). The site measures 600m<sup>2</sup> and is roughly rectangular in shape (Figure 2).
- 2.2 Currently the site is occupied by trees and open space. Two trees near to the new teaching block have Tree Preservation Orders on them. The proposed development is for the erection of a new classroom building and other school blocks, with associated surfacing, landscaping and tree works.
- 2.3 The site itself is not within a designated area of archaeological importance or within a Conservation Area.

## **3 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY**

- 3.1 The site is situated on the Second River Terrace Gravels of the Cam River, overlying Middle Chalk bedrock at an approximate height of 15mOD.
- 3.2 Geotechnical investigations carried out in 2006 (Concept, 2006) indicate that the natural chalk deposit is between 0.50m and 1.00m below ground level.

## 4 PLANNING BACKGROUND

- 4.1 The local planning authority is Cambridge City Council. Archaeological advice to the council is provided by Cambridgeshire Archaeology.
- 4.2 Planning permission to undertake the development has been granted under the Town & Country Planning Act (1990) (Ref No.:C/0174/FUL), subject to conditions. Condition 12 states that:

*“No development shall take place within the site until the applicant, or their agent or successors in title, has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted by the applicant and approved by the Local Planning Authority.”*

Reason: To ensure that an appropriate archaeological investigation of the site has been implemented before development commences (Cambridge Local Plan 1996 policies BE40 and BE41).

This condition has been required in accordance with *Planning Policy Guidance: Archaeology and Planning* (PPG 16) issued by the Department of the Environment in 1990 (DoE, 1990), and was recommended by the Archaeology Advisor to Cambridge City Council.

- 4.3 The proposed development involves the erection of a new classroom building and other school blocks, with associated surfacing, landscaping and tree works.
- 4.4 To satisfy the planning consent condition, a programme of archaeological works was required, in the form of evaluation trenching. Accordingly, Arup commissioned AOC Archaeology to undertake the fieldwork.
- 4.5 This document reports on the results of the archaeological evaluation, undertaken to identify any archaeological remains that might be threatened by the proposed development.

## 5 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

- 5.1 A Desk Based Assessment has not been prepared for this project. The following background is drawn from local websites and a 750m radius search of the Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record (CHER).

### **Prehistoric (before c.AD 43)**

- 5.2 Scatters of worked flint from the prehistoric period have been found in Grantchester, to the west of the site (Taylor, 1997). One Palaeolithic, two Neolithic and one Bronze Age axe have also been found in the area. A flint adze (CHER 04738) was found approximately 500m to the southeast of the site dating from Early Neolithic to Late Bronze Age period. To the east of the site field-walking undertaken at Clay Farm revealed a Mesolithic tranchet axe (CHER MCB 16139). A Bronze Age pit containing Deverill Rimbury pottery was found during evaluation work at the former government offices (CHER MCB 16312) to the northeast of the site.
- 5.3 Bronze Age barrows were discovered and excavated in 1894 at a site at Limekiln Hill to the east of the site, just south of Cherry Hinton (Warham & Wright 2002). The barrows were found within an enclosure delineated by a ditch up to 8m wide and 3.5m deep. Pottery sherds from the primary fills of this ditch were dated to the early Iron Age and roundhouses were also found within the enclosure, suggesting a long period of use.
- 5.4 Remains of Iron Age settlement activity have been identified in the area of Grantchester, dating to as early as 500BC. Pottery sherds were discovered to the south and west of Grantchester, as well as an iron spear (Taylor, 1997).
- 5.5 It has been suggested that the river crossing to Trumpington was in use in the Iron Age. Pottery sherds have been found in the area and the crossing would have linked Grantchester to settlements further afield at Hauxton, Harston and Haslingfield (Taylor, 1997).

### **Roman (c. AD 43 - 450)**

- 5.6 A Roman villa was discovered to the south of Grantchester and roads to the west of the site between Cambridge and Arrington Bridge, and Cambridge and Barton were in use at this time. Pottery and tile of Roman date were found in a ploughed field to the west of the site in 1953 (CHER 05044). The field is at the edge of, and a little above, the old flood-plain of the River Cam.
- 5.7 A Roman farm was found at the site of Limekiln Hill. It is thought there were at least two periods of occupation. The farm was in existence by 110AD, incorporating a large rectangular building, probably a thatched farmhouse, and a small barn. These earlier structures had been destroyed in a fire by the end of the

- 2<sup>nd</sup> century. A 2<sup>nd</sup> century well had also been deliberately infilled (Warham & Wright 2002).
- 5.8 Postholes demarcating the largest building associated with the farmstead were identified on a different alignment to the earlier structures. This building dated to the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> centuries (Wareham & Wright, 2002).
- 5.9 Evidence for pre-Roman activity has been found at Castle Hill, to the north of the river. However, it was during the Roman period that a settlement was first established, capitalising on the convenient crossing point of the River Cam and the topographical advantages of the higher ground (Cambridge History).
- 5.10 A large mound approximately 500m to the southwest of the site (CHER 04923) is thought to be a Roman Barrow. It measures 27 feet in diameter at the top, 47 feet in diameter at base and just over 3 feet high. Due to damage caused by later building activity and a tree being planted on the top of the mound it is not recommended for scheduling.
- 5.11 Further evidence for Roman activity was discovered during an evaluation in 2004 (CHER CB15766) to the east of the site; a single linear feature containing abraded Roman pottery. Another linear feature was identified during evaluation work at the former government offices site on Brooklands Avenue (CHER MCB 15919) dating to the 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD.

### **Anglo-Saxon (c.451-1065)**

- 5.12 To the west of the site, a sunken-floored building dating to the Early Saxon period was discovered at Fiddler's Close. It was a simple sub-rectangular structure comprising a roof supported by a post at each end. Finds from the interior comprised a brooch and decorated pottery sherds.
- 5.13 Development during the Saxon period included the digging of defensive ditches around a settlement at Grantchester, with a road leading to the ford. Various other finds from Grantchester in this period include spears, knives and a decorated urn, probably originally from graves (Taylor, 1997).
- 5.14 At the Limekiln site, the Bronze Age barrows were reused for burial in the 7<sup>th</sup> century. One burial contained a wooden bed with grave goods including a crystal ball, sling and spear head (Wareham & Wright, 2002).
- 5.15 Five carved stone pieces dating to the early 11<sup>th</sup> century were discovered in the rubble of the nave of Grantchester Church when it was demolished in the 1870's (Taylor, 1997). These proved to be from grave-slabs and had plait-work decoration on them. They are thought to have been manufactured in Cambridge.



- 5.16 The settlement at Castle Hill continued into the Saxon period and another was established near St. Benedict's Church (Cambridge History). The church itself is the oldest building in Cambridge, its tower still surviving from the Saxon period.
- 5.17 Magdalene Bridge was formerly known as The Great Bridge and is thought to have been built by King Offa in 756 – 793 (Cambridge History).

### **Medieval (c.1066 - 1485)**

- 5.18 In 1068 the Normans continued the development of Castle Hill, establishing a castle there to fortify Cambridge in the face of rebel forces lead by Hereward the Wake (Cambridge History).
- 5.19 One of only four round Norman churches in England, the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, was founded by the Kinghts Templar in Cambridge. Several other religious houses were established in Cambridge in the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> centuries such as Barnwell Priory, now located by the Elizabeth Way Bridge, but originally located on Castle Hill in 1092, and St Rhadegund's Nunnery, which eventually became Jesus College (Cambridge History).
- 5.20 In 1201 King John granted a charter to Cambridge and in 1209 the first recorded event connected with Cambridge University occurred when some Oxford University students moved to Cambridge. The earliest College to be founded was Peterhouse in 1284. Later colleges were established, taking over from priories or amalgamating previous colleges.
- 5.21 In the 14<sup>th</sup> century Jaks Manor, a group of properties, belonged to the Grantchesters, a local family who had taken their name from the town (Taylor, 2002). The manor house was situated in the south of Grantchester and in the 15<sup>th</sup> century it was sold to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Henry Somer. Somer subsequently left the property, along with several other properties he had acquired in the village, to King's College.
- 5.22 A roadside ditch and quarrying pits were discovered during evaluation work carried out to the southwest of the site (CHER MCB 16298). The number and variety of the finds are suggestive of a medieval settlement in the area.
- 5.23 The Green Man Inn was built in the 15<sup>th</sup> century approximately 500m to the south of the site. It comprised a ground-floor hall open to the roof in the middle and a cross-wing at each end. Over the following centuries it was continuously adapted although the structural interior timber is no longer visible.

### **Post-Medieval (c.1485 - modern)**

- 5.24 The 16<sup>th</sup> century saw extensive building in Cambridge, most notably the gatehouses and King's College Chapel (Cambridge History). Control of the university colleges was rested from the religious bodies that had previously controlled them by Henry VIII.

- 5.25 In 1614 Thomas Hobson was commissioned to build a new causeway to bring water into Cambridge from Nine Wells (Cambridge History). The water, used for drinking and flushing the streets to reduce the incidence of plague and other diseases, was fed via channels to a fountain in the Market Square. In 1856 it was moved to its present position (CHER 04529a). The channels of this structure still run along Trumpington Street, immediately to the west of the site.
- 5.26 The Perse school is Cambridge's oldest secondary school, founded in 1615 by Dr Stephen Perse (The Perse School). Originally the school was located in Free School Lane but was moved several times, finally being established on the present site in 1960.
- 5.27 The Coach and Horses Inn was built in the 17<sup>th</sup> century 500m to the south of the site (CHER 05092). Soon afterwards it was enlarged with the addition of a small gabled wing. In the 18<sup>th</sup> century a square staircase-bay was added, followed in the 19<sup>th</sup> century by a large extension to the northeast.
- 5.28 A plan of Colonel Pemberton's Estate dating to 1847 shows a windmill immediately to the south of the site (CHER 04771).
- 5.29 The farmhouse at Clay Farm (CHER 04901) just to the southeast of the site is a Grade II Listed Building of early 19<sup>th</sup> century date. It is a two storey brick-built structure with a hipped slate roof.
- 5.30 Aside from Hobson's causeway, there was little development in Cambridge during the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries and the period marked a general decline in the town's fortunes (Cambridge History). However, the town was revitalised in the late Victorian period with the founding of several new colleges. In 1806 the Barnwell Enclosure Act allowed development to the south and east, the railway reaching Cambridge in 1845. In 1951 Cambridge became a city.

## **6 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

- 6.1 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 Cambridge City Council to make an informed decision on the status of the condition on the planning permission,

and any possible requirement for further work in order to satisfy that condition.

- To make available to interested parties the results of the investigation in order to inform the mitigation strategy as part of the planning process.

6.2 The specific objectives of the Evaluation were to:

- Determine the presence of any remains of Iron Age date.
- Determine the presence of any remains of Roman date on the site.
- Assess the potential of the site to inform on the medieval development and chronology of Cambridge.
- Assess the degree and extent of truncation of earlier deposits by any later activity on the site.

6.3 The final aim was to make public the results of the investigation, subject to any confidentiality restrictions.

## 7 METHODOLOGY

7.1 The archaeological investigation was conducted in accordance with the Written Scheme of Investigation (AOC, 2007) and the brief supplied by Cambridgeshire Archaeology Planning and Countryside Advice (CAPCA 2007).

7.2 The evaluation consisted of one machine-excavated trench measuring 15.00m by 2.00m which met the requirements laid out in the brief (CAPCA 2007) for the first building to be constructed. Before excavation the entire site was visually inspected.

7.3 The trench was located at least 10m away from the canopy of nearby trees to avoid damaging the roots of trees with Tree Preservation Orders (TPO's) on them. All overburden was to be removed down to the top of the natural deposit as no archaeological horizons were present. All machine excavation was carried out using a 16 tonne tracked machine with a 2.0m wide toothless ditching bucket.

7.4 All machining was carried out under direct control of an experienced archaeologist. The site and spoil heaps were scanned visually for finds.

7.5 On completion of machine excavation, all faces of trenches that required examination or recording were cleaned using appropriate hand tools.

7.6 All excavation was undertaken with a view to avoiding damage to any archaeological features or deposits which appeared to be demonstrably worthy of preservation *in situ*.

7.7 After recording, the trenches were backfilled with excavated material.

- 7.8 A Temporary Bench Mark (TBM) was set up on site (Figure 2), transferred from a Bench Mark on the corner of 18-20 High Street. This BM had a value of 17.83mOD.
- 7.9 The evaluation work was undertaken in three days by Catherine Edwards, Project Supervisor, and Charley Vallance, Archaeologist, under the overall project management of Andy Leonard, Project Officer.

## 8 RESULTS

### 8.1 Table of results

#### Trench 1 (Figure 2).

Context No	Depth	Height of deposit (mOD)	Description
1/001	0.30m	19.03 – 18.73	Grey brown sandy silt clay. Topsoil.
1/002	0.25m	18.73 – 18.48	Dark brown sandy clay with occasional flints. Subsoil or Made ground.
1/003	0.45m-0.20m	18.48 – 18.03	Mid orange brown clay with lenses of sand with occasional flint. Redeposited subsoil used as ground make up.
1/010	-	18.03	Natural chalk.

8.2 Three features were recorded cutting into the natural chalk deposit (1/010). The three irregular features, [1/005], [1/007], and [1/009], measured 1.60m x 0.80m, 1.10m x 0.50m and 3.60m x 1.80m respectively and were filled by (1/004), (1/006) and (1/008): mid orange brown sandy clay. The features were identified as tree boles. The fills were very similar to (1/003) which suggests the tree boles were backfilled with the same material used to level and raise the general area.

8.3 No significant archaeological remains or finds were identified in Trench 1.

## 9 FINDS

9.1 An iron horse shoe was recovered from topsoil layer 1/001. This was recorded and discarded.

9.2 No other finds were recovered from the site.

## 10 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

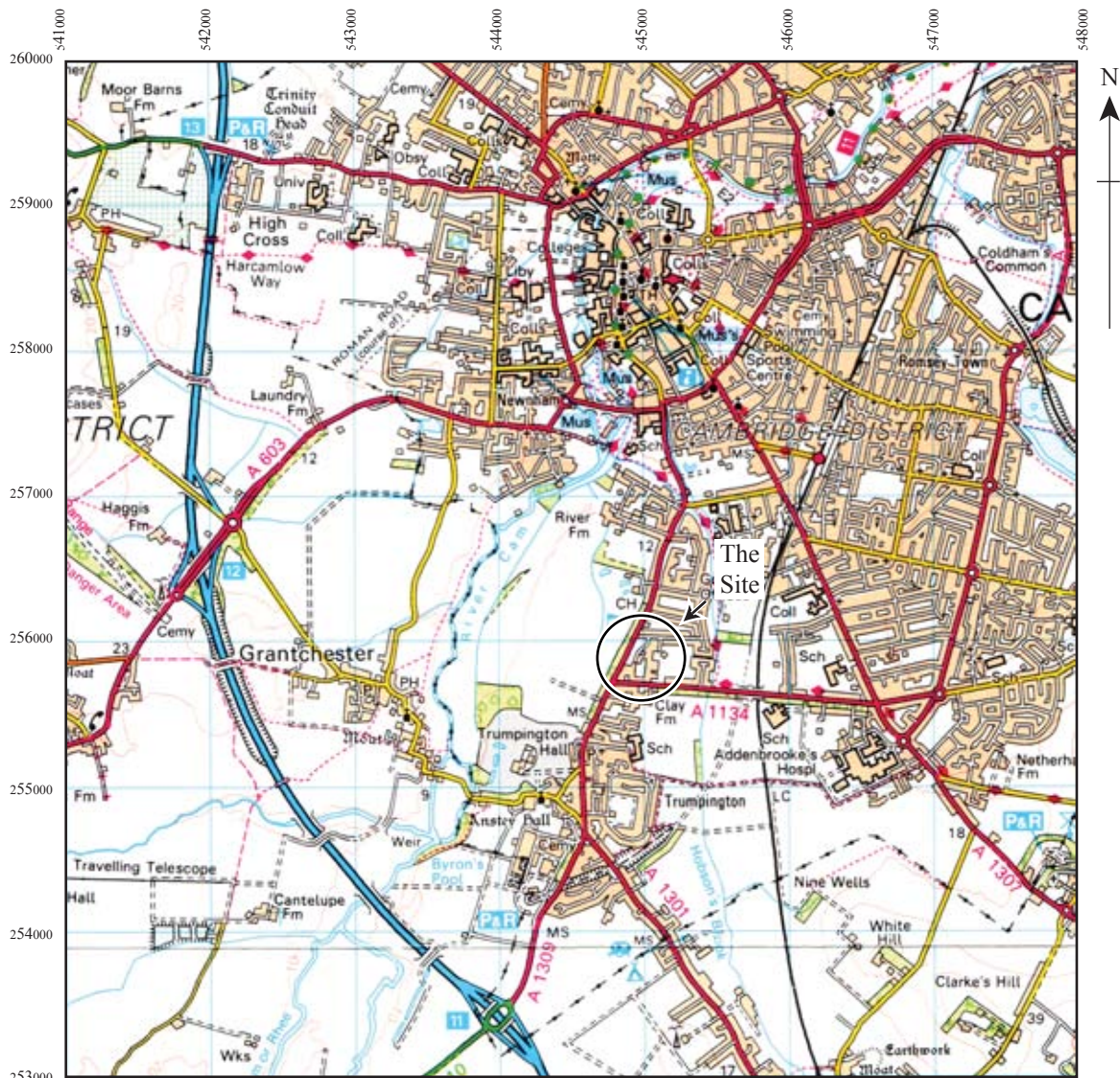
10.1 The evaluation met its primary objective: to establish the presence/absence of any archaeological remains. No archaeological deposits were identified in Trench 1. Three tree boles were recorded cutting into the natural chalk, which suggests that the intermittent spread of trees currently seen on the school playing fields to the west of the trench would have originally continued into the area of Trench 1. These may have been removed during the creation of the school in 1960 or during various expansions phases in later years.

10.2 The final decision as to the requirement for any further archaeological work will be made by Cambridge City Council and its archaeology advisor, Andy Thomas.

10.3 Publication of the results will be through the ADS OASIS form (Appendix C).

## 11 BIBLIOGRAPHY

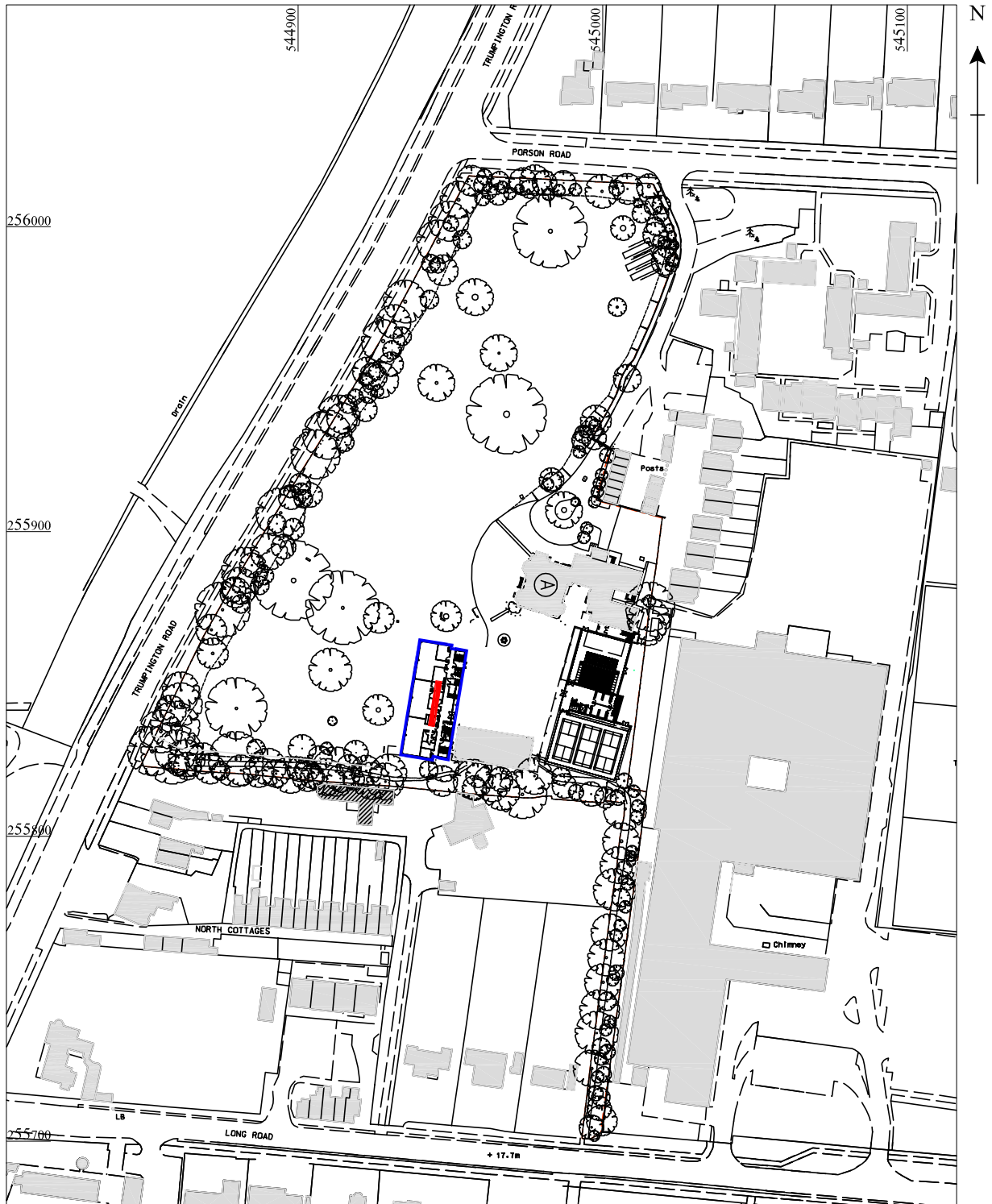
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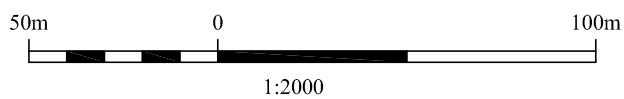


**Figure 1:** Site Location



Based on the Plans Provided by ARUP

- New Building
- Evaluation Trench



**Figure 2:** Detailed Site / Trench Location



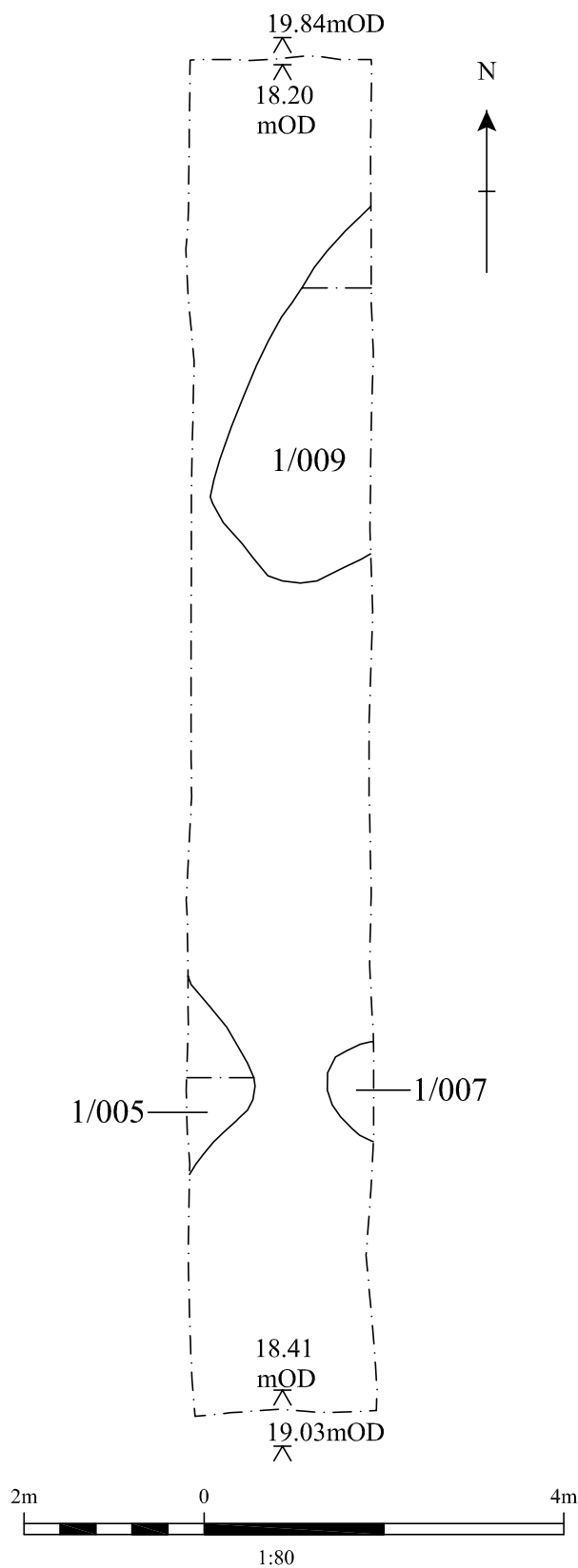


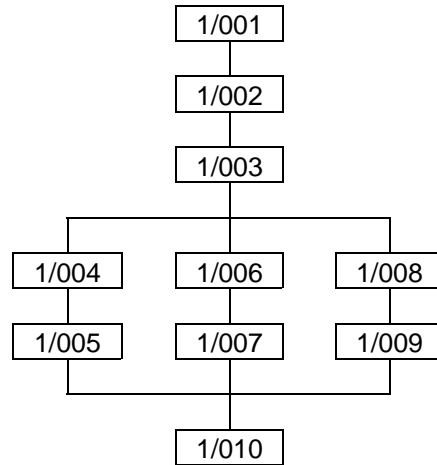
Figure 3: Trench 1 Plan

## APPENDIX A: CONTEXT REGISTER

Context No.	Context Description	Length	Width	Depth
1/001	Grey Brown sandy silt clay. Topsoil.	15m	2.0m	0.30m
1/002	Dark brown sandy clay with occasional flints. Subsoil or Made ground.	15m	2.0m	0.25m
1/003	Mid orange brown clay with lenses of sand with occasional flint. Redeposited subsoil used as ground make up.	15m	2.0m	0.20m
1/004	Mid orange brown clay with lenses of sand with occasional flint.	1.60m	0.80m	0.55m
1/005	Cut of tree bole.	1.60m	0.80m	0.55m
1/006	Mid orange brown clay with lenses of sand with occasional flint.	1.10m	0.50m	0.55m
1/007	Cut of tree bole.	1.10m	0.50m	0.55m
1/008	Mid orange brown clay with lenses of sand with occasional flint.	3.60m	1.80m	0.55m
1/009	Cut of tree bole.	3.60m	1.80m	0.55m
1/010	Natural Chalk.	15m	2.0m	-

## APPENDIX B – MATRICES

### Trench 1



## APPENDIX C: OASIS FORM

### OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM: ENGLAND

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#### Printable version

**OASIS ID: AOCARCHA1-26946**

#### Project details

Project name	Perse School, Cambridge
Short description of the project	An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by AOC Archaeology Group in May 2007 at Perse Preparatory School, Trumpington Road, Cambridge on behalf of Arup. The aim of the evaluation was to assess the impact of the proposed development on any surviving archaeological remains. The evaluation comprised the excavation of a single trench, measuring 15.00m x 2.00m. Three tree boles were recorded cutting into the natural chalk. Overlying the tree boles was a layer of redeposited subsoil used as ground make up, a layer of possibly in situ subsoil and topsoil. No archaeological remains were recorded in the trench.
Project dates	Start: 12-05-2007 End: 14-05-2007
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	ECB2604 - Sitecode
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	None
Current Land use	Other 14 - Recreational usage
Monument type	TREE BOLE Post Medieval

Methods & techniques	'Sample Trenches'
Development type	Private School building
Prompt	Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPG16
Position in the planning process	After full determination (eg. As a condition)

### Project location

Country	England
Site location	CAMBRIDGESHIRE CAMBRIDGE CAMBRIDGE Perse Preparatory School, Trumpington Road, Cambridge
Postcode	CB2 8EX
Study area	600.00 Square metres
Site coordinates	TQ 4497 5585 51.2827865343 0.07895547841240 51 16 58 N 000 04 44 E Point
Height OD	Min: 18.32m Max: 18.35m

### Project creators

Name of Organisation	AOC Archaeology
Project brief originator	Local Authority Archaeologist and/or Planning Authority/advisory body
Project design originator	AOC Archaeology Group
Project director/manager	Andy Leonard

Project supervisor Catherine Edwards

Type of sponsor/funding body Developer

Name of sponsor/funding body Arup

### Project archives

Physical Archive Exists? No

Digital Archive recipient Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeology Store

Digital Archive ID ECB2604

Digital Contents 'Stratigraphic'

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

Digital Archive notes Archive to be retained at AOC until ready for deposition with the Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeology Store.

Paper Archive recipient Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeology Store

Paper Archive ID ECB2604

Paper Contents 'Stratigraphic'

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

Paper Archive notes Archive to be retained at AOC until ready for deposition with the Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeology Store.

**Project bibliography 1**

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	New Teaching Block, Perse School, Porson Road, Cambridgeshire: A Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Evaluation.
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Leonard, A.
Date	2007
Issuer or publisher	AOC Archaeology Group
Place of issue or publication	AOC Archaeology Group
Description	A4 bound document

**Project bibliography 2**

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	NEW TEACHING BLOCK, PERSE SCHOOL, TRUMPINGTON ROAD, CAMBRIDGESHIRE: AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION REPORT
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Edwards, C.
Date	2007
Issuer or publisher	AOC Archaeology
Place of issue or publication	AOC Archaeology
Description	A4 bound document

Entered by            Andy Leonard (andyleonard@aocarchaeology.co.uk)  
Entered on            29 May 2007

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