

Hengrove Community Arts College, Petherton Gardens, Bristol

An Archaeological Watching Brief Report

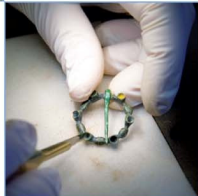
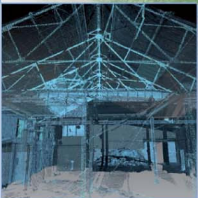
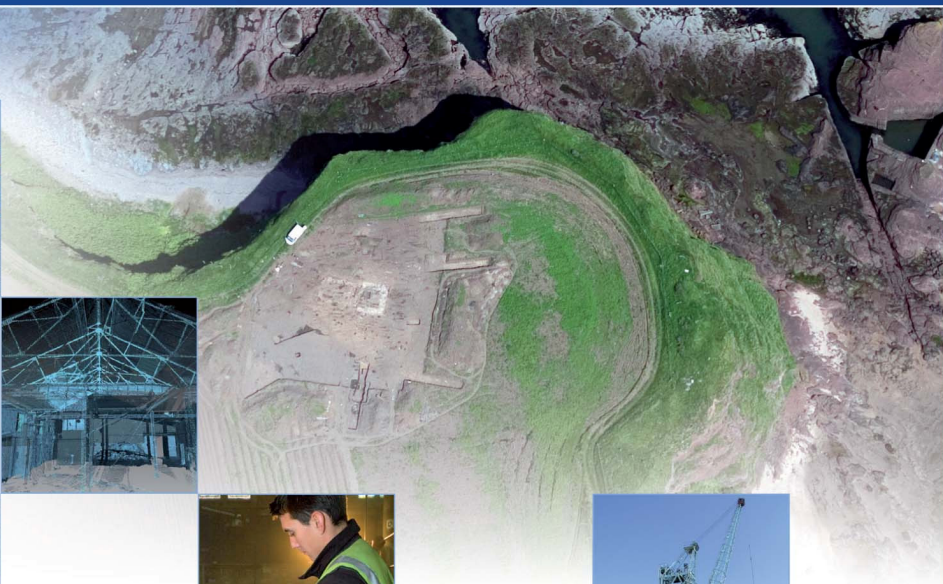
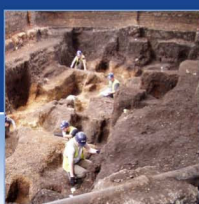
Planning Application Number: 08/01797/FB

National Grid Reference Number: ST 59280 72083

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Date: April 2009



Hengrove Community Arts College, Petherton Gardens, Bristol

An Archaeological Watching Brief Report

On Behalf of:	Skanska Construction 200 Woodlands Court Road Ash Ridge Road Almondsbury Bristol BS32 4LB
National Grid Reference (NGR):	ST 59280 72083
AOC Project No:	30361
Prepared by:	Chris Pole
Illustration by:	Jonathan Moller
Date Of Watching Brief:	20th January – 29th January 2009
Date of Report:	April 2009

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

Author: Chris Pole

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Approved by:

Date:

Draft/Final Report Stage:

Date:

Enquiries to: AOC Archaeology Group
Unit 7
St Margarets Business Centre
Moor Mead Road
Twickenham
TW1 1JS

Tel. 020 8843 7380
Fax. 020 8892 0549
e-mail. london@aocarchaeology.com



www.aocarchaeology.com

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Non-Technical Summary

An archaeological watching brief was conducted on a programme of ground reduction enabling works for the installation of temporary car parks, compounds and haulage road, and within the footprint of a new build at Hengrove Community Arts College, Petherton Gardens, Bristol in January 2009. The ground works were monitored to the northeast of the existing college buildings, centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) ST 5928 7208. All archaeological work was carried out by AOC Archaeology Group on behalf of Skanska Construction.

No archaeological features were revealed. Stratigraphy across the site comprised topsoil overlying subsoil, overlying natural clay.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This document is a report on an Archaeological Evaluation undertaken at Hengrove Community Arts College, Petherton Gardens, Bristol (Figure 1). The work was undertaken on behalf of Skanska Construction.
- 1.2 The application site is currently occupied by Hengrove Community Arts College. The site of the main school is located immediately south of Petherton Gardens, centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) ST 5928 7208.
- 1.3 The site is bounded to the south and west by residential properties, to the north by residential properties and Christ Church and Vicarage, and to the east by New Fosse Way School. The site is irregular in shape and covers an area of approximately 16.9 hectares.
- 1.4 The site is effectively level and contains a series of buildings (the current school) in the northern part of the site, with playing fields and sports pitches covering much of the rest of the site.

2. Planning Background

- 2.1 The local planning authority is Bristol City Council. Archaeological advice to the council is provided by the City Archaeologist, Peter Insole.
- 2.2 In accordance with Planning Policy Guidance: Archaeology and Planning (PPG16) issued by the Department of the Environment in 1990 (DoE, 1990) and the recommendations of the City Archaeologist, an archaeological investigation was to be carried out to inform the planning decision about an appropriate mitigation strategy, in relation to the destruction of the potential archaeological resource.
- 2.3 Planning permission to undertake the proposed development has been granted under the Town and Country Planning Act (1990) (Ref No. 08/01797/FB) subject to the following condition:

“The developer will ensure that all groundworks are monitored an archaeologist or archaeological organisation to be approved by the Local Planning Authority and working to a brief and specification prepared by the Local Planning Authority. No development, including preliminary site clearance, shall commence until at least two weeks notice has been given in writing to the Local Planning Authority and the appointment of a suitable archaeologist or archaeological organisation has been confirmed in writing unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority.”

“Reason: SR62 - To record remains of archaeological interest before destruction”

- 2.4 The development proposal involves the demolition of the current buildings and the construction of a new complex of college buildings in the north east of the site, the construction of a new sports hall and flood lit games area as well as the landscaping of the grounds to provide car parks and sports pitches.
- 2.5 An archaeological watching brief was recommended by the City Archaeologist, Peter Insole, as a suitable mitigation strategy.
- 2.6 This report details the results of the Archaeological Watching Brief.

3. Geology & Topography

- 3.1 British Geological Survey Sheet 264 shows the site sitting on a superficial geology of clay with bands of limestone. The underlying geology is white and blue lias, comprising mainly limestone.

4. Archaeological & Historical Background

- 4.1 The following information is taken from the Desk-Based Assessment for St Bernadettes Catholic School, Bristol (AOC 2007), which lies 200m south of the site.

Prehistoric (Before c.AD 43)

- 4.2 The settlement of Bristol originates from the Anglo-Saxon period. However settlement in this region of Avon dates back to the prehistoric period. In the settlement area of Bristol itself, archaeological evidence includes examples of early prehistoric flint artefacts, through Bronze Age sites and onto a number of Iron Age Forts that dot the area such as Blaise Castle, just south of Lawrence Weston and Clifton, west of the Cotham district of the City.
- 4.3 The HER does not record any prehistoric archaeological remains within 500m of the site.

Roman (c.AD 43 – 410)

- 4.4 There is a known strong Roman presence in this area, primarily directed to the large settlement at Sea Mills, but with numerous Villas and farmsteads in the surrounding 'catchment' area such as Knowle West, Lawrence Weston and Avonmouth, villas at Brislington and Kings Weston and other settlements such as at Inns Court
- 4.5 There are no recorded features within 500m of the proposed site of re-development dating to the Roman period, although it is thought that the presence of a Roman settlement in this part of Bristol is likely.

Anglo-Saxon (c.AD 410 – 1066)

- 4.6 In the Saxon period the settlement grew to the south of the main Roman settlement of Sea Mills between the rivers of the Avon and Frome, at the site of a river crossing from where its place name originates; *Bricgstow* meaning 'the place by the bridge'. There is a lack of information on Saxon Bristol partly because Bristol does not have its own entry in the Domesday Book, and partly because there is a lack of Anglo-Saxon charters relating to the settlement.
- 4.7 The settlement developed in to a defensive settlement with a ditch and rampart possibly dating to the time of Offa around the end of the 8th century, before a larger stronger fortification at the end of 9th / beginning of the 10th century, mainly in response to the Danes in the east. The HER contains no records of Saxon features within 500m of the site.

Medieval (c.AD 1066 – 1485)

- 4.8 The settlement at Bristol continued into the medieval period, with the earlier ditch and rampart being replaced by stone fortifications in the Norman period. The town grew through trade to become one of the most prominent towns in England, and its growth continued into the post-medieval period with its important maritime ship building industry.
- 4.9 The site is located to the south of the medieval core of Bristol. There are no medieval entries recorded within the HER, although it is suggested within the Archaeological Desk-Based

Assessment of land at Loxton Square, Hengrove, that the site was in the Manor of Keynsham until 1098 when William II created the Manor of Brislington and granted it to Fitz Hamon.

Post-Medieval (c.AD 1485 - Modern)

- 4.10 The city developed during the 19th and 20th centuries to cover a wider area, although by the 19th century the port began to decline.
- 4.11 An archaeological watching brief was conducted during groundworks associated with the construction of a new sports hall at St Bernadettes School. The topsoil was 0.15m and 0.30m thick. The subsoil was a yellow silty clay. A number of post medieval – modern deposits were recorded, as well as the foundations of three limestone rubble walls bonded in a mid-to dark grey mortar with lime and charcoal inclusions. The walls appeared to define a rectangular structure measuring 2.7m by 4.2m.
- 4.12 Manor House on Wells Road and its associated formal gardens can be seen on the 1885 Ordnance Survey Map, the building was still extant in 1930 but has since been demolished.

5. Aims of the Investigation

- 5.1 The aims of the Watching Brief 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 Bristol 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.
- 5.2 The specific aims of the Watching Brief were:
- To determine the presence of any remains of Roman date.
 - To determine the presence of features relating to post-medieval activity.
- 5.3 The final aim was to make public the results of the investigation, subject to any confidentiality restrictions.

6. Methodology

- 6.1 The archaeological programme of work comprised a series of watching briefs on all ground reduction works within the area of the site. (Figure 3). The areas and works observed were:
- Topsoil Stripping
 - Construction of a haul road;
 - Ground reduction for the new college building footprint;
 - Ground reduction for a temporary cabin compound;

- Ground reduction for a temporary car park.

- 6.2 All machining during the watching brief was carried out using a 13 ton 360° tracked excavator with a ditching bucket, under the constant supervision of the Archaeological Project Supervisor.
- 6.3 The HER event number **24696** was obtained for the project, and used for all fieldwork
- 6.4 All recording was in accordance with the standards and requirements of the Museum of London's *Archaeological Field Manual* (MoL 3rd edition 1994).
- 6.5 All of the work was carried out in line with:
- Archaeological Guidance Paper (AGP): 3, *Standards and Practices in Archaeological Fieldwork* (English Heritage June 1998)
 - IFA *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* (IFA October 1994)
- 6.6 A continuous unique numbering system was employed.
- 6.7 Written descriptions, comprising both factual data and interpretative elements, were recorded on standardised sheets.

7. Results

Topsoil Strip

- 7.1 The topsoil forming the turfed playing fields was stripped across the entire area of the site (Figure 3).



Plate 1: Topsoil Strip

- 7.2 The natural geology (103) consisted of a mid orange yellow sandy clay.
- 7.3 This was overlain in places by a thin, patchy layer of subsoil (102), which consisted of a mid grey yellow brown clay sand with occasional large pieces of flat, angular limestone. The subsoil varied in depth across the site from 0.05m to 0.18m in depth.
- 7.4 The subsoil was overlain by the topsoil (101), which consisted of a dark brown grey clay silt sand, which was turfed. This varied in depth between 0.20m and 0.30m in depth and covered the whole area of the site.

- 7.5 A number of finds were recovered from the topsoil and included post-medieval pottery and clay pipe stems.

Haul Road Construction

- 7.6 A temporary haul road was excavated on the site from the Petherton Gardens entrance at the northeast of the site, along the temporary fence line to the temporary cabin compound to the southeast (Figure 3).

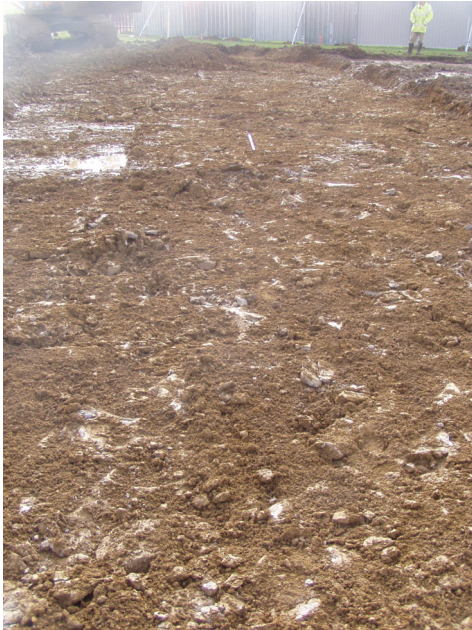


Plate 2: Haul Road Construction



Plate 3: Haul Road Sample Section

- 7.7 The Stratigraphy revealed during this phase of the watching brief was identical to that encountered during the topsoil strip. No archaeological features were present.

College Building Footprint

- 7.8 The area of the footprint of the new college building was reduced and levelled. This involved excavating to a depth of approximately 2.50m at the northeast end of the site and building up the ground level by approximately 1m at the southwest end of the site (Figure 3).



Plate 4: Building Footprint Strip



Plate 5: Building Footprint Stratigraphy

- 7.9 The stratigraphy revealed during this phase of the watching brief was identical to that encountered during earlier phases. However, underlying the natural limestone layers was a layer of blue and white lias stone (Plate 5). No archaeological features were present.

Temporary Cabin Compound

- 7.10 An area at the southeast of the site was excavated to provide space for a temporary cabin compound during the construction works (Figure 3).



Plate 6: Cabin Compound Area



Plate 7: Cabin Compound Stratigraphy

- 7.11 The stratigraphy revealed during this phase of the watching brief was identical to that encountered during the topsoil strip. No archaeological features were present.

Car Park Area

- 7.12 An area at the northeast of the site was excavated to provide space for a temporary car park during the construction works (Figure 3).



Plate 8: Car Park Area Stratigraphy

- 7.13 The stratigraphy revealed during this phase of the watching brief was identical to that encountered during the topsoil strip. No archaeological features were present.

8. RESULTS

- 8.1 The initial strip of topsoil from across the site, subsequent ground reduction works and the excavation within the footprint of the new build revealed a consistent tripartite stratigraphy throughout. A 0.25m thick, dark brownish grey, firm, clayey, silty sand topsoil (101), with occasional large, angular stone inclusions covered the entire site. Below this a 0.15m thick layer of mid greyish, yellowish brown, firm, clayey sand subsoil (102), which also contained occasional large, angular stone inclusions, covered a mid orangey yellow, clayey sand natural (103) with protruding bands of longitudinally fractured stone.
- 8.2 No archaeological features were revealed during the programme of archaeological works.

9. FINDS

- 9.1 Fragments of post medieval pottery, including china, CBM and the stem of a clay pipe were recovered from the interface between topsoil deposit (101) and subsoil (102).

10. CONCLUSIONS

- 10.1 No archaeological features or significant artefactual remains were revealed during the ground works monitored at Hengrove Community Arts College, Bristol. Therefore, no further work is recommended for the development site, although the final decision lies with Mr Peter Insole, the Bristol City Council Archaeologist.
- 10.2 The results of the watching brief will be limited to publication via the online ADS OASIS database and a short summary for the local round-up.

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Figure 1 Site Location

Figure 2 Detailed Site Location Plan

Figure 3 Watching Brief Locations

Appendices

Appendix A: Context Register

Context No.	Context Description	Length	Width	Depth	Plan No.	Section No.
101	Topsoil	Site	Site	0.30m	1	1
102	Subsoil	Site	Site	0.20m	1	1
103	Natural	Site	Site	0.10m+	1	1

Appendix B: OASIS Form

OASIS ID: aocarcha1-52912

Project details

Project name Hengrove Community Arts College, Bristol

Short description of the project An archaeological watching brief was conducted on a programme of ground reduction works at Hengrove Community Arts College, Petherton Gardens, Bristol. No archaeological features were revealed. A tripartite stratigraphy of topsoil, overlying subsoil, overlying a clay natural was found throughout the site.

Project dates Start: 20-01-2009 End: 29-01-2009

Previous/future work No / Not known

Any project codes associated reference 24696 - HER event no.

Any project codes associated reference 2008/86 - Museum accession ID

Any project codes associated reference 30361 - Contracting Unit No.

Type of project Recording project

Site status None

Current Land use Community Service 1 - Community Buildings

Significant Finds CERAMICS Post Medieval

Significant Finds CERAMICS Medieval

Investigation type 'Watching Brief'

Prompt Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPG16

Project location

Country England

Site location CITY OF BRISTOL CITY OF BRISTOL BRISTOL Hengrove Community Arts College, Petherton Gardens, Bristol

Study area 15.90 Hectares

Site coordinates 359280 172083 359280 00 00 N 172083 00 00 E Point

Project creators

Name of AOC Archaeology
Organisation

Project brief Bristol City Council
originator

Project design AOC Archaeology
originator

Project Andy Leonard
director/manager

Type of Developer
sponsor/funding body

Name of Skanska
sponsor/funding body

Project archives

Physical Archive Bristol City Museum
recipient

Physical Archive ID BRSMG:2008/86

Physical Contents 'Ceramics'

Paper Media 'Context sheet','Drawing','Plan','Report','Section'
available

Project bibliography 1

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

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Author(s)/Editor(s) Pole, C

Date 2009

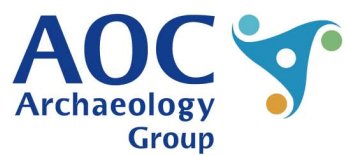
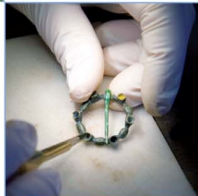
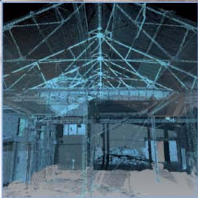
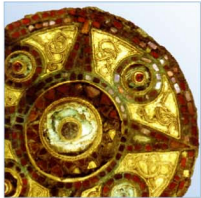
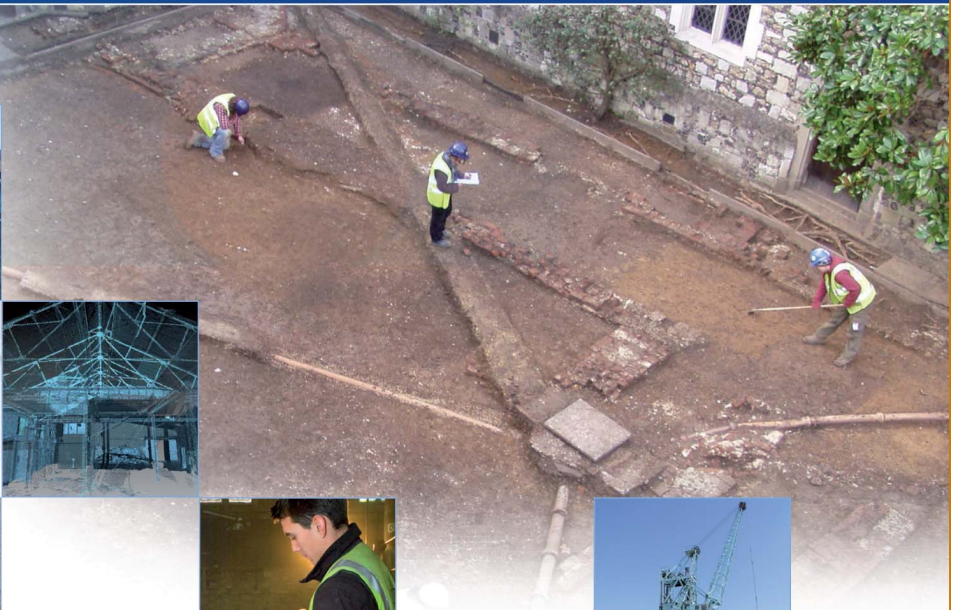
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AOC Archaeology Group, Unit 7, St Margarets Business Centre, Moor Mead Road, Twickenham TW1 1JS
 tel: 020 8843 7380 | fax: 020 8892 0549 | e-mail: london@aocarchaeology.com

www.aocarchaeology.com