# ASE

Archaeological Evaluation Report Fox Grove School Leatherhead, Surrey

> NGR 515980 157976 (TQ 15980 57976)

Mole Valley District Council
Planning Reference MO/2019/2193
ASE Project No: 190703

Site Code: FGS 20 ASE Report No: 2020053 OASIS ID: archaeol6-386314



**By Simon Stevens** 

# Archaeological Evaluation Report Fox Grove School Leatherhead, Surrey

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Prepared by:	Simon Stevens	Senior Archaeologist	AMAN AD
Reviewed and approved by:	Dan Swift	Project Manager	000009-
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Archaeology South-East
Units 1 & 2
2 Chapel Place
Portslade
East Sussex
BN41 1DR

Tel: 01273 426830 Fax: 01273 420866 Email: fau@ucl.ac.uk

# **Abstract**

Archaeology South-East was commissioned by RPS Consulting to undertake an archaeological evaluation on land at Fox Grove School, Leatherhead, Surrey.

Eleven trenches were excavated. The subsoil horizon was found to be intact, and no archaeological features, deposits or significant finds were encountered in the evaluation.

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#### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

# 1.1 Site Background

1.1.1 Archaeology South-East (ASE) was commissioned by RPS Consulting to undertake an archaeological evaluation on land at Fox Grove School, Leatherhead, Surrey (centred at NGR 515980 157976; Figure 1).

# 1.2 Geology and Topography

- 1.2.1 The site is located to the north of the centre of Leatherhead to the west of Kingston Road. Two separate parcels of land were evaluated, one at the northern end and one at the southern end of the site. Both areas were laid out as grassed sports pitches prior to the archaeological work.
- 1.2.2 According to the latest available data from the British Geological Survey, the underlying geology at the site consists of the clays and silts of the London Clay Formation. There are no recorded superficial deposits at the site, although there are deposits of alluvium associated with a local watercourse to the north (BGS 2020).

# 1.3 Planning Background

- 1.3.1 A planning application has been submitted to Mole Valley District Council for the erection of new two storey Special Educational Needs School with associated access, parking and landscaping, reconfiguration of existing access road and car park, and for the erection of a new, four court sports hall (planning reference MO/2019/2193).
- 1.3.2 A *Heritage Desk-Based Assessment* (Cotswold Archaeology 2018) suggested that there was only limited potential for the survival of archaeological deposits at the site.
- 1.3.3 Following consultation between the Surrey County Council (SCC) archaeological advisor to the Local Planning Authority (LPA) and the archaeological consultant at RPS, a written scheme of investigation for archaeological evaluation (RPS Consulting 2019) was approved in anticipation of a condition attached to the approved planning application and prior to the commencement of fieldwork.

#### 1.4 Scope of Report

1.4.1 This report details the results of the archaeological evaluation undertaken in February 2020.

#### 2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

#### 2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 The archaeological background to the site that is discussed in the DBA (Cotswold Archaeology 2018) was summarised in the WSI (RPS Consulting 2019) and is reproduced below.

#### 2.2 Prehistoric

2.2.1 No evidence of prehistoric activity has been recorded on the site. A small number of chance finds dating to the prehistoric periods have been found in the vicinity of the study site. Possible Iron Age occupation has been identified through archaeological investigations at Woodlands Park approximately 700m south of the site. The site lay within a landscape that was being exploited during the prehistoric periods and whilst the potential for evidence of occupation is limited it cannot be entirely ruled out.

#### 2.3 Roman

2.3.1 No evidence of Roman activity has been recorded on the site and a small number of finds dating to this period have been recorded in the vicinity including that at Woodlands Park. The site lay within a landscape that was being exploited during the Roman period and whilst the potential for evidence of occupation is limited it cannot be entirely ruled out.

# 2.4 Anglo-Saxon/Medieval

2.4.1 The site appears to have been located outside the limits of the known Saxon and medieval settlements. The Surrey Historic Landscape Characterisation records the Site as comprising former medieval commons, indicating that it was most likely marginal land utilised for common grazing in this period. A low potential for settlement evidence dating to these periods is therefore anticipated.

#### 2.5 Post-Medieval/Modern

2.5.1 The site apparently continued as agricultural land during the post-medieval and modern periods until its conversion into school playing fields in the latter part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. A low potential for significant settlement evidence dating to these periods is anticipated

#### 2.6 Research Aims and Objectives

2.6.1 The following research aims and objectives were included in the WSI (RPS Consulting 2019):

'The evaluation will determine, as far as is reasonably possible, the location, form, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any surviving archaeological remains, irrespective of period.

The evaluation will also seek to clarify the nature and extent of existing disturbance and intrusions and hence assess the degree of archaeological survival of buried deposits and any surviving structures of archaeological significance.

Within these parameters, the evaluation of this site presents an opportunity to address the following objectives:

- Is there evidence of prehistoric or Roman occupation?
- What is the impact of current land use?
- Provide sufficient information to construct an archaeological mitigation strategy

# 3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

# 3.1 Fieldwork Methodology

- 3.1.1 Twelve 30m x 1.8m trenches were originally proposed however Trench 10 (RPS Consulting 2019) was aborted following an initial site visit as the ground in this area had previously been significantly disturbed and Trenches 11 and 12 were therefore renumbered on site sequentially as Trenches 10 and 11.
- 3.1.2 Trench 10 (formerly Trench 11) was originally proposed as north-south orientated, but had to be swung around to east-west avoid a playing field and also had to be excavated in two sections in order to avoid a detected buried service. Trench 1 was moved slightly south and Trench 4 slightly east of the proposed (*ibid*) in order to respect a 10m exclusion zone around ancient woodland and Trenches 7, 8 and 9 were moved slightly north in order to avoid disturbance to a football pitch. All other trenches were excavated to proposed lengths and in their planned positions (Figures 2, 3 and 4).
- 3.1.3 All work was carried out in accordance with the *WSI* (ibid), the *Regulations, Standards and Guidance* of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (ClfA 2020).
- 3.1.4 Mechanical excavation, under constant archaeological supervision, using a flat-bladed bucket was undertaken in small spits down to the top of natural geological deposits. Care was taken not to damage potential archaeological deposits through excessive use of mechanical excavation. Revealed surfaces of the natural geology were manually cleaned in order to identify any potential archaeological features. Spoil and the trenches were scanned for the presence of artefacts, both visually and with a metal detector.
- 3.1.5 All deposits were recorded to accepted professional standards using standard Archaeology South-East recording forms.
- 3.1.6 Trench locations were planned using digital survey technology and a digital photographic record was maintained of all trenches (Figures 5, 6 and 7).

#### 3.2 **Archive**

The site archive is currently held at the offices of ASE and will be offered to 3.2.1 Leatherhead Museum in due course.

Context sheets	33
Section sheets	0
Digital photos	39 images
Photo register	1
Drawing register	0
Watching brief forms	0
Trench Record forms	11

Table 1: Quantification of site paper archive

Bulk finds (quantity e.g. 1 bag, 1	0
box, 0.5 box 0.5 of a box )	
Registered finds (number of)	0
Flots and environmental remains	0
from bulk samples	
Palaeoenvironmental specialists	0
sample samples (e.g. columns,	
prepared slides)	
Waterlogged wood	0
Wet sieved environmental	0
remains from bulk samples	

Table 2: Quantification of artefact and environmental samples

### 4.0 RESULTS

(Figures 2 - 7)

#### 4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 The trenches were excavated in February 2020. Weather conditions offered good visibility for the identification of archaeological deposits, features and finds.

#### 4.2 Trench 1

Context	Туре	Description	Max. Length m	Max. Width m	Max. Thickness m	Height m AOD
1/001	Layer	Topsoil	Trench	Trench	0.20	37.27 - 38.02
1/002	Layer	Subsoil	Trench	Trench	0.32	-
1/003	Layer	Natural	Trench	Trench	-	36.77 - 37.58

Table 3: Trench 1 list of recorded contexts

- 4.2.1 The encountered stratigraphic sequence in the trench was straightforward. The upper layer consisted of a dark-greyish brown silty clay topsoil, context [1/001]. This overlay a deposit of yellowish brown/brownish yellow silty clay subsoil, which contained occasional small pieces of chalk, context [1/002], which in turn directly overlay the 'natural' London Clay deposits, which varied from brownish yellow clay to brownish orange slightly silty clay, context [1/003].
- 4.2.2 No archaeological deposits or feature were recorded in the trench.

#### 4.3 Trench 2

Context	Туре	Description	Max. Length m	Max. Width m	Max. Thickness m	Height m AOD
2/001	Layer	Topsoil	Trench	Trench	0.28	37.21 -37.26
2/002	Layer	Subsoil	Trench	Trench	0.25	-
2/003	Layer	Natural	Trench	Trench	-	36.74 - 36.83

Table 4: Trench 2 list of recorded contexts

4.3.1 The two layers of overburden and the 'natural' were similar in character to those encountered in Trench 1. No archaeological deposits, features were recorded in the trench, although a post-medieval horseshoe was recovered from the topsoil.

#### 4.4 Trench 3

Context	Туре	Description	Max. Length m	Max. Width m	Max. Thickness m	Height m AOD
3/001	Layer	Topsoil	Trench	Trench	0.36	37.02 - 37.93
3/002	Layer	Subsoil	Trench	Trench	0.30	-
3/003	Layer	Natural	Trench	Trench	-	36.48 - 37.51

Table 5: Trench 3 list of recorded contexts

4.4.1 The two layers of overburden and the 'natural' were similar in character to those encountered in Trench 1. No archaeological deposits, features or finds were recorded in the trench.

#### 4.5 Trench 4

Context	Туре	Description	Max. Length m	Max. Width m	Max. Thickness m	Height m AOD
4/001	Layer	Topsoil	Trench	Trench	0.30	37.66 - 37.75
4/002	Layer	Subsoil	Trench	Trench	0.31	-
4/003	Layer	Natural	Trench	Trench	-	37.17 - 37.40

Table 6: Trench 4 list of recorded contexts

4.5.1 The two layers of overburden and the 'natural' were similar in character to those encountered in Trench 1. No archaeological deposits, features or finds were recorded in the trench.

# 4.6 Trench 5

Context	Туре	Description	Max. Length m	Max. Width m	Max. Thickness m	Height m AOD
5/001	Layer	Topsoil	Trench	Trench	0.27	37.98 - 38.33
5/002	Layer	Subsoil	Trench	Trench	0.33	=
5/003	Layer	Natural	Trench	Trench	-	37.41 - 37.76

Table 7: Trench 5 list of recorded contexts

4.6.1 The two layers of overburden and the 'natural' were similar in character to those encountered in Trench 1. No archaeological deposits, features were recorded in the trench but a sherd of post-medieval pottery was recovered from the topsoil.

#### 4.7 Trench 6

Context	Туре	Description	Max. Length m	Max. Width m	Max. Thickness m	Height m AOD
6/001	Layer	Topsoil	Trench	Trench	0.25	37.98 - 38.24
6/002	Layer	Subsoil	Trench	Trench	0.40	-
6/003	Layer	Natural	Trench	Trench	-	37.41 - 37.82

Table 8: Trench 6 list of recorded contexts

4.7.1 The two layers of overburden and the 'natural' were similar in character to those encountered in Trench 1. No archaeological deposits, features were recorded in the trench but a fragment of fire-cracked flint and a sherd of post-medieval pottery were recovered from the topsoil.

#### 4.8 Trench 7

Context	Туре	Description	Max. Length m	Max. Width m	Max. Thickness m	Height m AOD
7/001	Layer	Topsoil	Trench	Trench	0.20	38.09 - 38.52
7/002	Layer	Subsoil	Trench	Trench	0.43	=
7/003	Layer	Natural	Trench	Trench	-	37.51 - 38.03

Table 9: Trench 7 list of recorded contexts

4.8.1 The two layers of overburden and the 'natural' were similar in character to those encountered in Trench 1. No archaeological deposits, features were recorded in the trench but a sherd of post-medieval pottery were recovered from the topsoil.

# 4.9 Trench 8

Context	Туре	Description	Max. Length m	Max. Width m	Max. Thickness m	Height m AOD
8/001	Layer	Topsoil	Trench	Trench	0.31	38.45 - 38.62
8/002	Layer	Subsoil	Trench	Trench	0.32	-
8/003	Layer	Natural	Trench	Trench	-	37.95 - 38.08

Table 10: Trench 7 list of recorded contexts

4.9.1 The two layers of overburden and the 'natural' were similar in character to those encountered in Trench 1. No archaeological deposits, features or finds were recorded in the trench.

#### 4.10 Trench 9

Context	Туре	Description	Max. Length m	Max. Width m	Max. Thickness m	Height m AOD
9/001	Layer	Topsoil	Trench	Trench	0.31	38.31 - 38.84
9/002	Layer	Subsoil	Trench	Trench	0.32	-
9/003	Layer	Natural	Trench	Trench	-	37.95 - 38.32

Table 11: Trench 7 list of recorded contexts

4.10.1 The two layers of overburden and the 'natural' were similar in character to those encountered in Trench 1. No archaeological deposits, features or finds were recorded in the trench.

#### 4.11 Trench 10

Context	Туре	Description	Max. Length m	Max. Width m	Max. Thickness m	Height m AOD
10/001	Layer	Topsoil	Trench	Trench	0.34	39.40 -39.49
10/002	Layer	Subsoil	Trench	Trench	0.26	-
10/003	Layer	Natural	Trench	Trench	-	38.92 - 39.07

Table 12: Trench 7 list of recorded contexts

- 4.11.1 Trench 10 was split to avoid the alignment of a detected buried service. The two layers of overburden were similar in character to those encountered in Trench 1, although the subsoil contained a higher concentration of chalk pieces than observed in the northern part of the site. The 'natural' London Clay contained occasional flint gravel and angular flint absent in the northern trenches.
- 4.11.2 No archaeological deposits, features or finds were recorded in the trench.

#### 4.12 Trench 11

Context	Туре	Description	Max. Length m	Max. Width m	Deposit Thickness m	Height m AOD
11/001	Layer	Topsoil	Trench	Trench	0.38	39.44 - 39.47
11/002	Layer	Subsoil	Trench	Trench	0.16	-
11/003	Layer	Natural	Trench	Trench	-	38.98 - 39.05

Table 13: Trench 7 list of recorded contexts

4.12.1 The two layers of overburden and the 'natural' were similar in character to those encountered in Trench 10. There had been considerable disturbance to the surface of the 'natural' from a line of pits probably excavated for the planting of trees or shrubs. The fills of these features contained modern debris including chocolate wrappers. They were not excavated or recorded in detail.

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4.12.2 No significant archaeological deposits or features were recorded in the trench, although post-medieval pottery and tile was recovered from the topsoil.

#### 5.0 THE FINDS

# 5.1 Summary

5.1.1 A small assemblage of finds was recovered during the evaluation at Fox Grove School, Leatherhead. All finds were washed and dried or air dried as appropriate. They were subsequently quantified by count and weight and bagged by material and context. The hand-collected bulk finds are quantified in Table 14. All finds have been packed and stored following ClfA guidelines (2020).

Context	Pottery	Weight (g)	CBM	Weight (g)	Iron	Weight (g)	Fire Cracked Flint	Weight (g)
1/001	1	12						
2/001					1	228		
5/001	1	6						
6/001	1	2					1	5
7/001	1	3						
11/001	1	4	1	67				
Total	5	27	1	67	1	228	1	5

Table 14: Quantification of hand-collected bulk finds

# 5.2 The Burnt Unworked Flint by Karine Le Hégarat

5.2.1 Context [6/001] produced a small fragment of unworked burnt flint weighing 5g. It was calcined to a white colour but is otherwise un-dateable.

# **5.3** The Post-Roman Pottery by Luke Barber

- 5.3.1 The archaeological work recovered just five sherds of post-Roman pottery, weighing 22g, from five individually numbered topsoil contexts. The material has been fully listed by common ware name in Table 1 as part of the visible archive. Overall the pottery consists of small to medium-sized sherds with slight to moderate signs of abrasion. As such the material appears to have been subjected to some reworking.
- 5.3.2 Although the glazed red earthenware could easily be as early as the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century there is no reason why it could not be of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Certainly all the other sherds can easily be placed within a c. 1850-1940 date range. The assemblage, which appears to be domestic in nature, is too small to draw conclusions from.

5.3.3 The pottery assemblage is small, unstratified and of types well known of in the area. It is not considered to hold any potential for further analysis beyond that undertaken for this report and is not suitable for long-term curation in a museum. As such it has been discarded.

Cantaut	Fabric	Daviad	N.		Comments (including estimated number of different vessels represented by type. ? = undiagnostic
Context	Fabric	Period	NO	Weight	,
	Brown transfer-printed				Plate x1 (geometric pattern around
1/001	whiteware	LPM	1	10g	rim)
	Green transfer-printed				Bowl x1 (geometric pattern around rim
5/001	whiteware ·	LPM	1	6g	exterior)
6/001	Yellow ware	LPM	1	2g	?x1
7/001	Glazed red earthenware (late)	LPM	1	2g	?x1 (clear glaze internally)
11/001	Refined whiteware	LPM	1	2g	Plate x1

Table 15: Pottery assemblage (LPM - Late Post-Medieval c. 1750-1900+)

# 5.4 The Ceramic Building Material by Rae Regensburg

- 5.4.1 One fragment of ceramic building material weighing 67g was recovered from context [11/001]. This consisted of a piece of roof tile which had an orange micaceous fabric with some very fine quartz scattered through it. The tile was 12 mm thick and had a section of round peg hole present. As roof tile remains fairly consistent through the medieval and post-medieval periods, it is not possible to provide a refined date range. Although round peg holes are thought to be associated with the medieval period, they are found regularly enough in post-medieval contexts to make it an unreliable dating method.
- 5.4.2 The tile fabric was identified with the aid of a x20 binocular microscope and recorded in a standard excel form.

#### 5.5 The Bulk Metalwork

5.5.1 A complete fullered iron horse shoe with toe clip was recovered from the topsoil of Trench 2, weighing 228g. The horse shoe is of 20th century date. It is not considered to hold any potential for further analysis and is therefore recommended for discard.

### 6.0 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

#### 6.1 Overview

6.1.1 No archaeological features, deposits or finds of any significance were encountered in any of the evaluation trenches in either of the examined areas. Post-medieval material had become incorporated into the topsoil over time, and the recovery of a single fragment of fire-cracked flint cannot be treated as evidence of prehistoric occupation.

# 6.2 Deposit Survival and Existing Impacts

6.2.1 There was no evidence of any largescale earth-moving at the site, despite the proximity of the school buildings and playground, with a thick *in situ* subsoil across both areas. Therefore the potential archaeology horizon was predominantly intact apart from some minor truncation in Trench 11.

#### 6.3 Consideration of Research Aims

6.3.1 The work has shown that the evaluated areas appeared undisturbed and that no archaeological deposits or features were present. Given the absence of archaeological deposits or features none of the site specific research aims could be met.

#### 6.4 Conclusions

6.4.1 Eleven trenches were excavated. The subsoil horizon was found to be intact, and no archaeological features, deposits or significant finds were encountered in the evaluation.

### **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

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RPS Consulting, 2019 Fox Grove School, Leatherhead, Surrey Archaeological Written Scheme of Investigation for Archaeological Trial Trenching Evaluation. Unpub RPR document Ref. JAC26023

#### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

ASE would like to thank the RPS Consulting for commissioning the work. The input of Nigel Randall, Archaeological Officer, Surrey County Council, is also gratefully acknowledged. The fieldwork was carried out by Simon Stevens (Senior Archaeologist), Naomi Humphreys (Archaeological Surveyor), Wiktoria Krzoska, Charli Mansfield and Michael Whitehorn (Assistant Archaeologists). The project was managed by Paul Mason (Fieldwork Project Manager) and by Dan Swift (Post-Excavation Manager).

# **HER Summary**

Site code	FGS 20								
Project code	190703	190703							
Planning reference	MO/2019	/21	93						
Site address	Fox Grov	e S	chool, L	eath	erhead	d, Surr	еу		
District/Borough	Mole Val	ley	District						
NGR (12 figures)	515980 1	579	976						
Geology	London (	Clay	,						
Fieldwork type	EV								
Date of fieldwork	17.02.20	20 -	24.02.2	020					
Sponsor/client	RPS Cor	sul	ting						
Project manager	Paul Mas	on							
Project supervisor	Simon St	eve	ens						
Period summary									
									None
Project summary	undertak Leatherh Eleven tr be intact,	Archaeology South-East was commissioned by RPS Consulting to undertake an archaeological evaluation on land at Fox Grove School, Leatherhead, Surrey (centred at NGR 515980 157976).  Eleven trenches were excavated. The subsoil horizon was found to be intact, and no archaeological features, deposits or significant finds were encountered in the evaluation.							

#### **OASIS Form**

OASIS ID: archaeol6-386314

Project details

Archaeological Evaluation Report - Land at Fox Grove School, Project name

Leatherhead, Surrey

Archaeology South-East was commissioned by RPS Consulting to

undertake an archaeological evaluation on land at Fox Grove School,

the project

Short description of Leatherhead, Surrey (centred at NGR 515980 157976) Eleven trenches were excavated. The subsoil horizon was found to be intact.

and no archaeological features, deposits or significant finds were

encountered in the evaluation.

Start: 17-02-2020 End: 24-02-2020 Project dates

Previous/future

work

codes

No / Not known

Any associated

project reference

190703 - Contracting Unit No.

codes

Any associated

project reference

FGS 20 - Sitecode

Any associated

project reference

MO/2019/2193 - Planning Application No.

codes

Type of project Field evaluation

Site status None

Current Land use Other 14 - Recreational usage

Monument type NONE None

POTTERY Post Medieval Significant Finds Significant Finds HORSESHOE Post Medieval

Methods & techniques

"Sample Trenches"

Development type

Public building (e.g. school, church, hospital, medical centre, law

courts etc.)

**Prompt** Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPS

Position in the planning process

Between deposition of an application and determination

Project location

Country England

SURREY MOLE VALLEY LEATHERHEAD Land at Fox Grove School Site location

Postcode **KT22 7NZ** Study area 1 Hectares

TQ 15980 57976 51.308552534646 -0.335875912984 51 18 30 N 000 Site coordinates

20 09 W Point

Project creators

Name of Organisation

Archaeology South-East

Project brief **RPS Consulting**  originator

Project design originator

Archaeology South-East

Project

director/manager

Paul Mason

Project supervisor

Simon Stevens

Type of

sponsor/funding

client

body

Name of

recipient

sponsor/funding

**RPS Consulting** 

body

Project archives

Physical Archive

Leatherhead Museum

**Physical Contents** 

"other"

Digital Archive recipient

Leatherhead Museum

**Digital Contents** 

"other"

Digital Media available

"Images raster / digital photography"

Paper Archive

recipient

Leatherhead Museum

**Paper Contents** "other"

Paper Media available

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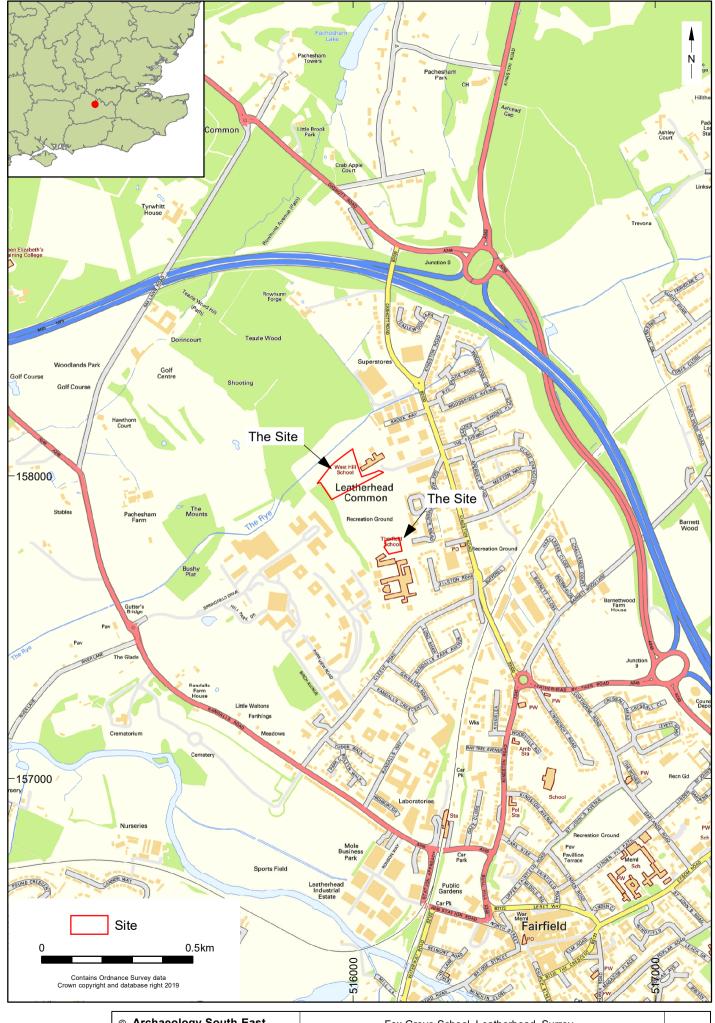
publication

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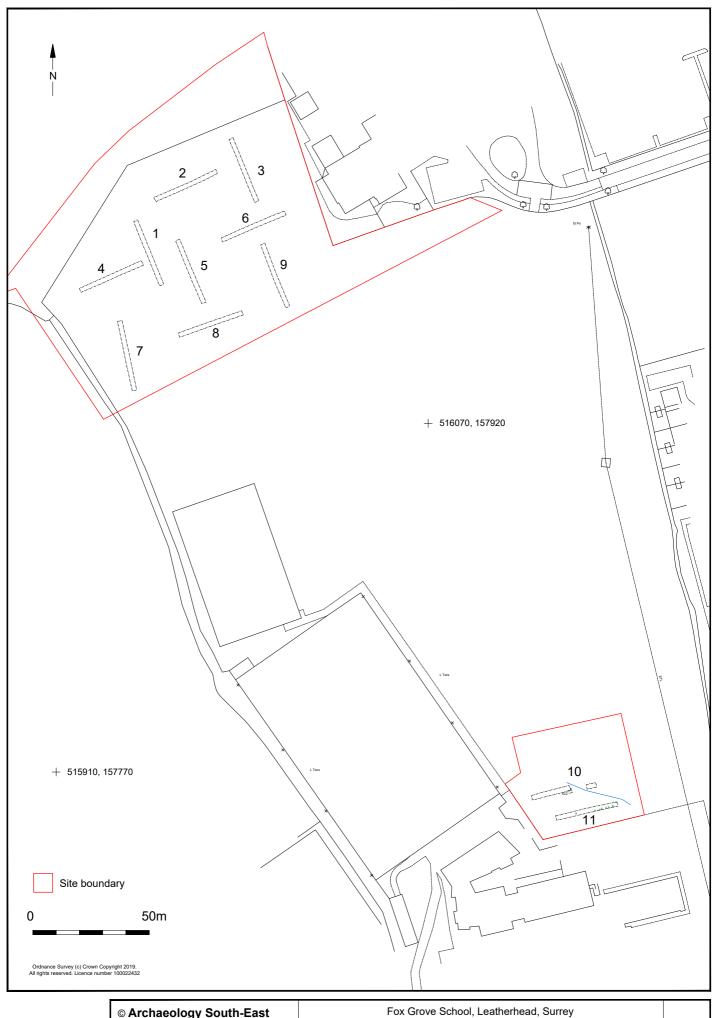
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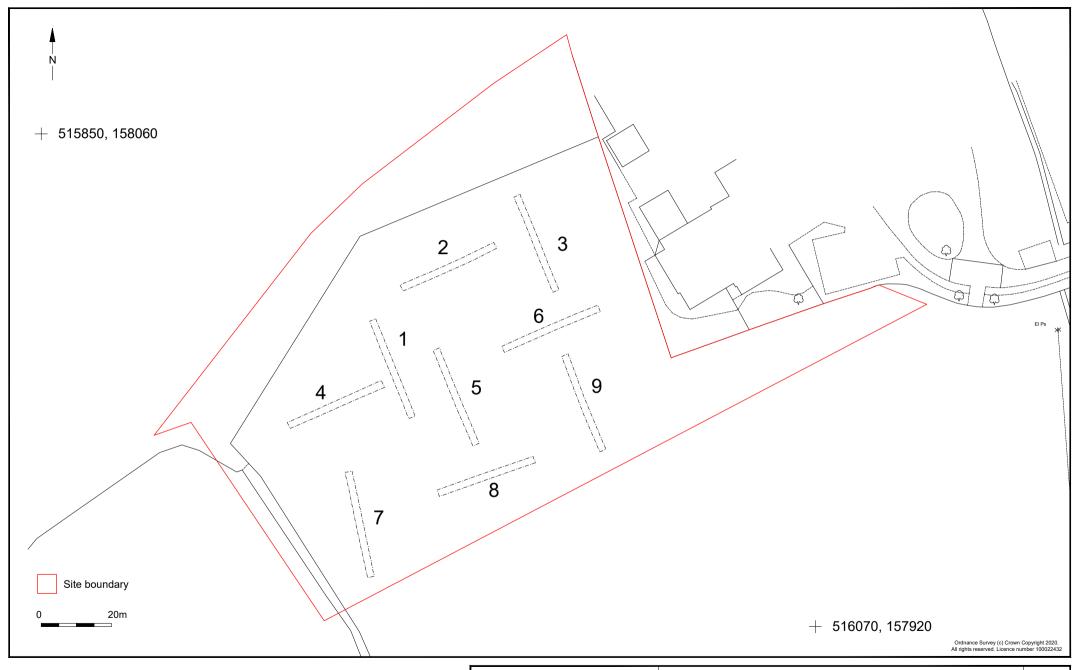
Entered on 9 March 2020



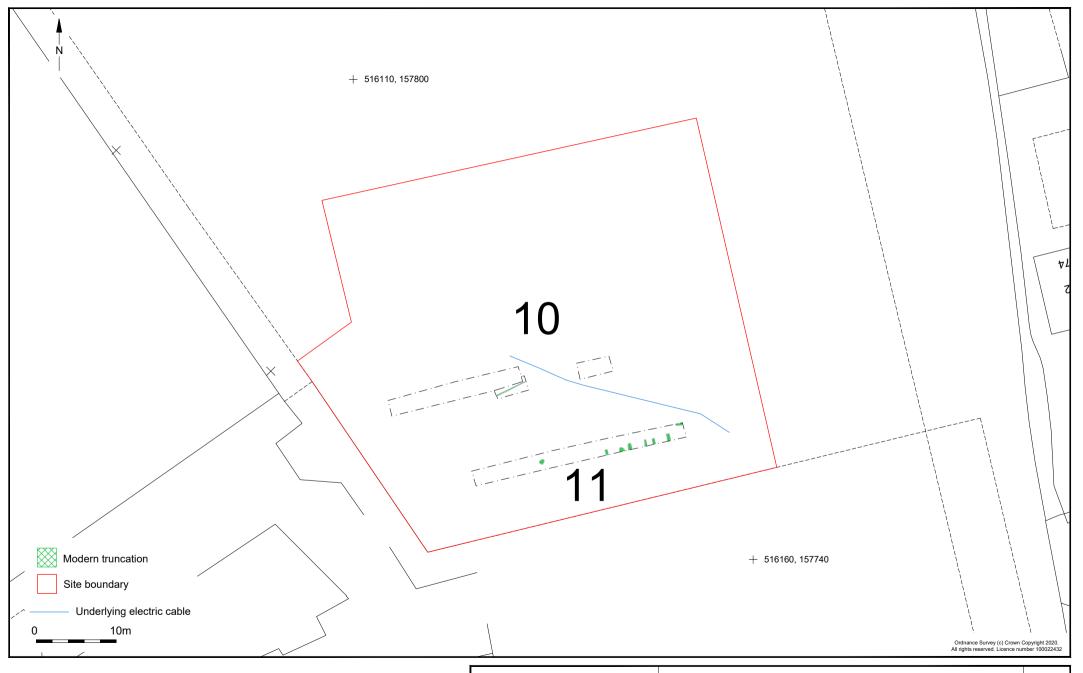
© Archaeology Sout	:h-East	Fox Grove School, Leatherhead, Surrey	Fig. 1
Project Ref: 190703 Fe	ebruary 2020	Site location	
Report Ref: 2020053 Dr	rawn by: NH	OILE IOCALIOTI	



© Archaeology South-East		Fox Grove School, Leatherhead, Surrey	Fig. 2
Project Ref: 190703	February 2020	Trench plan	1 lg. 2
Report Ref: 2020053	Drawn by: NH	Trenor plan	



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Project Ref: 190703	February 2020	Trench plan: northern area	Fig. 3
Report Ref: 2020053	Drawn by: NH	Trendit plan. northern area	



© Archaeology South-East		Fox Grove School, Leatherhead, Surrey	Fig. 4
Project Ref: 190703	February 2020	Trench plan: southern area	1 lg. 4
Report Ref: 2020053	Drawn by: NH	Trenon plant southern area	





Trench 2, looking east-northeast



Trench 3, looking south-southeast



Trench 4, looking west-southwest



Trench 5, looking south-southeast



© Archaeology South-East		Fox Grove School, Leatherhead, Surrey	Fig. 5
Project Ref: 190703	February 2020	Dhoton Transhas 1 G	rig. 5
Report Ref: 2020053	Drawn by: NH	Photos: Trenches 1 - 6	







Trench 8, looking east-northeast





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Trench 11, looking west



Excavation of Trench 5 (foreground) and Trench 7 (background)



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Photos: Trench 11 and general working shots

# **Sussex Office**

Units 1 & 2 2 Chapel Place Portslade East Sussex BN41 1DR tel: +44(0)1273 426830 email: fau@ucl.ac.uk

web: www.archaeologyse.co.uk

# **Essex Office**

27 Eastways Witham Essex CM8 3YQ

tel: +44(0)1376 331470 email: fau@ucl.ac.uk

web: www.archaeologyse.co.uk

# **London Office**

Centre for Applied Archaeology UCL Institute of Archaeology 31-34 Gordon Square London WC1H 0PY tel: +44(0)20 7679 4778

email: fau@ucl.ac.uk web: www.ucl.ac.uk/caa

