

**An Archaeological Watching Brief at Chantry Primary School,
Ordnance Road, Gravesend, Kent**

NGR 565340 174021

**Site Code: CPG 08
Project No: 3561
OASIS No: archaeol06-47832
ASE Report No: 2008131**



David Fallon

September 2008

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Abstract

An Archaeological Watching Brief was maintained during the ground works undertaken in advance of the erection of prefabricated units for a new Children's Centre at Chantry Primary School, Ordnance Road, Gravesend, Kent (NGR 565340 174021). The work was undertaken between 31st July and 4th August 2008 and was commissioned by Neilcott Special Works. The Watching Brief entailed the observation of ground works consisting of the stripping of the topsoil over an area measuring 273.60m² and the excavation of 42 pad holes each measuring between 0.60m x 0.60m x 1.00m and 0.80m x 0.80m x 1.00m.

The underlying natural deposit of light yellow brown clay silt was encountered at a maximum of 8.86m and a minimum 8.48m OD to the south of the site; the natural deposits were not revealed to the north. Above this was an undisturbed topsoil of soft mid brown clay silt. No archaeological deposits were encountered during these works.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Site Background

1.1.1 Archaeology South-East (ASE), a division of University College London Centre for Applied Archaeology (UCLCAA), were commissioned by Neilcott Special Works to undertake an archaeological Watching Brief on ground works consisting of the stripping of the topsoil over an area measuring 273.60m² and the excavation of 42 pad holes each measuring between 0.60m x 0.60m x 1.00m and 0.80m x 0.80m x 1.00m at Chantry Primary School, Ordnance Road, Gravesend, Kent (NGR 565340 174021), henceforth called the site (Figure 1). The pad holes were located to fit a predetermined pattern (Figure 2).

1.1.2 The site lay in a plot of land to the west of the school buildings currently in use as a lawn area (Fig.3). It was bounded to the north by Ordnance Road, to the west by a residential development and to the south and the east by the school play ground.

1.2 Geology and Topography

1.2.1 The site is located in a low-lying area approximately 200m south of the River Thames.

1.2.2 The natural geology of the site comprises Upper Chalk (white chalk with bands of flint), as observed from the Geological Survey of England and Wales 1:50,000 map (Sheet 271, Dartford). Mostly, however, this stretch of Upper Chalk is interrupted by deposits of Thanet Beds (sands), which outcrop further towards Gravesend and towards Northfleet.

1.3 Planning Background

1.3.1 The ground works were undertaken as part of the development of the site for a Children's Centre. The site lies within an area of some archaeological potential. The programme of archaeological works was undertaken as a response to a condition of planning permission for the site and followed the direction of a Specification produced by Adam Single of the Heritage Conservation Group at Kent County Council.

1.4 Aims and Objectives

1.4.1 The objectives of the Watching Brief are to contribute to heritage knowledge of the area through recording of the archaeological remains exposed as a result of the excavations in connection with the pad holes.

1.4.2 The general aim of this work was to ensure that any features, artefacts or ecofacts of archaeological interest exposed and affected by the works were recorded and interpreted to appropriate standards.

1.5 Scope of the Report

1.5.1 The report presents the findings of the Watching Brief, which was undertaken by David Fallon (Archaeologist). The project was managed by Giles Dawkes (Project Manager) and Louise Rayner (Post-Excavation).

2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The site lies in a historic area of Gravesend in the vicinity of military installations such as New Haven Fort and Milton Blockhouse.
- 2.2 A 500m search of the Kent County Council Historic Environment Record identified thirty one archaeological results (Fig. 1). These results are tabulated below (the search also highlighted forty three records pertaining to Listed buildings. They have not been tabulated):

No	HER No	Type	Date	Description	NGR
1	MWX 0239	Unassigned	Not Known	Line of Stakes	TQ 65435 74406
2	MWX 0240	Monument	20 th C	Wharf	TQ 65237 74408
3	MWX 0241	Monument	Post-Medieval	Wooden Structure	TQ 65615 74304
4	MKE 1529	Find Spot	Roman	Samian Pottery	TQ 65 74
5	MKE 1530	Find Spot	Bronze Age	Axe	TQ 65 74
6	MKE 1531	Find Spot	Iron Age	Coins	TQ 65 74
7	MKE 1552	Find Spot	Neolithic	Axe	TQ 65 74
8	MKE 1558	Monument	Medieval	Fort	TQ 6550 7429
9	MKE 1563	Monument	Post-Medieval	Fort	TQ 6530 7430
10	MKE 1572	Monument	Post-Medieval	Canal Bridge	TQ 656 742
11	MKE 1576	Monument	20 th C	Gun Emplacement	TQ 652 743
12	MKE 1580	Find Spot	Post-Medieval	Clay Pipes	TQ 65 74
13	MKE 9030	Monument	Post-Medieval	Barracks	TQ 6518 7365
14	TQ67 SE204	Monument	20 th C	Air Raid Shelter	TQ 6514 7394
15	TQ67 SE206	Monument	20 th C	Power Station	TQ 6575 7413
16	TQ67 SE207	Monument	20 th C	Air Raid Warden Post	TQ 6515 73889
17	TQ67 SE2332	Monument	Post-Medieval	Maltings	TQ 6510 7394
18	TQ67 SE216	Monument	Medieval	Structure	TQ 6526 7440
19	TQ67 SE1006	Building	Undated	/	TQ 65669 74282
20	TQ67 SE1012	Monument	Post-Medieval/ 20 th C	Groyne	TQ 65395 74421
21	TQ67 SE1016	Monument	Post-Medieval	Pier	TQ 65226 74447
22	TQ67 SE1017	Monument	Post-Medieval	Pier	TQ 65259 74450
23	TQ67 SE1027	Monument	20 th C	Pier	TQ 65153 74433
24	TQ67 SE1028	Monument	20 th C	Coast Guard Station	TQ 65190 74401
25	TQ67 SE1037	Monument	Post-Medieval	Canal Lock	TQ 6563 7430
26	TQ67	Monument	Post-	Revetment/	TQ 6525 7440

No	HER No	Type	Date	Description	NGR
	SE1038		Medieval	Slipway	
27	TQ67 SE1039	Monument	Post- Medieval	Structure	TQ 6525 7440
28	TQ67 SE235	Monument	Post- Medieval	Canal Basin	TQ 65647 74235
29	TQ67	Monument	Post- Medieval	Boundary Marker	TQ 655 743
30	TQ67	Building	Post- Medieval	House	TQ 6572 7429
31	TQ67 SW436	Find Spot	Palaeolithic	Handaxes	TQ 65 74

Table 1: Summary of HER Data

- 2.3 The search of the HER highlighted relatively few records from the periods before the post-medieval period. This may reflect the amount of archaeological work that has been carried out in this built-up area.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

- 3.1 The general aim of the archaeological work was to ensure that any artefacts or ecofacts of an archaeological interest encountered during the ground works were located and recorded to appropriate standards. Specifically, the main aims of the archaeological works was to establish the location, extent and date of any ground disturbance present and to ascertain at what depth any archaeological or potential archaeological horizons were encountered
- 3.2 The ground works comprised the mechanical stripping of the topsoil to a depth of 0.10m in the north of the site and 0.400m in the south. This was accomplished by an eight tonne 360° excavator using a 1.00m smooth bladed grading bucket (Fig.4). A series of 42 pad holes measuring between 0.60m x 0.60m x 1.00m and 0.80m x 0.80m x 1.00m were then excavated using a 0.60m toothed trenching bucket (Fig.5).
- 3.3 All ground works were monitored by a member of Archaeology South-East staff.

4.0 EXCAVATION AND RECORDING TECHNIQUES

- 4.1 The stripping of the topsoil and the excavation of the pad holes was carried out by the ground works subcontractor. The pad holes were spaced throughout the footprint of the proposed development (Fig. 2). The pad holes measured between 0.60m x 0.60m x 1.00m and 0.80m x 0.80m x 1.00m.
- 4.2 A log of the work was kept using standard Archaeology South-East Watching Brief Record forms, a site plan on waterproof draughting film produced and a digital photographic record taken of the works.

5.0 RESULTS

- 5.1 The natural deposit, a soft mid brown clay silt, was present at a maximum of 8.86m and a minimum 8.48m OD to the south of the site underneath 0.40m of soft mid brown clay silt topsoil. However, the level of the natural deposits to the north of the site was not ascertained because the ground works project design stipulated that only 0.10m of topsoil should be removed in this area.
- 5.2 The top of the natural silt constituted the potential archaeological horizon and nothing of an archaeological interest was observed. Nor was any disturbance of the natural deposits observed on the site.
- 5.3 No archaeological finds or features were observed in any of the 42 pad holes.

6.0 CONCLUSION

- 6.1 The aims of the Watching Brief have been addressed by these works and the information recovered.
- 6.2 The ground works did not encounter any archaeological remains and no artefacts or ecofacts of an archaeological interest were recovered during these works.

Appendix 1

OASIS ID: archaeol6-47832

Project details

Project name	Chantry Primary School
Short description of the project	A Watching Brief of ground works consisting of topsoil reduction and excavation of 42 pad holes for prefabricated school buildings
Project dates	Start: 31-07-2008 End: 04-08-2008
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	CPG 08 - Sitecode
Type of project	Recording project
Monument type	NONE None
Monument type	NONE Uncertain
Significant Finds	NONE None
Significant Finds	NONE None
Investigation type	'Watching Brief'
Prompt	Planning condition

Project location

Country	England
Site location	KENT GRAVESHAM GRAVESEND Chantry Primary School
Postcode	DA12 2RL
Study area	273.60 Square metres

Site coordinates 565340 174021 565340 00 00 N 174021 00 00 E Point

Project creators

Name of Organisation Archaeology South-East

Project brief originator Kent County Council

Project design originator Kent County Council

Project director/manager Giles Dawkes

Project supervisor David Fallon

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists? No

Digital Archive recipient Local Museum

Digital Contents 'other'

Digital Media available 'Images raster / digital photography'

Paper Archive recipient Local Museum

Paper Contents 'none'

Paper Media available 'Unpublished Text'

Project bibliography 1

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

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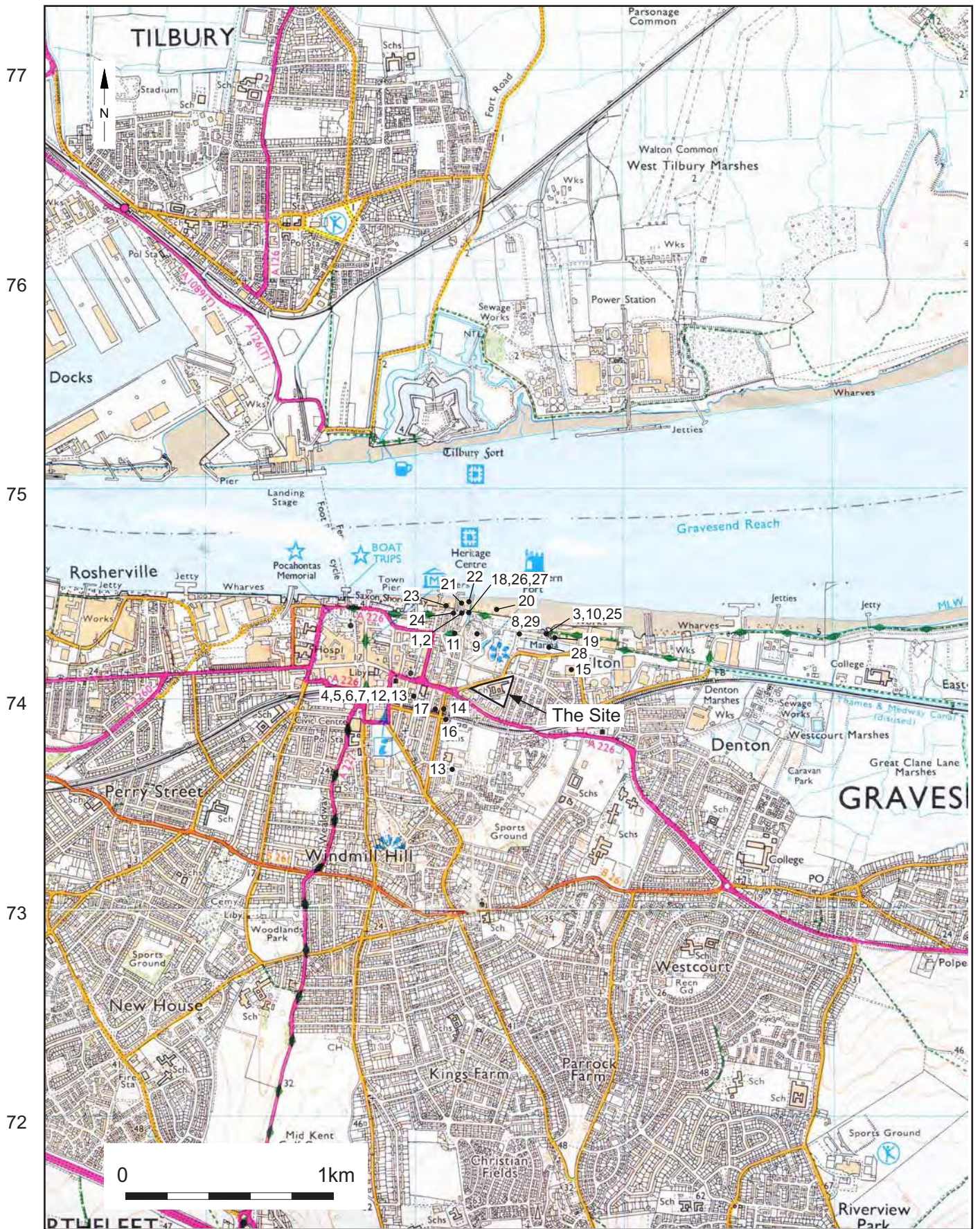
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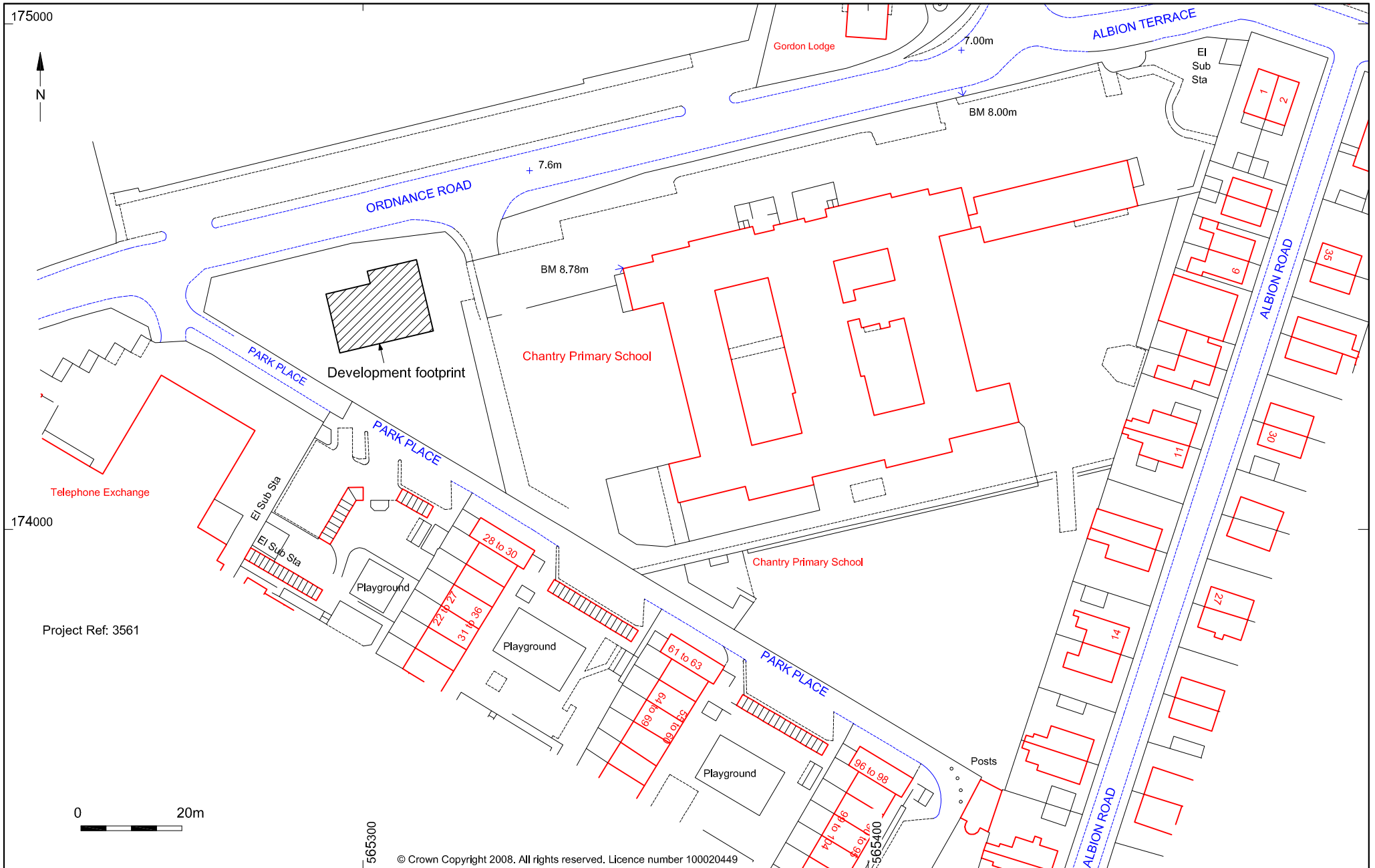
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Fig. 3: The Site



Fig.. 4: Stripping the topsoil

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Fig. 5: Excavating the pad holes



Fig.. 6: Detail of pad hole

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