

**An Archaeological Watching Brief at
Langley Green Primary School, Langley Green,
Crawley, West Sussex**

NGR 52610 13800

**Crawley Borough Planning Reference
CR/178/08**

**Project No. 4095
Site Code: CNM 09**

**ASE Report No. 2009191
OASIS ID: archaeol6-68176**

**by
Simon Stevens BA MIFA**

**With a contributions by
Luke Barber and Sarah Porteus**

April 2010

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Abstract

An archaeological watching brief was maintained during groundworks for the construction of a new Children's Centre in the grounds of Langley Green Primary School, Langley Green. No archaeological features or deposits were encountered, although a small assemblage of artefacts was recovered from the overburden, including post-medieval and potentially medieval ironworking slag.

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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) was commissioned by Westridge Construction Ltd. to undertake an archaeological watching brief at Langley Green Primary School, Crawley (NGR 52610 13800; Fig. 1).

1.2 Geology and Topography

1.2.1 The site lies 1.5km to the north-west of the historic centre of Crawley in Langley Green, one of the nine 'neighbourhoods' of Crawley New Town (Kay 1999). It lies on the western side of the existing school complex, and is bounded to the west by *Stagelands* (the road from which the site is accessed), and to the north-east by a recent development, and to the south by part of the school playing field.

1.2.2 According to the British Geological Survey 1: 50 000 map of the area (Sheet 302, *Horsham*) the underlying geology at the site is Weald Clay.

1.3 Planning Background

1.3.1 Planning permission was granted by Crawley Borough Council for the demolition of an existing building at the site, and the erection of a new Children's Centre (planning ref. CR/178/08). Following consultation between Crawley Borough Council and West Sussex County Council (Crawley Borough Council's advisers on archaeological issues), a condition was attached to the permission, requiring that:

'No development shall be carried out on the land until the applicant, or their agents or successor in title, has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological works in accordance with a written specification and timetable which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the council'

1.3.2 A *Written Scheme of Investigation* was produced by Archaeology South-East outlining the scope of archaeological monitoring during groundworks at the site (ASE 2009). The document was approved by John Mills, Archaeological Officer, West Sussex County Council before the commencement of the work on site.

1.4 Aims and Objectives

1.4.1 The general aim given in the *Written Scheme of Investigation* (ASE 2009, 2) was to

'ensure that any features, artefacts or ecofacts of archaeological interest affected by the proposed groundworks are recorded and interpreted to appropriate standards'.

1.5 Scope of Report

- 1.5.1 The current report provides results of the archaeological monitoring at the site was undertaken during November 2009. The on-site work was undertaken by Simon Stevens (Senior Archaeologist) and Nick Garland (Archaeologist). The project was managed by Jon Sygrave and Dan Swift.

2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1 A number of archaeological sites have been excavated in Crawley in recent years, supporting documentary evidence that suggests that the town was an important centre in the medieval period, its wealth based on the iron industry. Following the grant of a market charter to Michael de Poynings in 1202/3 (Salzman 1940, 145), the settlement apparently prospered and by the 14th century there were tanners, cloth-weavers and ironworkers in the town (Gardiner 1997).
- 2.2 Archaeological work carried out along the line of the Crawley High Street Relief Road in 1995 uncovered various medieval features (Saunders 1998). Excavations at the Old Post Office in the same year revealed 13th to 14th century cess-pits and rubbish pits and the remains of a house probably dating from the 16th century (Stevens 1997); an evaluation uncovered further medieval material in the area at the corner of High Street and Pegler Way (ASE 1999) and recent work has uncovered medieval features in Church Walk (ASE 2008).
- 2.3 Significant quantities of ironworking slag were recovered during these investigations, providing evidence for industrial processes that have been carried out in the general area since at least the Romano-British period (Cartwright 1992). Ironworking provisionally dated to the Iron Age has been identified in the Goffs Park area of the town (Jeremy Hodgkinson, Wealden Iron Research Group, *pers. comm.*). An undated bloomery site has been identified by the Wealden Iron Research Group c.510m to the west of the current site based on the presence of a concentration of ironworking slag (WSCC HER No. 7550 - MWS7625, Fig 1).
- 2.4 Excavation work has also uncovered remains of *in situ* medieval ironworking hearths. Archaeomagnetic dating suggested a late 14th to early 15th century date for the features uncovered at the northern end of the High Street (Cooke 2001). A group of medieval pits containing ironworking slag were discovered on the opposite side of London Road, the continuation of the medieval High Street (Stevens 2006). However, the largest archaeological project in the town to date was the excavation at the Asda site at the southern end of the High Street which provided abundant evidence of both medieval domestic and industrial activity (Stevens 2008). In addition, limited quantities of flintwork have been retrieved during archaeological work in the general area suggesting some level of prehistoric activity (e.g. at the site of Broadfield Stadium; ASE 1996).
- 2.6 An examination of the West Sussex County Council Historic Environment Record showed that there are no known archaeological sites in the immediate vicinity of the current site, although Ewehurst Place, a listed Grade II* late 16th century house with the remains of two moat lies c.500m to the

south-east (WSSC HER No. 4025 -MWS3811, Fig. 1). The site within the outer moat is designated as a Scheduled Ancient Monument and extends beyond the boundaries of the current house and grounds. Remains include those of an ice house (WSSC HER 5262 – MWS3964, Fig. 1). An archaeological watching brief was undertaken in the 1990s within the scheduled area, but no archaeological features, deposits or finds were recorded (HER No. 6680 – MWS6512, Fig 1; ASE 1997).

3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

- 3.1 An archaeological watching brief was maintained during mechanical ground reduction at the site. The work was undertaken by a 15 tonne *Komatsu PC 160* 360° excavator fitted with a five foot (1.54m) wide toothless ditching bucket, under constant archaeological monitoring.
- 3.2 All encountered archaeological deposits, features and finds were recorded to accepted professional standards using standard Archaeology South-East record forms. Deposit colours were recorded by visual inspection and not by reference to a Munsell Colour chart.
- 3.3 A full photographic record of the work was kept and will form part of the site archive. The site archive is currently held by Archaeology South-East at the offices in Portslade, and will be offered to a Crawley Museum in due course. The archive consists of the following material:

Number of Contexts	3
No. of files/paper record	1
Plan and sections sheets	-
Bulk Samples	-
Photograph	10 digital
Bulk finds	1 bag
Brick Samples	-
Registered finds	-
Environmental flots/residue	-

Table 1: Quantification of Site Archive

4.0 RESULTS (Fig. 2)

- 4.1 The removal of overburden at the site was carried out with a 15 tonne 360° excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket. No deposits of archaeological significance were encountered and the stratigraphic sequence was found to be straightforward, with little variation across the stripped area.
- 4.2 The overburden consisted of a layer of silty clay topsoil (Context [01]), which varied in colour between orangey brown and mid-brown, and in thickness between 100mm and 600mm. It contained various modern detritus including glass, metalwork, and plastic, as well as a high concentration of brick rubble. The brick rubble was more prevalent in the south-eastern corner of the stripped area, where the overburden was also deeper (to 900mm in places).

This deposit was recorded separately, as Context [02]. The brick rubble in the overburden was undoubtedly the result of recent demolition work at the site.

- 4.3 The underlying 'natural' was Weald Clay, which was a brownish orange 'sticky' silty clay (Context [03]).

5.0 THE FINDS

5.1 Post-Roman Pottery by Luke Barber

- 5.1.1 A single small bodysherd of later 19th- to 20th- century refined white earthenware was recovered from the overburden.

5.2 The Ceramic Building Material by Sarah Porteus

- 5.2.1 Two unstratified fragments of peg tile in a silty fabric with abundant angular chunky silt inclusions were recovered and are likely to be of 17th to 19th century date.

5.3 Metallurgical Remains by Luke Barber

- 5.3.1 Four pieces of slag were recovered from the overburden. Two of these (187g) consist of fragments of post-medieval blast furnace slag while the other two are undiagnostic of process. However, they could also easily derive from an iron blast furnace. The presence of such slag is not unexpected as it was frequently removed from iron-working sites for use as metalling on tracks and roads throughout the Weald.

6.0 DISCUSSION

- 6.1 No archaeological features or deposits were encountered during the watching brief at the site despite constant monitoring during the stripping of the overburden down to the level of the 'natural' across the site.
- 6.2 The presence of ironworking slag was not unexpected given the occurrence of numerous known ironworking sites in the Weald and specifically in the Crawley area, including a suspected bloomery relatively close the site (See Paragraph 2.3 above). The presence of this material is not indicative of the location of ironworking activity in the immediate vicinity of the current site given the various uses to which it has been put in the past away from smelting and forging locations (see Paragraph 5.2.1 above).
- 6.3 The recovery of post-medieval pottery was also not unforeseen given that a post-medieval building was demolished at the site as part of the current development project. Arguably a larger assemblage might have been suspected, suggesting that the demolished building at the site was of late

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SMR Summary Form

Site Code	CNM 09					
Identification Name and Address	Langley Green Primary School, Langley Green					
County, District &/or Borough	Crawley District, West Sussex					
OS Grid Reference.	NGR 52610 13800					
Geology	Weald Clay					
Arch. South-East Project Number	4095					
Type of Fieldwork	Eval.	Excav.	Watching Brief ✓	Standing Structure	Survey	Other
Type of Site	Green Field	Shallow Urban ✓	Deep Urban	Other		
Dates of Fieldwork	Eval.	Excav.	WB. Nov. 2009	Other		
Sponsor/Client	Westridge Construction Ltd.					
Project Manager	Jon Sygrave/Jim Stevenson					
Project Supervisor	Simon Stevens					
Period Summary	Palaeo.	Meso.	Neo.	BA	IA	RB
	AS	MED ?	PM ✓	Other		
100 Word Summary.						
<p><i>An archaeological watching brief was maintained during groundworks for the construction of a new Children's Centre in the grounds of Langley Green Primary School, Langley Green. No archaeological features or deposits were encountered, although a small assemblage of artefacts was recovered from the overburden, including post-medieval and potentially medieval ironworking slag.</i></p>						

OASIS Form

OASIS ID: archaeol6-68176

Project details

Project name	An Archaeological Watching Brief at Langley Green Primary School, Langley Green, Crawley, West Sussex
Short description of the project	An archaeological watching brief was maintained during groundworks for the construction of a new Children's Centre in the grounds of Langley Green Primary School, Langley Green, Crawley. No archaeological features or deposits were encountered, although a small assemblage of artefacts were recovered from the overburden.
Project dates	Start: 09-11-2009 End: 19-11-2009
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	4095 - Contracting Unit No.
Any associated project reference codes	CNM 09 - Sitecode
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	None
Current Land use	Other 13 - Waste ground
Monument type	NONE None
Significant Finds	IRONWORKING SLAG Medieval
Investigation type	'Watching Brief'
Prompt	Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPG16

Project location

Country	England
Site location	WEST SUSSEX CRAWLEY CRAWLEY Langley Green Primary School
Postcode	RH11 7TF
Study area	300.00 Square metres
Site coordinates	TQ 2610 1380 50.9093136335 -0.206186856232 50 54 33 N 000 12 22 W Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 62.00m Max: 63.00m

Project creators

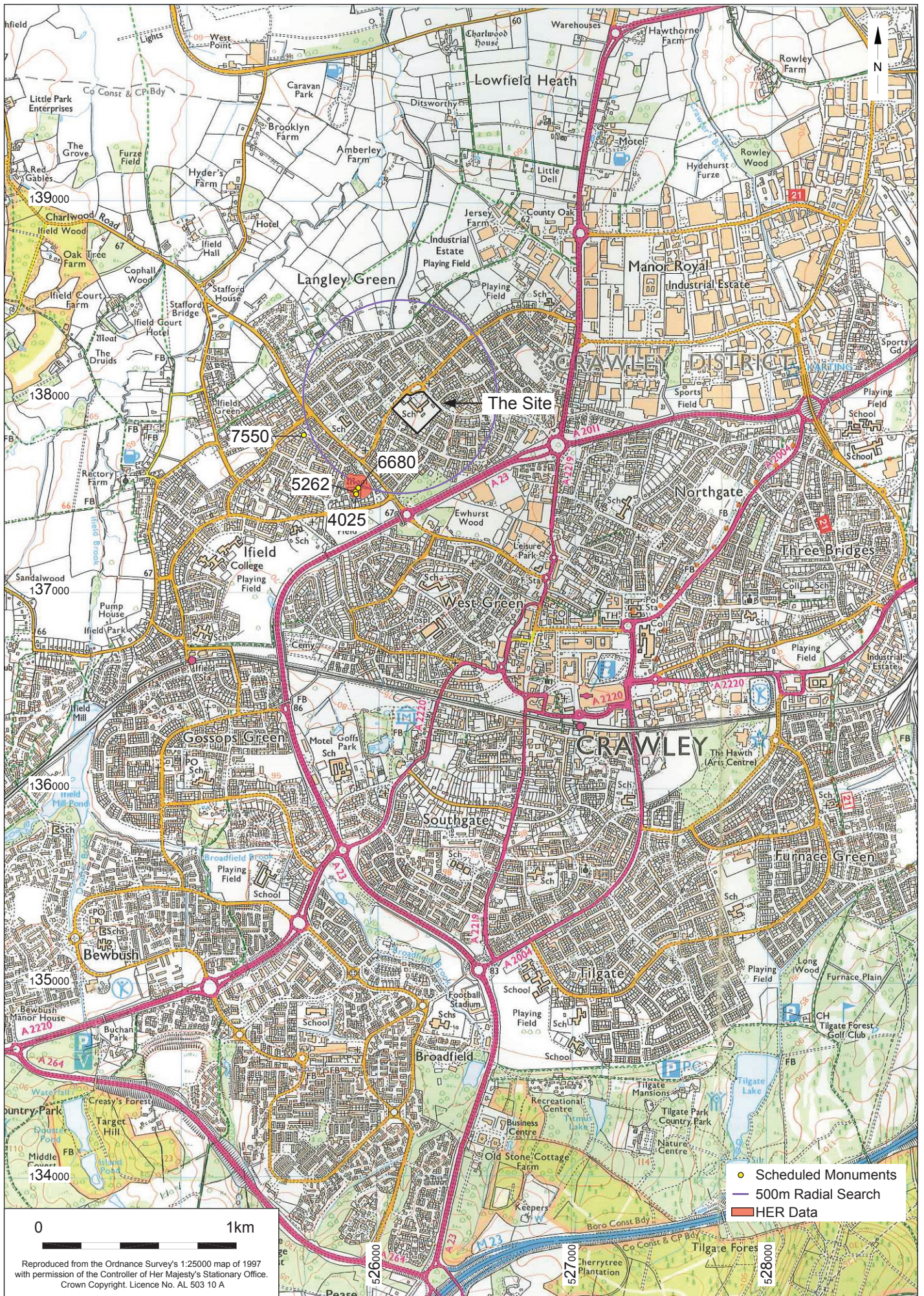
Name of Organisation	Archaeology South-East
Project brief originator	West Sussex County Council
Project design originator	Archaeology South-East
Project director/manager	Jon Sygrave
Project supervisor	Simon Stevens

Type of sponsor/funding body	Client
Name of sponsor/funding body	Westridge Construction Ltd.
Project archives	
Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	Crawley Museum
Digital Contents	'other'
Digital Media available	'Images raster / digital photography'
Paper Archive recipient	Crawley Museum
Paper Contents	'other'
Paper Media available	'Context sheet', 'Correspondence', 'Report'

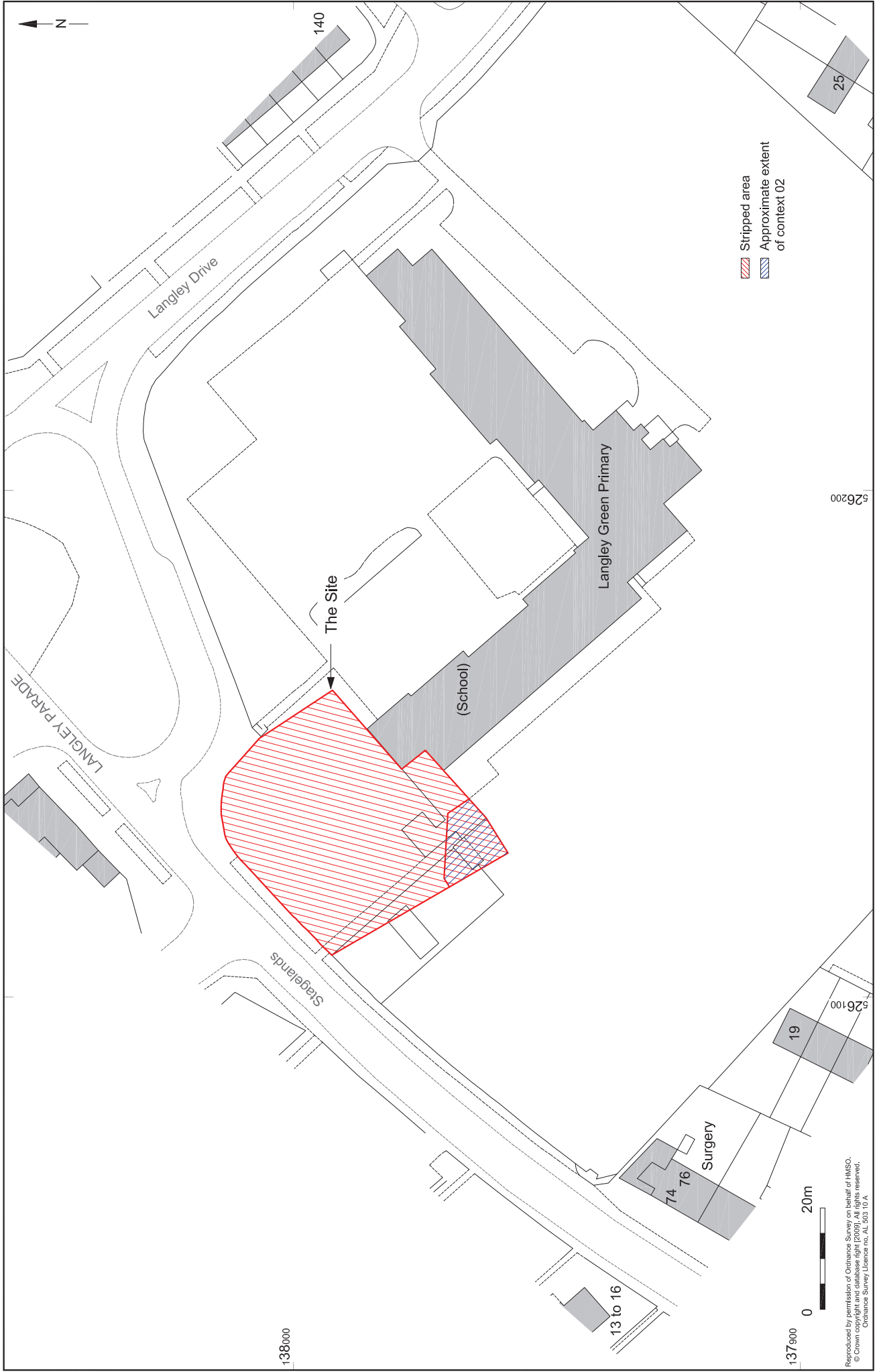
Project bibliography

1

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© Archaeology South-East		New Children's Centre, Langley Drive, Crawley	
Project Ref: 4095	April 2010	Site location	
Report Ref:	Drawn by: FEG	Fig. 1	



© Archaeology South-East		New Medical Centre, Crawley	
Project Ref: 4095	April 2010	Plan of monitored area	
Report Ref:	Drawn by: JLR		

Fig. 2

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