
ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOLUTIONS LTD

**BUTTSBURY JUNIOR SCHOOL,
NORSEY VIEW DRIVE, BILLERICAY, ESSEX**

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING & EXCAVATION

Authors: Zbigniew Pozorski	
NGR: TQ 6781 9625	Report No: 4705
District: Borough of Basildon	Site Code: BLBS14
Approved: Claire Halpin	Project No: 5942
Signed:	Date: 30 October 2014

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CONTENTS

OASIS SUMMARY SHEET

SUMMARY

- 1 INTRODUCTION**
- 2 DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE**
- 3 TOPOGRAPHY, GEOLOGY AND SOILS**
- 4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**
- 5 METHODOLOGY**
- 6 DESCRIPTION OF RESULTS**
- 7 CONFIDENCE RATING**
- 8 DISCUSSION**
- 9 DEPOSITION OF THE ARCHIVE**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

BIBLIOGRAPHY

APPENDICES

- 1 CONTENTS OF THE ARCHIVE**
- 2 HER SUMMARY SHEET**

OASIS SUMMARY SHEET

Project details			
Project name	<i>Buttsbury Junior School, Norsey View Drive, Billericay, Essex</i>		
<p><i>In October 2014 Archaeological Solutions (AS) carried out an archaeological monitoring and excavation at Buttsbury Junior School, Norsey View Drive, Billericay, Essex (NGR TQ 6781 9625). The monitoring was commissioned by Barker Associates LLP in compliance with a planning condition attached to planning permission for the construction of new extensions to the school.</i></p> <p><i>The site is situated in the northern part of Billericay, Essex. It had a potential for prehistoric and Romano-British archaeological remains as a Late Iron Age vessel was found on the site in 1974 and the site lies within the possible location of a Roman cemetery.</i></p> <p><i>In the event the monitoring revealed no archaeological features or finds. The area of investigation was the subject of modern truncation likely related to the construction of the school in 1970s.</i></p>			
Project dates (fieldwork)	<i>09-10/10/2014</i>		
Previous work (Y/N/?)	<i>N</i>	Future work (Y/N/?)	<i>N</i>
P. number	<i>5942</i>	Site code	<i>BLBS14</i>
Type of project	<i>Archaeological Monitoring & Excavation</i>		
Site status	<i>-</i>		
Current land use	<i>Side yard</i>		
Planned development	<i>Extensions to school building</i>		
Main features (+dates)	<i>-</i>		
Significant finds (+dates)	<i>-</i>		
Project location			
County/ District/ Parish	<i>Essex</i>	<i>Basildon</i>	<i>Billericay</i>
HER/ SMR for area	<i>Essex HER</i>		
Post code (if known)	<i>CM12 0QR</i>		
Area of site	<i>c.200m²</i>		
NGR	<i>TQ 6781 9625</i>		
Height AOD (min/max)	<i>c.79m AOD</i>		
Project creators			
Brief issued by	<i>ECC</i>		
Project supervisor/s (PO)	<i>Zbigniew Pozorski</i>		
Funded by	<i>Buttsbury Junior School</i>		
Full title	<i>Buttsbury Junior School, Norsey View Drive, Billericay, Essex. Archaeological Monitoring & Excavation</i>		
Authors	<i>Pozorski, Z.</i>		
Report no.	<i>4705</i>		
Date (of report)	<i>October 2014</i>		

BUTTSBURY JUNIOR SCHOOL, NORSEY VIEW DRIVE, BILLERICAY, ESSEX

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING & EXCAVATION

SUMMARY

In October 2014 Archaeological Solutions (AS) carried out an archaeological monitoring and excavation at Buttsbury Junior School, Norsey View Drive, Billericay, Essex (NGR TQ 6781 9625). The monitoring was commissioned by Barker Associates LLP in compliance with a planning condition attached to planning permission for the construction of new extensions to the school.

The site is situated in the northern part of Billericay, Essex. It had a potential for prehistoric and Romano-British archaeological remains as a Late Iron Age vessel was found on the site in 1974 and the site lies within the possible location of a Roman cemetery.

In the event the monitoring revealed no archaeological features or finds. The area of investigation was the subject of modern truncation likely related to the construction of the school in 1970s.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 In October 2014 Archaeological Solutions (AS) carried out an archaeological monitoring and excavation at Buttsbury Junior School, Norsey View Drive, Billericay, Essex (NGR TQ 6781 9625; Figs. 1 & 2). The monitoring was commissioned by Barker Associates LLP on behalf of the school in compliance with a planning condition attached to planning permission for the construction of new extensions to the school (Borough of Basildon Council Planning Ref. 14/00200/FUL).

1.2 The monitoring was undertaken in accordance to a brief issued by Historic Environment Officer of Essex County Council (ECC; dated 17/06/2014), and a written scheme of investigation (specification) prepared by AS (dated 26/08/2014), and approved by ECC. The project conformed to the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA) *Code of Conduct and Standard and Guidance for An Archaeological Watching Brief* (revised 2008), and the document *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England* (Gurney 2003).

1.3 The objective of the project of archaeological monitoring and excavation was to record any buried archaeological remains revealed during the groundworks phase of the project. The archaeological work also aimed to record the location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any surviving archaeological remains. The specific aims of the project were to identify any evidence of Iron Age/Roman settlement/burial activity within the area of proposed development and to record the stratigraphic sequence of deposits affected by the development.

Planning policy context

1.4 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2012) states that those parts of the historic environment that have significance because of their historic, archaeological, architectural or artistic interest are heritage assets. The NPPF aims to deliver sustainable development by ensuring that policies and decisions that concern the historic environment recognise that heritage assets are a non-renewable resource, take account of the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits of heritage conservation, and recognise that intelligently managed change may sometimes be necessary if heritage assets are to be maintained for the long term. The NPPF requires applications to describe the significance of any heritage asset, including its setting that may be affected in proportion to the asset's importance and the potential impact of the proposal.

1.5 The NPPF aims to conserve England's heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, with substantial harm to designated heritage assets (i.e. listed buildings, scheduled monuments) only permitted in exceptional circumstances when the public benefit of a proposal outweighs the conservation of the asset. The effect of proposals on non-designated heritage assets must be balanced against the scale of loss and significance of the asset, but non-designated heritage assets of demonstrably equivalent significance may be considered subject to the same policies as those that are designated. The NPPF states that opportunities to capture evidence from the historic environment, to record and advance the understanding of heritage assets and to make this publicly available is a requirement of development management. This opportunity should be taken in a manner proportionate to the significance of a heritage asset and to impact of the proposal, particularly where a heritage asset is to be lost.

2 DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE

2.1 Buttsbury Junior School lies on the western side of Norsey View Drive in the northern part of Billericay (Fig. 1). It comprises the existing school buildings, car park and playing fields. The proposed development occupies an area adjacent to the school buildings in the eastern part of the site (Fig. 2). It is proposed to replace two existing temporary classrooms with a new permanent classroom extension.

3 TOPOGRAPHY, GEOLOGY AND SOILS

3.1 The site lies at c.79m AOD on a land gently sloping towards the west. The solid geology of the area is of Claygate Member clay (British Geological Survey 1978). Soils in the area are those of the Windsor association, described as permeable seasonally waterlogged clayey soils mostly with brown subsoils (Soil Survey of England and Wales 1983).

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

4.1 The earliest archaeological evidence from Billericay comes from Norsey Wood, c.800m south-east of the site. Mesolithic finds, Bronze Age burial mounds, Bronze Age and Iron Age settlements, Roman cemetery and Belgic settlement are known from that area. Saxon settlement existed at Great Burstead, c.3.5km south of the site. Billericay was not mentioned in Domesday Book, and was recorded for the first time in 1291. In Middle Ages it became an en-route point for pilgrims going to Canterbury. In 1381 a battle between the forces of King Richard II and Essex rebels was fought at Norsey Wood ending the Peasants' Revolt. Billericay played a role as a meeting point in the journey of Pilgrim Fathers in the *Mayflower*. Later colonists were also recruited from the town.

4.2 The Essex Historic Environment Record notes that the school occupies an area of archaeological interest, with a Late Iron Age lathe-turned pottery vessel being found when the school was originally built in 1974 (EHER 5477). The site is also reportedly the location of a Roman cemetery (EHER 5478), though there is little further information to substantiate this. Roman pottery sherds were also found c.300m north of the site (EHER 5463).

5 METHODOLOGY

5.1 The principal element monitored was the mechanically-excavated ground reduction for the new western extension to the school building (Fig. 3). The area of the extension was reduced in stages to the level of natural before the laying of a piling mat, and the entire footprint of the proposed new extension was visible to the surface of the natural.

5.2. The archaeological monitoring comprised the observation of all groundworks, the inspection of the subsoil and natural deposits for archaeological features and the examination of spoil heaps and the recording of soil profiles. Archaeological features and deposits were recorded using *pro forma* recording sheets, drawn to scale and photographed as appropriate. Excavated spoil was checked for finds and the excavated area was scanned by metal detector.

6 DESCRIPTION OF RESULTS

6.1 The site was commonly overlain by Topsoil L1000, a dark, greyish brown, soft, sandy silt (0.10 – 0.20m thick). At the time of the investigation the northern part of the site still contained L1000 whilst within remaining part of the site it was removed to expose Made Ground L1001 (0.20 – 0.40m thick), a mid brown, friable, clayey silt with moderate CBM fragments. The natural geology deposit, L1002, was present at 0.25 – 0.45m below existing ground level and comprised a mid yellow, compact, clay.

6.2 No archaeological features or finds were identified. The area of the proposed extension was truncated by modern (20th century) services.

7 CONFIDENCE RATING

7.1 It is not felt that any factors inhibited the recognition of archaeological features or finds during the programme of archaeological monitoring and recording, despite the presence of modern services. The area of the proposed extension was viewed to the surface of the natural where any features, if they had been present, would have been visible.

8 DISCUSSION

8.1 The site had a potential for archaeological remains, in particular for Iron Age and Romano-British archaeology. Such remains have been found on, and in the vicinity of, the site. A Roman cemetery is also believed to be located within the school grounds.

8.2 In the event no archaeological features or finds were revealed, and no residual finds were recovered. No indication of any previous development of the site was identified prior to the modern construction of the school with its associated services. It appeared that during the 1970s construction works the soil was removed in close proximity to the new buildings. Furthermore, it is likely that the school sports grounds to the immediate west, visibly levelled and elevated in comparison to the surrounding buildings, may contain the deposits excavated during this construction.

9 DEPOSITION OF THE ARCHIVE

9.1 Archive records, with an inventory, will be deposited with any donated finds from the site at Southend Central Museum. The archive will be quantified, ordered, indexed, cross-referenced and checked for internal consistency.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Solutions would like to thank Mr Chris Cook of Barker Associates LLP for commissioning the project, and Buttsbury School for funding the works. AS would also like to acknowledge the assistance of the main contractor Haynes & Smith.

AS would also like to acknowledge the input and advice of Ms Teresa O'Connor, the Historic Environment Officer of Essex County Council.

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Gurney, D 2003, *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England*. East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers 14/ALGAO

Institute of Field Archaeologists (now Institute for Archaeologists), 1994 (revised 2008), *Standard and Guidance for An Archaeological Watching Brief*. IfA Reading.

Soil Survey of England and Wales (SSEW), 1983, *Legend for the 1:250,000 Soil Map of England and Wales*. SSEW, Harpenden

APPENDIX 1 CONTENTS OF THE ARCHIVE

Records	Number
Brief	Y
Specification	Y
Registers	2 (Context, Digital Photo)
Context Sheets	2
Site drawings A1	0
Site drawings A3	0
Site drawings A4	0
Site photographs b/w	0
Site photographs colour slides	0
Digital Photographs	14

APPENDIX 2 HER SUMMARY SHEET

Site name/Address: <i>Buttsbury Junior School, Norsey View Drive, Billericay, Essex</i>	
Parish: <i>Billericay</i>	District: <i>Basildon</i>
NGR: <i>TQ 6781 9625</i>	Site Code: <i>BLBS14</i>
Type of Work: <i>Archaeological Monitoring & Excavation</i>	Site Director/Group: <i>Zbigniew Pozorski</i>
Date of Work: <i>9-10/10/2014</i>	Size of Area Investigated: <i>200m²</i>
Location of Finds/Curating Museum: <i>Southend Central</i>	Funding source: <i>Buttsbury Junior School</i>
Further Seasons Anticipated?: <i>-</i>	Related HER No.s: <i>5463, 5477, 5478</i>
Final Report: <i>Pozorski, Z., 2014, Buttsbury Junior School, Norsey View Drive, Billericay, Essex: Archaeological Monitoring & Excavation</i>	
Periods Represented: <i>-</i>	
SUMMARY OF FIELDWORK RESULTS: <i>In October 2014 Archaeological Solutions (AS) carried out an archaeological monitoring and excavation at Buttsbury Junior School, Norsey View Drive, Billericay, Essex (NGR TQ 6781 9625). The monitoring was commissioned by Barker Associates LLP in compliance with a planning condition attached to planning permission for the construction of a new extension to the school.</i> <i>The site is situated in the northern part of Billericay, Essex. It had a potential for prehistoric and Romano-British archaeological remains as a Late Iron Age vessel has been found on the site in 1974 and the site lies within the possible location of a Roman cemetery.</i> <i>In the event the monitoring revealed no archaeological features or finds. The area of investigation proved to be truncated likely related to the construction of the school in 1970s.</i>	
Previous Summaries/Reports:	
Author of Summary: <i>Z. Pozorski</i>	Date of Summary: <i>30/10/2014</i>

PHOTOGRAPHIC INDEX



DP 1. The site of new extension to the school. Looking east-north-east.



DP 2. East part of the site after initial strip of the soil. Looking south-east.



DP 3. East part of the site during further excavation. Looking south-south-west.



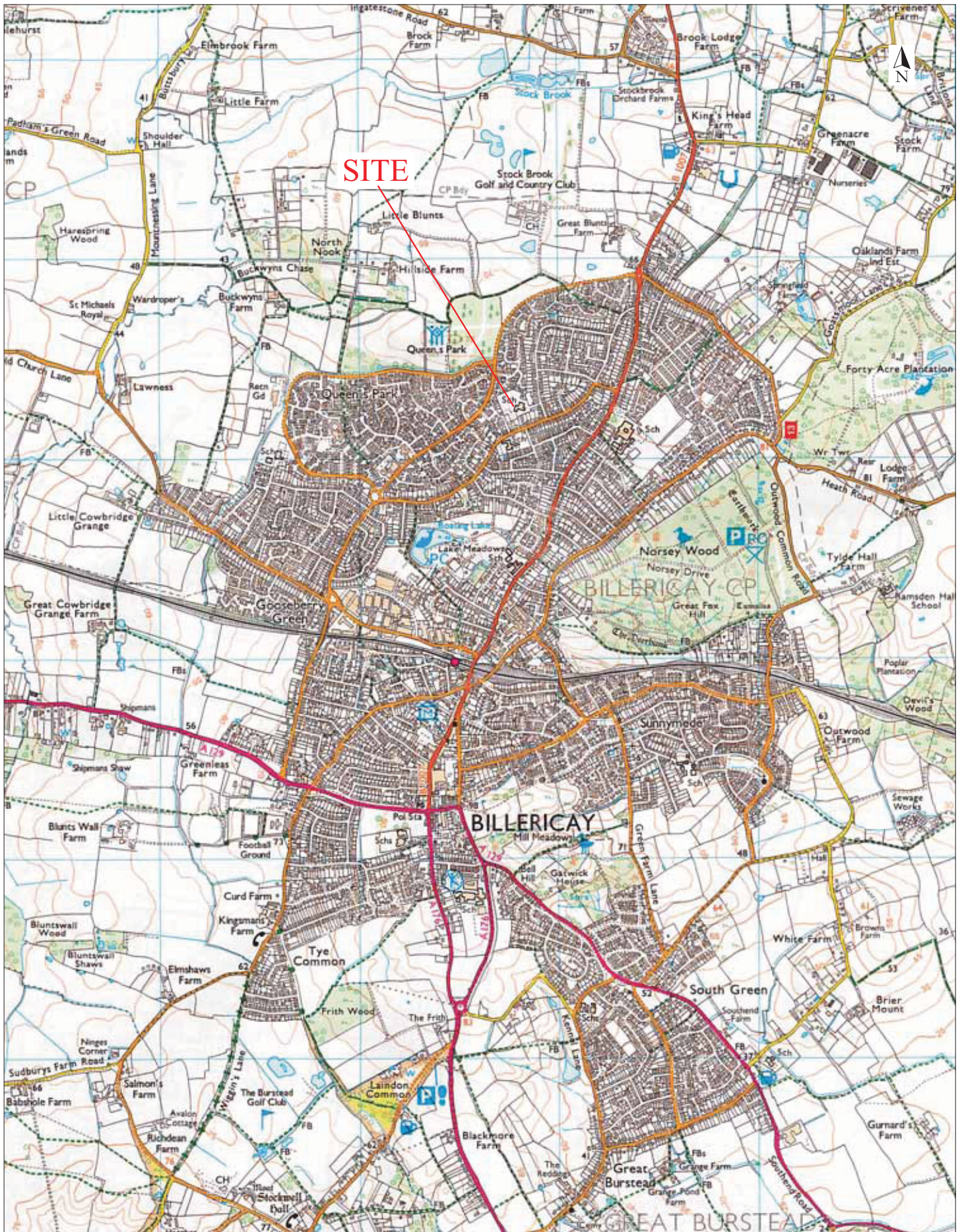
DP 4. Reduced ground in east part of the site. Looking south-south-west.



DP 5. North part of the site. Looking south-east.

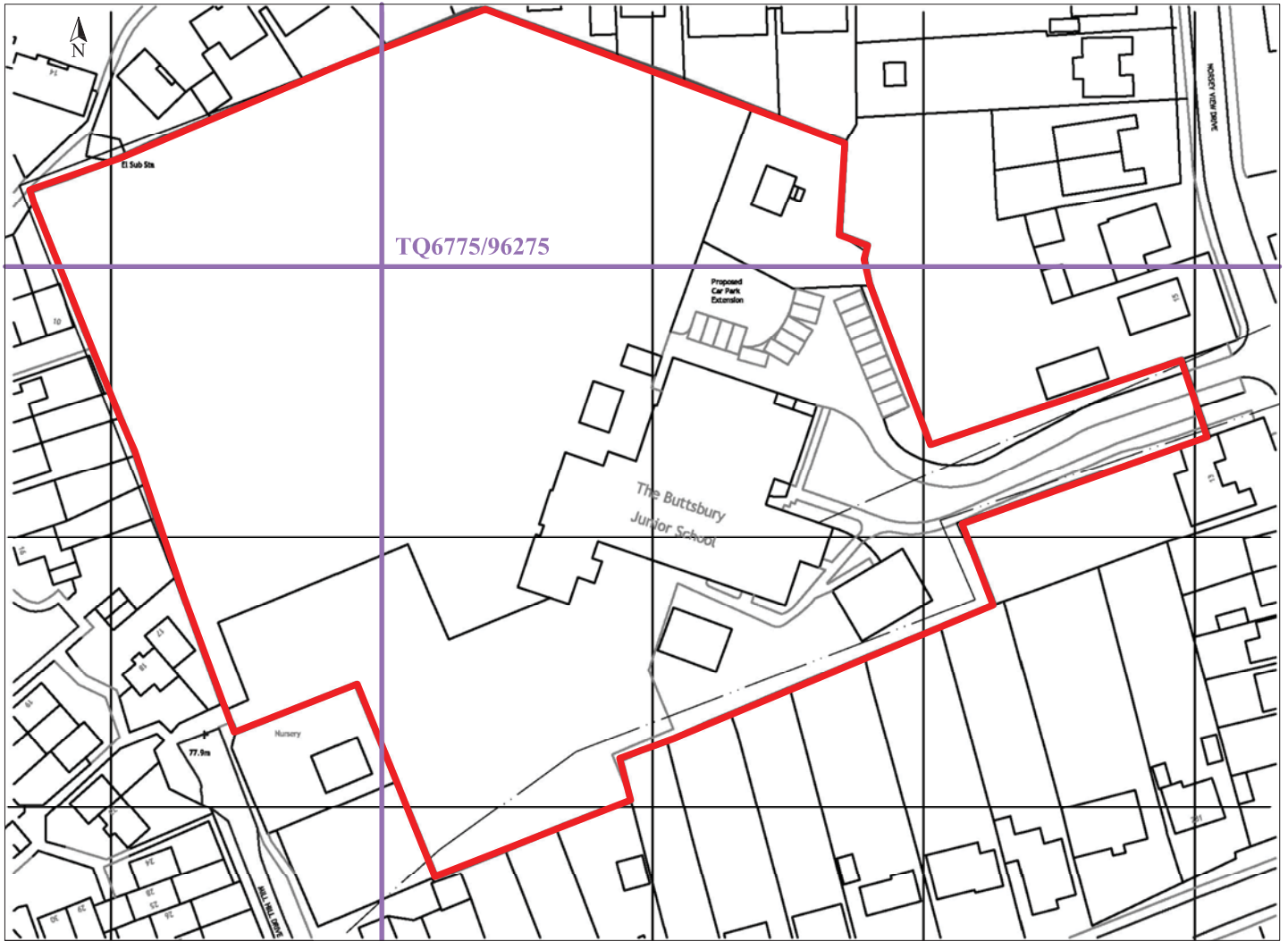


DP 6. West part of the site. Looking south-south-west.



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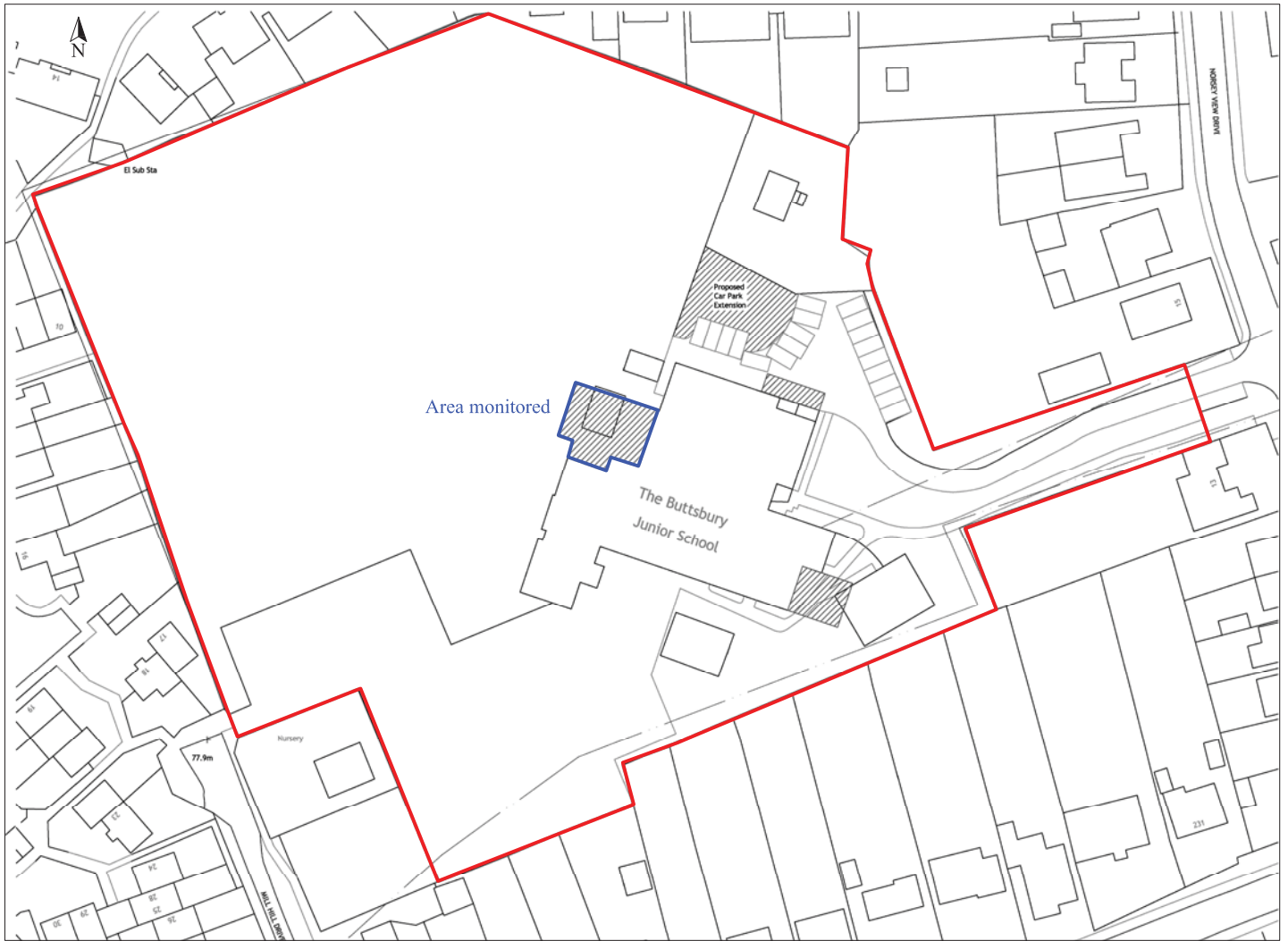
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Fig. 1 Site location plan
 Scale 1:25,000 at A4



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0 75m

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Fig. 2 Detailed site location plan
Scale 1:1250 at A4



<p><i>Archaeological Solutions Ltd</i></p> <p>Fig. 3 Area monitored</p> <p>Scale 1:1250 at A4</p>
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