

Archaeological Observation



**The Quadrangle
3 The Close
Winchester
SO23 9LT
Hampshire**

On behalf of

The Pilgrims' School Winchester

January 2021

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REPORT REFERENCE

BA2085PSW/REP

GRID REFERENCE

NGR: SU 4824 2907

OS LICENCE NUMBER

100055758

SMC REFERENCE

S00240479

DATE

January 2021

Cover: View southwest showing Site works in progress

ISO 9001 | ISO 14001 | OHSAS 18001

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1 Non-Technical Summary

Border Archaeology was instructed by The Pilgrims' School Winchester to carry out Archaeological Observation of groundworks in the Quadrangle involving the replacement of an existing turf lawn with an artificial 'Astroturf' surface. The area is within Winchester Cathedral Close, a Scheduled Monument.

The turf was originally laid following construction of the school's Millennium Building in 1999-2000, when the ground level in the Quadrangle was also raised. The replacement works involved stripping the modern turf to a depth of not more than 100mm.

Two preliminary Test Pits were excavated to confirm that there would be no impact on any archaeological levels. Made ground was seen to underlie the turf in both areas and turf removal proceeded under archaeological supervision.

Made ground was observed to extend across the site, with no impact on any underlying archaeological features or deposits.

2 Introduction

Border Archaeology Ltd was instructed by The Pilgrims' School (hereafter, 'the Site') to carry out a programme of Archaeological Observation in the Quadrangle in connection with the replacement of an area of turf with an artificial surface ('Astroturf'). The area is within Winchester Cathedral Close (*fig. 1*), which is a Scheduled Monument (No: SM HA 585, HA 1005520). Scheduled Monument Consent was granted (SMC Ref: S00240479).

This Report has been compiled for submission to Alex Bellisario Assistant Inspector of Ancient Monuments Historic England; a copy will also be sent to Ms Tracy Matthews Historic Environment Officer (Archaeology) (HEOA).

3 Site Description

The Site is located at a height of c. 33m AOD within the Inner Close of Winchester Cathedral centred on NGR SU 4824 2907. The Quadrangle is flanked to the W by the main school building, which incorporates the core of the 14th Century monastic guest hall and guest master's accommodation. The Stancliffe Building opened in 1989 stands to the N and to the E is the Millennium Building of 1999- 2000, incorporating an earlier classroom block of 1973-4. To the S is a paved path alongside the Close Wall.

3.1 Soils & Geology

The Soil Survey of England and Wales (SSEW) classifies this as an unsurveyed urban area. However, a band of earthy eutro-amorphous (mainly humified) peat soils of the ADVENTURERS' 3 Series (1024c) is recorded running roughly N-S along the course of the River Itchen to the E. These deep peat soils overlie river alluvium and are associated with extremely calcareous mineral soils and high groundwater levels (SSEW 1983).

The British Geographical Society online map viewer identified bedrock of the New Pit Chalk Formation with superficial deposits composed of alluvium (BGS 2020).

Only modern turf and made ground deposits were encountered during the course of the Archaeological Observation.



4 Aims & Objectives

The aim of the programme of archaeological work was to identify and record any archaeological finds, features or deposits within the groundworks area and to confirm that no impact on the archaeological resource occurred during the course of the groundworks without its implementation.

5 Scheme of Work

The engineering methodology involved stripping the existing turf laid across the Quadrangle in 2000 to a depth of not more than 100mm and replacing it with an artificial 'Astroturf' surface.

Prior to turf removal, two Test Pits (TPs) were excavated to the required engineering depth under archaeological supervision to establish the impact of the proposed groundworks on any underlying archaeological features or deposits.

TP 1 was located in the N corner and excavated by hand; TP 2 was located in the SE corner. Each was located on a plan (*fig. 1*).

Both TPs revealed modern made ground beneath the existing turf layer; the made ground was observed to continue below the base of excavation in each of the TPs.

No archaeological features or deposits were revealed within the impact zone in either location and turf removal proceeded to the required depth across the Site under constant archaeological supervision.

A *proforma* context record was completed for each excavated context and a high-resolution (20 MPX) digital photographic record made of the TPs and subsequent groundworks (*Plates 1-4*).

6 Results

The uppermost context recorded in both TPs was a modern turf deposit composed of stone-free moderately compacted but plastic dark brown silty clay to an average thickness of 0.04m. This contained modern (21st Century) inclusions, such as confectionery wrappers and broken pencils.

Underlying the turf in each of the TPs was a modern made ground deposit consisting of firm dark grey brown sandy clay extending to an unknown depth below the level of engineering impact. This contained occasional to moderate inclusions of slate, CBM, Fe, bottle glass, bone, pottery and modern geotextile material, together with moderate natural flint inclusions.

No further deposits were seen during observation of the turf-stripping.

Each excavated context is described in full in the accompanying table (see Appendix)



Plate 1: View W of TP 1



Plate 2: View E of TP 2



Plate 3: View NW showing TP 2 following removal of turf



Plate 4: View S showing the Site following turf removal

7 Conclusion

Archaeological Observation of turf removal within the Quadrangle revealed only modern made ground formed during construction of the Millennium Building in 1999-2000, which contained post-medieval inclusions and modern materials such as late 20th Century geotextile. The groundworks had no impact on any underlying archaeological features or deposits.

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9 References

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10 Appendix: Context Tabulation

10.1 Test Pit 1

Context	Slot	Type	Filled By	Fill Of	Description	Interpretation	Finds	Samples	Provisional Date
(1001)	-	Deposit	-	-	Moderately compacted but plastic dark brown silty clay (c. 15% sand, 35% silt, 50% clay); confectionery wrappers and broken pencils; 0.04m average thickness. stone-free. Overlying (1002). Same as (2001).	Turf	-	-	Modern
(1002)	-	Deposit	-	-	Firm dark grey brown sandy clay (c. 25% silt, 30% sand, 45% clay); occasional to moderate slate, CBM, Fe, bottle glass, bone & post-med. pottery, moderate natural flint. Underlying (1001). Same as (2002).	Made Ground	-	-	Modern

10.2 Test Pit 2

Context	Slot	Type	Filled By	Fill Of	Description	Interpretation	Finds	Samples	Provisional Date
(2001)	-	Deposit	-	-	Moderately compacted, plastic dark brown silty clay (c. 15% sand, 35% silt, 50% clay); stone-free, modern inclusions; 0.04m average thickness. Overlying (2002). Same as (1001).	Turf	-	-	Modern
(2002)	-	Deposit	-	-	Firm dark grey brown sandy clay (c. 25% silt, 30% sand, 45% clay); occasional to moderate slate, CBM, Fe, bottle glass, bone, post-med. pottery & modern geotextile, moderate natural flint. Underlying (2001). Same as (1002).	Made Ground	-	-	Modern

Document Title		Document Reference	
Archaeological Observation on behalf of The Pilgrims' School at The Quadrangle 3 The Close Winchester SO23 9LT.		BA2085PSW/REP	
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Issue No.	Status	Date	Approved for issue
1	Final	January 2021	George Children MA MCIfA