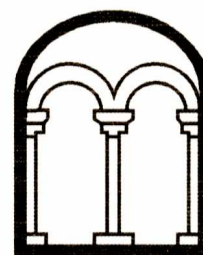


**BRIDGEWATER SCHOOL  
BERKHAMSTED  
HERTFORDSHIRE**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF**

**Albion**  
archaeology



**BRIDGEWATER SCHOOL  
BERKHAMSTED  
HERTFORDSHIRE**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF**

Project: BS2149  
OASIS no. albionar1-148753  
Dacorum Heritage Trust Museum accession no. DACTH: 4353  
Document: 2013/78  
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Compiled by	Checked by	Approved by
Kathy Pilkinton	Wesley Keir	Drew Shotliff

26th April 2013

Produced for:  
Mouchel Ltd

On behalf of  
Hertfordshire County Council



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## **Preface**

*Every effort has been made in the preparation of this document to provide as complete a summary as possible within the terms of the method statement. All statements and opinions in this document are offered in good faith. Albion Archaeology cannot accept responsibility for errors of fact or opinion resulting from data supplied by a third party, or for any loss or other consequence arising from decisions or actions made upon the basis of facts or opinions expressed in this document.*

## **Acknowledgements**

*The project was commissioned by Mouchel Ltd on behalf of Hertfordshire County Council and monitored on behalf of the Local Planning Authority by Andy Instone, the Hertfordshire County Council Planning Archaeologist.*

*The fieldwork was undertaken by Kathy Pilkinton (Archaeological Supervisor). This report has been prepared by Kathy Pilkinton. All Albion projects are under the overall management of Drew Shotliff (Operations Manager).*

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## **Version History**

<i>Version</i>	<i>Issue date</i>	<i>Reason for re-issue</i>
<i>1.0</i>	<i>26/04/13</i>	<i>n/a</i>

## **Key Terms**

The following abbreviations are used throughout this report:

CPA	Hertfordshire County Council Planning Archaeologist
EAA	East Anglian Archaeology
IfA	Institute for Archaeologists
LPA	Local Planning Authority
WSI	Written Scheme of Investigation



## 1. INTRODUCTION

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### 1.1 *Planning Background*

A planning application has been submitted for the construction of two temporary modular classrooms at Bridgewater School in Berkhamsted.

Because the development had the potential to impact upon significant heritage assets and in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework – Section 12: Conserving and enhancing the historic environment<sup>1</sup>, the County Planning Archaeologist (CPA) advised that a programme of archaeological works should be implemented at the site. This comprised a watching brief during the groundworks associated with the construction of the development. A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) was prepared (Albion 2013) and agreed with the CPA.

The watching brief was undertaken between the 2nd and 17th April 2013. The results are presented in this report.

### 1.2 *Site Location and Description*

Bridgewater School is located off Bridle Way on the north-eastern edge of Berkhamsted; it is centred on OS grid reference SP 9842 0897.

The area of the development lies to the rear of the school currently occupied by a long jump track and pit and lies at a height of *c.* 153m OD. The underlying geology in this area is largely chalk overlain by loamy clay-with-flints, silty sand and gravel.

### 1.3 *Archaeological Background*

Bridgewater School lies within a heritage alert area to the north of Berkhamsted Conservation Area. The present town of Berkhamsted developed along the line of a Roman Road, now known as Akeman Street, which linked the Roman settlement of Verulamium (St Albans) with Corinium Dubunorum (Cirencester). The site is away from the main area of Roman and medieval settlement, though remains of the Iron Age and Roman period are known along Castle Hill Avenue and Bridgewater Road, close to the site.

Most significantly, a number of heritage assets are recorded by the HER (HER request no. 315/12) within the area of the school itself (HER2228, HER4904, HER13059). Excavations undertaken during construction of the school in the 1970s revealed late Iron Age, Roman and medieval remains. These included four Iron Age cremation burials and evidence for Iron Age/Roman metal-working in the form of four shaft furnaces (Thompson and Holland 1976, 183, 142).

Further investigations were conducted in 2004 and 2007 as a result of building work at the school; a ditch dating to the late Iron Age/Roman period was recorded during the 2004 investigation (Hunn and Thompson 2004, 16) *c.*

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<sup>1</sup> National Planning Policy Framework, published by the Department for Communities and Local Government (2012). Available at: <http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/nppf>.



100m to the north of the current development. The small section of ditch investigated contained a relatively large number of pottery sherds as well as two fragments of iron slag, a fragment of a sharpening stone and small lump of iron (ibid.). No archaeological remains were revealed during the 2007 investigation, though this was thought to be possibly due to truncation from ground reduction associated with the original construction of the school (Hunn 2007, 11).

#### 1.4 **Project Objectives**

The immediate objective of the archaeological fieldwork was to monitor and supervise all groundworks that had the potential to reveal archaeological remains, and to investigate, characterise and record any archaeological deposits encountered within them.

The close proximity of significant Iron Age and Roman remains indicated the investigation could potentially contribute to regional research topics identified within the Revised Framework for the East of England (Medlycott 2011).

These included the following subjects:-

- Processes of economic and social change and development during the Late Iron Age and Iron Age/Roman transition (p31);
- Late Iron Age iron extraction and iron working technologies (p31);
- How does the industry relate to topography, natural resources and infrastructure (p48);
- Late Iron Age funerary practices and the significance of cremation burials as indicators for social hierarchies (p31).

#### 1.5 **Methodology**

All groundworks that had the potential to reveal archaeological remains were monitored. The groundworks comprised the following main elements:

- footings for two classrooms comprising the excavation of 30 foundation pads, measuring 1650 x 600 x 500mm deep, and a further 12 foundation pads, measuring 600 x 1600 x 600mm deep;
- a soakaway measuring 10m x 0.8m x 3m deep;
- three drainage trenches excavated to a depth of 200–1200mm;
- a service trench requiring excavation to a depth of c. 750mm

Throughout the project the standards set out in the following documents were adhered to:

• Albion Archaeology	<i>Procedures Manual: Volume 1 Fieldwork</i> (2nd edn, 2001).
• ALGAO	<i>Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England. EAA Occasional Paper No. 14</i> (2003)
• English Heritage	<i>Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment: MoRPHE Project Managers' Guide</i> (2009)
	<i>Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment. PPN 3: Archaeological Excavation</i> (2008)



	<i>Environmental Archaeology: A guide to the theory and practice of methods, from sampling and recovery to post-excavation, 2nd edition (2011)</i>
• IfA	<i>By-Laws (2010) and Code of Conduct (2012)</i>
	<i>Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief (revised 2008)</i>
	<i>Standard and Guidance for Excavation (revised 2008)</i>



## **2. RESULTS**

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### **2.1 Introduction**

The groundworks only revealed deposits associated with the landscaping of the school grounds and geological deposits. All excavations were deep enough to reveal undisturbed geological deposits. However, these deposits appear to have been subject to some degree of previous truncation likely to be associated with the creation of the neighbouring playing fields. The deposits revealed are summarised below.

### **2.2 Overburden and Geological Deposits**

Within the majority of excavations, topsoil of generally 0.25–0.35m thickness was observed directly overlaying the natural geological deposits comprising a mixture of clay-with-flints and chalk.

In the area of the former long jump sand pit, towards the middle of the western building footprint, the geological deposits were reached at a depth of *c.* 0.6m beneath the sand.

The service trench heading north towards the existing building (see Figure 2) revealed an area of built-up ground, comprising re-deposited geological deposits and fragments of modern rubble associated with the construction of the school. Undisturbed geological deposits were identified in this area at depths of between 0.2–0.8m.

### **2.3 Conclusions**

No archaeological features or deposits were revealed during the course of the groundworks. It is possible that any such features or deposits which may once have existed within the area of the current development have been destroyed by the evident ground reduction associated with previous landscaping of the school grounds. Evidence of significant previous ground reduction in the vicinity was also noted during previous archaeological investigation at the school (Hunn and Thompson 2004).

The project archive will be deposited with The Dacorum Heritage Trust Museum (accession no. DACT: 4353). This report will be uploaded onto the Archaeology Data Service's OASIS website (ref. albionar1-148753).





### 3. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Hunn, J. R., 2007, *Archaeological strip and record excavation: Bridgewater School, Berkhamsted, Herts*. RNO 1916

Hunn, J. R., & Thompson, A., 2004, *Archaeological salvage recording: Bridgewater School, Billet Lane, Berkhamsted*. RNO 1827

Medlycott, M. (ed), 2011, *Research and Archaeology Revisited: A Revised Framework for the East of England*. East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper 24.

Thompson, A., & Holland, E., 1974-6, 'Excavation of an Iron Age site at Dellfield, Berkhamsted' *Hertfordshire Archaeology* 4 (1974-6), 137-48.



#### 4. APPENDIX 1: HER SUMMARY SHEET

Site name and address: Bridgewater School, Berkhamsted		
County: Hertfordshire	District: Dacorum	
Village/Town: Berkhamsted	Parish: Great Berkhamsted	
Planning application reference: -		
HER Enquiry reference: 315/12		
Client name, address, and tel. no.: Mouchel Ltd on behalf of Hertfordshire County Council. Hertfordshire County Council, County Hall, Pegs Lane, Hertford, SG13 8DE. Tel. 01992 588275		
Nature of application: Construction of two temporary modular classrooms.		
Present land use: School playing field		
Size of application area: c. 1652sqm	Size of area investigated: 1652sqm	
NGR (to 8 figures): SP 9842 0897		
Site code (if applicable): BS2149		
Site director/Organization: Wesley Keir / Albion Archaeology		
Type of work: Watching Brief		
Date of work:	Start: 02.04.13	Finish: 17.04.13
Location of finds & site archive/Curating museum: The Dacorum Heritage Trust Museum		
Related HER Nos: n/a	Periods represented: Modern	
Relevant previous summaries/reports <i>Albion Archaeology, 2012, Bridgewater School, Berkhamsted, Hertfordshire: Written Scheme of Investigation for Archaeological Watching Brief. Document: 2013/52 v. 1.0</i>		
Summary of fieldwork results:  No archaeological features or deposits were revealed during the course of the groundworks. It is possible any such features or deposits which may once have existed within the area of the current development have been destroyed by the evident ground reduction associated with previous landscaping of the school grounds.		
Author of summary: Kathy Pilkinton	Date of summary: 24.04.2013	

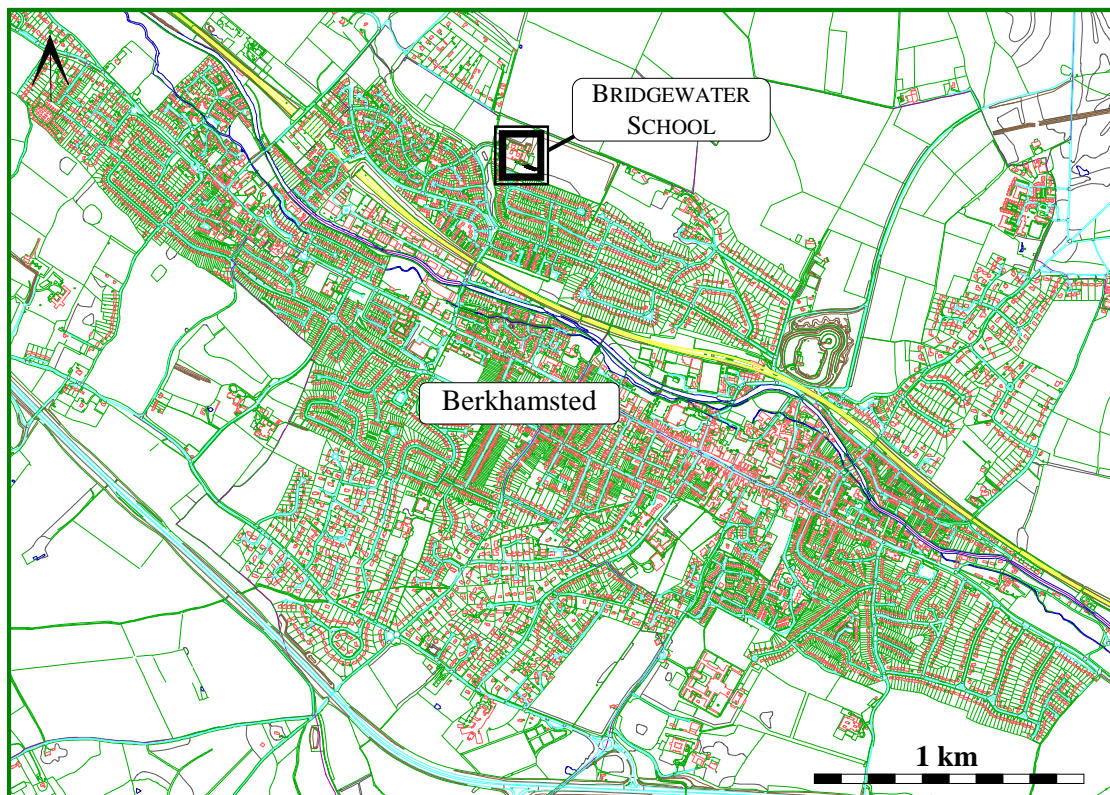


## 5. APPENDIX 2: OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM

OASIS ID	albionar1-148753
<b>PROJECT DETAILS</b>	
Project name	Bridgewater School, Berkhamsted
Short description of the project	No archaeological features or deposits were revealed during the course of the groundworks. It is possible any such features or deposits which may once have existed within the area of the current development have been destroyed by the evident ground reduction associated with previous landscaping of the school grounds.
Project dates	Start: 02-04-2013 End: 17-04-2013
Previous/future work	Yes/No
Any associated project reference codes	BS2149 - Contracting Unit No. DACHT:4353 - Museum accession ID
Type of project	Recording project
Monument type	None
Significant Finds	None
Methods & techniques	'Watching Brief'
Prompt	National Planning Policy Framework - NPPF
<b>PROJECT LOCATION</b>	
Country	England
Site location	HERTFORDSHIRE DACORUM BERKHAMSTED Bridgewater
Study area	0.6 Hectares
Site coordinates	SP 9842 0897
<b>PROJECT CREATORS</b>	
Name of Organisation	Albion Archaeology
Project brief originator	None
Project design originator	Albion Archaeology
Project director/manager	Wes Keir
Project supervisor	Kathy Pilkinton
<b>PROJECT ARCHIVES</b>	
Physical Archive Exists?	None
Physical Archive notes	N/a
Digital Archive recipient	Dacorum Heritage Trust Museum
Digital Archive ID	DACHT:4353
Digital Media available	'Images raster / digital photography','Text'

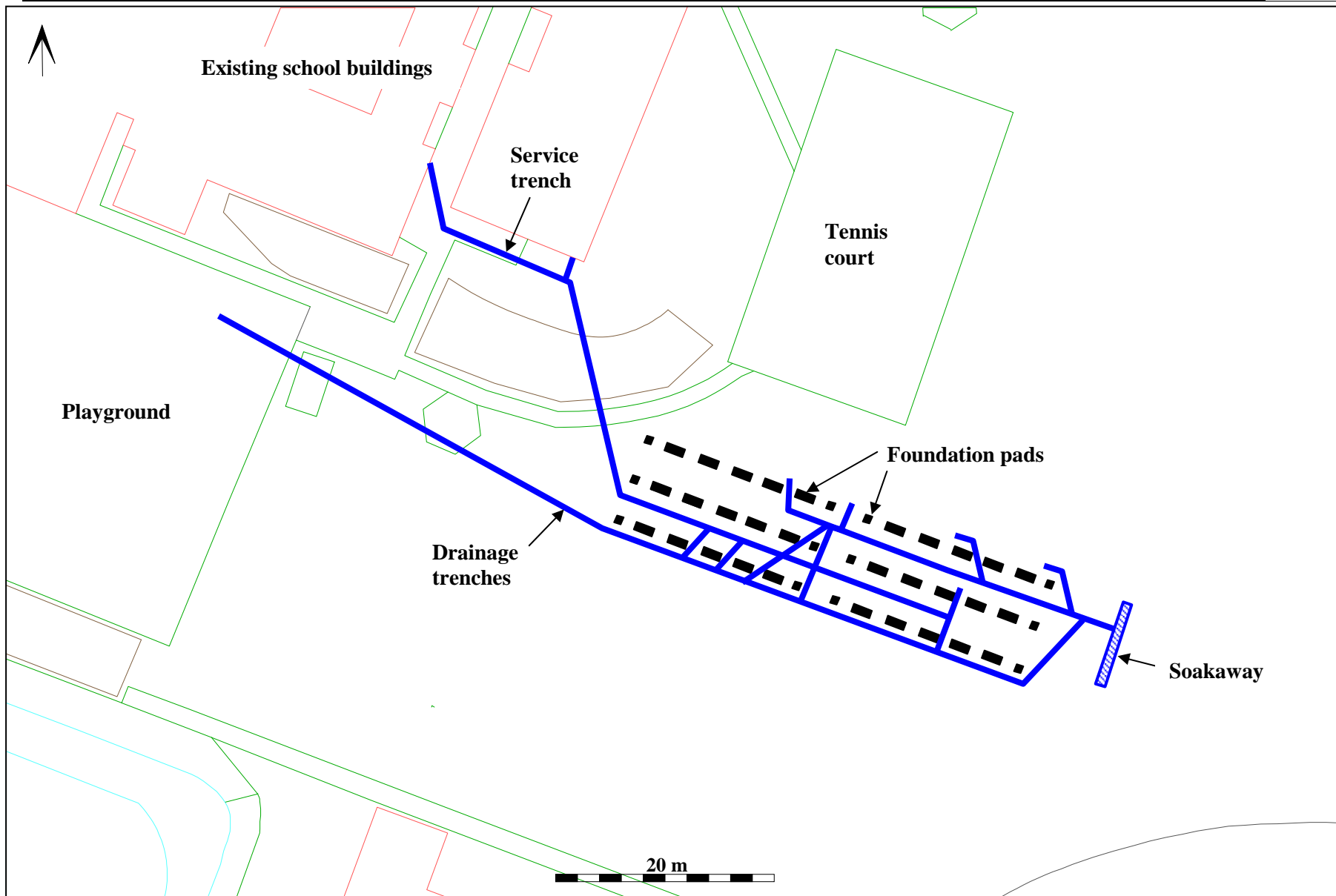


Paper Archive recipient	Dacorum Heritage Trust Museum
Paper Archive ID	DACHT:4353
Paper Contents	other
Paper Media available	'Context sheet', 'Correspondence', 'Microfilm', 'Miscellaneous Material', 'Photograph', 'Report'
Paper Archive notes	To be stored at Albion Archaeology until deposition
PROJECT BIBLIOGRAPHY 1	
Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	Bridgewater School, Berkhamsted, Hertfordshire: Archaeological Watching Brief
Author(s)/Editor(s)	'Pilkinton, K'
Other bibliographic details	2013/78
Date	2013
Issuer or publisher	Albion Archaeology
Place of issue or publication	Bedford
Description	Comb bound report



**Figure 1: Site location plan**

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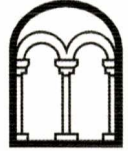


**Figure 2: Plan of observations**

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