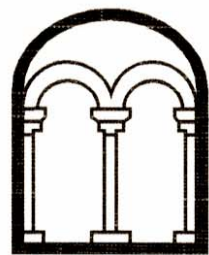


**PRAE WOOD PRIMARY SCHOOL  
ST ALBANS  
HERTFORDSHIRE**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
MONITORING AND RECORDING**

**Albion**  
archaeology



**PRAE WOOD PRIMARY SCHOOL  
ST ALBANS  
HERTFORDSHIRE**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
MONITORING AND RECORDING**

Project: PW2161  
OASIS no.: albionar1-157362  
Verulamium Museum accession no.: PWS13  
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Compiled by	Checked by	Approved by
Jo Barker	Wesley Keir	Drew Shotliff

Produced for:  
Kier Construction

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 an assessment as possible, within the terms of the specification. 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 Kier Construction on behalf of Hertfordshire County Council and was monitored on behalf of the Local Planning Authority by Andy Instone, the Hertfordshire County Council Planning Archaeologist.*

*The fieldwork was undertaken by Jo Barker (Supervisor) and Wesley Keir (Project Officer). This report has been prepared by Jo Barker with figures by Joan Lightning (CAD Technician). All Albion projects are under the overall management of Drew Shotliff (Operations Manager).*

*The assistance and co-operation of the principal contractor, Kier Construction, throughout the project is gratefully acknowledged.*

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## Version History

Version	Issue date	Reason for re-issue
1.0	23/09/13	n/a

## Key Terms

Throughout this document the following terms or abbreviations are used:

ALGAO	Association of Local Government Archaeological Officers
CPA	County Planning Archaeologist
HER	Historic Environment Record
IfA	Institute for Archaeologists
WSI	Written Scheme of Investigation
Procedures Manual	<i>Procedures Manual Volume 1 Fieldwork</i> , 2nd ed, 2001 Albion Archaeology



## 1. INTRODUCTION

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### 1.1 *Planning Background*

Planning permission has been granted for the construction of a new classroom, plus a temporary classroom and toilet facilities, at Prae Wood Primary School, St Albans.

Because the proposed development had the potential to impact upon significant heritage assets, the Local Planning Authority (LPA) were advised that a scheme of archaeological works should be implemented at the site. In accordance with this advice, and of paragraph 141 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), the LPA attached two conditions to the planning permission requiring the submission of a written scheme of archaeological investigation (Albion Archaeology 2013b) for approval, followed by its implementation.

Discussions with Simon West, the St Albans District Archaeologist, and Andy Instone, the Hertfordshire County Planning Archaeologist (Hertfordshire County Council HEU), confirmed that the scheme of investigation (Albion Archaeology 2013b) required was a programme of archaeological monitoring and recording.

The archaeological monitoring and recording was undertaken between 28th August and 6th September 2013. The results are presented in this report.

### 1.2 *Site Location and Description*

Prae Wood Primary School lies to the south-west of Mayne Avenue, off King Harry Lane, on the western edge of St Albans City Centre (Fig. 1); it is centred on OS grid reference TL13390 06480. The St Albans Conservation Area lies immediately to the north of the site.

The area affected by the groundworks was 178.2sqm in extent and situated adjacent to the west side of the main school block. It lies at c. 115m OD on a slight, east-facing slope and comprised areas of tarmac and grass. Previous archaeological investigations (Albion Archaeology 2011) confirmed that the underlying geology comprises orange-hued clay-with-flints.

### 1.3 *Archaeological Background*

The site lies within an area of widespread archaeological remains, predominantly associated with the late Iron Age *oppidum* of 'Verlamion' and the Roman town of Verulamium. A heritage asset assessment details the archaeological and historical background of the site (Albion Archaeology 2013a).

The scheduled remains of the Roman town (NHLE 1003515; HER14510) lie c. 100m to the north of the site and a late Iron Age earthwork found by Sir Mortimer Wheeler (HER14306) lies to the south of the school. A Roman cemetery containing over fifty cremations and twenty-eight inhumations was uncovered at the western edge of the school site (HER14146).



Previous archaeological monitoring during the construction of a temporary classroom to the south-east of the school building only revealed two undated pits and ditches (Albion Archaeology 2011). However, the shallow depth of the majority of the observed groundworks meant that the features were only partially revealed.

#### 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, Roman and Saxon remains indicated there was the potential for the investigation to contribute to several regional research topics identified within published Research Frameworks for the Eastern Counties (Brown and Glazebrook 2000, Medlycott and Brown 2008, Medlycott 2011). These include the following subjects:

- Processes of economic and social change and development during the Late Iron Age and Iron Age/Roman transition
- Roman town development
- Saxon settlement patterns

#### 1.5 Methodology

All groundworks that had the potential to reveal archaeological remains were monitored. This mainly comprised ground reduction of between 0.2m and 1m in an area measuring c. 15m x 12m for the new classroom (Fig. 2).

The area was stripped down to the formation level by mechanical excavator using a toothless bucket where possible.

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</i> (2011)
• IfA	<i>By-Laws</i> (2010) and <i>Code of Conduct</i> (2012)
	<i>Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief</i> (revised 2008)



	<i>Standard and Guidance for Excavation</i> (revised 2008)
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## 2. RESULTS

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### 2.1 *Introduction*

The groundworks only revealed deposits associated with landscaping of the school grounds and geological deposits. The underlying geology was only reached in approximately two thirds of the excavated area, partly due to the variable formation level and partly due to truncation by previous landscaping at the site (see Fig. 2). The deposits revealed are summarised below.

### 2.2 *Overburden and Geological Deposits*

The development area was covered by a 0.1m-thick clay-sandy-silt topsoil (201). Below this was a series of make-up and levelling layers that consisted of re-deposited chalk (200, 204), stony clay-sandy-silt (202), concrete (205) and tarmac planings (206). Immediately below these layers and overlying the natural geology was a stone-rich levelling layer of sandy-silty clay (207).

The underlying geology (203) was encountered at varying depths across the development area due to truncation probably resulting from landscaping of the school grounds and associated with the various make-up and levelling layers described above. The underlying geological deposits consisted of a loose dark brownish orange clay-silt, mixed with a large quantity of medium-sized rounded stones. In the northern part of the excavation it was encountered at a depth of 0.8m, whilst to the south it gradually rose up to a depth of *c.* 0.5m below ground level (Fig.2).

### 2.3 *Conclusions*

No archaeological features or deposits were revealed during the course of the groundworks. It is possible this represents a 'blank' area within the extent of the '*oppidum*', though it is equally 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.

The project archive will be deposited with Verulamium Museum (accession no. PWS13). This report will be uploaded onto the Archaeology Data Service's OASIS website (ref. albionar1-157362).





### 3. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Albion Archaeology, 2001 Procedures Manual Volume 1 Fieldwork, 2nd ed.

Albion Archaeology, 2011 *Prae Wood Primary School, St Albans, Hertfordshire, Archaeological Works Comprising Strip, Map and Record Investigation and Archaeological Monitoring and Recording*, Document 2011/108

Albion Archaeology, 2013a *Prae Wood Primary School, St Albans, Hertfordshire, Heritage Asset Assessment*, Document 2013/77

Albion Archaeology, 2013b *Prae Wood Primary School, St Albans, Hertfordshire. Written Scheme of Investigation for Archaeological Monitoring and Recording*, Document 2013/131

Brown, N. and Glazebrook, J., 2000 *Research and Archaeology: A Framework for the Eastern Counties – 2 Research Agenda and Strategy*. East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper 8

Medlycott, M. and Brown, N., 2008 *Revision of the Regional Archaeological Framework for the Eastern Region*, ALGO East of England

Medlycott, M., 2011 *Research and Archaeology Revisited: a revised framework for the East of England*, EAA Occasional paper 24



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

Site name and address: Prae Wood Primary School, King Harry Lane		
County: Hertfordshire	District: St Albans	
Village/Town: St Albans	Parish: N/A	
Planning application reference: N/A		
HER Enquiry reference: 18/13		
Client name, address and tel. no.: Kier Construction, on behalf of Hertfordshire County Council, Hertfordshire Property, Hertford Tel: (01992) 588118		
Nature of application: Construction of classroom and two parking spaces		
Present land use: School grounds		
Size of application area: 680sq m	Size of area investigated: 680sq m	
NGR (to 8 figures): TL1339/0648		
Site code (if applicable): PW2161		
Site director/Organization: Drew Shotliff/Albion Archaeology		
Type of work: Monitoring and recording		
Date of work:	Start: 28/08/13	Finish: 06/09/13
Location of finds & site archive/Curating museum: Verulamium Museum		
Related HER Nos:	Periods represented: Modern	
<p>Relevant previous summaries/reports</p> <p><i>Prae Wood Primary School, St Albans, Hertfordshire: Archaeological Impact Assessment</i> (Archaeological Solutions Ltd, 2011)</p> <p><i>Prae Wood Primary School, St Albans, Hertfordshire, Archaeological Works Comprising Strip, Map and Record Investigation and Archaeological Monitoring and Recording</i> (Albion Archaeology 2011, Document 2011/108)</p> <p><i>Prae Wood Primary School, St Albans, Hertfordshire, Heritage Asset Assessment</i>, (Albion Archaeology 2013, Document 2013/77)</p> <p><i>Prae Wood Primary School, St Albans, Hertfordshire. Written Scheme of Investigation for Archaeological Monitoring and Recording</i>, (Albion Archaeology 2013 Document 2013/131)</p>		
<p>Summary of fieldwork results:</p> <p>Archaeological monitoring of groundworks associated with a new classroom block at Prae Wood School, St Albans was carried out during August and September 2013. The groundworks only revealed deposits associated with landscaping of the school grounds and geological deposits. The underlying geology was only reached in approximately two thirds of the excavated area at depths of 0.5–0.8m below the ground surface, partly due to the variable formation level and partly due to truncation by previous landscaping at the site.</p> <p>It is possible this represents a 'blank' area within the extent of the '<i>oppidum</i>', though it is equally 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.</p>		
Author of summary: J. Barker	Date of summary: 23/09/13	



## 5. APPENDIX 2: OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM

**OASIS ID: albionar1-157362**

### Project details

Project name	Prae Wood Primary School
Short description of the project	Planning permission has been granted for the construction of a new classroom, plus a temporary classroom and toilet facilities, at Prae Wood Primary School, St Albans. Groundworks only revealed deposits associated with landscaping of the school grounds and geological deposits.
Project dates	Start: 28-08-2013 End: 06-09-2013
Previous/future work	Yes / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	PW2161 - Contracting Unit No.
Any associated project reference codes	PWS13 - Museum accession ID
Type of project	Recording project
Monument type	NONE
Significant Finds	NONE
Investigation type	"Watching Brief"
Prompt	National Planning Policy Framework - NPPF

### Project location

Country	England
Site location	HERTFORDSHIRE ST ALBANS ST ALBANS Prae Wood Primary School
Study area	180.00 Square metres
Site coordinates	TL 1337 0651 51 0 51 44 43 N 000 21 27 W Point



### Project creators

Name of Organisation	Albion Archaeology
Project brief originator	none
Project design originator	Written Scheme of Investigation Produced
Project director/manager	Wesley Keir / Drew Shotliff
Project supervisor	Joanne Barker

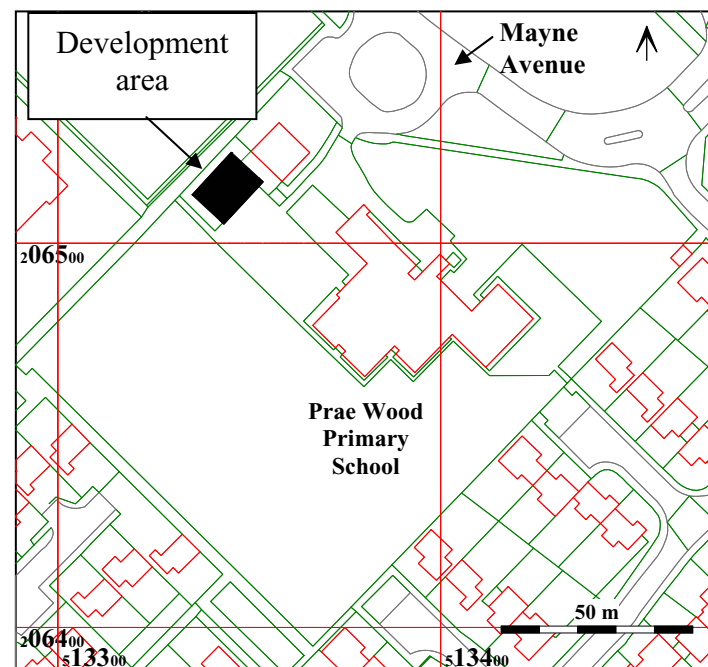
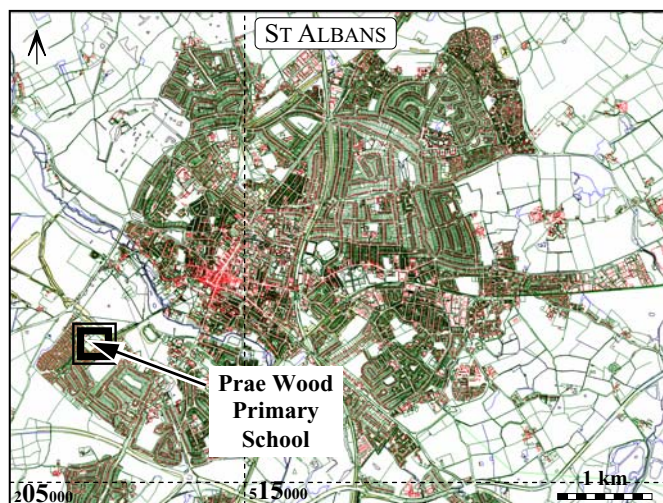
### Project archives

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	Verulamium Museum
Digital Archive ID	PWS13
Digital Contents	"other"
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography", "Text"
Paper Archive recipient	Verulamium Museum
Paper Archive ID	PWS13
Paper Contents	"other"
Paper Media available	"Context sheet", "Correspondence", "Miscellaneous Material", "Photograph", "Report"



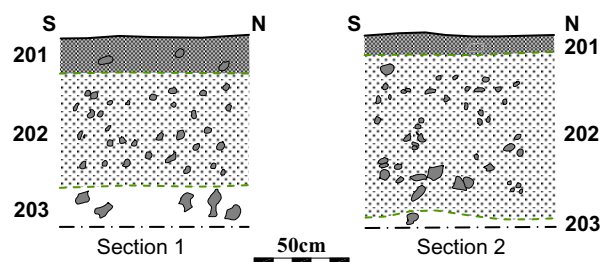
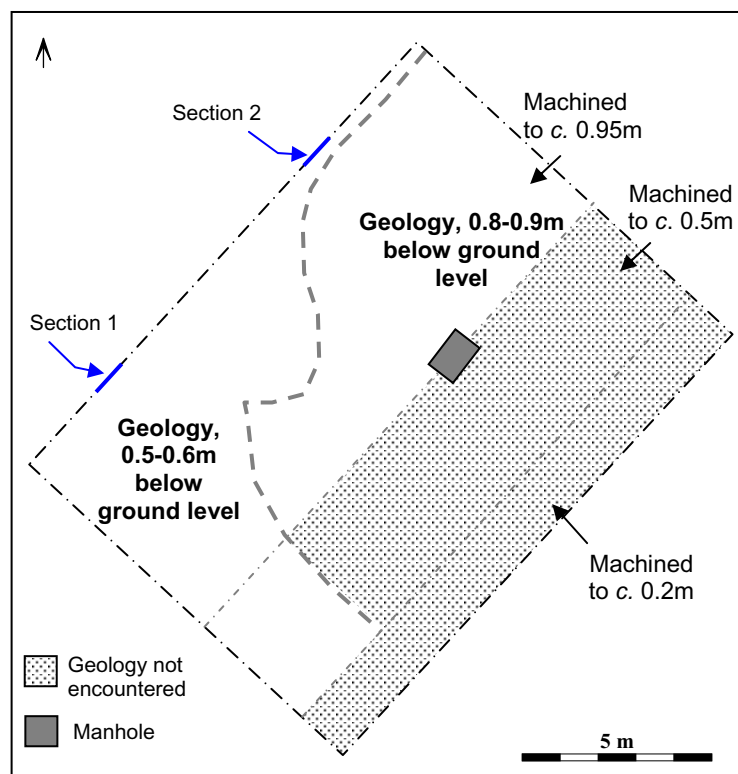
**Project  
bibliography 1**

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	Prae Wood Primary School, St Albans, Hertfordshire, Archaeological Works Comprising Monitoring and Recording
Author(s)/Editor(s)	'Barker, J'
Author(s)/Editor(s)	'Keir, W'
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Issuer or publisher	Albion Archaeology
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Entered by	Helen Parslow (hl.parslow@albion-arch.com)
Entered on	20 September 2013



**Figure 1: Site location**

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**Figure 2: Groundworks and representative section drawings**

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Plate 1. View of partially excavated development area from the south. Showing some of the make-up and bedding layers, topsoil and geology



Plate 2. 0.95m deep step from the north (1m scale)

**Figure 3:** Photographs showing the area of excavation





Plate 3. East-facing section 2 (1m scale)

**Figure 4:** Photograph showing the typical deposit sequence



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