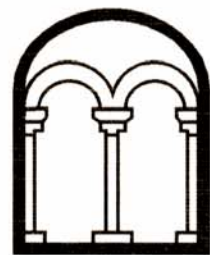


**SHACKLETON LOWER SCHOOL
PEARCEY ROAD
BEDFORD**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL OBSERVATION
INVESTIGATION, RECORDING, ANALYSIS AND
PUBLICATION**

Albion
archaeology



**SHACKLETON LOWER SCHOOL
PEARCEY ROAD
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**ARCHAEOLOGICAL OBSERVATION
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Preface

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.

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Version History

Version	Issue date	Reason for re-issue
1.0	26th September 2014	n/a

Key Terms

Throughout this document the following terms or abbreviations are used:

HER	Bedford Borough Council Historic Environment Record
HET	Bedford Borough Council Historic Environment Team
IfA	Institute for Archaeologists
WSI	Written Scheme of Investigation



Non-technical Summary

Bedford Borough Council granted planning permission (14/00261/DC3) for the construction of two new classroom blocks, a covered walkway, a footpath and an extension to the existing car park at Shackleton Lower School in Bedford.

Due to the archaeological sensitivity of the site of the planned works, a condition (13) was attached to the planning consent requiring the implementation of a programme of archaeological works. The required programme of archaeological works is described in the HET brief (HET 2014) and comprised the observation and recording of relevant groundworks and investigation of any revealed archaeological remains.

Archaeological observation and investigation during the groundworks took place between 23rd July and 8th August 2014. The only archaeological feature revealed was a short length of a small ditch [205] in Trench 2, located to the rear of the main school building. It contained a small number of artefacts that suggest it dates to the Roman period and adds to the small, but growing body of physical evidence for Roman settlement activity in the immediate vicinity of the school.

No archaeological features were revealed in Trenches 1, 3 or 4, though the ground reduction within Trenches 1 and 4 was not deep enough to reach the archaeological horizon. It is also possible that the previous landscaping of the school grounds, indicated by the large areas of levelling and make-up layers present within the areas of the groundworks, have potentially truncated former archaeological remains. Such a scenario could well be the cause of the very shallow surviving depth of ditch [205].

The project archive will be deposited with Bedford Museum under accession no. BEDFM 2014.46. This report will be uploaded onto the OASIS website under reference number albionar1 - 181850.



1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 *Project Background*

Bedford Borough Council granted planning permission (14/00261/DC3) for the construction of two new classroom blocks, a covered walkway, a footpath and an extension to the existing car park at Shackleton Lower School in Bedford.

Due to the archaeological sensitivity of the site of the planned works, a condition (no. 13) was attached to the planning consent requiring the implementation of a programme of archaeological works. This was in accordance with advice provided to the Local Planning Authority by Bedford Borough Council's Historic Environment Team and in compliance with *National Planning Policy Framework– Section 12: Conserving and enhancing the historic environment*¹.

The required programme of archaeological works is described in the HET brief (HET 2014) and comprised the observation and recording of relevant groundworks and investigation of any revealed archaeological remains.

1.2 *Site Location and Development Description*

Shackleton Lower School lies within an urban environment approximately 1.3km to the south of the town centre, at grid reference TL05376/48440 (Figure 1). The site of the development mainly comprised open grassed areas with the geology being river terrace gravels associated with the Great Ouse. The ground is generally level at a height of around 25m OD.

The two new classroom blocks comprised a two-classroom block measuring 11.6m x 15m located at the rear of the main school building and an eight-classroom block measuring 14.8m x 22m located at the front of the school (Figures 1 and 2).

A new footpath was created to the south of an existing four-classroom building, connecting it to the main entrance to the school (Figure 3). Another footpath was constructed at the rear of the school, connecting Conquest Road with the main school building (Figure 3).

1.3 *Archaeological Background*

The development site was located in an area of archaeological interest, with in particular Roman artefacts having been found within the immediate vicinity of the school. The Bedford Borough Historic Environment Record (HER) records that a small Roman jar was found on Pearcey Road prior to 1949 and subsequently, further sherds have been found (HER270). There was, therefore, the potential for groundworks associated with the development to impact upon archaeological remains related to possible former Roman occupation in the area.

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



1.4 Project Objectives

Due to the uncertain nature of any potential archaeological remains, the objectives of the investigation were to determine:

- whether archaeological remains were present on the site.
- the date and character of any archaeological remains that were present;
- the integrity and state of preservation of any archaeological features or deposits that were present.

Further specific objectives, based on local and regional research objectives in Brown and Glazebrook (2000), Oake *et al* (2007) and Medlycott (2011) were to have been devised during the project, in the event that significant archaeological remains had been encountered.



2. METHODOLOGY

Archaeological observation and investigation during the groundworks took place between 23rd July and 8th August 2014. Groundworks monitored included the excavation required for the two classroom areas (recorded as Trenches 2 and 3), as well as ground reduction for the two new footpaths (recorded as Trenches 1 and 4) (see Figure 1).

Deposits encountered were investigated and recorded in accordance with Albion's *Procedures Manual*. Spoil heaps were checked on a regular basis for artefact recovery.

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).
• Bedford Borough Council	<i>Preparing Archaeological Archives for Deposition in Registered Museums in Bedford</i> (ver. 2.8, 2010)
• EAA	<i>Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England</i> (2003)
• English Heritage	<i>Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE) Project Managers' Guide</i> (2006)
	<i>Environmental Archaeology: A guide to the theory and practice of methods, from sampling and recovery to post-excavation</i> , (2nd edn, 2011)
• IfA	<i>By-Laws and Code of Conduct</i>
	<i>Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Excavation</i> (updated 2013)
	<i>Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief</i> (updated 2013)
	<i>Standard and Guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials</i> (updated 2013)

A detailed methodology is provided in the Written Scheme of Investigation (Albion Archaeology 2014).



3. RESULTS

3.1 Introduction

Groundworks comprised the excavation of two main areas (recorded as Trenches 2 and 3) to a depth of 1.7m and the much shallower ground reduction required for the two new footpaths (recorded as Trenches 1 and 4) (see Figure 1). Trench 1 was situated near the main entrance to the school, connecting Pearcey Road with an existing building. The other footpath (Trench 4) was located to the rear of the main building, connecting it with Conquest Road. The ground reduction required for the two footpaths (Trenches 1 and 4) was only 0.35m; this was not sufficiently deep to expose the archaeological horizon.

The largest area excavated (Trench 3) measured 22m x 14.8m and was located to the front of the main school building (Figure 2). Trench 2 to the rear of the school measured 15m x 11.6 m (Figure 2).

The results of the archaeological work are summarised below. Details of all the deposits and features encountered are contained within Appendix 2.

3.2 Overburden and Undisturbed Geological Deposits

The overburden generally comprised 0.17–0.26m of topsoil, overlying a grey sandy-silt subsoil, up to 0.28m thick. Several fragments of modern bricks were observed within the subsoil. In addition, modern make-up layers were observed beneath the topsoil within areas of Trenches 1, 2 and 3 (see Section 3.4).

Underlying geological deposits comprising stony, orange-brown sandy silt were only reached within Trenches 2 and 3 at depths of 0.4–0.7m in Trench 2 and c. 0.6m below the ground level within Trench 3. Several further, naturally formed bands of sand and gravel were observed beneath this uppermost deposit.

3.3 Archaeological Features

The ground reduction in Trench 2 revealed one shallow, poorly defined NE-SW aligned ditch (205) (Figure 4). It was 0.55m wide and 0.07m deep and was only visible for a distance of 1m, with both ends appearing to peter-out rather than terminate.

Its brown sandy-silt fill (206) produced two abraded pottery sherds (4g), in shell-tempered fabric R13², along with a probable copper alloy coin fragment, comprising part of the outer edge only, and a corroded iron fragment with a splayed end, possibly representing the top of a stylus.

3.4 Modern Disturbance

Areas of modern levelling/make-up layers and other recent disturbance likely to be associated with previous episodes of landscaping at the school were revealed beneath the topsoil in all but one of the trenches.

² Fabric type defined in accordance with the Bedfordshire Ceramic Type Series.



Levelling/make-up layers of 0.08–0.76m thickness were concentrated in the north-west parts of both Trenches 2 and 3, which in the latter case corresponds with an area of slightly raised ground. A series of gravely, levelling deposits were also observed throughout Trench 1.

Other modern features comprised a probable pit [216], containing fragments of modern bricks, glass and pottery, partially revealed within the southern corner of Trench 2 and the remnants of a probable foundation trench [104], filled with concrete and mortar fragments, that had been cut into the levelling layers.

3.5 Natural Features

A tree-throw [207] was observed within Trench 2. It was filled with a mid grey-brown sandy silt containing occasional small stones and flecks of charcoal.



4. CONCLUSIONS

The only archaeological feature revealed during the groundworks was a short length of a small ditch [205] located in Trench 2 to the rear of the main school building. It contained a small number of artefacts that suggest it dates to the Roman period and adds to the small, but growing body of physical evidence for Roman settlement activity in the immediate vicinity of the school.

No archaeological features were revealed in Trenches 1, 3 or 4, though the ground reduction within Trenches 1 and 4 was not deep enough to reach the archaeological horizon. It is also possible that the previous landscaping of the school grounds, indicated by the large areas of levelling and make-up layers present within the areas of the groundworks, had truncated former archaeological remains. Such a scenario could well be the cause of the very shallow surviving depth of ditch [205].

The project archive will be deposited with Bedford Museum under accession no. BEDFM 2014.46. This report will be uploaded onto the OASIS website under reference number albionar1-181850.



5. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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

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6. APPENDIX 1: OASIS FORM

OASIS ID: albionar1-181850

Project details

Project name	Shackleton Lower School, Pearcey Road, Bedford
Short description of the project	Bedford Borough Council granted planning permission (14/00261/DC3) for the construction of two new classroom blocks, a covered walkway, a footpath and an extension to the existing car park at Shackleton Lower School in Bedford. Due to the archaeological sensitivity of the site of the planned works, a condition (13) was attached to the planning consent requiring the implementation of a programme of archaeological works. The required programme of archaeological works is described in the HET brief (HET 2014) and comprised the observation and recording of relevant groundworks and investigation of any revealed archaeological remains. Archaeological observation and investigation during the groundworks took place between 23rd July and 8th August 2014. The only archaeological feature revealed was a short length of a small ditch [205] in Trench 2 located to the rear of the main school building. It contained a small number of artefacts that suggest it dates to the Roman period and adds to the small, but growing body of physical evidence for Roman settlement activity in the immediate vicinity of the school. No archaeological features were revealed in Trenches 1, 3 or 4, though the ground reduction within Trenches 1 and 4 was not deep enough to reach the archaeological horizon. It is also possible that the previous landscaping of the school grounds, indicated by the large areas of levelling and make-up layers present within the areas of the groundworks, have truncated former archaeological remains. Such a scenario could well be the cause of the very shallow surviving depth of ditch [205].
Project dates	Start: 23-07-2014 End: 08-08-2014
Previous/future work	No / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	SS2431 - Contracting Unit No.
Any associated project reference codes	BEDFM 2014.46 - Museum accession ID
Any associated project reference codes	14/00261/DC3 - Planning Application No.
Type of project	Recording project
Monument type	DITCH Roman
Significant Finds	POTTERY Roman
Investigation type	"Watching Brief"
Prompt	National Planning Policy Framework - NPPF



Project location

Country	England
Site location	BEDFORDSHIRE BEDFORD BEDFORD Shackleton Lower School, Pearcey Road, Bedford
Study area	538.00 Square metres
Site coordinates	TL 505376 248440 51.9013093956 0.188340679096 51 54 04 N 000 11 18 E Point

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Albion Archaeology
Project brief originator	Local Authority Archaeologist and/or Planning Authority/advisory body
Project design originator	Albion Archaeology
Project director/manager	Robert Wardill
Project supervisor	Anna Rebisz-Niziolek

Project archives

Physical Archive recipient	Bedford Museum
Physical Archive ID	BEDFM 2014.46
Physical Contents	"Ceramics"
Digital Archive recipient	Albion Archaeology
Digital Contents	"Ceramics", 'other"
Digital Media available	"Database" ,"Images raster / digital photography", "Text"
Paper Archive recipient	Bedford Museum
Paper Archive ID	BEDFM 2014.46
Paper Contents	"other"
Paper Media available	"Context sheet" ,"Correspondence" ,"Miscellaneous Material" ,"Photograph" ,"Report"

Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	'Shackleton Lower School, Pearcey Rd, Bedford - Archaeological Observation, Investigation, Recording, Analysis and Publication'



Author(s)/Editor(s) 'Rebisz-Niziolek, A'
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Issuer or publisher Albion Archaeology
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Entered by Helen Parslow (hl.parslow@albion-arch.com)
Entered on 18 August 2014



7. APPENDIX 2: CONTEXT DATA



Trench: 1

Max Dimensions: Length: 28.00 m. Width: 2.70 m. Depth to Archaeology Min: m. Max: m.

Co-ordinates:

Reason: Trench excavated for new footpath

Context:	Type:	Description:	Excavated:	Finds Present:
100	Topsoil	Loose mid orange grey sandy silt moderate small stones 0.17m thick	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
101	Make up layer	Loose mid brown sandy silt occasional small CBM, occasional small stones 0.11m thick	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
102	Make up layer	Loose mid orange brown sandy silt occasional small-medium stones 0.06m thick	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
103	Make up layer	Loose mid brown sandy silt moderate small-medium CBM, moderate small-medium stones	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
104	Foundation trench	Linear dimensions: max breadth 0.23m, max length 6.95m L-shape, N-S and E-W; modern.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
105	Fill	Loose light yellow white concrete moderate small-medium stones	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>



Trench: 2

Max Dimensions: Length: 15.00 m. Width: 11.60 m. Depth to Archaeology Min: 0.4 m. Max: 0.72 m.

Co-ordinates:

Reason: Trench/area excavated for the 2 Class Connect Block

Context:	Type:	Description:	Excavated:	Finds Present:
200	Topsoil	Friable mid brown sandy silt occasional small CBM, moderate small stones 0.26m thick	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
201	Subsoil	Friable mid orange brown sandy silt 0.17m thick	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
202	Natural	Friable mid brown orange sandy silt moderate small-medium stones 0.11m thick	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
203	Natural	Loose brown orange sandy gravel	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
204	Make up layer	Friable light yellow brown silty sand moderate small-medium concrete, moderate small-medium stones 0.12m thick	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
205	Ditch	Linear NE-SW sides: concave base: concave dimensions: max breadth 0.55m, max depth 0.07m, min length 1.m Possible linear feature	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
206	Fill	Friable mid brown sandy silt moderate small-medium stones 0.07m thick	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
207	Treethrow	Irregular sides: irregular base: uneven dimensions: min breadth 0.5m, max depth 0.22m, min length 0.84m	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
208	Fill	Friable mid grey brown sandy silt occasional flecks charcoal, occasional small stones 0.22m thick	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
209	Natural	Loose light yellow white sand 0.07m thick	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
210	Natural	Loose light brown yellow sand Min. 0.1m thick	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
211	Natural	Loose light brown sand	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
212	Natural	Loose mid brown yellow sand occasional small stones 0.2m thick	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
214	Natural	Loose dark orange sandy gravel moderate small-medium stones Min. 0.19m thick	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
215	Make up layer	Loose light yellow brown sandy gravel 0.13m thick	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
216	Pit	dimensions: min breadth 3.5m, max depth 0.21m, min length 4.3m Visible only in the corner of the trench; shape, profile and base unknown; modern	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
213	Fill	Friable dark grey clay silt occasional small-medium CBM, occasional small-medium stones 0.21m thick	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>



Trench: 3

Max Dimensions: Length: 22.00 m. Width: 14.80 m. Depth to Archaeology Min: 0.33 m. Max: 0.84 m.

Co-ordinates:

Reason: Trench/area excavated for the 8 Class Connect Block

Context:	Type:	Description:	Excavated:	Finds Present:
300	Topsoil	Friable mid brown sandy silt 0.18m	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
301	Subsoil	Friable mid brown sandy silt occasional small-medium CBM, moderate small stones 0.39m thick	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
302	Make up layer	Hard mid orange brown silty clay 0.16m thick	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
303	Make up layer	Loose yellow white concrete moderate small-medium stones 0.1m thick	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
304	Make up layer	Firm dark grey 0.02m thick	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
305	Make up layer	Friable dark brown clay silt occasional small CBM, occasional small stones 0.12m thick	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
306	Natural	Friable mid orange brown sandy silt moderate small-medium stones Min. 0.03m	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
307	Make up layer	Friable mid orange clay silt moderate small-medium stones 0.21m thick	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
308	Make up layer	Compact mid brown green clay 0.12m thick	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
309	Make up layer	Friable dark grey silty clay occasional small stones 0.26m thick	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
310	Make up layer	Friable mid orange clay silt moderate small-medium stones 0.33m thick	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
311	Make up layer	0.15m thick	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
312	Make up layer	Friable mid brown silty clay moderate small-medium stones 0.15m thick	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
313	Make up layer	Friable dark grey clay silt moderate small stones, occasional medium stones 0.72m thick	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Trench: 4

Max Dimensions: Length: 155.00 m. Width: 2.50 m. Depth to Archaeology Min: m. Max: m.

Co-ordinates:

Reason: Trench excavated for the new footpath

Context:	Type:	Description:	Excavated:	Finds Present:
400	Topsoil	Friable mid brown sandy silt occasional small CBM, moderate small stones 0.17m thick	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
401	Subsoil	Friable mid orange brown sandy silt Min.0.05m thick	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

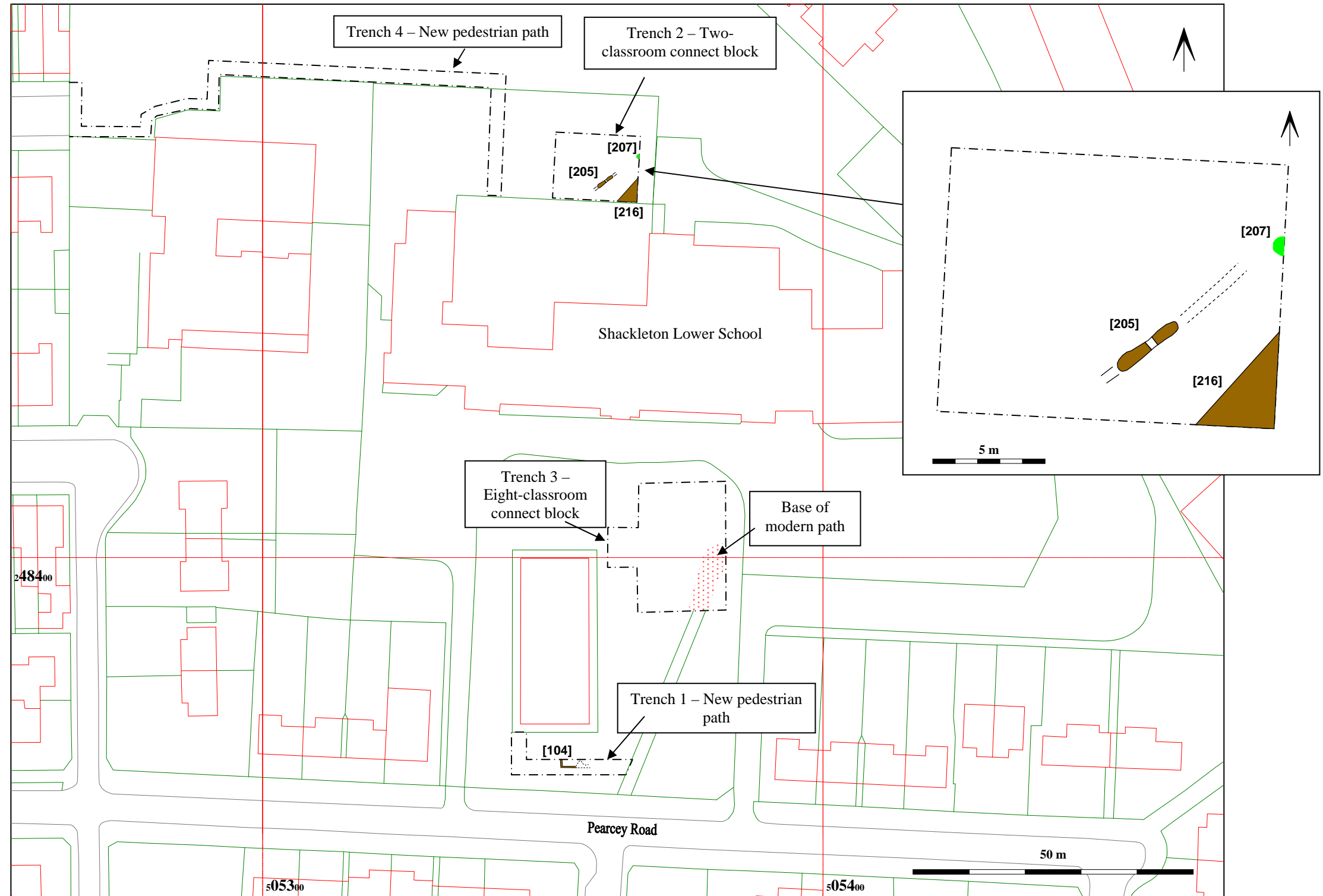
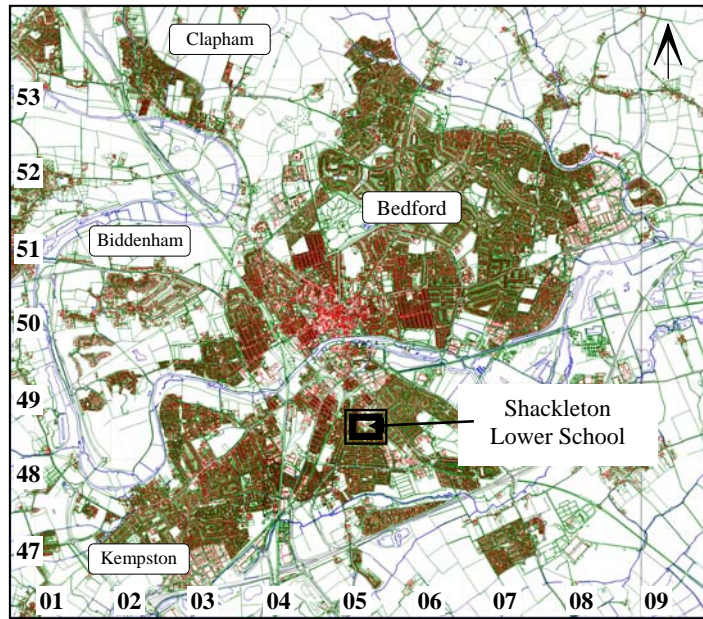
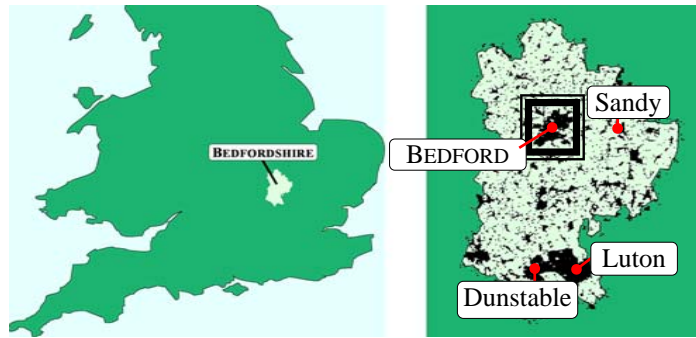


Figure 1: Site location and all features plan

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Trench 3 – excavated area for the eight-classroom connect block (looking north-east)



Trench 2 – excavated area for the two-classroom connect block (looking west)

Figure 2: Photos of Trenches 2 and 3 (to the north and south respectively of the main school building)

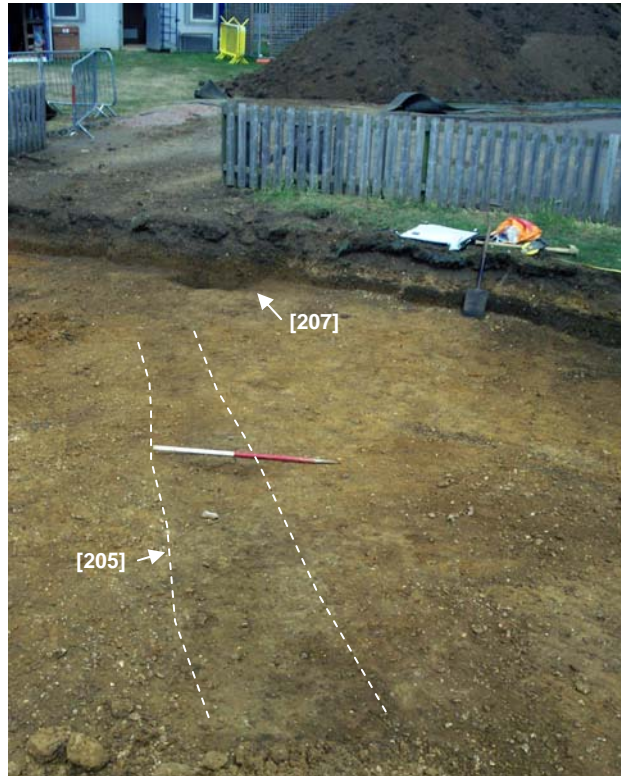


Trench 1 – excavated area for new pedestrian path

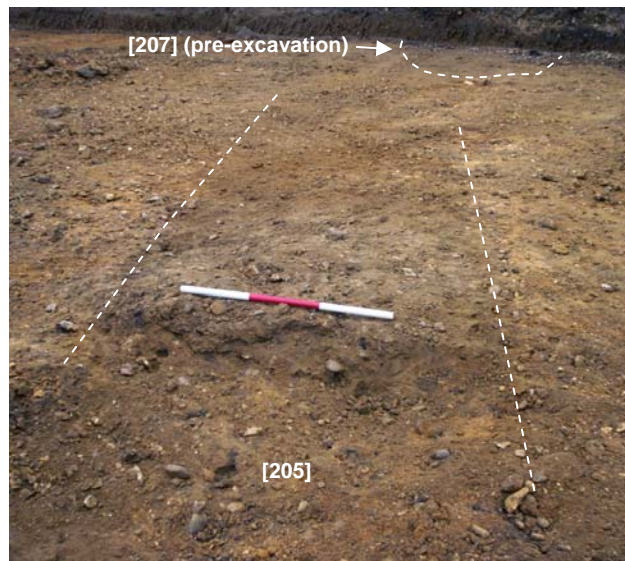


Trench 4 – excavated area for new pedestrian path

Figure 3: Photos of Trenches 1 and 4



Ditch [205] within Trench 2 (looking ENE; scale 1m)



Section across ditch [205] within Trench 2 (looking NNE; scale 30cm)

Figure 4: Photos of ditch [205]

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