



EMMER GREEN PRIMARY SCHOOL
Grove Road
Reading

County of Berkshire

Watching brief report

August 2011



**Emmer Green Primary School,
Grove Road
Reading
Berkshire
RG4 8LN**

Site Code BR-EGP11

A report on the archaeological watching brief

Sign-off History:

| Issue No. | Date: | Prepared by: | Checked/ Approved by: | Reason for Issue: |
|------------------|--------------|---------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 | 12.08.11 | Portia Askew | Stewart Hoad | First issue |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |

Museum of London Archaeology
© Museum of London

Mortimer Wheeler House, 46 Eagle Wharf Road, London N1 7ED
tel 0207 410 2200 fax 0207 410 2201 email MOLAGeneralEnquiries@museumoflondon.org.uk

Table of Contents

| | | |
|-----|---|---|
| 1 | Introduction..... | 3 |
| 1.1 | Site background..... | 3 |
| 1.2 | Planning background | 3 |
| 1.3 | Origin and scope of the report..... | 4 |
| 1.4 | Aims and objectives | 4 |
| 2 | Topographical and historical background | 5 |
| 3 | The watching brief | 5 |
| 3.1 | Methodology | 5 |
| 3.2 | Results of the watching brief | 5 |
| 4 | Publication and archiving..... | 7 |
| 5 | Conclusions..... | 7 |
| 6 | Acknowledgements | 7 |
| 7 | Bibliography..... | 8 |

Figure List

Front cover: Area 1, showing the nature of the subsoil with the line of a utilities trench on the right hand side of the picture (viewed from the south end of the trench)

| | | |
|-------|--|---|
| Fig 1 | Site location..... | 9 |
| Fig 2 | Location of watching brief areas | 9 |

1 Introduction

1.1 Site background

The watching brief took place at Emmer Green Primary School, Grove Road, Reading, Berkshire RG4 8LN, hereafter called 'the site'. The centre of the site is at OS National Grid Reference 471671 176587. Modern ground level on the adjacent playground averages 83m OD. The site code is BR-EGP11 (Fig 1).

The proposed development involves the installation of a temporary modular classroom and the construction of additional playground areas. The works proposed consisted of an archaeological watching brief outlined in Section 1.5 of the *Method Statement for an archaeological watching brief* (MOLA 2011).

1.2 Planning background

Outline planning consent for the development was granted by the Borough of Reading (Application no.11/00809/REG3). An archaeological condition was applied to the planning consent under the following policy which states that:

POLICY CUD 11: ANCIENT MONUMENTS AND OTHER IMPORTANT ARCHAEOLOGICAL REMAINS

6.46 THE COUNCIL WILL SEEK TO ENSURE THE PRESERVATION OF THE SITES AND SETTINGS OF SCHEDULED ANCIENT MONUMENTS AND OTHER IMPORTANT ANCIENT MONUMENTS AND REMAINS OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL IMPORTANCE. THE COUNCIL WILL NOT NORMALLY PERMIT DEVELOPMENT WHICH WOULD ADVERSELY AFFECT SUCH SITES OR SETTINGS.

Reason for the policy

6.47 The Borough contains two scheduled Ancient Monuments - Reading Abbey and High Bridge - and whilst this policy is largely geared to protecting and enhancing these, there are extant unscheduled monuments and possible undiscovered monuments in Reading which it is also necessary to protect. The Borough Council wishes to enhance Reading's monuments and their settings by encouraging only high quality development which pays them proper regard. Scheduled ancient monuments are safeguarded by the need to obtain scheduled monument consent from the Secretary of State as well as planning permission from the local authority. In those cases where scheduled monument consent has been issued by the Secretary of State, planning permission may be granted provided that schemes contribute towards the character of the monument. Where development proposal is likely to affect the setting of a scheduled monument the local authority has a clear role to play ensuring that the setting of the monument is not affected and that a high standard of development is achieved. The Local Planning Authority has a duty to consult English Heritage on any planning application affecting the site of an ancient monument (Town &

Country Planning General Development Procedure Order 1995 - Article 10).

1.3 Origin and scope of the report

This report was commissioned by Project Services Hampshire County Council on behalf of the client Reading Borough Council and produced by Museum of London Archaeology (MOLA). The report has been prepared within the terms of the relevant Standard specified by the Institute for Archaeologists (IFA, 2001).

The purpose of the watching brief was to determine whether archaeological remains or features were present on the site and, if so, to record the nature and extent of such remains. A number of more site-specific research aims and objectives were established in the preceding *Method Statement* (MOLA 2011) and are outlined in the following section.

The purpose of the present report is to analyse the results of the excavation against the original research aims, and to inform the further elaboration of the construction design and facilitate the elaboration of an appropriate mitigation stage.

1.4 Aims and objectives

The following research aims and objectives were established in the *Method Statement* for the watching brief (Section 2.2):

What is the nature and level of natural topography?

What are the earliest deposits identified?

What are the latest deposits identified?

Is there any evidence of occupation or activity on the site associated with the three socketed axes of late Bronze age date found during the construction of Emmer Green Primary School?

Is there any evidence of occupation or activity relating to the Middle Iron Age remains found on the adjacent site of Cedarcot, Lyefield Court, or the later Iron Age coin found at St Barnabas road?

Is there any evidence of occupation or activity relating to the Roman period? If so, are these remains associated with those found at the nearby sites of Highdown Hill Road and Grove House, by either date, form or function?

Is there further evidence of Iron Age/Roman ditches/field systems on site which relate to remains found on the adjacent site of Emmer Green Youth and Community Centre?

2 Topographical and historical background

A description of the archaeology and history of the site was provided in Section 1.4 of the *Method Statement* (MOLA 2011). Briefly, the area is characterised by prehistoric and Roman finds, with a medieval barn to the north-west.

3 The watching brief

3.1 Methodology

All archaeological excavation and recording during the watching brief was done in accordance with the *Method Statement* (MOLA, June 2010) and the *Archaeological Site Manual* (MoLAS, 1994).

The ground was cleared by contractors under MOLA supervision. Trenches were excavated by machine by the contractors, and monitored by a member of staff from MOLA.

The locations of the areas observed are recorded on a plan titled Emmer Green Primary School Temporary Classroom - Detailed Plan Proposal Drawing no E1896-A-200:

The heights of observations and/or archaeological remains were recorded relative to Ordnance Datum taken from the Plan No E1896 -A-200.

The site has produced: 1 trench location plan, 1 site diary, 5 trench sheets

The site records can be found under the site code BR-EGP11 in Reading Museum.

3.2 Results of the watching brief

Area 1

Area 1 was located to the west of the Reception Year external playground adjacent to the playground on the southern edge of the school playing field and measured 22m long by 8m wide and 0.21m deep. Topsoil, at a height of between 83.07 - 83.13m OD varied in depth between 70-100mm and overlay gravelly sandy silt, at a height of 82.97m OD, which was only excavated down to a 110-113mm depth. A single fragment of undiagnostic redeposited burnt flint was found at the interface of the turf and subsoil deposit. An east-west aligned linear feature was identified 0.80m north of the southern side of the trench, measuring 1m wide (see front cover). This was identified as a utilities trench for electricity and gas. No archaeological features were observed within the area.

Area 2

Area 2 was located adjacent to the northwest corner the Reception Year playground and measured 9.85m long by 4.5m wide and 0.21m deep. Topsoil, was recorded at a height of between 83.08m OD and varied in depth between 70-100mm and overlay a gravelly sandy silt, at a height of 82.98m OD, which was only excavated down to a 110-113mm depth. No archaeological features or finds were observed within the area.

Area 3

Area 3 was located adjacent to the north of the Reception Year playground and to the east of Area 2 and measured 7.20m long by 5.40m wide and 0.21m deep. Topsoil, was recorded at a height of between 82.86m OD and varied in depth between 70-100mm and overlay a gravelly sandy silt, at a height of 82.76m OD, which was only excavated down to a 110-113mm depth. No archaeological features or finds were observed within the area.

Foul Drainage trench

The excavation of a 33m long sewer trench, 0.45m wide and 0.70m - 0.90m deep, was recorded running northwards across the playground from the main school, northwards to a point at which the sewer would eventually connect to the proposed new classroom adjacent to the Reception Year playground. Gravelly sandy silt was seen at a depth of 0.25m below the top of asphalt, at a height of 82.78m OD. Natural gravel was observed at the base of the trench at a height of 82.33m OD. No archaeological features or finds were observed.

Utilities Trench

A dog-leg trench running southwest and turning south, in the playground, was recorded on the south-western corner of the temporary classroom unit (Reception Year). The total length of the run measured 5m long by 0.45m wide and 0.51m deep. Gravelly sandy silt, 0.15m thick was seen at a depth of 0.34m below the top of asphalt and rubble at a height of 82.74m OD. No archaeological features or finds were observed.

4 Publication and archiving

The site archive containing original records and finds will be stored in accordance with the terms of the *Method Statement* (MOLA, 2011) with the Reading Museum.

In view of the limited potential of the material and the relatively limited significance of the data it is suggested that a short note on the results of the watching brief should appear in an appropriate local academic journal.

5 Conclusions

No archaeological remains were identified on the site. Natural gravel was only seen in the Sewer trench and was uniformly level. The earliest deposit identified was the gravelly subsoil that was present in all the areas, its full depth of 0.45m was only exposed in the Sewer trench.

6 Acknowledgements

The author would like to thank Gareth Talbot from Hampshire County Council Property Services for commissioning the investigation and Mary Neale of Berkshire Archaeology for her advice and assistance during the project.

7 Bibliography

ACAO, 1993 *Models briefs and specifications for archaeological assessments and field evaluation*, Association of County Archaeological Officers

BADLG, 1986 *Code of Practice*, British Archaeologists and Developers Liaison Group

The Berkshire Structure Plan, 2001-2016

Department of the Environment, 1990 *Planning Policy Guidance 16, Archaeology and Planning*

English Heritage, 1991 *Exploring Our Past, Strategies for the Archaeology of England*

English Heritage, 1991 *Management of Archaeological Projects (MAP2)*

English Heritage, 1997 *Sustaining the historic environment: new perspectives on the future*

Institute for Archaeologists (IFA), 2001 *By-Laws, Standards and Policy Statements of the Institute for Archaeologists* (rev. 2001), *Standard and guidance: watching brief*

Institute for Archaeologists (IFA), supplement 2001, *By-Laws, Standards and Policy Statements of the Institute for Archaeologists: Standards and guidance – the collection, documentation conservation and research of archaeological materials*

Museum of London, 1994 *Archaeological Site Manual 3rd edition*

Museum of London, June 201 A Written Scheme of Investigation for an archaeological watching brief at Emmer Green Primary School, Grove Road, Reading Berkshire

Reading Borough Local Plan 1991-2006

Reading Borough Local Plan (2001 - 2016) Review 2003

Standing Conference of Archaeological Unit Managers, 1991 revised 1997 *Health and Safety in Field Archaeology, Manual*

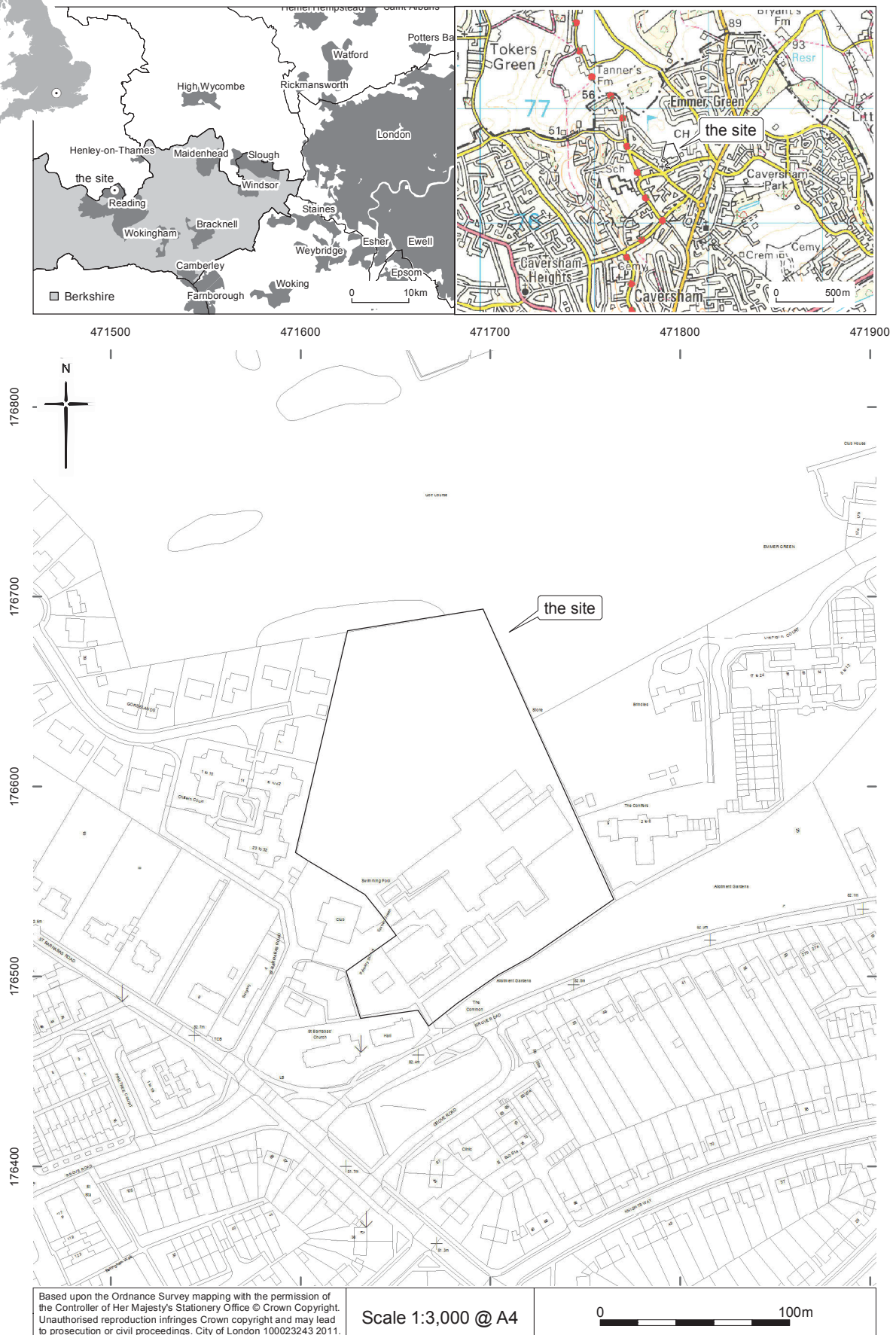


Fig 1 Site location

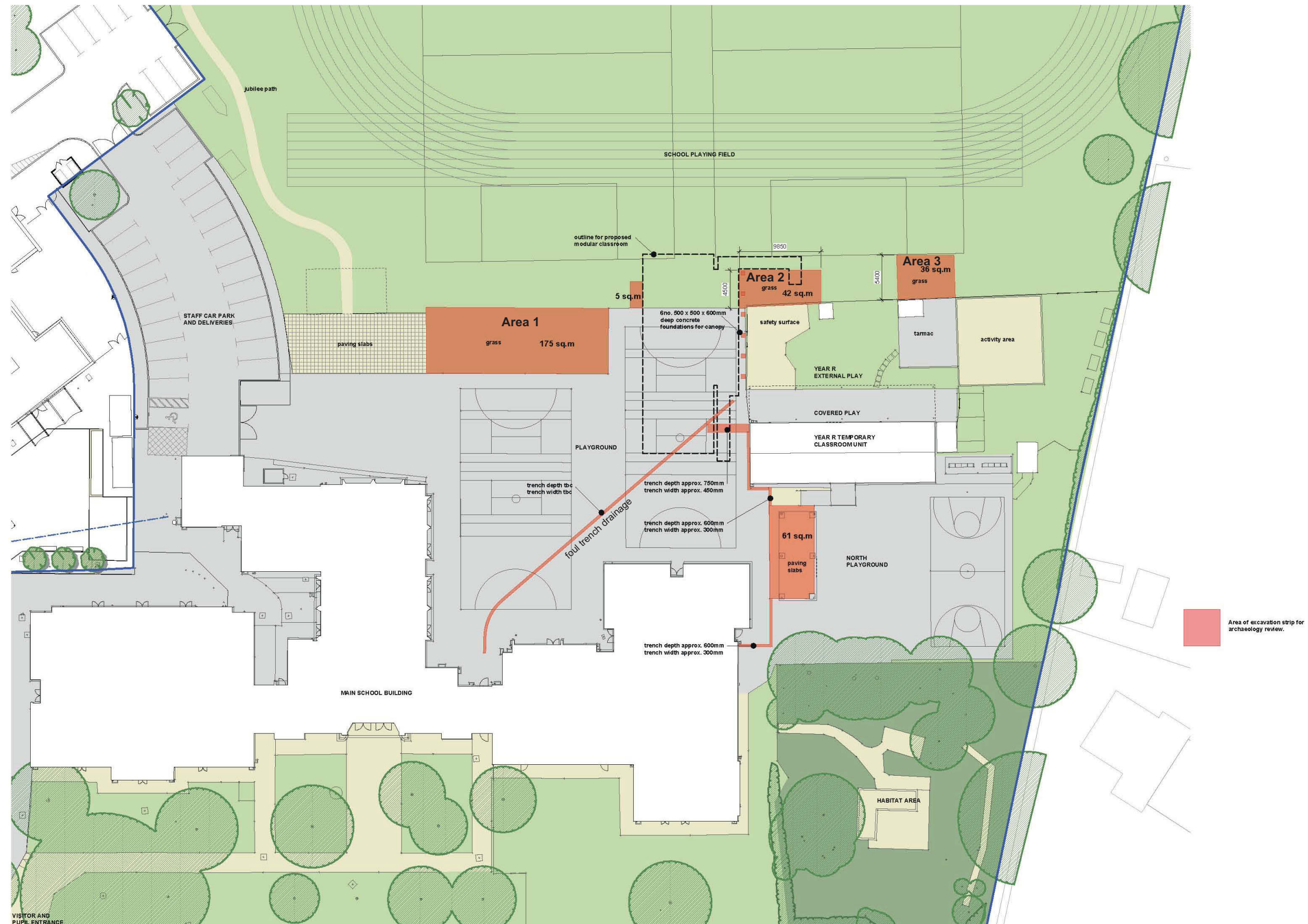


Fig 2 Location trench of watching brief areas

OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM: England

OASIS ID: molas1-107631

Project details

| | |
|--|---|
| Project name | Emmer Green Primary School, Caversham |
| Short description of the project | A watching brief was carried out by a MoLA on an area within the school grounds that was the proposed new site of a temporary modular classroom and additional playground areas |
| Project dates | Start: 20-07-2011 End: 29-07-2011 |
| Previous/future work | No / No |
| Any associated project reference codes | BR-EGP11 - Sitecode |
| Any associated project reference codes | BR-EGC09 - Sitecode |
| Type of project | Field evaluation |
| Site status | Area of Archaeological Importance (AAI) |
| Current Land use | Community Service 1 - Community Buildings |
| Methods & techniques | 'Targeted Trenches' |
| Development type | Public building (e.g. school, church, hospital, medical centre, law courts etc.) |
| Prompt | Planning condition |
| Position in the planning process | After full determination (eg. As a condition) |

Project location

| | |
|-------------------|--|
| Country | England |
| Site location | BERKSHIRE READING READING Emmer Green Primary School |
| Postcode | RG4 8LN |
| Study area | 175.00 Square metres |
| Site coordinates | 471671 176587 471671 00 00 N 176587 00 00 E Point |
| Height OD / Depth | Min: 82.33m Max: 82.33m |

Project creators

| | |
|------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Name of Organisation | MoL Archaeology |
| Project brief originator | MOLA project manager |
| Project design originator | MOL Archaeology |
| Project director/manager | Stewart Hoad |
| Project supervisor | Portia Askew |
| Type of sponsor/funding body | Hampshire County Council |
| Name of sponsor/funding body | Project Services |

Project archives

| | |
|----------------------------|----------------|
| Physical Archive Exists? | No |
| Physical Archive recipient | Reading Museum |

| | |
|---------------------------|----------------|
| Digital Archive recipient | Reading Museum |
|---------------------------|----------------|

| | |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Digital Media available | 'Images raster / digital photography' |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------------|

| | |
|-------------------------|----------------|
| Paper Archive recipient | Reading Museum |
|-------------------------|----------------|

| | |
|-----------------------|---|
| Paper Media available | 'Diary','Drawing','Plan','Unpublished Text' |
|-----------------------|---|

Project bibliography

1

| | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Publication type | Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript) |
| Title | Emmer Green Primary School - A report on the archaeological wathing brief |
| Author(s)/Editor(s) | Portia Askew |
| Date | 2011 |
| Issuer or publisher | Museum of London Archaeology |
| Place of issue or publication | museum of London Archaeology |
| Description | A short note in local archaeological journal |

| | |
|------------|---|
| Entered by | Portia Askew (paskew@museumoflondon.org.uk) |
| Entered on | 11 August 2011 |