

Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd

**WATCHING BRIEF:
LEVERSTOCK GREEN PRIMARY SCHOOL
GREEN LANE
HEMEL HEMPSTEAD
HERTFORDSHIRE**

NGR: TL 0855 0685

on behalf of Hertfordshire County Council



Janice McLeish MA Hons

January 2008

ASC: 1004/LGP/2

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Site Data

<i>ASC project code:</i>	LGP	<i>ASC Project No:</i>	1004
<i>County:</i>	Hertfordshire		
<i>Village/Town:</i>	Hemel Hempstead		
<i>NGR (to 8 figs):</i>	TL 0855 0685		
<i>Extent of site:</i>	c.825 sq m		
<i>Present use:</i>	School building and grounds		
<i>Planning proposal:</i>	Construction of a children's centre		
<i>Planning application ref/date:</i>	Not known		
<i>Local Planning Authority:</i>	Dacorum		
<i>Date of fieldwork:</i>	18/11/07, 27/11/07, 03/12/07, 08/12/07, 12/12/07		
<i>Agent:</i>	Mace Ltd Stag House Old London Road Hertford SG13 7YY		
<i>Client:</i>	Hertfordshire County Council		
<i>Contact name:</i>	Mr Dylan John		

Internal Quality Check

<i>Primary Author:</i>	Janice McLeish	<i>Date:</i>	28 th January 2008
<i>Revisions:</i>		<i>Date:</i>	
<i>Edited/Checked By:</i>		<i>Date:</i>	

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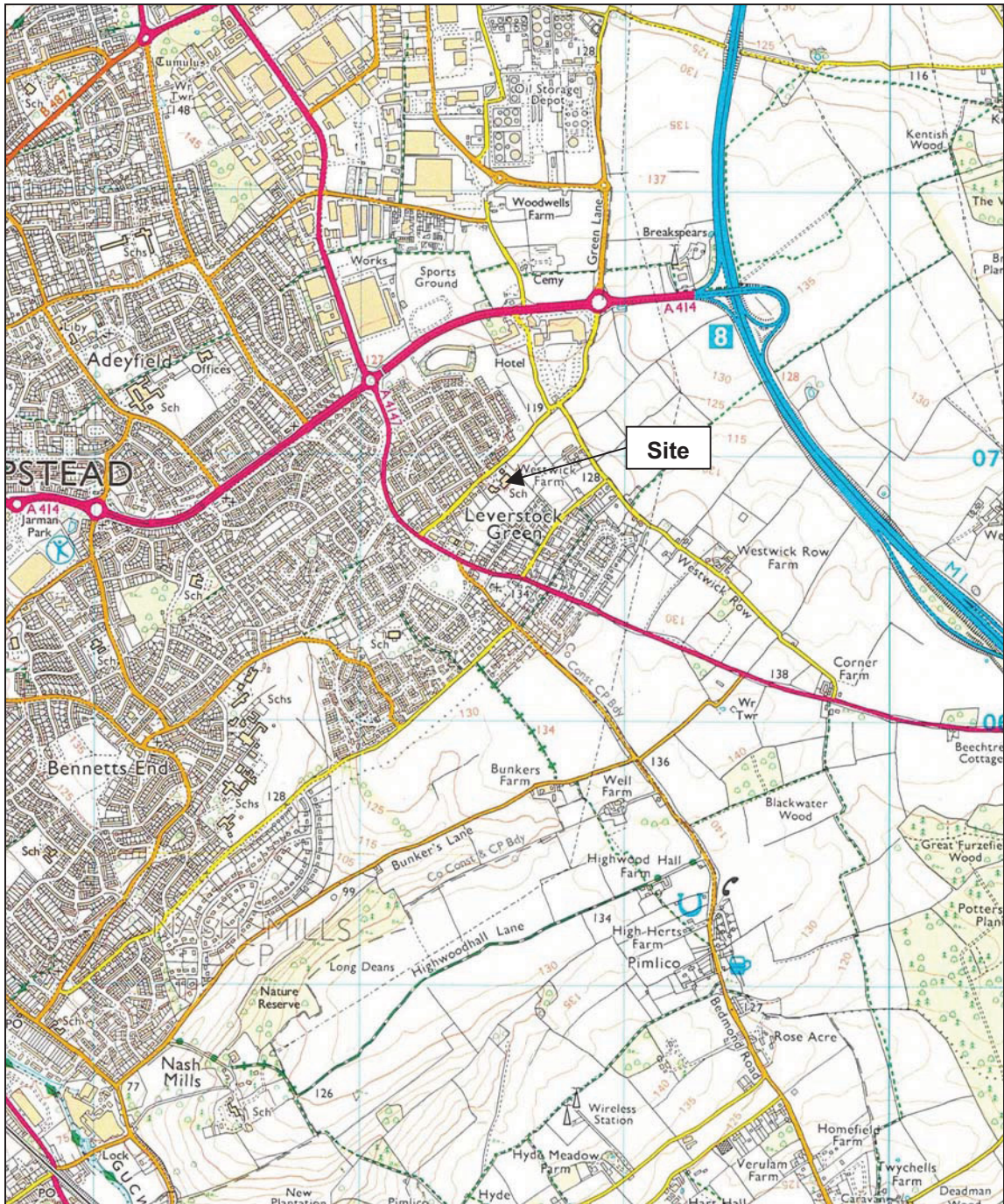


Figure 1: General location (scale 1:25,000)

Summary

During November and December 2007 a watching brief was maintained during the excavation of footings for the construction of a children's centre at Leverstock Green Primary School, Green Lane, Hemel Hempstead. The groundworks were monitored over five visits. No archaeological features or artefacts were observed within the development area.

1. Introduction

1.1 During November and December 2008 *Archaeological Services and Consultancy Ltd* (ASC) carried out a watching brief at Leverstock Green Primary School, Green Lane, Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire. The project was commissioned by *Mace Ltd* on behalf of *Hertfordshire County Council*, and was carried out according to a brief (Instone 2007) prepared on behalf of the local planning authority (LPA), *Dacorum Borough Council*, by their archaeological advisor (AA), the *Historic Environment Unit of Hertfordshire County Council*, and a project design prepared by ASC. The relevant planning application reference is 4/****/07.

1.2 *Planning Background*

This watching brief was required under the terms of *Planning Policy Guidance Note 16* (PPG16), as a condition of planning permission for the development of the site.

1.3 *Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd*

Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd (ASC) is an independent archaeological practice providing a full range of archaeological services including consultancy, field evaluation, mitigation and post-excavation studies, historic building recording and analysis. ASC is recognised as a *Registered Archaeological Organisation* by the Institute of Field Archaeologists, in recognition of its high standards and working practices.

1.4 *Management*

The project was carried out under the overall direction of **Bob Zeepvat** BA MIFA. Bob is an established archaeologist with extensive experience in managing archaeological projects, of a wide range of fieldwork in both rural and urban environments, of post-excavation, publication and presentation projects, and of work on a wide range of historic buildings and structures. He holds a first degree from the University of Leicester, and has been a validated Member of the Institute of Field Archaeologists since 1986. He has been involved in the management of archaeological projects since the late 1970s, formerly as Senior Field Archaeologist for the *Milton Keynes Archaeology Unit*, and as Project Manager for the *Hertfordshire Archaeological Trust*.

1.5 **The Site**

1.5.1 *Location & Description*

The site is situated in Leverstock Green, in the administrative district of Dacorum, Hertfordshire (Fig. 1). It lies on the south side of Green Lane, close to the junction with Micklefield Road and is centred on Ordnance Survey National Grid Reference TL 0855 0685 (Fig. 2).

The site is currently occupied by the existing primary school buildings. Service plans were not provided. Access to the site was by the main entrance leading off Green Lane.

1.5.2 *Geology & Topography*

The terrain is flat and lies at an altitude of *c.*125m AOD. The soils are derived from Plateau Drift and are classified as belonging to the Batcombe Series, described as a '*gleyed brown earth*' which is a '*flinty silt loam or loam, locally clay loam*'. The subsoils consist of a '*yellow-brown, friable and normally flinty, passing to stiff yellow-red mottled clay*' (Avery 1964, map sheet 238; Soil Survey 1983, 582a).

The solid geology consists of upper chalk (BGS 1:250,000 sheet).

1.5.3 *Proposed Development*

The development proposal comprises the demolition of the existing school building, and the construction of a new children's centre (Fig. 3).

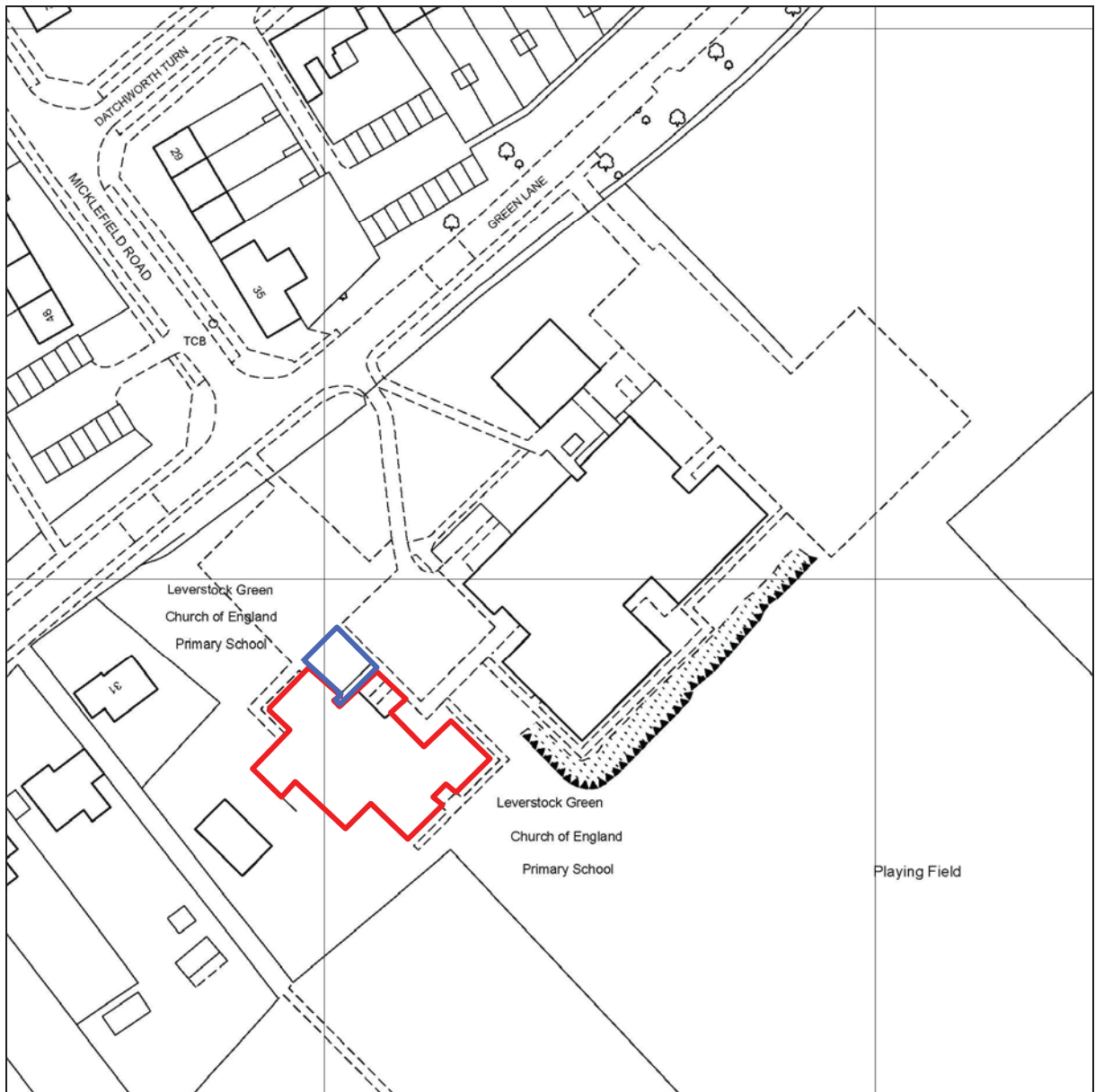


Figure 2: Site plan showing watching brief area in blue (*scale 1:1250*)

2. Aims & Methods

2.1 *Aims*

As described in the brief (Section 1) the aims of the watching brief were:

- To ensure the archaeological monitoring of all aspects of the development programme likely to affect archaeological remains
- To secure the adequate recording of any archaeological remains revealed by the development programme
- To secure the analysis, conservation and long-term storage of any artefactual/ecofactual material recovered from the site.
- To provide an adequately detailed project report that will place the findings of the monitoring and recording of the development programme in their local and regional context.

2.2 *Standards*

The work conformed to the project design, to the relevant sections of the Institute of Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct* (IFA 2000) and *Standard & Guidance Notes* (IFA 2001), to the Association of Local Government Archaeological Officers East of England Region *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England* (ALGAO 2003), and to the relevant sections of ASC's own *Operations Manual*.

2.3 *Methods*

The work was carried out according to the brief (Section 3), which required:

- Soil and overburden stripping under archaeological supervision
- The inspection of the sub-soil for archaeological features, deposits and artefacts
- The rapid investigation and recording of any archaeological features or deposits
- Sub-soil stripping under archaeological supervision
- The examination of foundation trenches etc., and the subsequent recording of any exposed archaeological remains
- Rapid examination of spoil-heaps for archaeological material
- A programme of post-fieldwork analysis, archiving and publication.

2.4 *Constraints*

No constraints were encountered during the fieldwork.

3. Archaeological & Historical Background

- 3.1 The following section provides a summary of the readily available archaeological and historical background to the development site and its environs. The site lies within an area of archaeological and historical interest, and has the potential to reveal evidence of a range of periods.

This section has been compiled with information from the Hertfordshire Sites and Monuments Record (SMR).

3.2 **Prehistoric** (before 43AD)

There is relatively little evidence for the early prehistoric periods in Leverstock Green, but a number of flint implements have been found in the area. These comprise Palaeolithic axes found at Ellingham Pit (SMR 0540 & 2276) and the Brickworks. Evidence from the later Neolithic period comprises a flint arrowhead found at Widmore Wood (SMR 0585) and Bronze Age burial urns, pottery and a group of 'Socketed Celts' and other metal objects have been found in Westwick Row (Evans 1892).

A number of cropmarks are present in the area. The school field contains three curvilinear cropmarks, which may be prehistoric or Roman in date.

3.3 **Roman** (AD43-c.450)

There is limited evidence for Roman occupation in the area. The Roman city of *Verulamium* (St Albans) was situated 5km east of Leverstock Green and remains of this period have been recorded at Handpost Lodge and adjacent to the M1 motorway at Breakspears.

3.4 **Saxon** (c.450-1066)

There is limited evidence for activity in the area during the Saxon period. Settlement may have developed to the east of the site along Westwick Row during the Saxon period, possibly as a result of land division and the development of new field systems. The name '*Westwick*' is derived from 'West dairy farm(s)' (Gover *et al* 1938, 92)

Westwick was mentioned in the will of *Aethelgifu* in late 10th century (B.Lib Mss Cott Nero DI, 152; Castle 1980, 37) and in 996 it was granted by King Ethelred to St Albans Abbey (Luard 1882, 16). In the late 10th or early 11th century it formed part of the parish of St Michaels, Kingsbury.

3.5 **Medieval** (1066-1500)

There is a mention of 'a certain assart beside the villa de Westwyc' in the late 12th to early 13th century, indicating that woodland clearance was taking place. The frequency of field names relating to woodland and woodland clearance in the 16th century has been noted elsewhere (Hunn 1981, 5). The potential of the site to reveal evidence of medieval activity was demonstrated during the excavation of a test-pit in the school playing field, when medieval and post-medieval pottery sherds were recorded.

3.6 **Post-Medieval & Modern** (1500-present)

The present settlement at Leverstock Green developed from the 19th century. Holy Trinity Church was built in 1849 and the settlement became a parish in 1850 (Yaxley

1973, 248). Green Lane had been laid out by the late 19th century and appears on the 1883 Ordnance Survey map, when the site is shown as open land. The area probably remained as green fields until the development of the primary school during the mid 20th century.

4. Results

- 4.1 Five visits were made to the site to observe the excavation of the foundation trenches for the new childrens' centre.
- 4.2 The eastern side of the site was covered by tarmac to a depth of *c.*0.2m. When this was removed several gas pipes and cables were exposed (Plates 1 & 4). Most of the area was still obscured by brick rubble forming the base for the tarmac. The footing trenches reached a depth of approximately 1.0m, and natural ground was observed 0.20m below the modern ground surface (Plates 4, 5 & 6).
- 4.3 The foundation trenches on the western side of the site were *c.*0.5m wide and 0.8m deep (Plates 2 & 3). The exposed soil horizon consisted of a dark grey residual soil with brick rubble and pebbles. Most of the exposed footings were cut into the natural reddish brown clay.
- 4.4 The south-west foundation trenches (Plate 1) were 0.55m wide and reached a depth of 1.20m. The underlying natural subsoil comprised mottled gravely clay beneath a thin horizon of disturbed ground consisting of a mix of soil, clay and building material with a maximum thickness of 0.15m.
- 4.5 The spoil heap was also visually inspected during each visit for potential artefact recovery. No archaeological features or artefacts were observed on site during this project.



Plate 1: View to south western footings



Plate 2: View to western corner of site



Plate 3: Detail of western corner showing gas pipe



Plate 4: View of eastern corner



Plate 5: View toward south eastern edge of site and school wall



Plate 6: View to north east edge of site

5. Conclusions

5.1 The excavation of footings for the development was monitored over a period of about four weeks. Throughout the project no archaeological features or artefacts were observed within the footprint of the new building. While it is apparent (Section 3 of this report) that evidence of Roman, Saxon and medieval activity has been found at Leverstock Green, and cropmarks of possible Iron Age or Roman date have been recorded in the school grounds, the area directly affected by the present development does not appear to contain anything of archaeological significance.

5.2 *Confidence Rating*

During the watching brief the weather remained overcast and damp, causing some standing water to be present in the trenches. This did not significantly impede observations of the strata exposed therein. Full co-operation was received from the contractors on site, and therefore a high confidence rating is attached to the results of this watching brief.

6. Acknowledgements

The watching brief was commissioned by *Hertfordshire County Council* and their agents *Mace Ltd*. The writer is grateful to John Dylan for his assistance. The project was monitored by Andy Instone of the Herts CC Historic Environment Unit on behalf of the local planning authority. Thanks are also due to Mark Ephgrave (Ash Construction).

The project was managed for ASC by Bob Zeepvat BA MIFA. Fieldwork was carried out by Jonathan Hunn BA PhD MIFA. The report was prepared by Janice McLeish and edited by Bob Zeepvat.

7. Archive

7.1 The project archive will comprise:

1. Brief
2. Project Design
3. Initial Report
4. Clients site plans
5. Site Monitoring Sheets
6. Site record drawings
7. List of photographs
8. B/W prints & negatives
9. CDROM with copies of all digital files.

7.2 The archive will be deposited with *Dacorum Heritage Trust*.

8. References

Standards & Specifications

- ALGAO 2003 *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England*. East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper **14**.
- EH 1991 *The Management of Archaeological Projects*, 2nd edition. English Heritage (London).
- IFA 2000a Institute of Field Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct*.
- IFA 2000b Institute of Field Archaeologists' *Code of Approved Practice for the Regulation of Contractual Arrangements in Field Archaeology*.
- IFA 2001 Institute of Field Archaeologists' *Standard & Guidance documents (Desk-Based Assessments, Watching Briefs, Evaluations, Excavations, Investigation and Recording of Standing Buildings, Finds)*.
- Instone A 2007 *Design Brief for Archaeological Monitoring and Recording*. Leverstock Green Primary School, Green Lane, Hemel Hempstead. Hertfordshire County Council

Secondary Sources

- BGS *British Geological Survey 1:50,000 Series, Solid & Drift Geology*.
- Brown R & Fell D 2007 *Project Design for Watching Brief on behalf of Hertfordshire County Council*. Leverstock Green Primary School, Green Lane, Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire. ASC Ltd 1004/LGP/1.
- Castle S A 1980 'The Will of Aethelgifu' *Hertfordshire's Past* **8**, 37
- Evans J G 1892 'An Archaeological Survey of Hertfordshire' in *Archaeological Journal* **9**, 21
- Gover J E B, Mawer A & Stenton F M 1970 *The Places-Names of Hertfordshire*. English Place-Name Society **15**. Cambridge University Press
- Hunn J. R. 1981: The landscape of Gorhambury. *Hertfordshire's Past* **10**, 2-9
- Luard H R (ed) 1882 *Matthaei Parisiensis Chronica Majora* **6** Addimenta (Rolls Series). London.
- Soil Survey 1983 *1:250,000 Soil Map of England and Wales, and accompanying legend* (Harpenden).
- Yaxley S (ed) 1973 *History of Hemel Hempstead*. Hemel Hempstead.

Appendix 1: Monitoring Sheets

A.S.C. LTD		ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD MONITORING RECORD				
Project: <i>Leverstock Green Primary School Herts</i>		Project No/Code: <i>10041 LGP</i>		Sheet: <i>1 of 5</i>		
Client/Developer: <i>Herts County Council</i>		Date of visit: <i>18/11/07</i>				
Contact: <i>Mandy Eyles (ASH)</i>		Phone: <i>07726-694043</i>				
Duration of Visit (inc. travel):	Start: <i>9.15</i>	Finish: <i>10.45</i>				
Completed by: <i>JRAA</i>						
Development Type:						
Footings	Services	Roads	Levelling	Quarrying	Pipelines	Other (specify):
Site & weather conditions: <i>Dull and very wet 5.5c</i>						
Observations: <i>Visited the site and met site foreman - the hearing being and being essential so no ground disturbance begun.</i>						
Comments: <i>The car park will be expanded by a small degree to allow for development space. The works schedule will be emailed to me/w in the next week or so.</i>						



A.S.C. LTD

ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD MONITORING RECORD

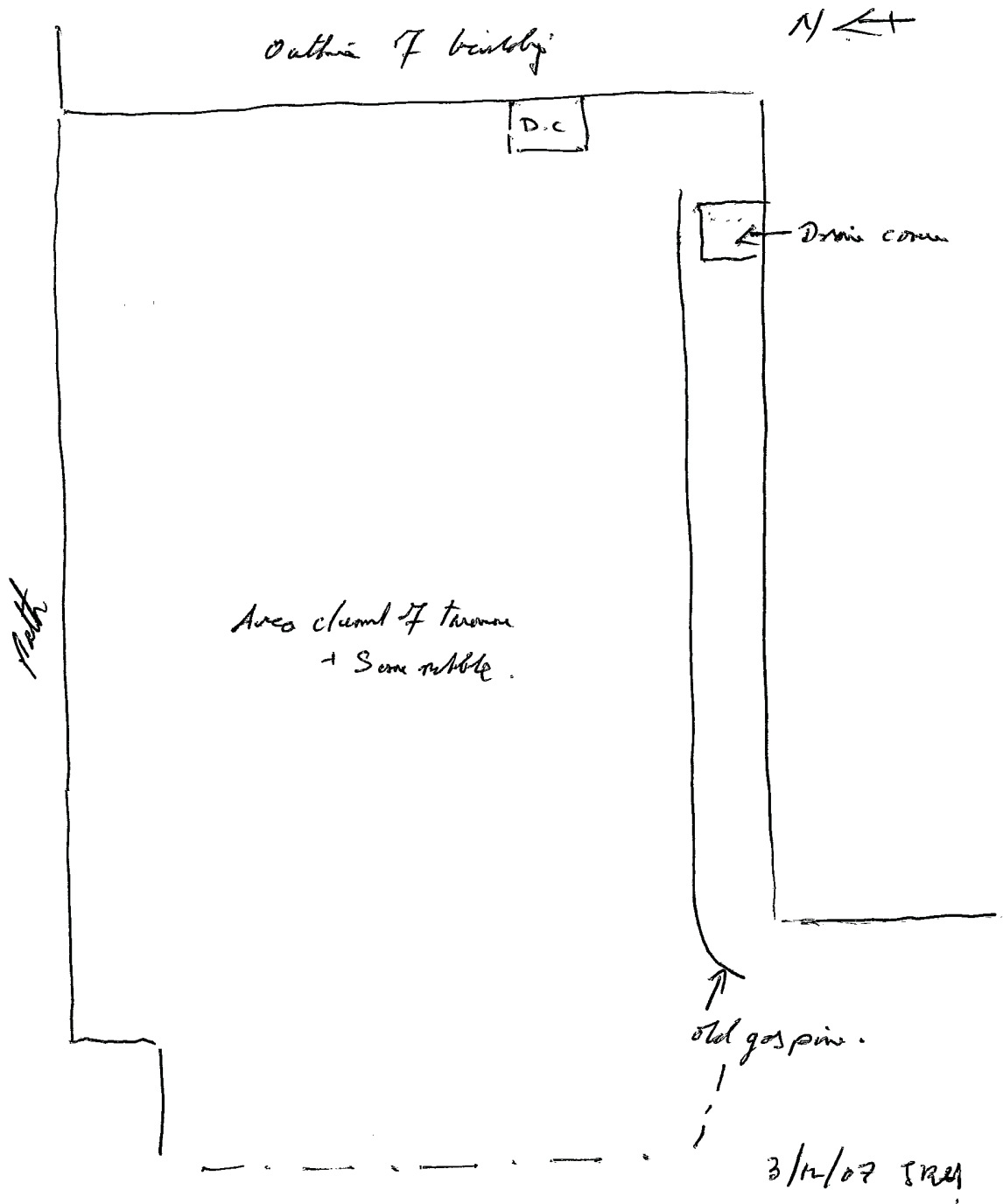
Project:		Project No/Code:	Sheet:			
Leverstock Green Primary Sch Herts		1004 1 LGP	2 of 5			
Client/Developer:		Date of visit:				
Hale (Herts county Council)		27/11/07				
Contact:		Phone:				
Mark Ephyrae (Asst)		07726-694093				
Duration of Visit (inc. travel):	Start:	Finish:				
	2.45 pm	3.15 pm.				
Completed by:						
JRA						
Development Type:						
Footings	Services	Roads	Levelling	Quarrying	Pipelines	Other (specify):
Site & weather conditions:						
Dull & Foggy.						
Observations:						
Discussed prospects etc. Discovery of unexpected gas pipe will delay project.						
Some ground chert identified. Temporary infrastructure in place.						
Comments:						



A.S.C. LTD

ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD MONITORING RECORD

Project: Leverstock ^{or.} Primary School Herts		Project No/Code: 1004 1 LGP	Sheet: 3 of 5
Client/Developer Herts. C.C		Date of visit: 3/12/07	
Contact: Mark Ephgrave (Aske)		Phone: 07726-694043	
Duration of Visit (inc. travel):	Start: 10.00 am	Finish: 11.15 am	
Completed by: JRH			
Development Type:			
Footings <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Services	Roads	Levelling
			Quarrying
			Pipelines
			Other (specify): chocolate
Site & weather conditions: Dry & Sunny (cold)			
Observations: Observed the corner of the site (east) where the tarmac had been removed. Mostly cables & gas pipes exposed ground still obscured by brick rubble hard standing. No natural ground seen. Ground reduced by no more than 0.2m max.			
Comments: Nothing of significance seen.			

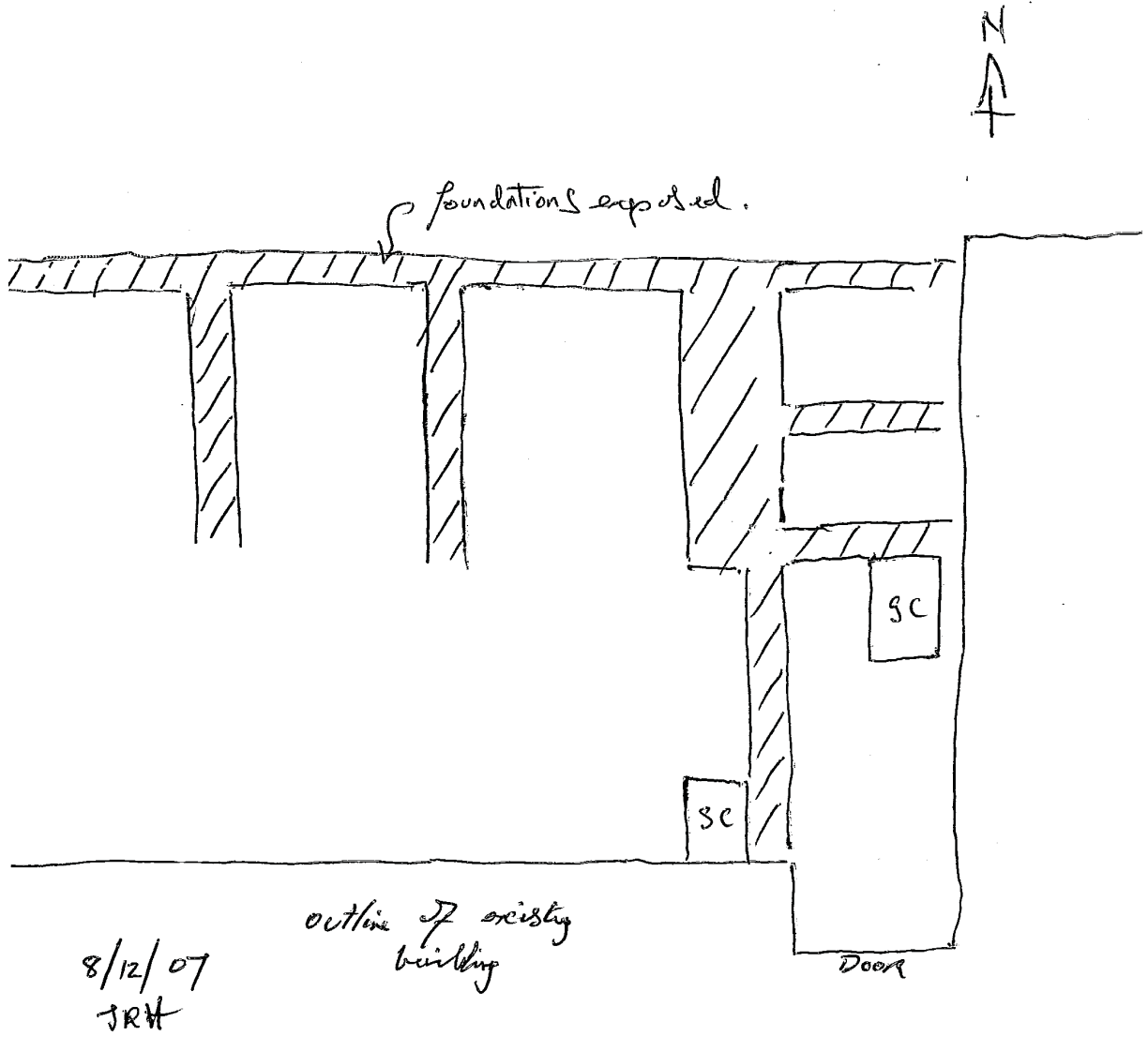




A.S.C. LTD

ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD MONITORING RECORD

Project: <u>Leverstock Green Primary School</u>		Project No/Code: <u>1004 1 LGP</u>	Sheet: <u>4 of 5</u>
<u>Herts</u>		Date of visit: <u>8/12/07</u>	
Client/Developer <u>Mare C. Herts C.C.</u>			
Contact: <u>Mark Eaglestone (Arch)</u>		Phone: <u>07726-694043</u>	
Duration of Visit (inc. travel):	Start: <u>10.30am</u>	Finish: <u>12.15pm</u>	
Completed by: <u>JRH</u>			
Development Type:			
Footings <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Services	Roads	Levelling
			Quarrying
			Pipelines
			Other (specify):
Site & weather conditions: <u>Persistent rain & cold.</u>			
Observations: <u>Outground footings on the western side of the site. These were 0.5m wide (approx) by 0.8m deep. The upper soil horizon consisted of a dark grey residual soil with hard rubble and pebbles. Most of the original foundations were cut into the natural weathered brown clay. 1/2 pre-random fence or utilities noted.</u>			
Comments:			

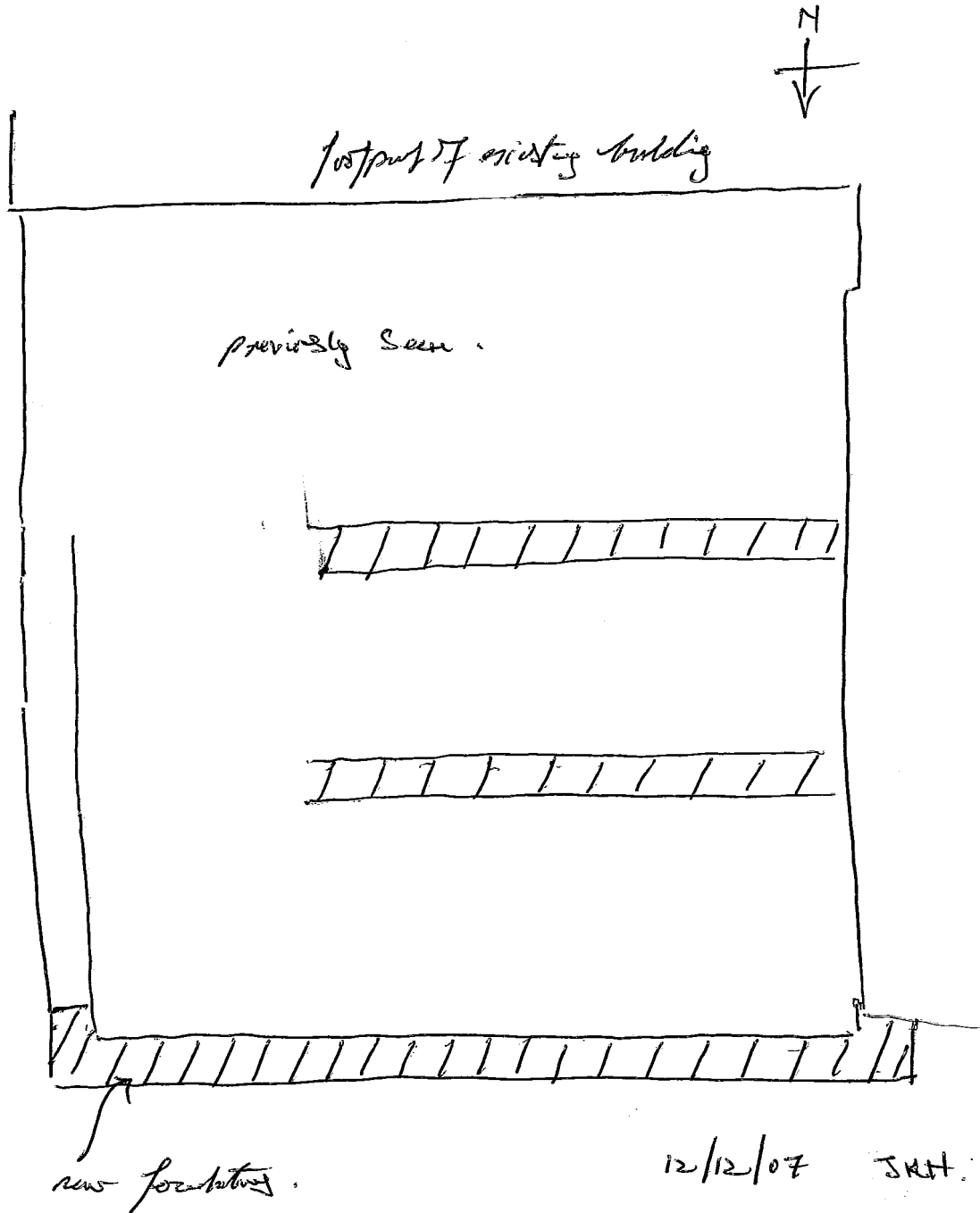




A.S.C. LTD

ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD MONITORING RECORD

Project: Leverstock Green Primary School Herts		Project No/Code: 1004 1 LGP	Sheet: 5 of 5
Client/Developer Hace for Herts C.C.		Date of visit: 12/12/07	
Contact: Mark Edwards (ASH)	Phone: 07726-694043		
Duration of Visit (inc. travel):	Start: 10.20	Finish: 12.15	
Completed by: JRM			
Development Type:			
Footings	Services	Roads	Levelling
			Quarrying
			Pipelines
			Other (specify):
Site & weather conditions: Dry & Sunny cold.			
Observations: Observed final area of the new extension. The deepest trench and adjacent to old school building is 1.20 x 0.55m which exposed a mottled, gravelly clay. Only a thin layer of disturbed ground consisting of a mix of soil, clay & building material overlay the natural ground ie. no more than 0.15m thick at most. No pre-modern features or artefacts noted.			
Comments: Machine had broken down and about 6m of trench remained to pull but there is no need to see the area has no further potential.			



Appendix 2: List of Photographs

SITE NAME:Leverstock Green Primary School, hemel hempstead			SITE NO/CODE:1004/LPG
Shot	B&W	Digital	Subject
1	✓	✓	General view of site looking south east
2		✓	View to eastern corner of site
3		✓	View to north eastern edge of site
4		✓	View to northern corner of site
5		✓	Detail of north eastern footing
6		✓	View to south eastern edge of site and school wall
7	✓	✓	General view showing access to site
8		✓	General view of site looking south east
9		✓	View of south western footing
10		✓	Detail of south western footing
11		✓	Detail of adjacent south western footing
12		✓	View to western corner of site
13		✓	Detail of western corner
14		✓	General view of site after tarmac removal
15		✓	General view of hard standing to southern corner
16		✓	General view to south west
17		✓	General view to north western edge of site and beyond

Appendix 3: ASC OASIS Form

PROJECT DETAILS			
Project Name:	Leverstock Green Primary School, Green Lane, Hemel Hempstead		
Short Description:	During November and December 2008 a watching brief was maintained during the excavation of footings in advance of construction of a children's centre at Leverstock Green Primary School, Green Lane, Hemel Hempstead. The groundworks were monitored over five visits. No archaeological features or artefacts were observed within the development area.		
Project Type:	Watching Brief		
Site status: (eg. none, SAM, Listed)	none	Previous work: (eg. SMR refs)	none
Current land use:	School building and grounds	Future work: (yes / no / unknown)	
Monument type:	none	Monument period:	none
Significant finds: (artefact type & period)	none		
PROJECT LOCATION			
County:	Hertfordshire	OS reference: (8 figs min)	TL 0855 0685
District:		Parish:	
Site address: (with postcode if known)	Leverstock Green Primary School, Green Lane, Hemel Hempstead.		
Study area: (sq. m. or ha)	c.825 sq m	Height OD: (metres)	c.125m AOD
PROJECT CREATORS			
Organisation:	Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd		
Project brief originator:	n/a	Project design originator:	n/a
Project Manager:	David Fell BA MA MIFA	Director/Supervisor:	Jonathan Hunn BA Phd MIFA
Sponsor / funding body:			
PROJECT DATE			
Start date:	18 th November 2007	End date:	12 th December 2007
PROJECT ARCHIVES			
	Location (Accession no.)	Content (eg. pottery, animal bone, files/sheets)	
Physical:	N/a	none	
Paper:	Dacorum Heritage Trust	Site drawings, site record sheets, brief, project design, report etc	
Digital:	Dacorum Heritage Trust	CD with all digital files	
BIBLIOGRAPHY (Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report)			
Title:	Watching Brief: Leverstock Green Primary School, Green Lane, Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire		
Serial title & volume:	ASC Ltd Report ref. 1004/LGP/2		
Author(s):	Janice McLeish MA Hons		
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