Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION:
WAINGELS COLLEGE
WAINGELS ROAD
WOODLEY
BERKSHIRE

NGR: SU 7720 7450

Commissioned by RPS Planning and Development
on behalf of Wilmott Dixon

Ralph S Brown BSc Hons

October 2008

ASC: 1128/RWC/1

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Site Data

ASC project code:	RWC	*ASC project no:*	1128
OASIS ref:	archaeol2-50532	*Event/Accession no:*	TBC

County:	Berkshire
Village/Town:	Woodley
Civil Parish:	Woodley Parish
NGR (to 8 figs):	SU 7720 7450
Extent of site:	11ha
Present use:	Secondary School
Planning proposal:	Phased reconstuction of the main teaching and administrative buildings
Planning application ref/date:	F/2008/1844
Local Planning Authority:	Wokingham District Council
Date of fieldwork:	27/10/08-28/10/08
Commissioned by:	RPS Planning & Development Mallams Court 18 Milton Park Abingdon Oxon, OX14 4RP
Client:	Wilmott Dixon
Contact name:	Charles Lequesne

Internal Quality Check

Primary Author:	Ralph S. Brown	*Date:*	7th November 2008

Revisions:		*Date:*	

Edited/Checked By:	Bob Zeepvat	*Date:*	7th November 2008

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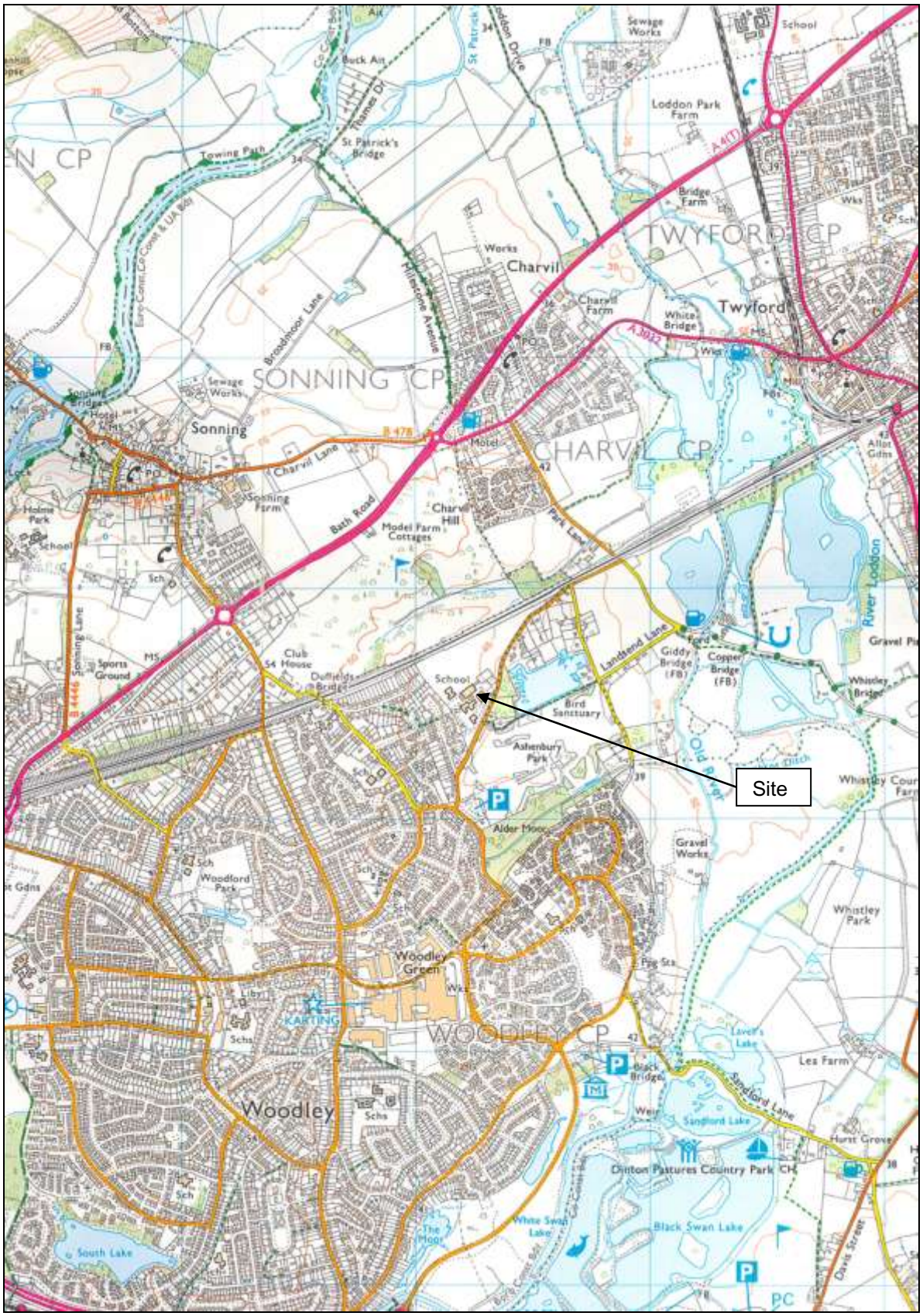

Figure 1: General location *(scale 1:25,000)*

Summary

In April 2008 ASC Ltd carried out an evaluation on the grounds of Waingels College, Waingels Road, Woodley, Berkshire. Four trenches were excavated within the footprints of proposed new school buildings and no archaeology was observed. The natural alluvium and terrace gravels were found to be largely undisturbed.

1. Introduction

1.1 In October 2008 *Archaeological Services and Consultancy Ltd* (ASC) carried out an evaluation at Waingels College, Waingels Road, Woodley, Berkshire. The project was commissioned by *RPS Planning & Development* on behalf of Wilmott Dixon, and was carried out according to a project design (RPS, 2008) agreed with *Archaeological Advisory Service of Berkshire Archaeology,* archaeological advisor (AA) to the local planning authority (LPA), *Wokingham Borough Council*. The relevant planning application reference is F/2008/1844.

1.2 ***Planning Background***

This evaluation 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 managed by Karin Semmelmann BA MA MIFA, and was carried out under the overall direction of Bob Zeepvat BA MIFA.

1.5 ***The Site***

1.5.1 *Location & Description*

Waingels College is situated within the district of Wokingham District Council is part of Woodley Parish on the eastern fringes of Reading. The site lies on the northeastern edge of Woodley at NGR SU 4772 1746 (Fig. 1).

The site occupies a triangular plot of land of 11ha and is bounded to the north by the Great Western Railway, to the west by a housing estate, and to the southeast by Waingels road. The school buildings, car parks and tennis courts are all located in the southern third of site with the rest of the land in use as playing fields (Fig. 2)

1.5.2 *Geology & Topography*

The site is flat and the area around the college buildings is at an elevation of approximately 46m OD.

The soils of the area derive from river terrace drift belonging to the Hucklesbrook Association (Soil Survey 1983, 571w), described as 'Well drained coarse loamy and some sandy soils, commonly over gravel'.

The solid geology on site is London Clay at *c.*3.5m below the ground surface. The overlying drift geology comprises the Lynch Hill Gravels on the northwestern side of site and the younger Taplow Terrace Gravels on the southeastern side (BGS, Sheet 268). All trenches excavated were within the area of the Taplow Gravel terrace.

1.5.3 *Proposed Development*

The proposed development involves a phased reconstruction of the college buildings comprising four two storey buildings set around a large courtyard (Fig. 3)

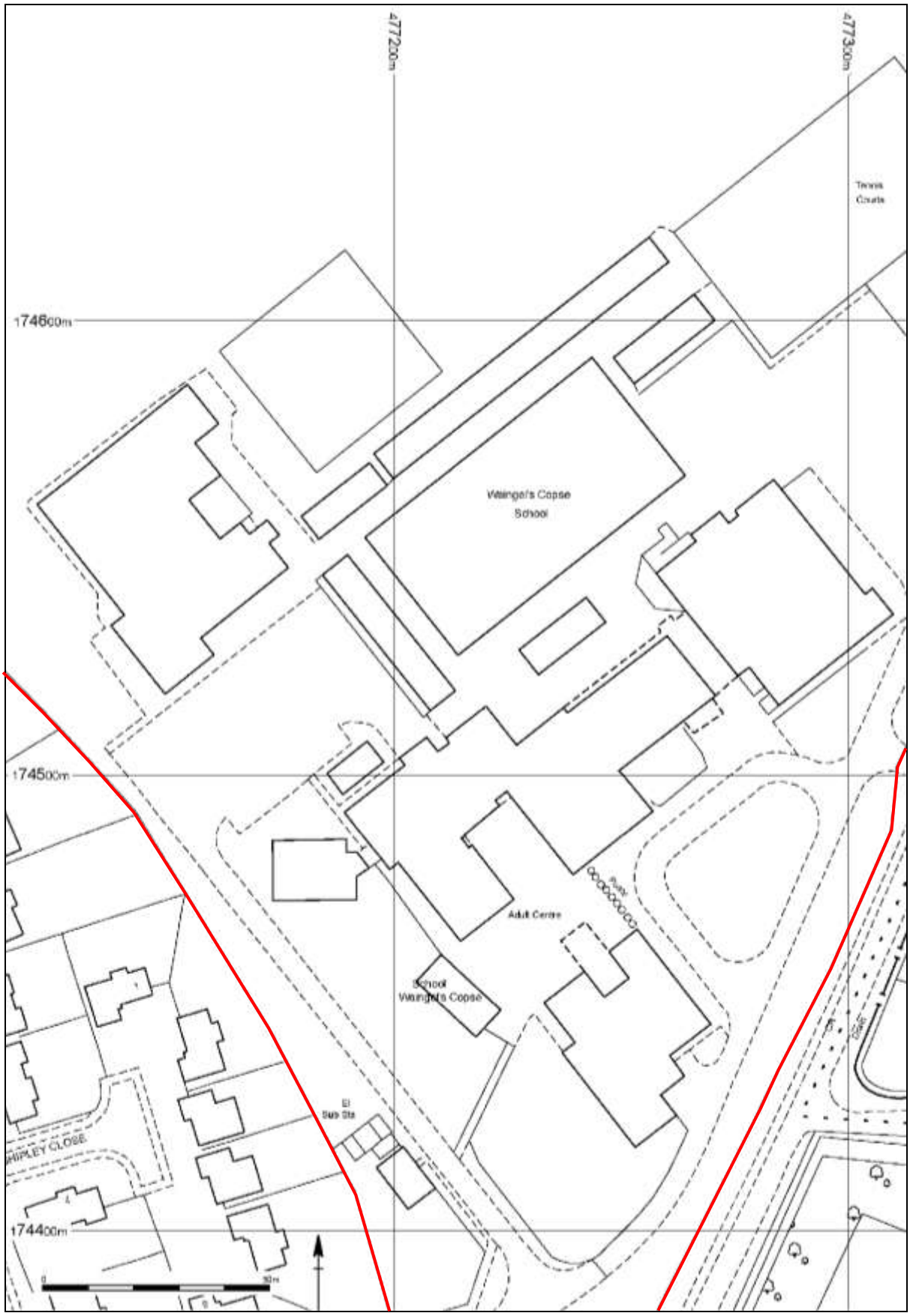

Figure 2: Site plan *(scale 1:1250)*

Figure 3: Proposed Development (existing structures in green) *(scale 1:1250)*

2. Aims & Methods

2.1 *Aims*

2.1.1 As described in the project design (Sections 2.6-2.7), the aims of the evaluation were:

- To determine the existence or absence of any archaeological remains; and should remains be found to be present to ensure their preservation by record to the highest possible standard;
- To determine or confirm the approximate date or date range of the remains, by means of artefactual or other evidence;
- To determine or confirm the approximate extent of the remains;
- To determine the conditions and state of preservation of the remains;
- To determine the degree of complexity of the horizontal and/or vertical stratigraphy present;
- To assess the associations and implications of the remains with reference to economy, status, utility and social activity;
- To determine or confirm the likely range, quality and quantity of the artefactual evidence present;
- To determine the potential of the site to provide palaeoenvironmental and/or economic evidence and the forms in which such evidence may be present.

2.1.2 Within this, there were the following site specific objectives:

- To assess the likelihood of the proposed development disturbing Palaeolithic remains in or on the glacial gravels;
- To establish whether prehistoric remains (of Late Upper Palaeolithic through to Bronze Age periods) of the type observed to the north and northeast of the site, on the other side of the Great Western Railway, extend across into the Waingles College site;
- To check for the presence of traces of Roman activity in the area;
- To check for traces of structures relating to possible storage facilities for the nearby Miles aircraft factory during the Second World War;
- Assess the extent to which any such remains have been disturbed by the development of the site since 1970

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), and to the relevant sections of ASC's own *Operations Manual.*

2.3 *Methods*

The work was carried out according to the project design (Sections 2.8-2.21), which required:

- The excavation of 4 trenches within the proposed building footprints
- All trenches to be 1.8m wide
- Mechanical excavation to be done in no more than 0.15m spits

- If archaeological features were encountered, a sufficient sample to be excavated in order to characterise their nature

2.4 ***Constraints***

Due to being sent the incorrect size of machine bucket Trenches 2, 3 & 4 were only 1.52m wide. Because of this Trench 2 was extended to 17m in length in order to keep a similar area of excavation.

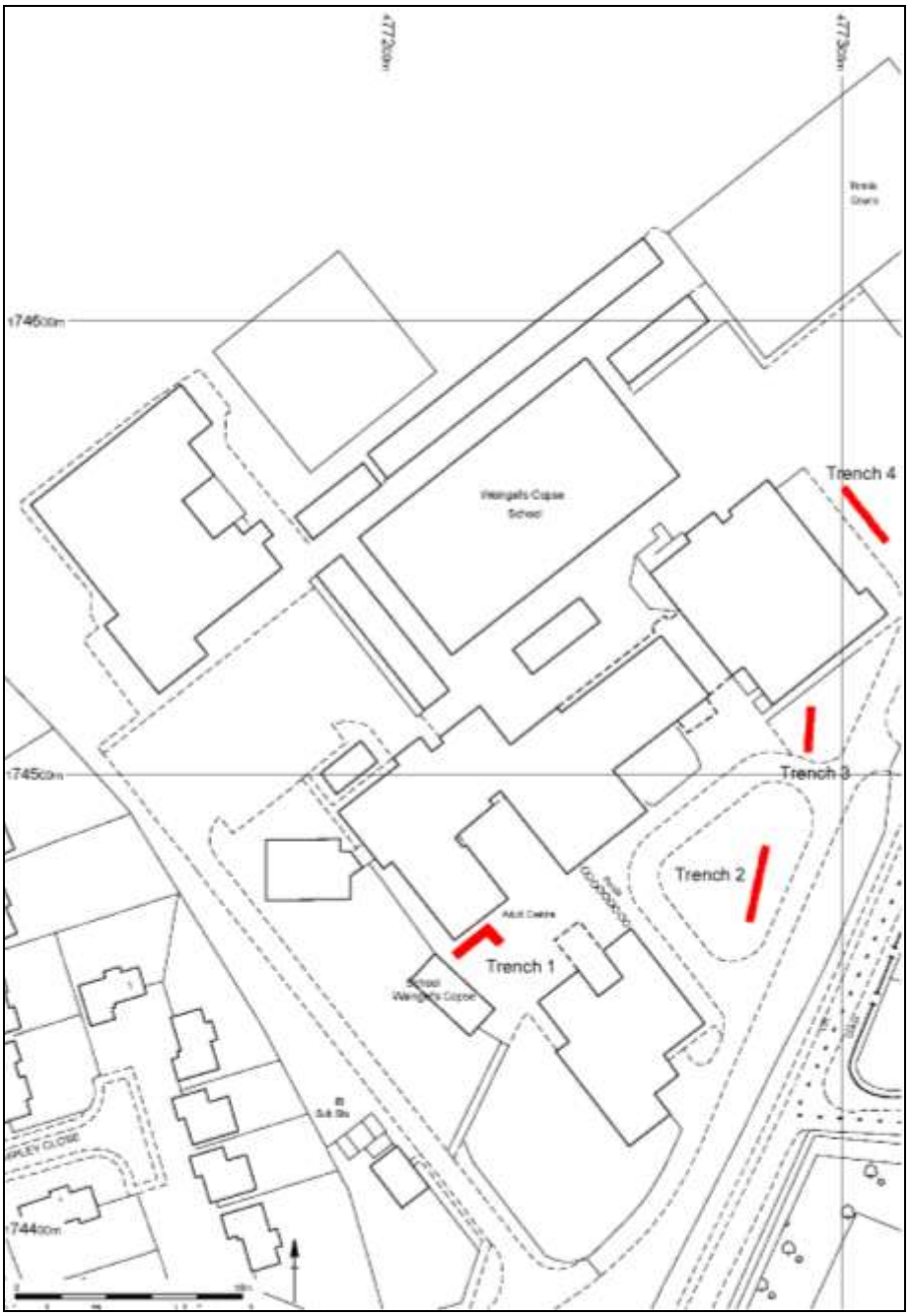

Figure 4: Trench Locations *(scale 1:1250)*

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 initial desk-based (LeQuesne, 2007) assessment and other readily available published scources.

3.2 ***Prehistoric*** *(before 600BC)*

Both gravel terraces that occur on the site, the Lynch Hill and the Taplow, have produced extensive Palaeolithic faunal and artefactual assemblages of flint tools both locally and in other parts of the Thames Valley (LeQuesne, 2007). These include groups of hand axes found in Woodley, Norris Green immediately southeast of the site, and two Middle Palaeolithic tools found during creation of Sonning golf course. Excavations 500m to the east of site, off Park Lane, recovered a group of 68 Late Upper Palaeolithic struck flakes and tools, found in a deposit overlying the natural gravel.

Three Mesolithic tranchet flint axe-heads have been found in the Woodley area including one within Sonning golf course to the north of site.

The excavations near Park Lane also revealed Early Middle and Late Neolithic pottery. Of great significance to the Waingels College site was the group of Late Neolithic material found in various features seemingly concentrated around the stream running through a valley immediately north of the railway line (LeQuesne, 2007).

The excavations either side of Park Lane also revealed Early Bronze Age pottery as well as the possible presence of Middle-Late Bronze Age field systems. Approximately 500m west of site a Middle-Late Bronze Age enclosure was found within which was found a series of classic 'burnt mounds'.

3.3 ***Iron Age & Roman*** *(600BC-AD450)*

Possible Iron Age or Roman pottery sherds were recovered from a garden immediately to the east of the school grounds.

The excavations at Park Lane revealed a Roman field boundary and a late third century coin was found within Woodley. It is also possible that a group of cropmarks in Sonning golf course could have Roman origins.

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

There are no known Saxon remains from the study area.

3.6 ***Medieval*** *(1066-1500)*

Early mapping indicates that during the Medieval period the Waingels College site lay largely in what had formerly been Sonning Eye Common and Marsh, apparently well away from any settlement (LeQuesne, 2007). Evidence of ridge and furrow ploughing has also been observed *c.*250m east of site.

3.7 ***Post-Medieval*** *(1500-1900)*

Nothing seems to have been built on the site of Waingels College during the post Medieval period, when the area was covered in fields and woodland. Between 1836 and 1840 the Great Western Railway was constructed forming the northern boundary to the site. By 1870 the northeastern half of site was covered in an area of woodland called Waingel Copse.

3.8 ***Modern*** *(1900-present)*

The early 20th century saw the expansion of Woodley towards the site and residential properties were built to the southeast and southwest, though no buildings were constructed on the site. It has been suggested that the site was used for storage by the Miles aircraft factory around the time of the Second World War. One indication of this was the discovery of historic hard-standing at *c.*0.5m below ground level during the recent construction of the Weeks block at the northeastern corner of the main complex of school buildings (LeQuesne, 2007). Waingels College was constructed and opened in 1970.

4 Results

4.1 *General*

Four trenches were excavated within the footprints of the proposed new buildings (Fig.4). All trenches were machined down to the loose, light grey natural Taplow gravels and no archaeology was observed in any of them.

Detailed information regarding the trial trenches and their contents appears in Appendix 1.

4.2 **Trench 1** (Fig. 4 & 5: Plates 1 & 2)

Trench Location: within footprint of proposed science block
Trench dimensions: 13.2m long×1.8m wide×0.94m deep

This was an 'L' shaped trench in the southwest of the main complex of college buildings and oriented southwest by northeast. It was excavated through 0.18m of tarmac surface and mid brown orange gravel make up (100). A 0.14m thick layer of soft, dark blue grey sandy silt representing modern contamination was below this, (101). These modern deposits overlay a 0.34m thick, soft, mid brown grey, sandy silt alluvium, (102). The Pleistocene gravels, (103), were reached below this which were inspected for any artefacts, but none were observed. Section 100 was taken from the southwestern end of the trench (Fig. 5).

4.3 **Trench 2** (Fig. 4 & 5: Plates 3 & 4)

Trench Location: within footprint of proposed entrance block
Trench dimensions: 17.00m long×1.52m wide×0.90m deep

This trench was placed in the island of green landscaping within the loop of the access road. It revealed 0.18m of a friable mid grey brown, silty loam topsoil, (200), overlying 0.22m of soft, mid grey brown, sandy silt subsoil, (201). Below these two was a 0.20m thick layer of alluvium, (202). In the northeast of the trench there was considerable bioturbation within the subsoil and alluvium resulting from the large bushes planted in a boarder that the trench was excavated through. The natural gravel, (203), was observed in the base of the trench, and were inspected for any artefacts but none were found. Section 200 was taken from the southwestern end of the trench (Fig. 5).

4.4 **Trench 3** (Fig. 4 & 5: Plates 5 & 6)

Trench Location: within footprint of proposed entrance block
Trench dimensions: 10.00m long×1.52m wide×0.79m deep

This trench was situated on the patch of green landscaping opposite the entrance to the site. Below a 0.16m thick layer of topsoil, (300), was 0.63m of firm, dark yellow grey, sandy silt made ground, (301). Although no dating was found, this made ground probably derives from the construction of the school, used to level the ground surface. The made ground was directly overlay the natural gravels (302). A northeast by southwest plastic service pipe was discovered in the northern end of the trench. No

artefacts were observed in the gravels. Section 300 was taken from the southern end of the trench (Fig. 5).

4.4 **Trench 4** (Fig. 4 & 5: Plates 7 & 8)
Trench Location: within footprint of Humanities and Technology block
Trench dimensions: 15.00m long×1.52m wide×1.11m deep

Below 0.30m of tarmac and concrete, (400), was 0.13m of loose mid brown orange coarse sand and gravel make up, (401), laid down for the current car park. This make up was placed on top of 0.23m thick subsoil, (403), similar to that found in Trench 2. The subsoil was truncated in the northwest end of the trench by modern contamination (402), similar to that found in Trench 1. A 0.50m thick layer of alluvium, (404) similar to that in Trenches 1 and 2 was found below (402) and (403). In the bottom of the trench the natural gravel, (405) was reached and no features or artefacts were observed. Section 400 was taken from the northwestern end of the trench (Fig. 5).

Plate 1: Trench 1 looking SW

Plate 2: Section 100 looking SE

Plate 3: Trench 2 looking NE

Plate 4: Section 200 looking SE

Plate 5: Trench 3 looking N

Plate 6: Section 300 looking E

Plate 7: Trench 4 looking SE

Plate 8: Section 400 looking NE

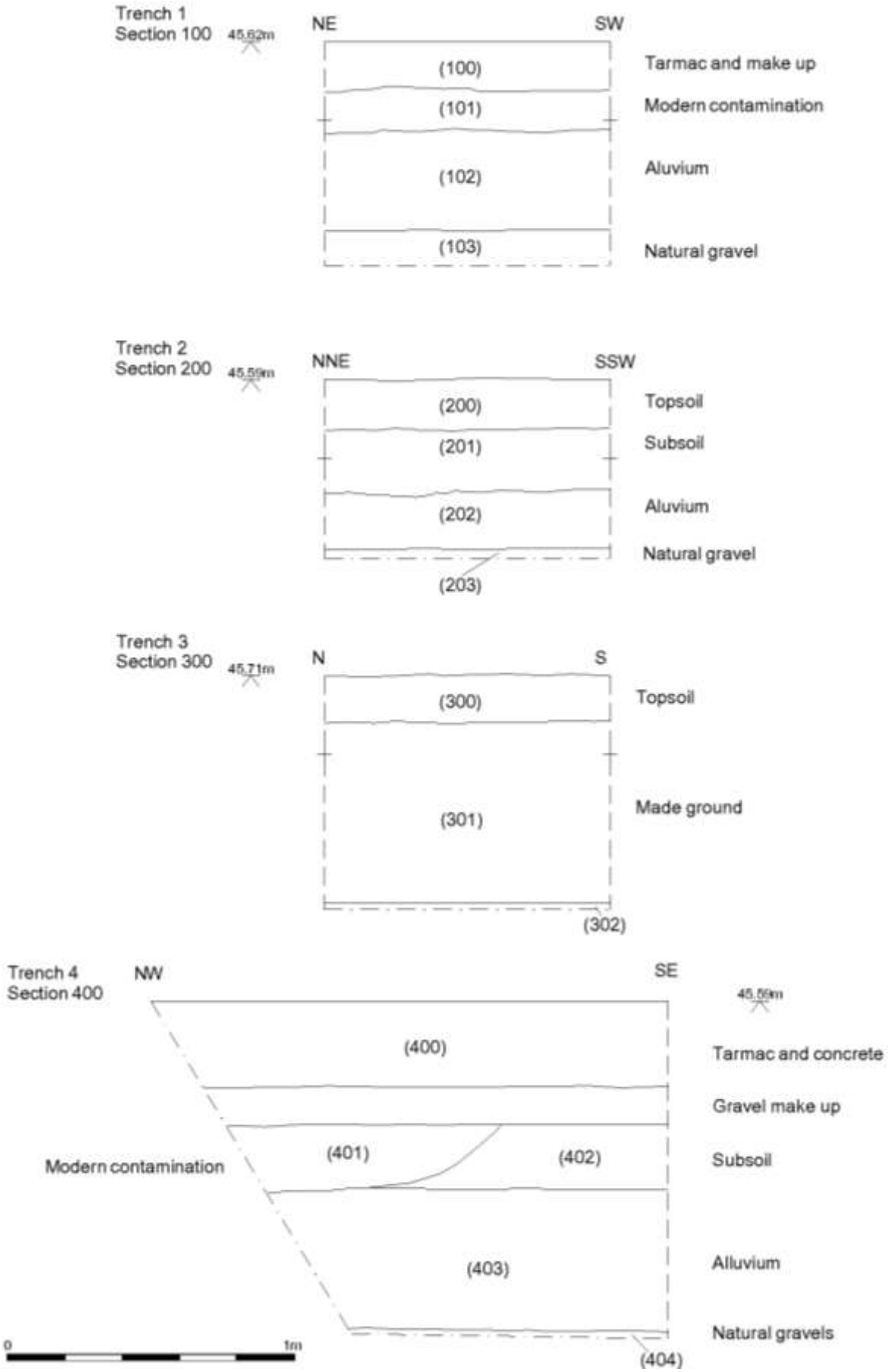

Figure 5: Sample Sections *(scale 1:20)*

5. Conclusions

5.1 While no archaeology was observed within any of the trenches, this evaluation has been useful in that it shows that much of the natural Pleistocene gravels have been undisturbed. This demonstrates that while the foundations for the current school buildings may have impacted on the natural stratigraphy, in the immediate areas around the buildings any archaeology has a high possibility of remaining intact. This leads to the conclusion that there is still the potential of finding palaeolithic material within the Taplow Gravel in the vicinity of the college.

5.2 While the existence of individual isolated archaeological features away from the trenches cannot be specifically excluded, it is unlikely that large numbers of archaeological features were present in the area of site being redeveloped. It is unlikely that the proposed development will have a significant impact on archaeological remains.

5.3 The evaluation took place in clement weather and was very straightforward with clear contexts and the full co-operation of everyone concerned. It is therefore possible to attach a high confidence rating to these results.

6. Acknowledgements

The evaluation was commissioned by RPS Planning and Development on behalf of Wilmott Dixon. The writer is grateful to Charles Lequesne and Rob Kinchin-Smith of RPS for their assistance. The project was monitored by Mary O'Donoghue on behalf of the local planning authority. Thanks are also due to Rodney Hing of Wokingham District Council for his assistance.

The project was managed for ASC by Karin Semmelmann. Fieldwork was carried out by Jonathan R. Hunn and Ralph Brown. The report was prepared by Ralph Brown and edited by Bob Zeepvat and Karin Semmelmann.

7. Archive

7.1 The project archive will comprise:

1. Project Design
2. Desk based Assessment
3. Initial Report
4. Clients site plans
5. Site records
6. List of photographs
7. B/W prints & negatives
8. CDROM with copies of all digital files.

7.2 The archive will be deposited with West Berkshire Museum.

8. References

Standards & Specifications

EH 1991 *The Management of Archaeological Projects, 2nd edition.* English Heritage (London).

IFA 2000a Institute of Field Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct.*

IFA 2001 Institute of Field Archaeologists' *Standard & Guidance* documents *(Desk-Based Assessments, Watching Briefs, Evaluations, Excavations, Investigation and Recording of Standing Buildings, Finds)*.

LeQuesne 2007 *Desk-based Assessment of Archaeological Potential: Waingles College, Waingles Road, Woodley (NGR SU 772 746), Berkshire* RPS

RPS 2008 Project design for Archaeological Evaluation/Mitigation of Redevelopment of Waingles College, Woodley, Berkshire (NGR SU 772 746)

Secondary Sources

BGS *British Geological Survey 1:50,000 Series, Solid & Drift Geology.* Sheet 268

Soil Survey 1983 *1:250,000 Soil Map of England and Wales, and accompanying legend* (Harpenden).

Appendix 1: Trench Summary Tables

Trench 1

Max Dimensions (m)					
Length	13.20	**Width**	1.80	**Depth**	0.94

Levels	
Trench base northeast	45.04m OD
Trench top northeast	45.71m OD
Trench base southwest	44.99m OD
Trench top southwest	45.72m OD

NGR Co-ordinates			
SU	77215 74460	**SU**	77222 77266
Orientation		NE-SW	
Reason for Trench		Planning condition	

Context	Type	Description and Interpretation	Width (max: m)	Length (max: m)	Thickness (max: m)
100	Layer	Tarmac surface with a mid orange brown gravel make up layer beneath	>5m	>10m	>0.18m
101	Layer	Modern Contamination, dark blue grey, sandy silt soft, 3% stones	>5m	>10m	>0.14m
102	Layer	Alluvium, mid brown grey, sandy silt, soft	>5m	>10m	>0.34m
103	Layer	Natural Gravel, light grey 80% stones 0.01-0.06m, 20% course sand	>5m	>10m	>0.12m

Trench 2

Max Dimensions (m)					
Length	17.00	**Width**	1.52	**Depth**	0.90

Levels	
Trench base northeast	44.69m OD
Trench top northeast	45.62m OD
Trench base southwest	44.84m OD
Trench top southwest	45.59m OD

NGR Co-ordinates			
SU	77279 74468	**SU**	77283 74485
Orientation		NE-SW	
Reason for Trench		Planning condition	

Context	Type	Description and Interpretation	Width (max: m)	Length (max: m)	Thickness (max: m)
200	Layer	Topsoil, friable mid grey brown silty loam	>1.52	>17	0.18
201	Layer	Subsoil, soft mid grey brown sandy silt	>1.52	>17	0.22
202	Layer	Aluvium, soft mid yellow brown sandy silt mottled with light brown grey.	>1.52	>17	0.20
203	Layer	Natural Gravel, light grey 80% stones 0.01-0.06m, 20% course sand	>1.52	>17	>0.03

Trench 3

Max Dimensions (m)					
Length	10.00	**Width**	1.52	**Depth**	0.79

Levels	
Trench base north	45.06m OD
Trench top north	45.76m OD
Trench base south	45.28m OD
Trench top south	45.71m OD

NGR Co-ordinates			
SU	77293 74505	**SU**	77293 74515
Orientation	N-S		
Reason for Trench	Planning condition		

Context	Type	Description and Interpretation	Width (max: m)	Length (max: m)	Thickness (max: m)
300	Layer	Topsoil, friable mid grey brown silty loam	>1.52	>10m	0.16
301	Layer	Made ground, firm dark yellow grey sandy silt 2%stone	>1.52	>10m	0.63
302	Layer	Natural Gravel, light grey 80% stones 0.01-0.06m, 20% course sand	>1.52	>10m	>0.03

Trench 4

Max Dimensions (m)					
Length	15.00	**Width**	1.52	**Depth**	1.14

Levels	
Trench base northeast	44.60m OD
Trench top northeast	45.59m OD
Trench base southwest	44.70m OD
Trench top southwest	45.62m OD

NGR Co-ordinates			
SU	77300 74563	**SU**	77309 74552
Orientation	NE-SW		
Reason for Trench	Planning condition		

Context	Type	Description and Interpretation	Width (max: m)	Length (max: m)	Thickness (max: m)
400	Layer	Tarmac and concrete of the present carpark	>1.52	>15.00	0.30
401	Layer	Make up, loose mid brown orange sandy gravel	>1.52	>15.00	0.13
402	Layer	Modern contamination, soft dark green grey sandy silt, occasional brick fragments	>1.52	>1.20	0.23
403	Layer	Subsoil, soft mid grey brown sandy silt	>1.52	>15.00	0.23
404	Layer	Aluvium, soft mid yellow brown sandy silt mottled with light brown grey.	>1.52	>15.00	0.50
405	Layer	Natural Gravel, light grey 80% stones 0.01-0.06m, 20% course sand	>1.52	>15.00	0.02

Appendix 2: List of Photographs

SITE NAME: Waingels College, Waingles Road, Woodley, Berkshire			**SITE NO/CODE: 1128/RWC**
Shot	B&W	Digital	Subject
1	✓	✓	Trench 4 looking SE
2	✓	✓	Trench 4 looking NW
3	✓	✓	Trench 4 general overview looking S
4	✓	✓	Section 400 looking NE
5	✓	✓	Trench 3 looking N
6	✓	✓	Section 300 looking E
7	✓	✓	Trench 3 general overview looking N
8	✓	✓	Trench 1 looking SW
9	✓	✓	Trench 1 looking SE
10	✓	✓	Section 100 looking SE
11		✓	Looking SE towards Trench 2
12		✓	General shot of Trench 1 looking W
13	✓	✓	Trench 2 looking NE
14	✓	✓	Section 200 looking SE

Appendix 1: ASC OASIS Form

PROJECT DETAILS			
Project Name:	Waingles College, Waingles Road, Woodley, Berkshire		
Short Description:	In April 2008 ASC Ltd carried out an evaluation on the grounds of Waingels College, Waingels Road, Woodley, Berkshire. Four trenches were excavated within the footprints of proposed new school buildings and no archaeology was observed. The natural alluvium and terrace gravels were found to be largely undisturbed.		
Project Type: (indicate all that apply)	Trial Trenching		
Site status: (eg. none, SAM, Listed)	None	Previous work: (eg. SMR refs)	Desk-based assessment by RPS
Current land use:	College	Future work: (yes / no / unknown)	yes
Monument type:	N/A	Monument period:	N/A
Significant finds: (artefact type & period)	None		
PROJECT LOCATION			
County:	Berkshire	OS reference: (8 figs min)	SU 7720 7450
Site address: (with postcode if known)	Waingles College, Waingles Road, Woodley, Berkshire, RG5 4RF		
Study area: (sq. m. or ha)	11ha	Height OD: (metres)	46
PROJECT CREATORS			
Organisation:	Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd		
Project brief originator:	RPS Planning and Development	Project design originator:	RPS Planning and Development
Project Manager:	Karin Semmelmann	Director/Supervisor:	Jonathan Hunn
Sponsor / funding body:	Wilmott Dixon		
PROJECT DATE			
Start date:	27/10/08	End date:	28/10/08
PROJECT ARCHIVES			
	Location (Accession no.)	Content (eg. pottery, animal bone, files/sheets)	
Physical:	West Berkshire Museum	N/a	
Paper:		Project design, Report Field records, b/w photos	
Digital:		CD with report and photos	
BIBLIOGRAPHY (Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report)			
Title:	Archaeological Evaluation: Waingels College, Waingels Road, Woodley, Berkshire		
Serial title & volume:	ASC Ltd Report ref. 1128/RWC/1		
Author(s):	Ralph S. Brown BSc Hons		
Page nos	24	Date:	07/11/08