

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF REPORT:

PRIORY RUSKIN ACADEMY, RUSHCLIFFE ROAD, GRANTHAM, LINCOLNSHIRE

Planning Reference: S35/2647/13

NGR: SK 9133 3700

AAL Site Code: PRAG 13

OASIS Reference Number: allenarc1-168109



Report prepared for Prospect Archaeology
on behalf of Lindum BMS and Priory Ruskin Academy

By
Allen Archaeology Limited
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Cover image: View of excavations in progress, looking east

Executive Summary

- An archaeological watching brief was carried out for Prospect Archaeology on behalf of Priory Ruskin Academy during groundworks for an extension to a sports hall at the school.
- The site is situated in an area of archaeological potential, with some evidence for an Anglo-Saxon cemetery discovered during the construction of the school in the 1970s.
- The watching brief consisted of the monitoring of ground reduction excavations and a ring beam trench for the new extension.
- The watching brief revealed a sequence of modern deposits overlying the natural geology, which was encountered at a depth of 0.7m. However, the majority of the footings were excavated to 0.45m depth and did not extend below the depth of modern deposits.

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Allen Archaeology Limited was commissioned by Prospect Archaeology to undertake a watching brief during groundworks for the extension of a sports hall at Priory Ruskin Academy, Grantham, Lincolnshire.
- 1.2 The excavation, recording and reporting conformed to current national guidelines, as set out in the Institute for Archaeologists '*Standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief*' (IfA 1994, revised 2001 and 2008), local guidelines in the *Lincolnshire Archaeological Handbook* (LCC 2012), and a specification prepared by Prospect Archaeology (Field 2013).
- 1.3 The documentary archive will be submitted to The Collection, Lincoln within six months of the completion of the report and stored under the museum accession code LCNCC: 2013.209.

2.0 Site Location and Description

- 2.1 Grantham is located in the administrative district of South Kesteven District Council, approximately 34km east of Nottingham and 35km south of Lincoln. The school is located off Rushcliffe Road which lies west of the A607 Manthorpe Road 1km to the north of Grantham town centre and centres on NGR SK 9133 3700. The sports hall is located on the southern side of the school site.
- 2.2 The local geology comprises Charmouth Mudstone Formation, overlain by superficial deposits of Belton sands and gravels (<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>).

3.0 Planning Background

- 3.1 Full planning permission has been granted by South Kesteven District Council for construction of an extension to an existing sports hall (Planning Application Reference S35/2647/13). The permission was granted subject to conditions, including the undertaking of a programme of archaeological monitoring and recording during all associated groundworks.
- 3.2 The scheme of works comprised the monitoring of all groundworks for the scheme by a suitably competent archaeologist, and the recording of any archaeological remains exposed, effectively 'preserving the archaeology by record'. This approach is consistent with the guidelines that are set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (Department for Communities and Local Government 2012).

4.0 Archaeological Background

- 4.1 The site is located in an area of archaeological potential with evidence activity dating from the prehistoric to the modern period contained within the Lincolnshire Historic Environment Record (LHER) within a 0.5km radius from the site.

- 4.2 Prehistoric flints have been found during an evaluation to the east of the site on Manthorpe Road (Bradley-Lovekin 2002). Two Bronze Age burials were also found in the vicinity (LHER 30525).
- 4.3 Roman activity is not well represented in the area; archaeological evaluation to the west of the sports hall however located small-scale Romano-British settlement activity represented by a small number of pits, postholes and two possible ditches (Rowe 2011).
- 4.4 There is more extensive evidence for Anglo-Saxon activity within the area, including from Priory Ruskin Academy, where during construction in the 1970s artefacts were uncovered including two spearheads, a buckle, pottery and coloured stones of irregular shape, suggesting a cemetery (LHER 30538). Subsequent archaeological evaluations at the school (LAS 2000 and 2004) have failed to locate any archaeological remains. Residual early to mid-Anglo-Saxon pottery has also been found during an evaluation on Manthorpe Road (Bradley-Lovekin 2002).
- 4.5 Although the site is currently located within Grantham parish it was historically located in the parish of Gonerby-cum-Manthorpe and lies equidistant from both Manthorpe and Grantham. Grantham was an important medieval market town and the Domesday Book of 1086 records Grantham as belonging to the king and possessing a hall, church and four mills (Morgan and Thorn 1986). Manthorpe is not listed in the Domesday Book, and was developed as an estate village of the 19th century when a church and some houses were built (Pevsner 1989, 550). Further evaluation at the Priory Ruskin Academy in 2011 revealed evidence for medieval to post-medieval ridge and furrow cultivation suggesting the site was agricultural through much of the medieval and post-medieval periods, and remained agricultural through to the construction of the school in 1976 (Rowe 2011).

5.0 Methodology

- 5.1 The groundworks were monitored over a period of two days: 12th and 13th December 2013. The watching brief comprised the monitoring of the excavation of footings for a ring-beam and raft foundation for the new extension.
- 5.2 A full written record of the archaeological deposits was made on standard AAL context recording sheets. Archaeological features and deposits were drawn to scale, in plan and section (at scales 1:20 or 1:50). Photography formed an integral part of the recording strategy. All photographs incorporated scales, an identification board and directional arrow, and a selection of these images has been included.
- 5.3 Each layer was allocated a unique two-digit identifier (context number), and accorded a written description, a summary of these are included in Appendix 1.

6.0 Results

- 6.1 Initial ground reduction was undertaken across the development footprint to remove the turf and paving slabs. A trial hole was then excavated to 0.8m depth to investigate the full sequence of deposits and determine the required depth of the foundations. Following a visit by the building inspector it was agreed that the required depth of the ground beam could be reduced to 0.45m.

- 6.2 The modern paving and underlying bedding material, 01, extended to a maximum depth of 0.5m in the area directly adjacent to the wall of the existing sports hall, 04. This partly overlay a friable dark brown clayey silt, 02, which was up to 0.7m thick and is likely to be a recent levelling deposit, which extended throughout the area of works. This in turn directly overlay the natural geology of yellow brown sandy silt 03, which was observed at a depth of 0.7m. As the majority of the groundworks were no deeper than 0.45m however, they did not extend below layer 02.



Plate 1: General view of the foundation footings, looking east-southeast



Plate 2: East facing section of foundation footings, scale is 2m

7.0 Discussion and Conclusions

- 7.1 No features or deposits of archaeological interest were identified during the watching brief. The natural geology was only exposed in a small area of the groundworks, with most of the excavations not extending below a recent soil layer.

8.0 Effectiveness of Methodology

- 8.1 The archaeological methodology was appropriate to the nature and extent of the proposed development. It has demonstrated that no archaeological deposits were disturbed during the works.

9.0 Acknowledgements

- 9.1 Allen Archaeology Limited would like to thank Prospect Archaeology and their client Priory Ruskin Academy for this commission. Thanks also go to the groundworkers from Lindum BMS for their co-operation during the watching brief.

10.0 References

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Appendix 1: Context Summary List

Context No.	Type	Description	Interpretation
01	Layer	Modern paving and bedding, 0.5m thick, seals 02 and 04	Modern paving and gravel
02	Layer	Friable dark brown slightly clayey silt, up to 0.7m thick, sealed by 01	Topsoil/levelling layer
03	Layer	Friable yellowy brown sandy silt, sealed by 02	Natural geology
04	Wall	E-W aligned wall of existing sports hall, sealed by 01	Existing sports hall structure

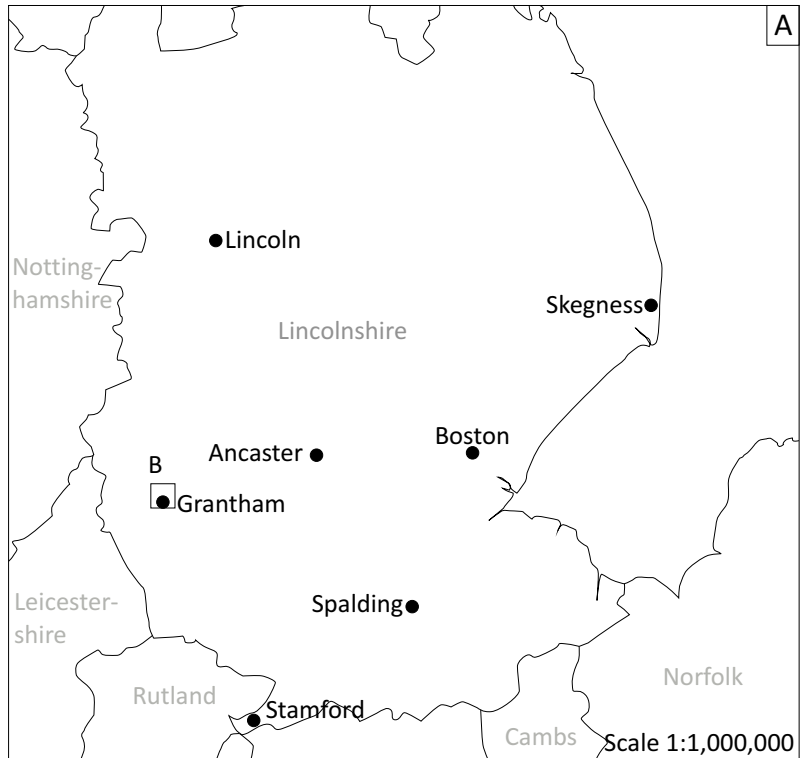
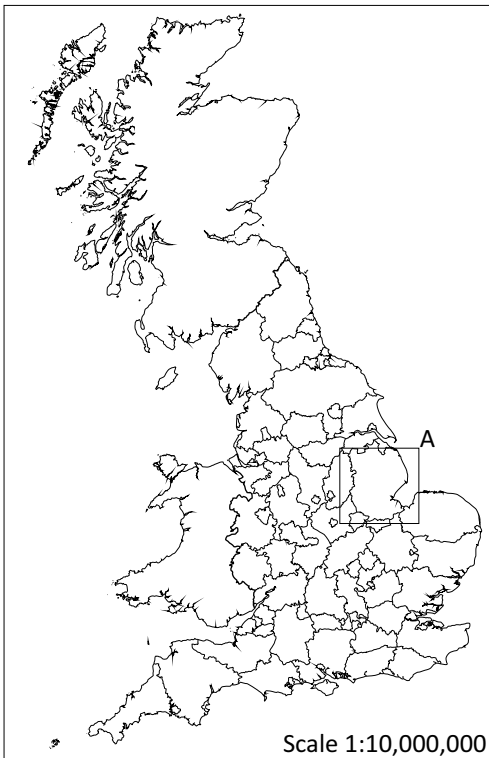


Figure 1: Site location outlined in red

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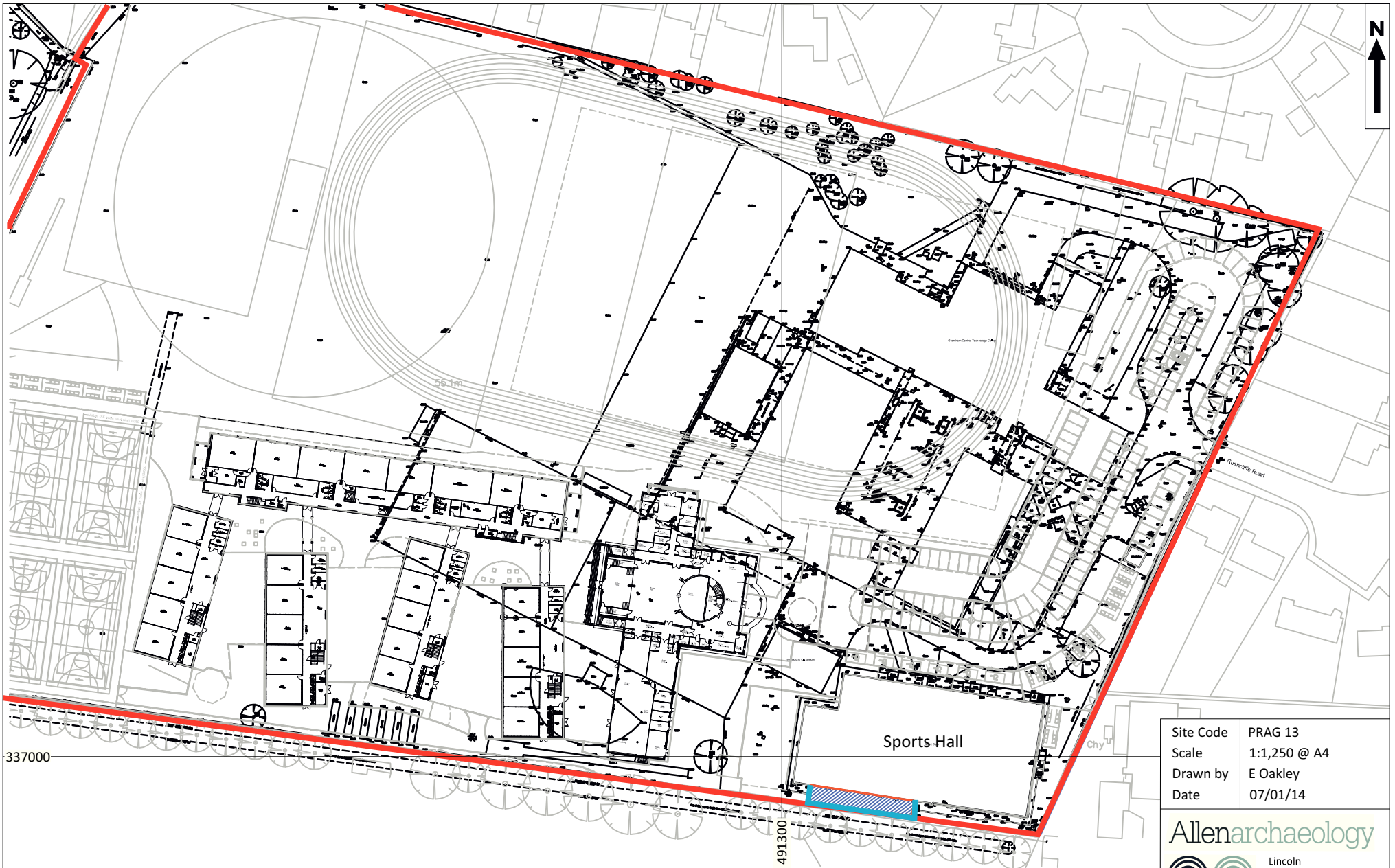
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Scales	1:10,000,000 1:1,000,000 1:25,000 @ A4
Drawn by	E Oakley
Date	07/01/14

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Site Code	PRAG 13
Scale	1:1,250 @ A4
Drawn by	E Oakley
Date	07/01/14

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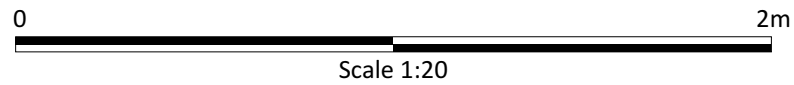
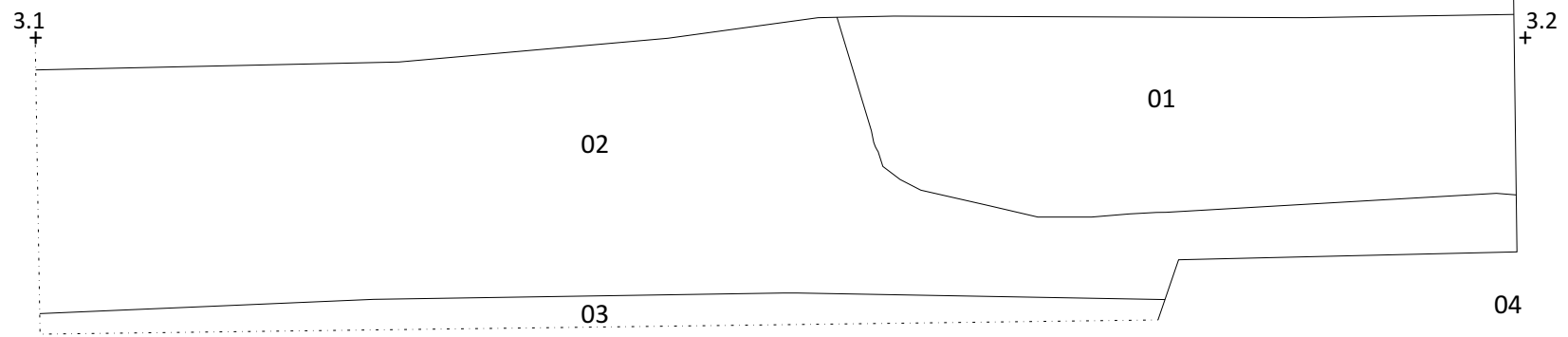
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Figure 2: Plan showing the site outlined in red and the monitored area in blue



East Facing Section



Site Code	PRAG 13
Scale	1:20 @ A4
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Date	16/01/14

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Figure 3: Representative section drawing



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