

# Dining Canopy High School for Girls Denmark Road Gloucester

*Archaeological Watching Brief*



for  
High School for Girls

CA Project: 5980  
CA Report: 16466

September 2016



Dining Canopy  
 High School for Girls  
 Denmark Road  
 Gloucester

Archaeological Watching Brief

CA Project: 5980  
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A	22 September 2016	Michael Joyce	Steven Sheldon	LPA issue		Richard Young

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Fig. 1: Site Location plan (1:25,000)

Fig. 2: Area of observed groundworks, showing previous archaeological works (1:350)

Fig. 3: Photograph



## SUMMARY

<b>Project Name:</b>	Dining Canopy, High School for Girls
<b>Location:</b>	Denmark Road, Gloucester
<b>NGR:</b>	SP 8388 1930
<b>Type:</b>	Watching Brief
<b>Date:</b>	15-18 August, 2016
<b>Planning Reference:</b>	12/01060/FUL
<b>Location of Archive:</b>	To be deposited with Gloucester City Museum
<b>Accession Number:</b>	GLRCM: 2016.32
<b>Site Code:</b>	DCN16

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology during groundworks associated with the construction of a new dining hall extension at the High School for Girls, Denmark Road, Gloucester.

No features or deposits of archaeological interest were observed during the groundworks, and no artefactual material was recovered.



## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In August 2016 Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out an archaeological watching brief for the High School for Girls, at the High School for Girls, Denmark Road, Gloucester (centred on NGR: SO 8388 1930; Fig. 1). The watching brief was undertaken to fulfil a condition attached to planning consent for the construction of a new 10 classroom block, drama studio and extension to the existing dining hall (Gloucester City Council Planning ref: 12/01060/FUL, condition 9). The classroom block has been subject to archaeological excavation (CA 2015) and has already been constructed.
- 1.2 The watching brief was carried out in accordance with a *Brief for an archaeological watching brief* (GCC 2016) prepared by Andrew Armstrong, City Archaeologist, Gloucester City Council (GCC) and with a subsequent detailed *Written Scheme of Investigation* (WSI) produced by CA (2016) and approved by Mr Armstrong. The WSI also followed *Standard and guidance: Archaeological watching brief* (ClfA 2014), and any other relevant standards or guidance contained within Appendix B.

### ***The site***

- 1.3 The development area is located within the south-eastern corner of the school site and comprises a level area of lawn, which lies at approximately 15m AOD and measures approximately 200m<sup>2</sup> in extent (Fig. 2). The site is bounded to the south by Denmark Road, to the east by Seabrook Road and to the north and west by the buildings and grounds of the existing school.
- 1.4 The underlying bedrock geology of the area is mapped as Blue Lias and Charmouth Mudstone Formations of the Rhaetian to Plebinsbachian geological era (BGS 2016). The natural substrate, comprising compact sands and gravels, was observed in Foundation Trenches 6, 7, 11 and 12.

## 2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Detailed information regarding the archaeological background of the site is contained within a preceding Heritage Desk-Based Assessment (CA 2012) and is

summarised below, along with any additional relevant information pertaining to the site:

- 2.2 The site lies c. 500m to the east of the early Roman legionary fortress at Kingsholm, the earliest phase of which was built in the AD 40s. This was subsequently abandoned during the AD 60s, when a new fortress was established close to the present city centre (Hurst 1988, 50). The site also lies immediately to the north of the route of Ermin Street, one of Gloucester's principal Roman thoroughfares (CA 2012).
- 2.3 A series of archaeological investigations have been undertaken during various phases of development and extension to the school buildings within the High School site itself (see Fig. 2 for locations). An evaluation and excavation was undertaken immediately to the north-west of the current development area during the construction of a gymnasium extension. The investigations recorded two pits and a large north/south-oriented ditch of Roman date (GCC 1995). An excavation, undertaken prior to the construction of new science laboratories, c. 35m to the north of the current site, recorded three Roman pits. A further excavation, c. 70m to the north-west of the current site, recorded a Roman well and two pits of probable Roman date (CA 2012).
- 2.4 An initial phase of archaeological evaluation, associated with the current development, was undertaken in 2013 and identified no archaeological features, finds or deposits (CA 2013). A second phase of archaeological evaluation was undertaken in 2014 and identified a probable ditch and three north/south-aligned ditches, of probable Roman date (CA 2014). A number of post-medieval pits, some of which contained residual sherds of Roman pottery, were also observed cutting the subsoil.
- 2.5 An archaeological excavation, subsequently undertaken within the footprint of the new classroom block, revealed further evidence of Roman activity. This comprised at least two phases of quarry pitting, the earliest phase of which was dated to the mid to late 1st-century AD (CA 2015). A series of Roman ditches, interpreted as field or plot boundaries, and a ditch containing pottery of 12th to 13th-century date were also identified.

### 3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

3.1 The objectives of the archaeological works were:

- to monitor groundworks, and to identify, investigate and record all significant buried archaeological deposits revealed on the site during the course of the development groundworks;
- at the conclusion of the project, to produce an integrated archive for the project work and a report setting out the results of the project and the archaeological conclusions that can be drawn from the recorded data.

### 4. METHODOLOGY

4.1 The fieldwork followed the methodology set out within the WSI (CA 2016). An archaeologist was present during intrusive groundworks, comprising ground reduction and the subsequent excavation (within the reduced area) of foundation trenches for the new dining canopy (see Fig. 2 for locations and extent). Non-archaeologically significant deposits were removed by the contactors under archaeological supervision. Where mechanical excavators were used, these were equipped with a toothless bucket.

4.2 The archive from the watching brief is currently held by CA at their offices in Kemble prior to deposition with Gloucester City Museum under accession number GLRCM: 2016.32. A summary of information from this project, set out within Appendix B, will be entered onto the OASIS online database of archaeological projects in Britain.

### 5. RESULTS (FIGS 2-3)

5.1 The natural substrate, comprising compact sands and gravels, was encountered in Foundation Trenches 6, 7, 11 and 12 at between 0.58m and 0.62m bpgl. In these trenches the natural substrate was overlain by sand-silt subsoil which was in turn sealed by topsoil, typically measuring 0.15m in thickness.

5.2 Foundation Trenches 1-5 were excavated to a maximum depth of 0.6m bpgl. The earliest deposits encountered in these trenches were modern dumped deposits

containing plastic and concrete fragments. These deposits were overlain by topsoil, typically measuring 0.15m in thickness.

- 5.3 Foundation Trenches 8-10 and 13-15 were excavated to a maximum depth of 0.6m bpgl. The earliest deposits encountered in these trenches comprised sand silt subsoil. This was overlain by topsoil, measuring between 0.22m and 0.27m in thickness.
- 5.4 Foundation Trench 16 was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.25m bpgl. The earliest deposits encountered in this trench comprised highly mixed modern dumped deposits at the north-western ends of the trench (immediately adjacent to the existing school building) and sand silt subsoil. Excavation ceased at the top of these deposits.
- 5.5 No features or deposits of archaeological interest were observed during the groundworks and, despite visual scanning of spoil, no artefactual material was recovered.

## 6. DISCUSSION

- 6.1 Despite the archaeological potential of the site (see *archaeological background* above) the watching brief identified no archaeological remains within the area of observed groundworks.
- 6.2 The lack of *in situ* soils and the presence of demonstrably modern dumped deposits in Foundation Trenches 1-5, and at the north-western ends of Foundation Trench 16, suggests that the ground in the vicinity of these trenches had been previously stripped, presumably during the construction of the existing school building and/or the previous archaeological excavation undertaken prior to its construction (see *archaeological background* above). This is likely to have truncated any archaeological deposits in this part of the site, had they existed, although to what extent is unclear from the limited depth of groundworks undertaken.
- 6.3 The natural substrate was exposed in Foundation Trenches 6, 7, 11 and 12 but no archaeological features or deposits were identified. Within Foundation Trenches 8-10 and 13-15 the groundworks did not penetrate beneath the subsoil, consequently



the survival of archaeological features/deposits in these areas remains unproven, but possible.

## 7. CA PROJECT TEAM

Fieldwork was undertaken by Michael Joyce. The report was written by Michael Joyce. The illustrations were prepared by Aleksandra Osinska. The archive has been compiled by Michael Joyce, and prepared for deposition by Hazel O'Neill. The project was managed for CA by Steven Sheldon.

## 8. REFERENCES

BGS (British Geological Survey) 2016 *Geology of Britain Viewer* <http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html> Accessed 19 August 2016

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Hurst, H., 1988 'Gloucester (Glevum), in G. Webster (ed) *Fortress into City*, 48–73.



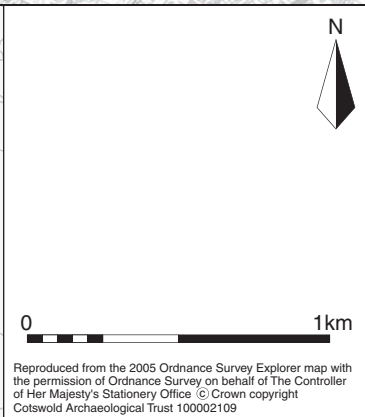
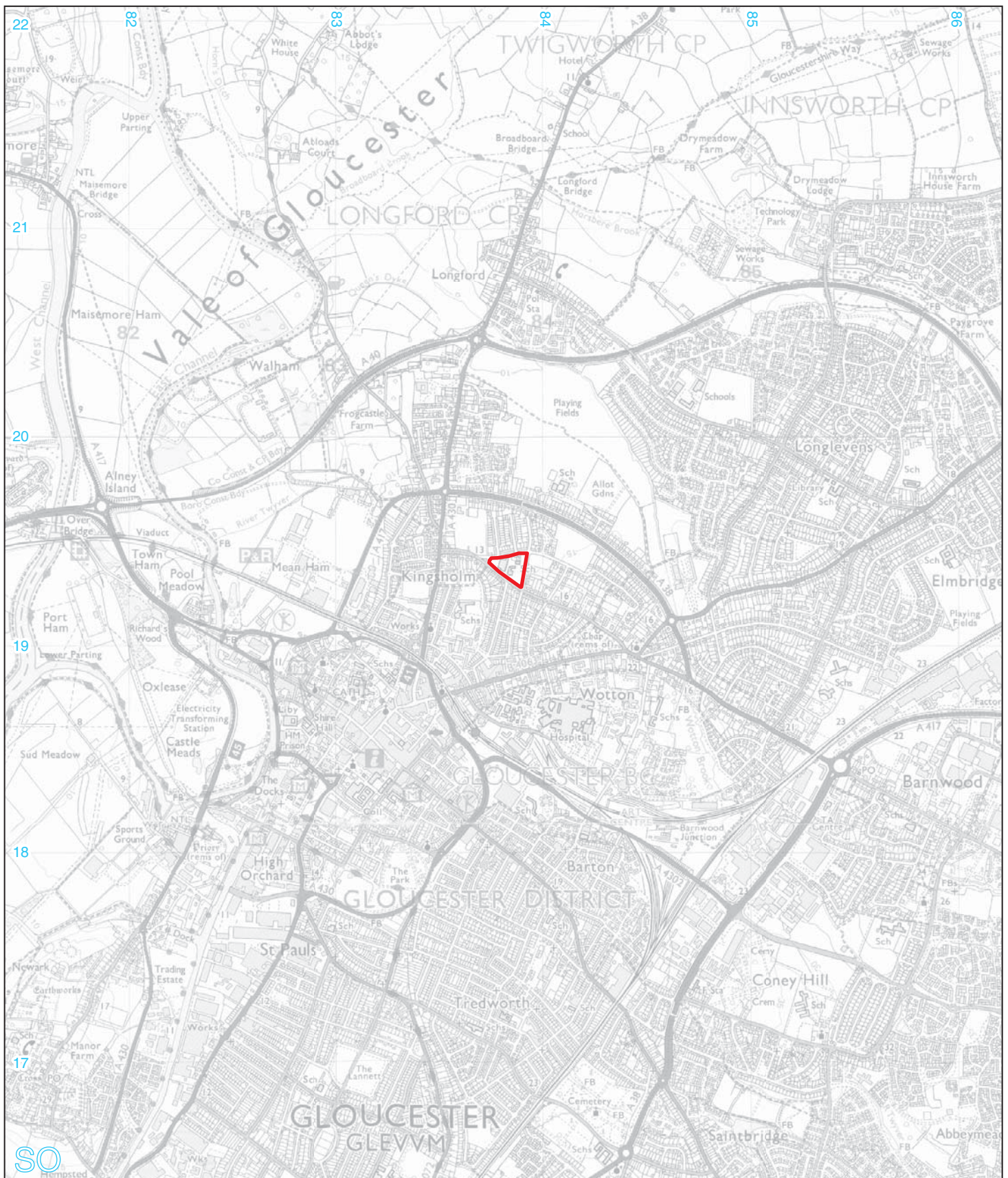
## APPENDIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

Trench No.	Context No.	Type	Fill of	Context interpretation	Description	L (m)	W (m)	Depth/thickness (m)
1	100	Layer		Topsoil	Mid grey brown silt clay	>1.4	>0.9	0.15
1	101	Layer		Modern make-up/levelling	Dark brown sand silt with frequent plastic, red brick and concrete fragments	>1.4	>0.9	>0.45
2	200	Layer		Topsoil	Mid grey brown silt clay	>1.4	>0.9	0.15
2	201	Layer		Modern make-up/levelling	Dark brown sand silt with frequent plastic, red brick and concrete fragments	>1.4	>0.9	>0.45
3	300	Layer		Topsoil	Mid grey brown silt clay	>1.4	>0.9	0.15
3	301	Layer		Modern make-up/levelling	Dark brown sand silt with frequent plastic, red brick and concrete fragments	>1.4	>0.9	>0.45
4	400	Layer		Topsoil	Mid grey brown silt clay	>1.4	>0.9	0.15
4	401	Layer		Modern make-up/levelling	Dark brown sand silt with frequent plastic, red brick and concrete fragments	>1.4	>0.9	>0.45
5	500	Layer		Topsoil	Mid grey brown silt clay	>1.4	>0.9	0.15
5	501	Layer		Modern make-up/levelling	Dark brown sand silt with frequent plastic, red brick and concrete fragments	>1.4	>0.9	>0.45
6	600	Layer		Topsoil	Mid grey brown sand silt	>1.4	>0.9	0.22
6	601	Layer		Subsoil	Mid brown orange sand silt, with occasional rounded pebble inclusions	>1.4	>0.9	0.36
6	602	Layer		Natural substrate	Mid-light yellow orange sand and gravel	>1.4	>0.9	>0.02
7	700	Layer		Topsoil	Mid grey brown sand silt	>1.4	>0.9	0.24
7	701	Layer		Subsoil	Mid brown orange sand silt, with occasional rounded pebble inclusions	>1.4	>0.9	0.38
7	702	Layer		Natural substrate	Mid-light yellow orange sand and gravel	>1.4	>0.9	>0.02
8	800	Layer		Topsoil	Mid grey brown sand silt	>1.4	>0.9	0.22
8	801	Layer		Subsoil	Mid brown orange sand silt, with occasional rounded pebble inclusions	>1.4	>0.9	>0.35
9	900	Layer		Topsoil	Mid grey brown sand silt	>1.4	>0.9	0.24
9	901	Layer		Subsoil	Mid brown orange sand silt, with occasional rounded pebble inclusions	>1.4	>0.9	>0.36
10	1000	Layer		Topsoil	Mid grey brown sand silt	>1.4	>0.9	0.25
10	1001	Layer		Subsoil	Mid brown orange sand silt, with occasional rounded pebble inclusions	>1.4	>0.9	>0.35
11	1100	Layer		Topsoil	Mid grey brown sand silt	>1.4	>0.9	0.24
11	1101	Layer		Subsoil	Mid brown orange sand silt, with occasional rounded pebble inclusions	>1.4	>0.9	0.32
11	1102	Layer		Natural substrate	Mid-light yellow orange sand and gravel	>1.4	>0.9	>0.04
12	1200	Layer		Topsoil	Mid grey brown sand silt	>1.4	>0.9	0.24
12	1201	Layer		Subsoil	Mid brown orange sand silt, with occasional rounded pebble inclusions	>1.4	>0.9	0.34
12	1202	Layer		Natural substrate	Mid-light yellow orange sand and gravel	>1.4	>0.9	>0.03
13	1300	Layer		Topsoil	Mid grey brown sand silt	>1.4	>0.9	0.24
13	1301	Layer		Subsoil	Mid brown orange sand silt, with occasional rounded pebble inclusions	>1.4	>0.9	>0.36

14	1400	Layer		Topsoil	Mid grey brown sand silt	>1.4	>0.9	0.27
14	1401	Layer		Subsoil	Mid brown orange sand silt, with occasional rounded pebble inclusions	>1.4	>0.9	>0.33
15	1500	Layer		Topsoil	Mid grey brown sand silt	>1.4	>0.9	0.27
15	1501	Layer		Subsoil	Mid brown orange sand silt, with occasional rounded pebble inclusions	>1.4	>0.9	>0.33
16	1600	Layer		Topsoil	Mid grey brown sand silt	>41	>0.6	0.24
16	1601	Layer		Modern make-up/levelling	Dark brown sand silt with frequent plastic, red brick and concrete fragments. Present at N/W ends of trench only.	>41	>0.6	>0.01
16	1602	Layer		Subsoil	Mid brown orange sand silt, with occasional rounded pebble inclusions.	>41	>0.6	>0.01

**APPENDIX B: OASIS REPORT FORM**

<b>PROJECT DETAILS</b>		
Project Name	Dining Canopy, High School for Girls, Denmark Road, Gloucester	
Short description	An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology during groundworks associated with the construction of a new Dining Hall extension at the High School for Girls, Denmark Road, Gloucester.  No features or deposits of archaeological interest were observed during groundworks, and no artefactual material was recovered.	
Project dates	15-18 August 2016	
Project type	Watching Brief	
Previous work	DBA (CA 2012) Excavation (CA 2015) Field evaluation (CA 2013, 2104)	
Future work	Unknown	
<b>PROJECT LOCATION</b>		
Site Location	Denmark Road, Gloucester, Gloucestershire	
Study area (M <sup>2</sup> /ha)	0.02ha	
Site co-ordinates	SO 8388 1930	
<b>PROJECT CREATORS</b>		
Name of organisation	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project Brief originator	Gloucester City Council	
Project Design (WSI) originator	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project Manager	Steven Sheldon	
Project Supervisor	Michael Joyce	
<b>MONUMENT TYPE</b>		
	None	
<b>SIGNIFICANT FINDS</b>		
	None	
<b>PROJECT ARCHIVES</b>		
	Intended final location of archive	Content
Physical	N/A	N/A
Paper	Gloucester/ GLRCM : 2016.32	Trench recording forms, photographic register, permatrace section drawings
Digital	Gloucester/ GLRCM : 2016.32	Digital Photographs
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>		
CA (Cotswold Archaeology 2016 <i>Dining Canopy, High School for Girls, Denmark Road, Gloucester, Gloucestershire: Archaeological Watching Brief</i> . CA typescript report <b>16466</b>		



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**PROJECT TITLE**  
 Dining Canopy, High School for Girls,  
 Denmark Road, Gloucester

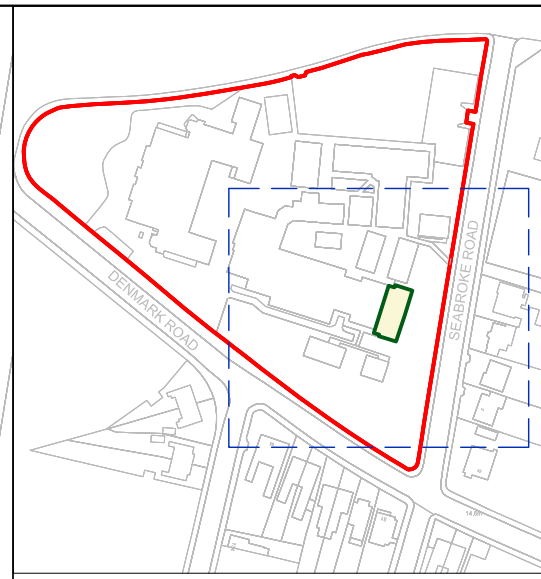
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**FIGURE TITLE**  
 Site location plan

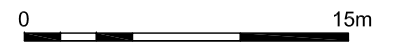
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- site boundary
- area of observed groundworks
- excavated foundation trench
- previous evaluation trench (CA 2013b)
- previous evaluation trench (CA 2014)
- previous excavation area
- identified Roman feature
- archaeological feature
- furrow
- modern
- section location



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**PROJECT TITLE**  
 Dining Canopy, High School for Girls, Denmark Road, Gloucester

**FIGURE TITLE**  
**Area of observed groundworks, showing previous archaeological works**

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APPROVED BY	SS	SCALE	A3 1:350	

PA5980 Dining Canopy, High School for Girls, Denmark Road, Gloucester (WB) Illustration/Drafts/5980 Dining Canopy Flr02.dwg





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**3 Excavated foundation trenches (looking north)**



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*PROJECT TITLE*

Dining Canopy, High School for Girls,  
 Denmark Road, Gloucester

*FIGURE TITLE*

**Photograph**

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*FIGURE NO.*

**3**



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