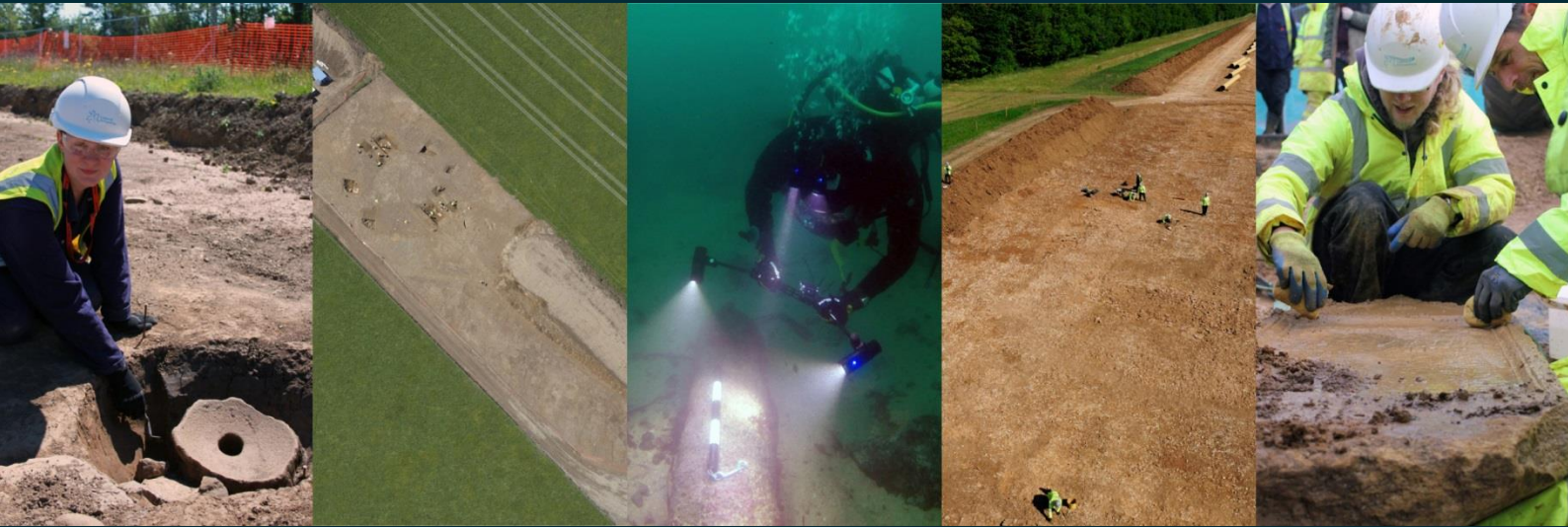


St Michael's Catholic School - Aylesbury Campus
Weedon Road
Aylesbury
Buckinghamshire
Archaeological Evaluation



for
BAM Construction

on behalf of
Buckinghamshire County Council

CA Project: 661014
CA Report: 18015
Site Code: SSA17
January 2018



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SUMMARY

Project Name:	St Michael's Catholic School - Aylesbury Campus
Location:	Weedon Road, Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire
NGR:	481073 214855
Type:	Evaluation
Date:	11-15 December 2017
Location of Archive:	Buckinghamshire Museum Service
Site Code:	SSA17

In December 2017, Cotswold Archaeology carried out an archaeological evaluation of land at St Michael's Catholic School - Aylesbury Campus, Weedon Road, Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire. The evaluation, which was commissioned by BAM Construction, acting on behalf of Buckinghamshire County Council, was carried out to support a planning application. The evaluation comprised the excavation of fourteen 30m long trenches.

A single posthole of possible late prehistoric date was recorded in the south-west of the site. A ditch aligned on a north-east/south-west axis ran across the north of the site, this produced pottery of Roman date. A similarly aligned, undated ditch was revealed in the east of the site and is considered likely to represent broadly contemporary activity and relate to the same field system.

Six trenches excavated along the south-western half of site contained large possible pits, the full extent of which was not visible within the trenches. It is considered likely that these represent the remains of two or three large possible quarry pits, dated to the post-medieval period. These were truncated by two post-medieval parallel ditches running on a north-west/south-east alignment. These ditches appear to correspond with those recorded on the Enclosure Map of 1771, shown as a trackway running between two fields. Another ditch to the east corresponds with a field boundary identified on the First Edition Ordnance Survey Map of 1879.

In the centre of the site five small pits were excavated which contained post-medieval finds, one of which included the articulated remains of the front end of a small cow skeleton.



Overall, the site is generally characterised by agricultural activity of post-medieval date along with evidence for post-medieval quarrying. An isolated posthole of possible late prehistoric date was recorded in the south-west of the site and a ditch of probable Roman date was recorded at the north of the site along with an undated ditch on a similar alignment, considered likely to be broadly contemporary.



1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In December 2017 Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out an archaeological evaluation at St Michael's Catholic School - Aylesbury Campus, Weedon Road, Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire (centred at NGR: 481073 214855; Fig. 1). The evaluation was commissioned by BAM Construction acting on behalf of Buckinghamshire County Council and was undertaken in support of a planning application being made to Aylesbury Vale District Council (AVDC) for the construction of a new secondary school complex.
- 1.2 The scope of the programme of archaeological investigation was determined following recommendations from Phil Markham, Buckinghamshire County Council's Senior Archaeology Officer (BCCSAO), archaeological advisor to AVDC. The recommendations were informed by the results of an archaeological desk-based assessment prepared by CA (2017a); it was determined that a trial trench evaluation was required prior to determination of the planning application.
- 1.3 The evaluation was carried out in accordance with a *Written Scheme of Investigation* (WSI) produced by CA (2017b) and approved by Phil Markham (BCCSAO). The fieldwork also abided by Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Evaluation* (CIfA 2014) and the Historic England procedural documents *Management of Archaeological Projects 2* (EH 1991) and *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE): Project Manager's Guide* (EH 2006).

The site

- 1.4 The proposed development site, which covers a total area of c. 3.9ha, is located north-west of Weedon Road and south-east of properties on Coventon Road at the northern edge of Aylesbury. It comprises areas of hard standing, formerly occupied by school buildings, to the east, and former playing fields to the west. It is the latter area that was subject to evaluation. The site is predominantly level and lies at c. 77m aOD.
- 1.5 The bedrock geology beneath the site comprises mudstone of the Kimmeridge Clay Formation, laid down between c. 157 and 152 million years ago in the Jurassic period, overlain by superficial river terrace and head deposits of clay, silt, sand and

gravel (BGS 2017), with the playing fields possessing slowly permeable and seasonally wet slightly acid but base-rich loamy and clayey soils (Cranfield University 2017). The River Thames flows c. 450m to the north of the site and evidence of palaeochannels has been recorded at the former Aylesbury Football Ground, c.590m to the east. This is consistent with the geology that was found on site, which comprised mid brown yellow silty clay with clay sand areas.

2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The archaeological and historical background of the site has been presented in detail in the heritage desk-based assessment (DBA) prepared by CA (2017a). This concluded that there are no designated heritage assets within the site, nor within the wider landscape. It has been superseded by the results of the evaluation.
- 2.2 The findings of the DBA attest to human activity within the study area around the site from at least the Bronze Age. Excavation has revealed areas of Romano-British and medieval habitation on the northern side of the River Thames, and the site most likely occupied the agricultural hinterland of these settlements, although no archaeological evidence of such land use is recorded within the site.
- 2.3 There was some potential for residual finds of later prehistoric and/or Romano-British date to be present within the site. In addition, it was considered likely that there are remnant features of historic agricultural land use within the site – namely buried furrows, ditches of former field boundaries, and evidence of the trackway and the field barn that are shown on late-18th and 19th century maps.
- 2.4 Cartographic evidence indicates that by 1771, the site comprised part of two elongated fields, separated by a trackway, which extended up to the River Thames to the north. By 1879, these two enclosures had been divided into a series of sub-rectangular fields with a barn shown in the western part of the site. Ridge and furrow earthworks, visible on historic aerial photographs, demonstrate post-medieval and/or modern cultivation within the site.

3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 3.1 As stated in the WSI (CA 2017b), the objectives of the evaluation are to provide information about the archaeological resource within the site, including its presence/absence, character, extent, date, integrity, state of preservation and quality. In accordance *Standard and Guidance: Archaeological Field Evaluation* (ClfA 2014) the evaluation was designed to be minimally intrusive and minimally destructive to archaeological remains.. This information will enable AVDC, as advised by BCCSAO to identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset, consider the impact of the proposed development upon it, and to avoid or minimise conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the development proposal, in line with the *National Planning Policy Framework* (DCLG 2012).

4. METHODOLOGY

- 4.1 Prior to the fieldwork commencing the perimeter of the archaeological work area was secured with HERAS fencing. The evaluation comprised the excavation of fourteen trenches, each measuring 30m long (420 linear metres at 1.8m wide) in the locations shown in Figure 2. Trenches were set out on OS National Grid (NGR) co-ordinates using Leica GPS and surveyed in accordance with Technical Manual 4 Survey Manual (CA 2009).
- 4.2 All trenches were excavated by mechanical excavator equipped with a toothless grading bucket. All machine excavation was undertaken under constant archaeological supervision to the top of the first significant archaeological horizon or the natural substrate, whichever was encountered first. Where archaeological deposits were encountered they were excavated by hand in accordance with CA Technical Manual 1: *Fieldwork Recording Manual* (CA 2007).
- 4.3 Deposits were assessed for their palaeoenvironmental potential in accordance with CA Technical Manual 2: *The Taking and Processing of Environmental and Other Samples from Archaeological Sites* (CA 2003) and no deposits were identified that required sampling. All artefacts recovered were processed in accordance with Technical Manual 3 *Treatment of Finds Immediately after Excavation* (CA 2005).

- 4.4 The archive and artefacts from the evaluation are currently held by CA at their offices in Milton Keynes e. Subject to the agreement of the legal landowner the artefacts will be deposited with Buckinghamshire Museum Service along with the site archive (Accession Number tbc). A summary of information from this project, set out within Appendix C, will be entered onto the OASIS online database of archaeological projects in Britain.

5. RESULTS (FIGS 2-8)

- 5.1 Fourteen trenches were excavated across the site as shown in Figure 2. This section provides an overview of the evaluation results; the trench descriptions are grouped by chronological period, so far as possible. The individual features and deposits are summarised below. Detailed summaries of the features and deposits encountered and the finds recovered are presented in Appendices A and B respectively.

Summary and general stratigraphy

- 5.2 The natural geological substrate was encountered at an average depth of 0.57m below present ground level (bpgl) and predominantly comprised mid brown yellow silty clay which became clayey sand along the eastern edge of the area of investigation. This was overlain by c. 0.24m subsoil comprising mid yellow brown clay silt which was in turn sealed by c.0.29m topsoil comprising mid grey brown silty loam . Within Trench 14 and the southern ends of Trenches 9 and 13 the remains of a hard standing surface measuring 0.2m thick was encountered overlying the topsoil which was subsequently overlain by a further 0.1m thick layer of recent topsoil.
- 5.3 A modern service was recorded on a north-west to south-east alignment at the south of Trench 2 (shown as a modern feature on Figure 2), aside from which no features were recorded in Trench 2. Possible archaeological remains were recorded in the remaining trenches (Trench 1 and Trenches 3 to 14) as detailed below.

Late Prehistoric (Figs 2 & 8)

Trench 13 (Fig. 8)

- 5.4 Posthole 1305 was exposed in the north-western half of Trench 13. It was circular with steep, straight sides and a flat base measuring 0.3m in diameter and 0.42m

deep (Fig. 8). It contained a single fill (1306), from which a sherd of late prehistoric pottery was recovered.

Roman (Figs 2 & 4)

Trench 1 (Figs. 2 & 4)

- 5.5 Ditch 103 was revealed within the southern half of Trench 1 on a north-east/south-west alignment (Fig. 4). It appears to be the continuation of ditches 303, 403 and 603 observed within Trenches 3, 4, and 6 respectively as detailed below. It had straight moderate sides with a concave base and measured 0.95m wide by 0.39m deep. It contained two silty clay fills, (104) and (105), deriving from secondary silting. A single sherd of Roman pottery was recovered from the upper fill (105).

Trench 3 (Fig. 2)

- 5.6 Ditch 303 was exposed in the southern half of Trench 3 running on a north-east/south-west orientation. This ditch was not excavated here as it was excavated in Trenches 1 and 6 and was also observed within Trench 4. Here it measured 0.55m wide and was filled with a mid purple grey silty clay.

Trench 4 (Fig. 2)

- 5.7 Ditch 403 was exposed in the western half of Trench 4 on a north-east/south-west axis and was not excavated here as it was investigated in Trenches 1 and 6 and was also observed in Trench 3. Here it measured 0.6m wide and was filled with a mid purple grey silty clay.

Trench 6 (Figs. 2 & 4)

- 5.8 Ditch 603 was revealed running on a north-east/southwest orientation in the western end of Trench 6 (Fig 4). It also appeared within Trenches 1, 3 and 4. It had straight moderate sides, a concave base and measured 0.69m wide and 0.29m deep. It contained a single fill (604) comprising mid brown grey silty clay derived from secondary silting from which a single sherd of Roman pottery was recovered.

Post-Medieval (Figs 2 & 5-8)

Trench 5 (Fig. 2)

- 5.9 Possible quarry pit 503 was exposed covering much of Trench 5 on a north-west/south-east alignment and was not excavated here as it was excavated in Trench 6. It was also observed within Trenches 10 and 11. Here it measured 15m wide.

Trench 6 (Figs. 2 & 5)

- 5.10 Possible quarry pit 605 was revealed covering much of the eastern half of Trench 6 on a north-west/south-east alignment (Fig. 5). It also appeared within Trenches 5, 10 and 11. In total it measured 12.8m wide and a 2.2m long slot was excavated in its western side. It was excavated to a depth of 0.66m (1.2m bpgl) without reaching the base. It had straight, steeply undercutting sides and was filled with (606), comprising mainly redeposited natural, likely the result of primary slumping, overlain by (607) comprising mid brown grey silty clay deriving from secondary silting. A single fragment of post-medieval ceramic building material (CBM) was recovered from fill (607).

Trench 7 (Figs. 2 & 8)

- 5.11 Five small pits were exposed in the northern half of Trench 7. Pit 705 was sub circular with steep concave sides. It had a diameter of 0.57m and was 0.27m deep with a single fill of mid yellow grey silty clay which contained a small amount of 18th-19th century pottery. Pit 707 was ovoid with moderate concave sides and flat base. It measured 0.6m by 0.44m with a depth of 0.05m and contained a single fill from which a sherd of modern pottery, CBM and glass was recovered. Pit 709 was oval with shallow concave sides measuring 1.3m by 0.8m with a depth of 0.04m. Its single fill contained the front portion of an articulated cow skeleton as well as an iron nail (Fig. 8). Pit 711 was circular with steep straight sides and measured 0.4m in diameter and 0.28m deep. Its single fill contained a small quantity of 19th century pottery along with CBM and glass.

Trench 8 (Fig. 2)

- 5.12 Ditch 803 was exposed running through the western half of Trench 8 on a north-east/south-west alignment cutting through the subsoil. It had straight moderate sides, a concave base and measured 0.73m wide by 0.28m deep. It contained a single fill comprising dark brown grey sandy clay, from which a small quantity of post-medieval CBM a fragment of glass and an iron nail were recovered.

Trench 9 (Figs. 2 & 8)

- 5.13 Furrow 907 ran on a north-east/south-west axis through the southern half of Trench 9 and measured 2.38m wide and 0.16m deep (Fig. 8). It contained a single fill from which no finds were recovered; however it appeared to align with furrow 1303 in Trench 13 to the south-west which contained post-medieval material.

Trench 10 (Fig. 2)

- 5.14 Possible quarry pit 1003 covered the western 11m of Trench 10 and was not excavated. It appears to be the same possible quarry pit exposed in Trenches 5 and 11 and excavated in Trench 6. A small quantity of post-medieval pottery, CBM and glass was recovered from the surface of this possible quarry pit 1003.
- 5.15 A 0.52m thick layer of demolition material comprising mostly of brick rubble (1005) was found covering the easternmost 11m of Trench 10. This possibly represents demolition material associated with the remains of a small barn like building shown ears on the First Edition Ordnance Survey Map of 1879.

Trench 11 (Fig. 2)

- 5.16 Possible quarry pit 1107 was revealed clipping the northern end of Trench 11 extending 4.1m into the trench. It was not excavated here and appears to be the continuation of the possible quarry pit recorded within Trenches 5, 6 and 10.

Trench 12 (Figs. 2, 6 & 7)

- 5.17 Two possible quarry pits were exposed within Trench 12, 1203/1216 covering a 5.3m length in the south-western half of the trench and 1210 covering an 11.3m length in the north-eastern half of the trench.
- 5.18 A 1.25m long slot was excavated into the south-western side of possible quarry pit 1203/1216 to a depth of 0.45m (1.2m bpgl) without reaching its base. It had near vertical undercutting sides and was filled with a single deposit (1204) comprising mid brown grey silty clay deriving from secondary silting from which a fragment of post-medieval CBM was recovered. It was also partially excavated on its north-eastern side where it was truncated by post-medieval ditch 1205 (Fig. 6).
- 5.19 Ditch 1205 cut the subsoil and ran on a north-west/south-east alignment through the centre of Trench 12 where it truncated the north-eastern side of possible quarry pit 1203/1216 (Fig 6). It measured 3.28m wide and was excavated to a depth of 0.78m before hitting a large concrete pipe which was buried in service trench 2014 that ran along the length of the ditch. It contained a single dark brown grey fill with flecks of CBM from which no finds were recovered. It could be seen continuing through Trench 14 as ditch 1404.

- 5.20 The south-western side of possible quarry pit 1210 was excavated along with post-medieval ditch 1207. It was excavated to a depth of 0.4m without reaching the base and had near vertical undercutting sides (Fig. 7). It contained two fills probably deriving from secondary silting from which no finds were recovered.
- 5.21 Ditch 1207 ran through Trench 12 approximately 2.5m to the north-east of parallel ditch 1205. It measured 1.49m wide and 0.53m deep with moderate straight sides and a concave base (Fig. 7). It was cut through the subsoil and contained two fills of secondary silting from which a small quantity of post-medieval CBM and a piece of clay pipe was recovered. Ditch 1207 can be seen continuing through Trench 14 as ditch 1406.

Trench 13 (Fig. 2)

- 5.22 Furrow 1303 ran through the north-western end of Trench 13 on a north-east/south-west orientation and aligned with furrow 907 in Trench 9. It measured 1.48m wide by 0.08m deep and contained a single fill from which a sherd of post-medieval pottery was recovered along with two fragments of CBM.

Trench 14

- 5.23 Possible quarry pit 1408 was exposed over a length of 11m of the north-eastern half of Trench 14. It was not excavated. It contained a deliberate backfill of mixed mid blue grey and mid grey brown clay from which a fragment of post-medieval CBM was recovered.
- 5.24 Two north-west/south-east parallel ditches spaced approximately 2.5m apart were observed in the south-western half of Trench 14. Neither of these were excavated as they corresponded to those ditches excavated in Trench 12. Ditch 1403 which correlated with ditch 1205 measured 2.1m wide, while ditch 1406, correlating with ditch 1207, measured 1.7m wide. Both ditches 1403 and 1406 were cut from the top of the subsoil.

Undated

Trench 9 (Fig 8)

- 5.25 Ditch 904 was exposed running on a north-east/south-west alignment through the north-western end of Trench 9. It had moderate straight sides with a concave base and measured 1.01m wide and 0.37m deep (Fig. 8). It contained two fills of secondary silting from which no finds were recovered.

6. THE FINDS

6.1 Artefactual material recovered from the evaluation is listed in Appendix B and discussed further below. Artefactual material was hand-recovered from 14 deposits (ditch, pit, posthole and furrow fills). The recovered material dates to the late prehistoric, Roman and post-medieval/modern periods. The pottery has been recorded according to sherd count/weight per fabric. Pottery fabric codes (in parenthesis below) have been devised for the purpose of this report.

Pottery: Late prehistoric

6.2 This period, which spans the Late Bronze Age and Iron Age, is represented by an unfeathered bodysherd (8g), from fill 1306 of posthole 1305 in Trench 13, in a fine quartz-and-quartzite (QZQT) tempered fabric. In the absence of form or decoration, a late prehistoric date is suggested on the basis of fabric and firing characteristics.

Pottery: Roman

6.3 Roman pottery consists of two heavily abraded, unfeathered bodysherds (8g) from fill 105 of ditch 103 in Trench 1 and fill 604 of ditch 603 in Trench 6. The fabric has been tempered with grog-and-quartz. Identification is somewhat tentative, due to the poor condition, however dating in the 1st century AD is considered most likely.

Pottery: Post-medieval/modern

6.4 Pottery from this date range totals nine sherds (25g). Of mid-16th to 18th century date is a heavily abraded, unfeathered bodysherd of glazed earthenware (GRE). Later fabrics include Creamware, transfer-printed Pearlware, porcelain, 'mocha' ware and refined whiteware, dating across the 18th and 19th centuries.

Ceramic building material

6.5 Ceramic building material, in variable condition, totals 20 fragments (447g), from nine deposits. All is post-medieval in date (some identifiable as deriving from flat roof tile) with the exception of one modern, perforated brick fragment from fill 708 of pit 707 in Trench 7.

Other finds

6.6 A fragment of clay tobacco pipe stem, from fill 1209 of ditch 1207 in Trench 12, is broadly dateable to the late 16th to late 19th centuries.

- 6.7 A total of four fragments of glass (45g) was retrieved. Three fragments are from post-medieval wine/spirits bottles in dark green coloured glass. The other fragment, from fill 708 of pit 707 in Trench 7, is from the base of a bottle in natural (pale green) coloured glass, of post-medieval or modern date.
- 6.8 Four objects of iron (150g) were recovered, including three nails of uncertain date. The object from fill 1004 of possible quarry pit 1003 in Trench 10 consists of two corroded chain links.

7. THE BIOLOGICAL EVIDENCE

Animal Bone

- 7.1 A total of 342 well preserved fragments of animal bone (3600g) were recovered from fill 710 of pit 709 in Trench 7. Although highly fragmented all the bone was identified as cattle (*Bos taurus*) and with the skull, mandibles scapula, vertebrae, ribs, humeri and other forelimb bones present, it was clear that the assemblage represented the front portion of a single animal. No cut or chop marks relating to butchery were observed.



8. DISCUSSION

8.1 The evaluation predominantly revealed evidence for post-medieval activity, some of which can be related to historic mapping as further detailed below. An isolated posthole of possible late prehistoric date was recorded at the south-west of the site and a ditch of probable Roman date was recorded at the north of the site.

Late Prehistoric/ Early Roman

8.2 A single posthole of possible late prehistoric date was revealed within Trench 13 on the south-western side of the investigation area. The lack of any other features in this area or remains of a similar prehistoric date elsewhere within the site complicates any detailed interpretation. Although this is the only feature dated to the late prehistoric period on the site it is possible that this could have been broadly contemporary with the ditch containing 1st century AD pottery, running across the north of the site.

8.3 The ditch crossing the north of the site on a north-east/south-west axis in Trenches 1, 3, 4 and 6 produced two sherds of pottery of Roman date, recovered from both of the interventions excavated. From the characteristics of this ditch and the paucity of finds recovered it is likely that it represents the remains of a field system ditch.

8.4 There is varied evidence for late prehistoric/early Roman activity within Aylesbury. Previously recorded remains include the possible outer defences of an Iron Age hillfort uncovered at Temple Street and Prebendal Court c. 1km to the south-east of site along with other ditches and pits situated outside this hill fort; excavations of a hearth and midden at Holland Road c. 275m to the west of the site; a stock enclosure at Watermead Roundabout c. 690m to the north-east of site; and excavations at Weedon Hill c. 450m to the north of the site revealed settlement activity. The posthole and ditch revealed during the evaluation strengthen the conclusion of the desk-based heritage assessment (CA 2017a) that during this period the land here comprised part of the agricultural hinterland of nearby settlement.

8.5 Both of the features dating to these periods have survived well beneath the subsoil with no obvious truncation. However, large areas of the site had been disturbed by later post-medieval activity indicating the possibility that similar remains of late prehistoric/early Roman date may have been destroyed by later activity.

Post-Medieval

- 8.6 A series of seven features were found covering large areas of six trenches across the south-western half of the site. Four interventions were excavated into these features, from which the near vertical sides and the size of the features leads to the interpretation that they could be the remains of possible quarry pits. The size of these features has made it difficult to determine how many individual possible quarry pits there may have been and how many form part of the same feature. It is likely that the possible quarry pits found in Trenches 5, 6, 10 and 11 are all part of the same feature. Also possible quarry pits 1210 and 1408 may form part of the same feature. These possible quarry pits were dated from three fragments of post-medieval CBM.
- 8.7 Two later parallel ditches were revealed truncating the possible quarry pits in Trench 12 and continuing through Trench 14. These ran through site on a north-west/south-east alignment and correlate well with the Enclosure Map for Aylesbury of 1771, which shows two elongated fields either side of a trackway leading north-west to the River Thames. The north-east/south-west ditch exposed in Trench 8 corresponds with that seen on the later First Edition Ordnance Survey Map of 1879, where a hedged boundary has divided the eastern elongated field. A small building resembling a barn can also be identified on the First Edition Ordnance Survey Map of 1879 which probably accounts for the layer of brick building rubble observed across the north-eastern end of Trench 10.
- 8.8 The two furrows exposed within Trenches 9 and 13 confirm the north-east/south-west directions of the ridge and furrow here, identified on aerial photography.

Undated

- 8.9 An undated ditch 904 was recorded in Trench 9 and a date could not be inferred through its alignment because of the similarity of alignment between the early Roman and post-medieval ditches. However, it can be noted that the fill more closely resembled that of the Roman ditch and subsoil overlies ditch 904 unlike the post-medieval ditches. Accordingly, it is considered more probable that ditch 904 relates to the probable Roman ditch recorded at the north of the site in Trenches 1, 3, 4 and 6 and represents part of the same field system.

- 8.10 Overall, the site is generally characterised by agricultural activity of post-medieval date along with evidence for post-medieval quarrying. An isolated posthole of possible late prehistoric date was recorded in the south-west of the site and a ditch of probable Roman date was recorded at the north of the site along with an undated ditch on a similar alignment, considered likely to be broadly contemporary.

9. CA PROJECT TEAM

Fieldwork was undertaken by Ralph Brown, assisted by Luke Brannlund, Sam Burns, John Hardisty, Anna Moosbauer, Christopher Watts and Daniel White. The report was written by Ralph Brown. The finds and biological evidence reports were written by Jacky Sommerville and Andy Clarke respectively. The illustrations were prepared by Esther Escudero. The archive has been compiled by Emily Evans, and prepared for deposition by Hazel O'Neill. The project was managed for CA by Michelle Collings.



10. REFERENCES

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January 2018

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CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2017b *St Michael's Catholic School-Aylesbury Campus, Weedon Road, Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire: Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Evaluation*

DCLG (Department of Communities and Local Government) 2012 *National Planning Policy Framework*



APPENDIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

Trench No	Context	Type	Fill of	Context Interpretation	Context Description	L (m)	W (m)	T (m)
1	100	Layer		Topsoil	Mid grey brown silty loam; friable; 1% stone inclusions 10- 50mm	>30	>1.9	0.28
1	101	Layer		Subsoil	Mid yellow brown clay silt; soft; 1% stone inclusions 10- 50mm	>30	>1.9	0.3
1	102	Layer		Natural	Mid brown yellow silty clay; firm; no inclusions	>30	>1.9	
1	103	Cut		Ditch	Linear NE- SW orientated ditch; straight moderately sloping sides; moderate break of slope at top, gradual at base; concave base	>1.2	0.95	0.39
1	104	Fill	[103]	Secondary silting	First fill of [103]. Mixed mid grey and bright orange silty clay; firm; rare charcoal flecks and gravel <30mm.	>1.2	0.48	0.18
1	105	Fill	[103]	Secondary silting	Second fill of [103]. Mid grey with orange mottle silty clay; firm; rare charcoal flecks and gravel <30mm.	>1.2	0.95	0.23
2	200	Layer		Topsoil	Mid grey brown silty loam; friable; 1% stone inclusions 10- 50mm	>30	>1.8	0.29
2	201	Layer		Subsoil	Mid yellow brown clay silt; soft; 1% stone inclusions 10- 50mm	>30	>1.8	0.28
2	202	Layer		Natural	Mid brown yellow silty clay; firm; no inclusions	>30	>1.8	
3	300	Layer		Topsoil	Mid grey brown silty loam; friable; 1% stone inclusions 10- 50mm	>30	>1.8	0.25
3	301	Layer		Subsoil	Mid yellow brown clay silt; soft; 1% stone inclusions 10- 50mm	>30	>1.8	0.28
3	302	Layer		Natural	Mid brown yellow silty clay; firm; no inclusions	>30	>1.8	
3	303	Cut		Ditch	Linear NE- SW orientated ditch; not excavated here - see [103], [403] and [603]	>2.5	0.55	
3	304	Fill	[303]	Secondary silting	Purple grey silty clay; firm; no inclusions	>2.5	0.55	
4	400	Layer		Topsoil	Mid grey brown silty loam; friable; 1% stone inclusions 10- 50mm	>30	>1.8	0.24
4	401	Layer		Subsoil	Mid yellow brown clay silt; soft; 1% stone inclusions 10- 50mm	>30	>1.8	0.3
4	402	Layer		Natural	Mid brown yellow silty clay; firm; no inclusions	>30	>1.8	
4	403	Cut		Ditch	Linear NE- SW orientated ditch; not excavated here - see [103], [303] and [603]	>3	0.6	
4	404	Fill	[403]	Secondary silting	Purple grey silty clay; firm; no inclusions	>3	0.6	
5	500	Layer		Topsoil	Mid grey brown silty loam; friable; 1% stone inclusions 10- 50mm	>30	>1.8	0.35
5	501	Layer		Subsoil	Mid yellow brown clay silt; soft; 1% stone inclusions 10- 50mm	>30	>1.8	0.1
5	502	Layer		Natural	Mid yellow brown clay, some grey and orange mottling	>30	>1.8	
5	503	Cut		Quarry	Quarry extending over several trenches; not excavated here	15	>1.8	
5	504	Fill	[503]	Secondary silting	Dark orange brown silt clay	15	>1.8	

5	505	Cut		Geological	Possible irregular linear feature orientated E-W but likely geological/bioturbation. Diffuse edges; shallow concave sides; flat base	>1	1.1	0.08
5	506	Fill	[505]	Geological silting	Mid orange brown silt clay; firm; rare small angular flint	>1	1.1	0.08
6	600	Layer		Topsoil	Mid grey brown silty loam; friable; 1% stone inclusions 10- 50mm	>30	>1.8	0.54
6	601	Layer		Subsoil	Mid yellow brown clay silt; soft; 1% stone inclusions 10- 50mm	>30	>1.8	0.11
6	602	Layer		Natural	Mid brown yellow silty clay; firm; no inclusions	>30	>1.8	
6	603	Cut		Ditch	Linear NE-SW orientated ditch; moderate straight sides; concave base	>1	0.69	0.29
6	604	Fill	[603]	Secondary silting	Only fill of [603]. Mid grey brown with yellow brown mottling silty clay; compact; >1% charcoal flecks, >1% gravel	>1	0.69	0.29
6	605	Cut		Quarry	Unable to see shape as covers several trenches; steep sides to the W, undercutting in the E; base not reached	>1	2.2	0.66
6	606	Fill	[605]	Primary fill	First fill of [605]. Mid yellow orange with mid brown mottling clay; compact; >1% iron panning.	>1	0.48	0.36
6	607	Fill	[605]	Secondary silting	Second fill of [605]. Mid grey brown silty clay; compact; <5% iron panning, <1% charcoal flecks	>1	>2.2	>0.66
7	700	Layer		Topsoil	Mid grey brown silty loam; friable; 1% stone inclusions 10- 50mm	>30	>1.8	0.3
7	701	Layer		Subsoil	Mid yellow brown clay silt; soft; 1% stone inclusions 10- 50mm	>30	>1.8	0.2
7	702	Layer		Natural	Mid yellow brown clay, some grey and orange mottling	>30	>1.8	
7	704	Layer		Made ground - modern	Mid grey brown clay silt; loose; frequent brick, rubble and scrap metal	6	>1	0.3
7	705	Cut		Pit	Sub-round pit; regular steep concave sides; sharp break of slope; irregular base	0.57	0.57	0.27
7	706	Fill	[705]	Silting	Mixed mid yellow grey silty clay; firm; no inclusions	0.57	0.57	0.27
7	707	Cut		Pit	Shallow, ovoid pit; moderately steep concave sides; moderate break of slope; flat base	0.6	0.44	0.05
7	708	Fill	[707]	Silting	Only fill of [707]. Mid blue grey silty clay; firm; no inclusions	0.6	0.44	0.05
7	709	Cut		Pit	NE-SW orientated oval shaped pit; no discernible sides (possibly truncated); flat base	1.3	0.8	0.04
7	710	Fill	[709]	Deliberate backfill	Single fill of [709]. Mid grey brown silty clay; firm; no inclusions	1.3	0.8	0.04
7	711	Cut		Posthole	Round posthole; steep straight sides with sharp break of slope; slightly concave, narrow base	0.4	0.4	0.28
7	712	Fill	[711]	Silting	Single fill of [711]. Mid blue grey silty clay; firm; no inclusions	0.4	0.4	0.28
7	713	Cut		Pit	Round pit; steep slightly concave sides with sharp break of slope; slightly concave base with moderate break of slope	0.41	0.37	0.12

7	714	Fill	[713]	Silting	Single fill of [713]. Mixed yellow grey silty clay; firm; no inclusions	0.41	0.37	0.12
8	800	Layer		Topsoil	Mid grey brown silty loam; friable; 1% stone inclusions 10- 50mm	>30	>1.8	0.3
8	801	Layer		Subsoil	Mid yellow brown clay silt; soft; 1% stone inclusions 10- 50mm	>30	>1.8	0.22
8	802	Layer		Natural	Mid brown yellow silty clay; firm; no inclusions	>30	>1.8	
8	803	Cut		Ditch	NE-SW orientated linear ditch; straight sides, 45°; concave base	>2	0.73	0.28
8	804	Fill	[803]	Secondary silting	Dark brownish grey sandy clay; loose; no inclusions	>2	0.73	0.28
9	900	Layer		Topsoil	Mid grey brown silty loam; friable; 1% stone inclusions 10- 50mm	>30	>1.8	0.28
9	901	Layer		Made ground	Modern layer of crushed grey stone at SE end of trench	>6	>1.8	0.14
9	902	Layer		Subsoil	Mid yellow brown clay silt; soft; 1% stone inclusions 10- 50mm	>30	>1.8	0.3
9	903	Layer		Natural	Light yellowish orange with occasional large grey patches sandy clay, bright reddish orange sandy mottle; rare gravel and pebbles <50mm	>30	>1.8	
9	904	Cut		Ditch	NE-SW orientated linear ditch; straight moderately sloping sides; moderate break of slope at top and gradual at base; concave base	>0.75	1.01	0.37
9	905	Fill	[904]	Silting and redeposited natural	First fill of [904]. Mixed mid grey and bright orange silty clay; firm; rare gravel <30mm	>0.75	0.64	0.21
9	906	Fill	[904]	Silting	Second fill of [904]. Light white grey silty clay; firm; no inclusions	>.75	1.01	0.16
9	907	Cut		Furrow	N-S orientated linear feature; moderately sloping sides; flat base	>0.7	2.38	0.16
9	908	Fill		Silting	Single fill of [907]. Orange yellow silty clay; >1% iron panning flecks	>0.7	2.38	0.16
10	1000	Layer		Topsoil	Mid grey brown silty loam; friable; 1% stone inclusions 10- 50mm	>30	>1.8	0.3
10	1001	Layer		Subsoil	Mid yellow brown clay silt; soft; 1% stone inclusions 10- 50mm	>30	>1.8	0.24
10	1002	Layer		Natural	Mid brown yellow silty clay; firm; no inclusions	>30	>1.8	
10	1003	Cut		Quarry	Quarry extending over several trenches; not excavated here	>11	>1.8	>0.26
10	1004	Fill	[1003]	Deliberate backfill	Mid purple grey silt clay; soft; no inclusions	>11	>1.8	
10	1005	Layer		Made ground - modern	Covering NE edge of trench only; mid grey brown clay silt; loose; frequent brick, rubble and scrap metal	>11	>1.8	0.52
11	1100	Layer		Topsoil	Mid grey brown silty loam; friable; 1% stone inclusions 10- 50mm	>30	>1.9	0.32
11	1101	Layer		Subsoil	Mid yellow brown clay silt; soft; 1% stone inclusions 10- 50mm	>30	>1.9	0.28
11	1102	Layer		Natural	Light orange yellow with grey mottle silty clay; firm; occasional gravel and pebbles <50mm	>30	>1.9	
11	1103	Cut		Bioturbation	Probable bioturbation; steep almost vertical sides; sharp break of slope at top and base; flatish base	0.28	0.28	0.08

11	1104	Fill	[1103]	Secondary silting	Single fill of [1103]. Dark yellow grey with reddish orange mottle silty clay; firm; rare charcoal flecks, rare gravel <30mm	0.28	0.28	0.08
11	1105	Cut		Bioturbation	Probable bioturbation; irregular curvy linear orientated NW-SE; shallow sloping sides; moderate break of slope at top, gradual at base; concave base	>0.5	0.53	0.14
11	1106	Fill	[1105]	Secondary silting	Light yellow grey with reddish orange mottle silty clay; firm; rare gravel <30mm	>0.5	0.53	0.14
11	1107	Cut		Quarry	Possible quarry extending over several trenches; not excavated here	>4.1	>1.8	
11	1108	Fill	[1107]	Secondary silting	Mid purple grey silt clay; soft; no inclusions	>4.1	>1.8	
11	1109	Cut		Bioturbation	Likely bioturbation; irregular curvilinear sides and base	>0.6	0.63	0.18
11	1110	Fill	[1109]	Secondary silting	Single fill of [1109]. Mid grey brown clay silt; no inclusions	>0.6	0.63	0.18
12	1200	Layer		Topsoil	Mid grey brown silty loam; friable; 1% stone inclusions 10- 50mm	>30	>1.9	0.28
12	1201	Layer		Subsoil	Mid yellow brown clay silt; soft; 1% stone inclusions 10- 50mm	>30	>1.9	0.3
12	1202	Layer		Natural	Bright orange yellow silty clay; firm	>30	>1.9	
12	1203	Cut		Quarry	Possible quarry extending over several trenches; steep, vertical sides at top, undercutting lower down; base not found	>1	1.2	>.45
12	1204	Fill	[1204]	Secondary	Dark brownish grey silty clay; dense; occasional stones	>1	1.2	>.45
12	1205	Cut		Ditch - Field boundary	NW- SE orientated linear ditch; shallow sloping sides; shallow break of slope at top; base truncated by modern concrete pipe	>1.9	3.28	0.78
12	1206	Fill	[1205]	Silting	Dark brownish grey silty clay; firm; inclusions of rare CBM flecks, occasional reddish orange mineralisation, rare gravel and pebbles <70mm	>1.9	3.28	0.78
12	1207	Cut		Ditch	N-S orientated linear ditch; concave sides; concave base	>1	1.49	0.53
12	1208	Fill	[1207]	Secondary silting	First fill of [1207]. Dark grey with flecks of brown; sandy clay; dense; no inclusions	>1	0.58	0.16
12	1209	Fill	[1207]	Secondary silting	Second fill of [1207]. Dark brown and grey silty sandy clay; dense; CBM and occasional pebble inclusions	>1	1.49	0.37
12	1210	Cut		Quarry	Possible quarry extending over several trenches; orientated N-S; vertical sides; flat base	>1	0.3	0.4
12	1211	Fill	[1210]	Deliberate backfill	First fill of [1210]. Dark grey sandy clay with flecks of brown sand; dense; no inclusions	>1	0.3	0.08
12	1212	Fill	[1210]	Deliberate backfill	Second fill of [1210]. Dark grey brown silty clay; dense; rare pebbles	>1	0.3	0.28
12	1214	Cut		Modern pipe cut	SE-NW orientated linear modern pipe trench; straight, steep sides; base not found	>1	1.5	>.77
12	1215	Fill	[1214]	Deliberate backfill	Dark brown grey clay silt; friable; no inclusions	>1	1.5	>.77
12	1216	Cut		Quarry	Sides and base truncated by [1205] and [1214]	>1	>0.27	>0.37

12	1217	Fill	[1216]	Secondary silting	Dark brownish grey silty clay; dense; occasional stones	>1	>0.27	>0.37
13	1300	Layer		Topsoil	Mid grey brown silty loam; friable; 1% stone inclusions 10- 50mm	>30	>1.8	0.25
13	1301	Layer		Subsoil	Mid yellow brown clay silt; soft; 1% stone inclusions 10- 50mm	>30	>1.8	0.23
13	1302	Layer		Natural	Mid brown yellow silty clay; firm; no inclusions	>30	>1.8	
13	1303	Cut		Furrow	N-S orientated linear furrow; concave sides; concave/ flat base	>1	1.48	0.08
13	1304	Fill	[1303]	Secondary	Single fill of [1303]. Dark brown grey sandy clay; loose; few inclusions	>1	1.48	0.08
13	1305	Cut		Posthole	Sub-round posthole; vertical sides; concave base	0.3	0.3	0.42
13	1306	Fill	[1305]	Silting	Single fill of [1305]. Dark grey brown sandy clay; compact; charcoal inclusions	0.3	0.3	0.42
13	1307	Layer		Topsoil	Mid red brown sandy loam; friable; 10% stones 10-50mm	>30	>1.8	0.1
13	1308	Layer		Made ground	Hard standing; light blue grey sand; 80% sub-angular stones 10-50mm	>30	>1.8	0.17
14	1400	Layer		Topsoil	Mid red brown sandy loam; friable; 10% stones 10-50mm	>30	>1.8	0.1
14	1401	Layer		Made ground	Hard standing; light blue grey sand; 80% sub-angular stones 10-50mm	>30	>1.8	0.2
14	1402	Layer		Buried topsoil	Mid grey brown silty loam; friable; 1% stone inclusions 10- 50mm	>30	>1.8	0.22
14	1403	Layer		Subsoil	Mid yellow brown clay silt; soft; 1% stone inclusions 10- 50mm	>30	>1.8	0.15
14	1404	Cut		Ditch	NW- SE orientated ditch; contains modern pipe and CBM; not excavated here	>1.8	2.1	
14	1405	Fill	[1404]	Secondary silting	Dark grey brown clay silt; soft; 2% sub-angular stones 10-50mm	>1.8	2.1	
14	1406	Cut		Ditch	NW-SE orientated post-medieval ditch; not excavated here	>1.8	1.7	
14	1407	Fill	[1406]	Secondary silting	Dark grey brown clay silt; soft; 2% sub-angular stones 10-50mm	>1.8	1.7	
14	1408	Cut		Quarry	Possible quarry extending over several trenches; inclusion of post medieval CBM; not excavated here	>1.8	11	>.28
14	1409	Fill	[1408]	Deliberate backfill	Blue grey with grey brown mottling mixed clay; firm; no inclusions	>1.8	11	>.28

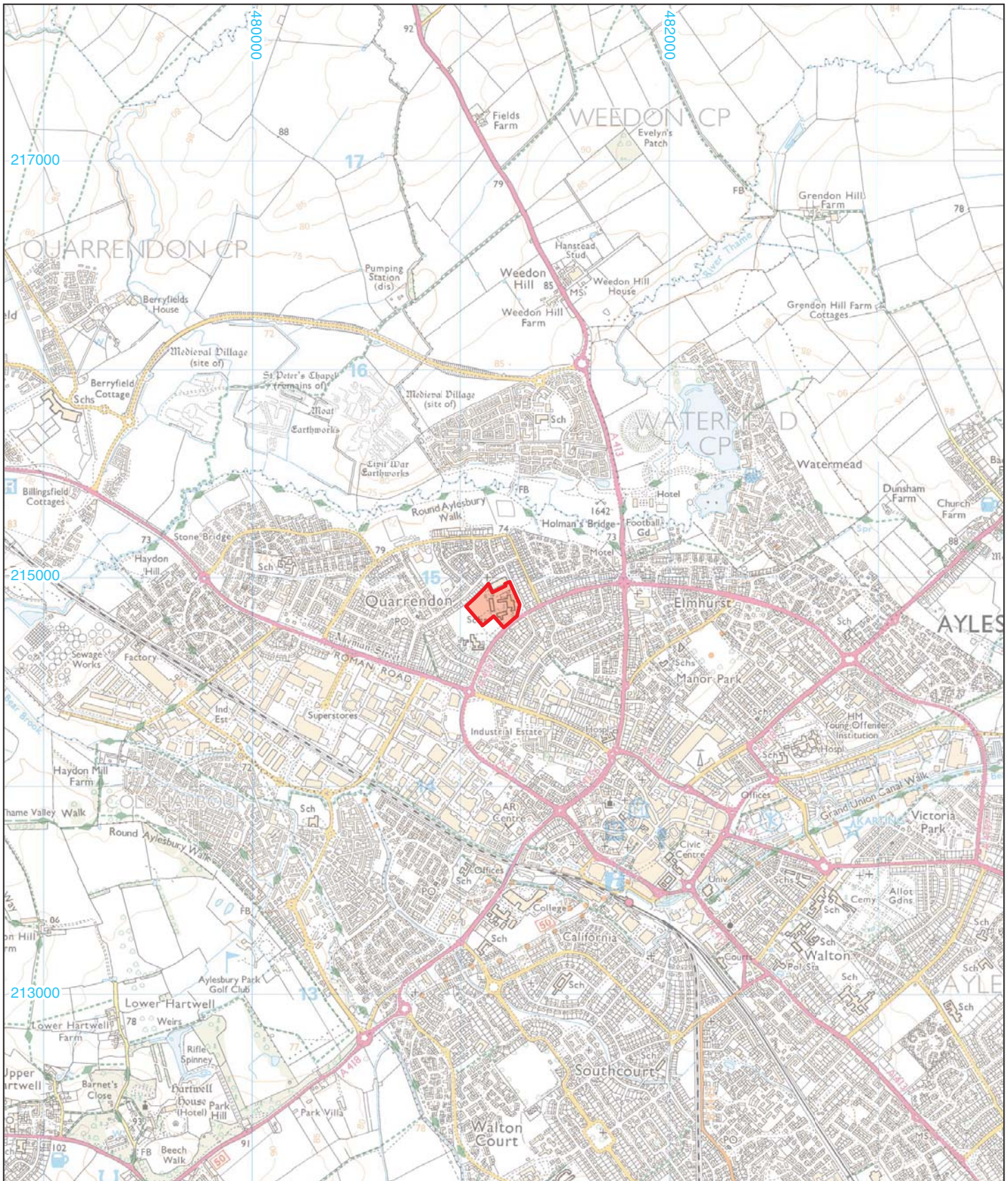
APPENDIX B: THE FINDS

Context	Category	Description	Fabric Code	Count	Weight (g)	Spot-date
105	Roman pottery	Grog-and-quartz tempered fabric	GRQZ	1	3	C1
604	Roman pottery	Grog-and-quartz tempered fabric	GRQZ	1	5	C1?
607	Post-medieval ceramic building material	Fragment		2	42	Post-medieval
706	Post-medieval/modern pottery	Transfer-printed pearlware	TPP	1	1	LC18-C19
	Post-medieval/modern pottery	Refined whiteware	RWH	1	<1	
708	Post-medieval pottery	Creamware	CRM	1	2	Modern
	Modern ceramic building material	Brick		1	9	
	Post-medieval/modern glass	Bottle		2	14	
710	Iron	Nail		1	5	-
712	Post-medieval pottery	Unglazed earthenware	UGL	1	4	C19
	Post-medieval/modern pottery	Porcelain	POR	1	2	
	Modern pottery	'Mocha' ware	MOC	1	4	
	Post-medieval ceramic building material	Fragment		2	36	
	Post-medieval glass	Bottle		1	16	
	Iron	Nail		1	4	
804	Post-medieval ceramic building material	Flat roof tile		2	18	Post-medieval
	Industrial Waste			1	59	
	Iron	Nail		1	10	
1004	Post-medieval/modern pottery	Refined whiteware	RWH	2	14	LC18-C19
	Post-medieval ceramic building material	Flat roof tile, fragments		4	35	
	Post-medieval glass	Bottle		1	15	
	Iron	Chain fragment		1	131	
1204	Post-medieval ceramic building material	Flat roof tile, fragments		3	58	Post-medieval
	Industrial Waste			1	30	
1209	Post-medieval ceramic building material	Flat roof tile, fragment		3	147	Post-medieval
	Clay tobacco pipe	Stem		1	6	
1304	Post-medieval pottery	Glazed earthenware	GRE	1	2	MC16-C18
	Post-medieval ceramic building material	Flat roof tile		2	57	
1306	Late prehistoric pottery	Quartz-and-quartzite tempered fabric	QZQT	1	8	Late prehistoric
1409	Post-medieval ceramic building material	Flat roof tile		1	50	Post-medieval

APPENDIX C: OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS	
Project Name	St. Michael's Catholic School-Aylesbury Campus, Weedon Road, Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire
Short description	<p>In December 2017, Cotswold Archaeology carried out an archaeological evaluation of land at St Michael's Catholic School - Aylesbury Campus, Weedon Road, Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire. The evaluation, which was commissioned by BAM Construction, acting on behalf of Buckinghamshire County Council, was carried out to support a planning application. The evaluation comprised the excavation of fourteen 30m long trenches.</p> <p>A single posthole of possible late prehistoric date was recorded in the south-west of the site. A ditch aligned on a north-east/south-west axis ran across the north of the site, this produced pottery of Roman date. A similarly aligned, undated ditch was revealed in the east of the site and is considered likely to represent broadly contemporary activity and relate to the same field system.</p> <p>Six trenches excavated along the south-western half of site contained large possible pits, the full extent of which was not visible within the trenches. It is considered likely that these represent the remains of two or three large possible quarry pits, dated to the post-medieval period. These were truncated by two post-medieval parallel ditches running on a north-west/south-east alignment. These ditches appear to correspond with those recorded on the Enclosure Map of 1771, shown as a trackway running between two fields. Another ditch to the east corresponds with a field boundary identified on the First Edition Ordnance Survey Map of 1879.</p> <p>In the centre of the site five small pits were excavated which contained post-medieval finds, one of which included the articulated remains of the front end of a small cow skeleton.</p> <p>Overall, the site is generally characterised by agricultural activity of post-medieval date along with evidence for post-medieval quarrying. An isolated posthole of possible late prehistoric date was recorded in the south-west of the site and a ditch of probable Roman date was recorded at the north of the site along with an undated ditch on a similar alignment, considered likely to be broadly contemporary.</p>
Project dates	11/12/17 – 15/12/17
Project type	Evaluation
Previous work	Heritage Desk-Based Assessment (CA 2017)
Future work	Unknown
PROJECT LOCATION	
Site Location	St. Michael's Catholic School-Aylesbury Campus, Weedon Road, Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire
Study area (M ² /ha)	3.9ha
Site co-ordinates	481073 214855
PROJECT CREATORS	
Name of organisation	Cotswold Archaeology
Project Brief originator	none
Project Design (WSI) originator	Cotswold Archaeology
Project Manager	Michelle Collings
Project Supervisor	Ralph Brown
MONUMENT TYPE	
	Posthole – prehistoric Ditch – Roman Furrow – medieval/post-medieval

	Ditch – post-medieval Pit – post-medieval	
SIGNIFICANT FINDS	Ceramics – prehistoric Ceramics – Roman Ceramics – post-medieval Iron – post-medieval Animal bone – post-medieval	
PROJECT ARCHIVES	Intended final location of archive (museum/Accession no.)	Content (e.g. pottery, animal bone etc)
Physical	Buckinghamshire Museum Services	Ceramics, animal bone, Fe objects
Paper	Buckinghamshire Museum Services	Context sheets, trench sheets, sections
Digital	Buckinghamshire Museum Services	Report, digital photos
BIBLIOGRAPHY		
CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2018 <i>St. Michael's Catholic School-Aylesbury Campus, Weedon Road, Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire: Archaeological Evaluation</i> . CA typescript report 18015		



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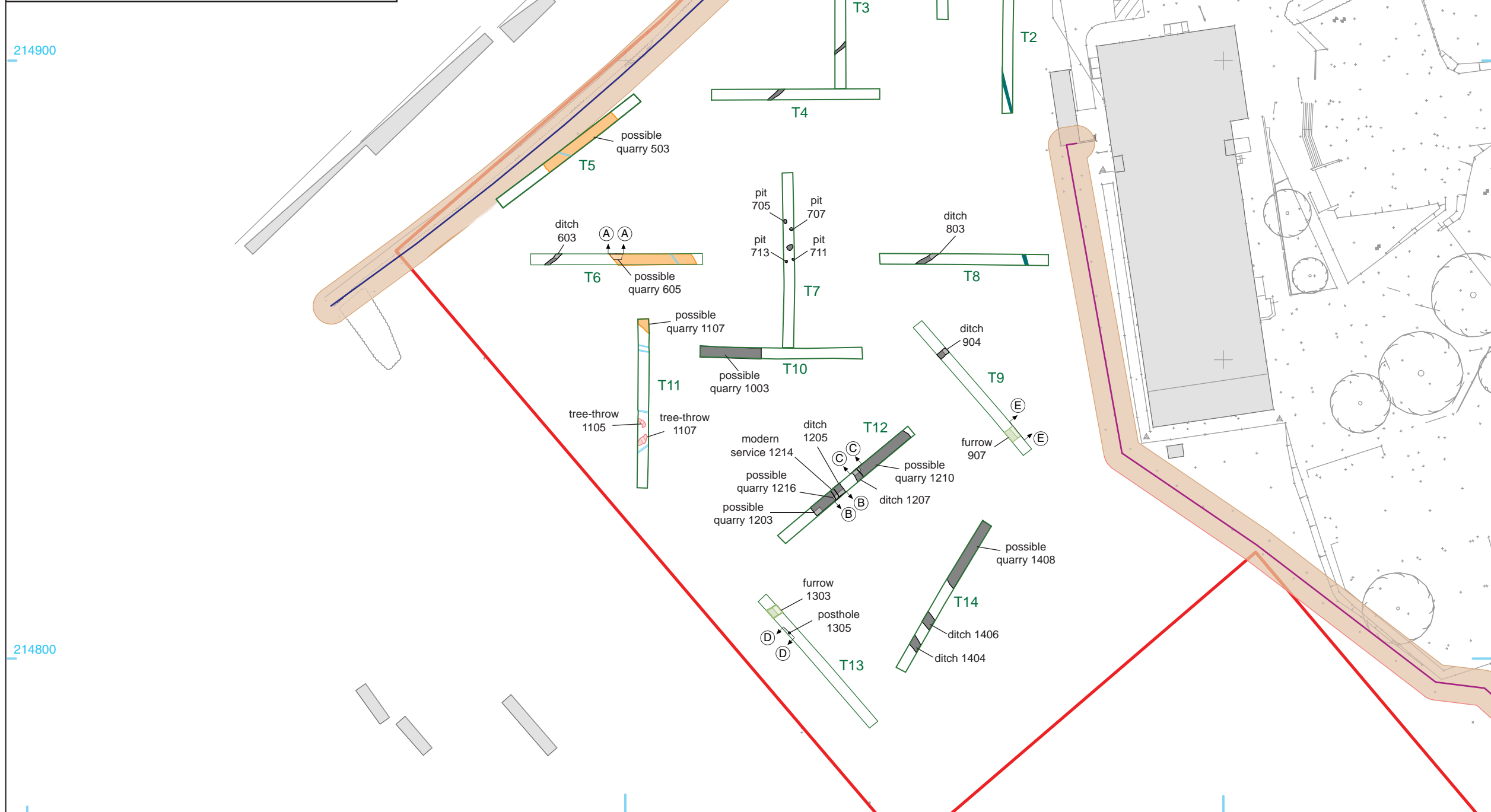
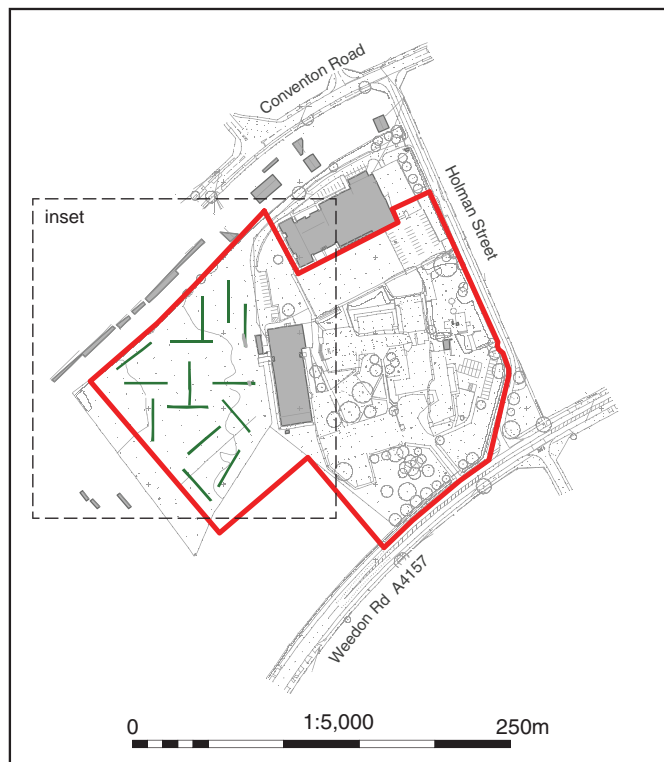
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PROJECT TITLE
 St Michael's Catholic School, Aylesbury,
 Buckinghamshire

FIGURE TITLE
Site location plan

DRAWN BY EE	PROJECT NO. 661014	FIGURE NO. 1
CHECKED BY DJB	DATE 21/12/2017	
APPROVED BY MLC	SCALE @A4 1:25,000	



- Site boundary
 - Evaluation trench
- excavated/unexcavated
- Archaeological feature
 - Modern feature
 - Tree-throw
 - Furrow
 - Field drain
 - Possible quarry found in rapid pre-ex
- A A Section location
- Electricity HV
 - Gas main
 - 3m buffer



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FIGURE TITLE
Trench location plan

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General site pre-excavation shot



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FIGURE TITLE

Photograph

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FIGURE NO.

3



Trench 6, looking east (1m scales)



Ditch 103, looking north-east (1m scale)



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FIGURE TITLE

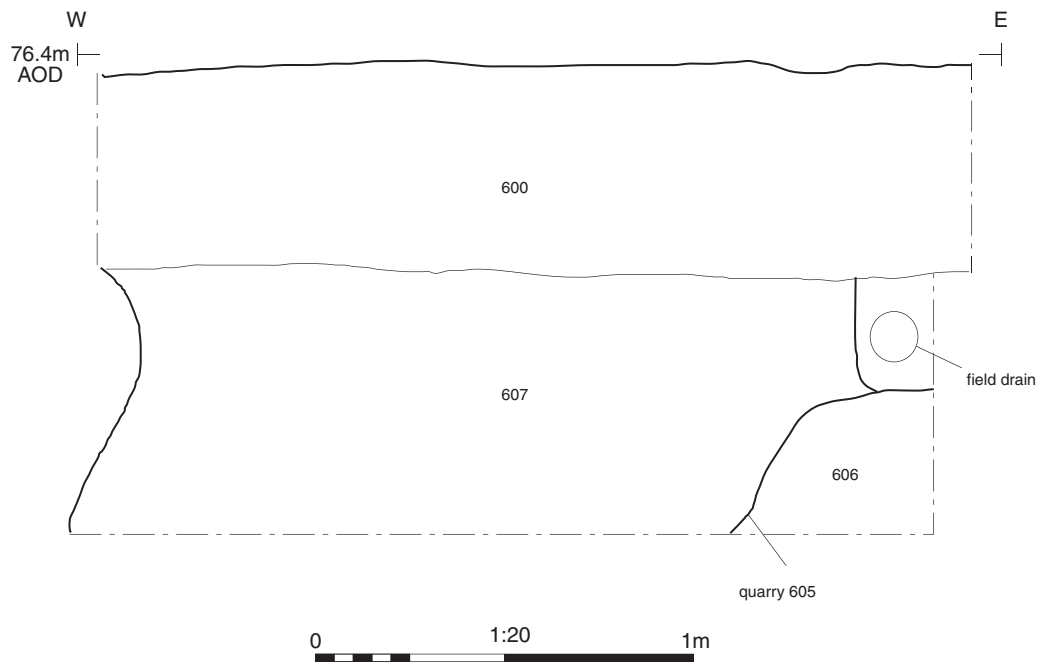
Photographs

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FIGURE NO.

4

Section AA



Quarry 605, looking north (1m scale)



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FIGURE TITLE

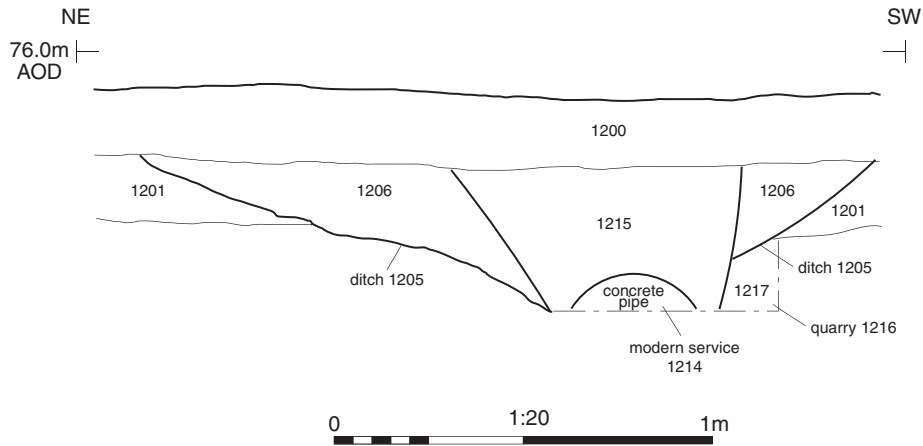
Trench 6: section and photograph

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FIGURE NO.

5

Section BB



Ditch 1205, modern service 1214 and quarry 1216, looking south-east (1m scale)



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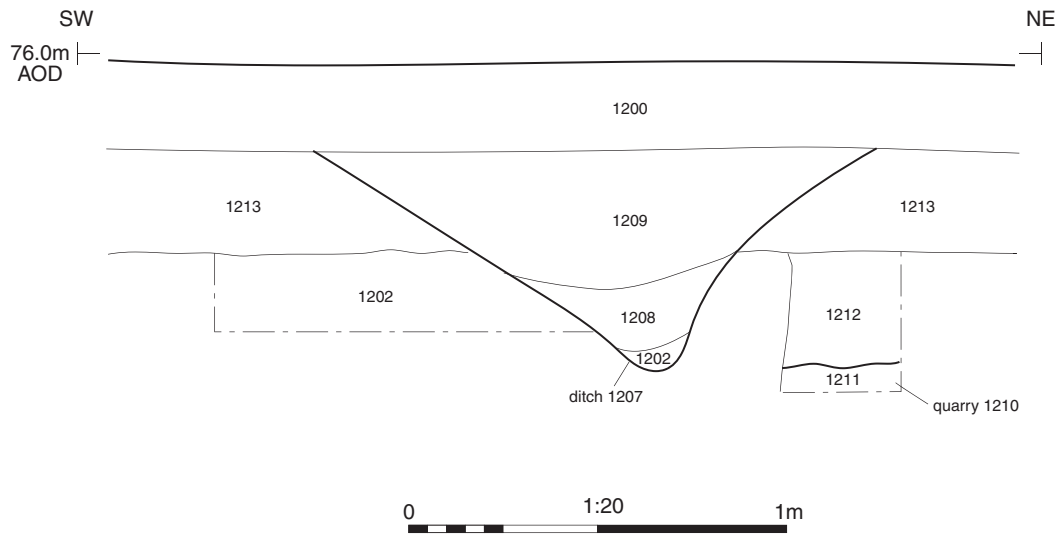
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FIGURE TITLE

Trench 12: section and photograph

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Section CC



Ditch 1207 and quarry 1210, looking north-west (1m scale)



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PROJECT TITLE

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FIGURE TITLE

Trench 12: section and photograph

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FIGURE NO.

7

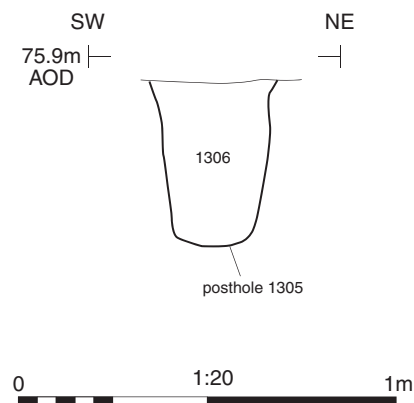


Cow burial 709, looking south (0.3m scale)

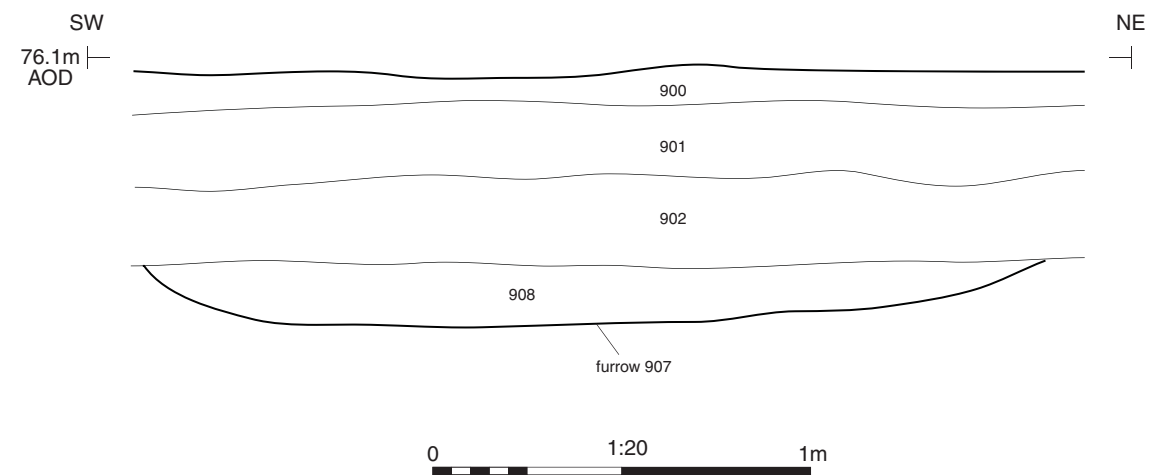


Ditch 904, looking south (1m scale)

Section DD



Section EE



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