

**Exeter Royal Academy for Deaf Education
Topsham Road
Exeter
Devon
Phase A & C**

Archaeological Evaluation



for
Acorn Property Group

CA Project: EX0086
CA Report: EX0086_1

November 2020



Exeter Royal Academy for Deaf Education
 Topsham Road
 Exeter
 Devon
 Phase A & C

Archaeological Evaluation

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Document Control Grid						
Revision	Date	Author	Checked by	Status	Reasons for revision	Approved by
A	03/11/20	Ray Kennedy	Richard Greatorex	Internal review	General Edit	Richard Greatorex

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Exeter City Council Historic Environment Record

Civil Parish & District: Exeter	National Grid Reference: 292542 091833	Number:
Subject: Exeter Royal Academy for Deaf Education Topsham Road Exeter Devon Phase A & C		Photo attached: N/A
Planning reference no: 17/1640/FUL	Recipient museum: N/A	
OASIS ID:	Museum Accession no: N/A	
Contractor's reference number/code: Site code: ERAD19; project number EX0086	Date fieldwork undertaken: 6-7 October 2020	
<p>Introduction</p> <p>In 2020, Cotswold Archaeology carried out an archaeological evaluation at the former site of the Exeter Royal Academy for Deaf Education, Topsham Road, Exeter, Devon. (Fig. 1).</p> <p>A total of 6 trenches were excavated, all of which were archaeologically sterile. Phase A & C represents the first phase of works, to be followed at a later date by Phase B.</p> <p>The evaluation was commissioned by Acorn Property Group as a condition of a planning application for residential development of the site.</p> <p>Archaeological background</p> <p>The proposed development site has been the subject of a desk-based archaeological assessment (Exeter Archaeology 2009) and a watching brief during ground investigation works (CA 2017). The following text is summarised from these sources</p> <p>The proposed development site is outside of the statutory Exeter Area of Archaeological Importance, as designated in 1984 under Part 2 of the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979.</p> <p><i>Prehistoric (pre-c. AD 43)</i></p> <p>There is evidence for later prehistoric occupation and funerary activity above the River Exe, to the south-east of central Exeter. No prehistoric sites are recorded in the immediate vicinity of the ERADE site, although a small amount of prehistoric worked flints were recovered at the former Gras Lawn sports field (c. 700m south-east of the ERADE site) and part of a mid-late Iron Age settlement has been excavated on the site of the Law Courts (c. 550m north of the ERADE site).</p> <p>Roman (AD 43–AD 410)</p> <p>The fortress of the Second Augustan Legion of the Roman Army was established at Exeter c. AD 55 and was abandoned c. AD 75. The early Roman town developed inside the earthwork ramparts of the abandoned legionary fortress. In the period AD 160–AD 200, the earth and timber ramparts were removed and replaced (on a slightly expanded circuit) by the stone city wall. The ERADE site lies c. 0.6km south-east of the city wall.</p> <p>Topsham Road follows the approximate alignment of a Roman road between Exeter and Topsham, where there was a port, minor fort and settlement. Roman extra-mural development has been recorded previously along the line of the road, such as at Holloway Street (c. 0.5km north-west of the ERADE site) and at the St. Loye's Foundation site (c. 1.5km south-east of the ERADE site), as well as further south-east around Topsham. The remains at the St. Loye's Foundation site comprised a double-ditched Roman military fort dating to the 1st century AD; the site may have been occupied until the 4th century AD.</p> <p><i>Early medieval (AD 410–1066) and medieval (1066–1539)</i></p> <p>The manor of St. Leonard's was not recorded by the Domesday Survey (1086), which may indicate that it is a medieval foundation. A chapel dedicated to St. Leonard was established by 1200. The parish appears to have been largely rural in the medieval period. The Roman road continued in use; a medieval bridge carrying the road over the Shutebrook still survives below the present road some 200m north-west of the ERADE site.</p> <p><i>Post-medieval (1540–1800)</i></p>		

Two large houses (Larkbeare and Radford House) were constructed in the area in the 16th century, although Larkbeare may be a rebuild of a medieval structure. Much of the ERADE site lies within the former gardens and wider land holding of Radford House. The house was fortified by the Parliamentarians during the English Civil War (1642–1651). The form of the defences around the house is unknown, although it is likely that the house was surrounded by ditches and banks, possibly incorporating firing platforms for musketry and artillery.

The Trew's Weir cotton mill was constructed on the Exe in 1780, to the south of the ERADE site. The mill was later converted into a paper mill and, in the late 20th century, into flats. Access to the mill was originally via a lane from Topsham Road. The north-east/south-west line of this lane is still visible as an internal road through the centre of the ERADE campus.

Modern (1800–present)

The parish remained largely rural until suburbanised in the 19th century. An 1816 survey of Sir Thomas Baring's manors in Mount Radford and Heavitree shows the ERADE site as a series of open fields with the Trew's Weir Mill lane running through its centre. A small collection of buildings are recorded to the immediate east of the lane, fronting onto Topsham Road; these were described as a house, courtleage, outhouses and garden.

The St. Leonard's Tithe Map (1840) shows the majority of the site as open fields, but the 'Deaf and Dumb Institution' had now been constructed in the north-western part of the site. This building was extended and altered in the mid and later 19th century and was demolished completely in the mid-20th century. The buildings next to the lane depicted on the 1816 survey map were still shown on the 1840 tithe map; a few additional small buildings had been constructed adjacent to them.

Later 19th and 20th century maps document the expansion of the institution. The college site was completely remodelled in the second half of the 20th century and all of the original institution buildings have been demolished. The only pre-World War II building surviving at the site is the swimming pool building. This is constructed of red brick, with yellow brick and stone dressings and details. It comprises a two-storey range fronting Topsham Road and a single-storey range along the former lane to Trew's Weir Mill. A pump room is attached to the rear of the latter range and modern additions have been constructed on the northern side of the building.

The construction of the ERADE buildings and grounds appears to have involved extensive 'cut and fill' in order to counteract the topographical downslope to the Exe. Buildings have been cut or terraced into the hillside on their north-eastern sides and constructed on raised ground (fill) at their south-western ends. The playing fields and landscaped grounds to the south of the buildings have been significantly raised to form level surfaces. This material used to raise the ground in this area may have partially derived from the construction of the post-war buildings on the site.

Watching brief

An archaeological watching brief was carried out in August 2017 during ground investigation works at the site (CA 2017). This indicated that the natural substrate lies at a depth of 0.6m below present ground level (bpgl) at the north-eastern site boundary. It is overlain directly by modern made ground, suggesting that the ground level has been truncated in this area.

The natural substrate was exposed at 1.2m bpgl in the north-western part of the site and is again sealed by made ground deposits. The natural substrate lay at 1.7m–2.1m bpgl in the south-western part of the site, where it is sealed by redeposited natural made ground deposits.

The monitored groundworks were very limited in scope. It was difficult to date deposits revealed at depth, and it is possible that some of these were archaeological in nature, rather than exclusively post-medieval/modern. It is also possible that these deposits may mask survival of archaeological deposits and cut features. There is also some potential for deep cuts (such as deep ditches) to survive in truncated areas. The St. Loye's Foundation site (see above) had a similar amount of modern truncation and fill, but significant Roman-period archaeological remains were found to survive underneath the later fill deposits, as well as within some of the truncated areas.

Methodology

The evaluation followed the methodology set out in the Written Scheme of Archaeological Work (CA

2019). A total of six trenches were excavated in Phase A & C (Fig. 2). Trench 1 was 12m, Trench 2 was 8, Trench 3 was 9, Trench 4 was 10m, Trench 5 was 23m and Trench 6 was 25m. Trenches 1 and 2 were moved to avoid services.

Results (Figs. 2 & 3)

Trenches 1-4 were dug to a maximum depth of 1.2m, due to deep made ground demolition deposits that covered this area. Natural was not exposed in these areas. The made ground consists of alternating orange and grey sands and medium sized gravels, mixed with construction and demolition debris, all associated with the demolition of the ERADE. Natural geology was not exposed in these areas.

Trenches 5 and 6 were located in the playing fields/grounds to the rear (south-west) of the site. There is a significant change in elevation within this area as the land slopes downhill to the south-west.

In this area the natural substrate consisted of reddish silty clay and was exposed at a depth of 0.49-0.7m below present ground level. This was overlain by mid brownish grey clayey silt averaging 0.16-0.24m in thickness, which was in turn sealed by 0.33-0.46m of topsoil which consisted of dark brownish grey silt.

Discussion

Despite the archaeological potential of the site, the evaluation recorded no archaeological finds, features or deposits.

References

British Geological Survey 2019 Geology of Britain Viewer <http://www.bgs.ac.uk/discoveringGeology/geologyOfBritain/viewer.html> Accessed 3 November 2020

Cotswold Archaeology 2017 Exeter Royal Academy for Deaf Education, Topsham Road, Exeter: Archaeological Watching Brief – Summary Report CA Report No. 17502

Cotswold Archaeology, 2019, Exeter Royal Academy for Deaf Education, Topsham Road, Exeter, Devon: Written Scheme of Archaeological Work

Exeter Archaeology 2009 Archaeological Assessment of the Exeter Royal Academy for Deaf Education Site, Topsham Road, Exeter Exeter Archaeology Report No. 09.19

Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government 2019 National Planning Policy Framework

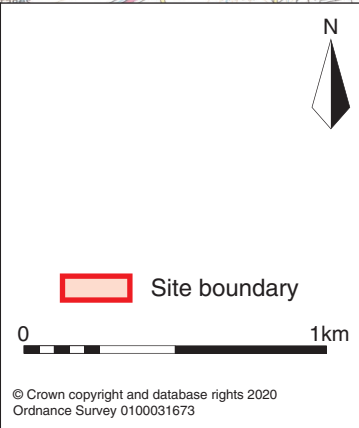
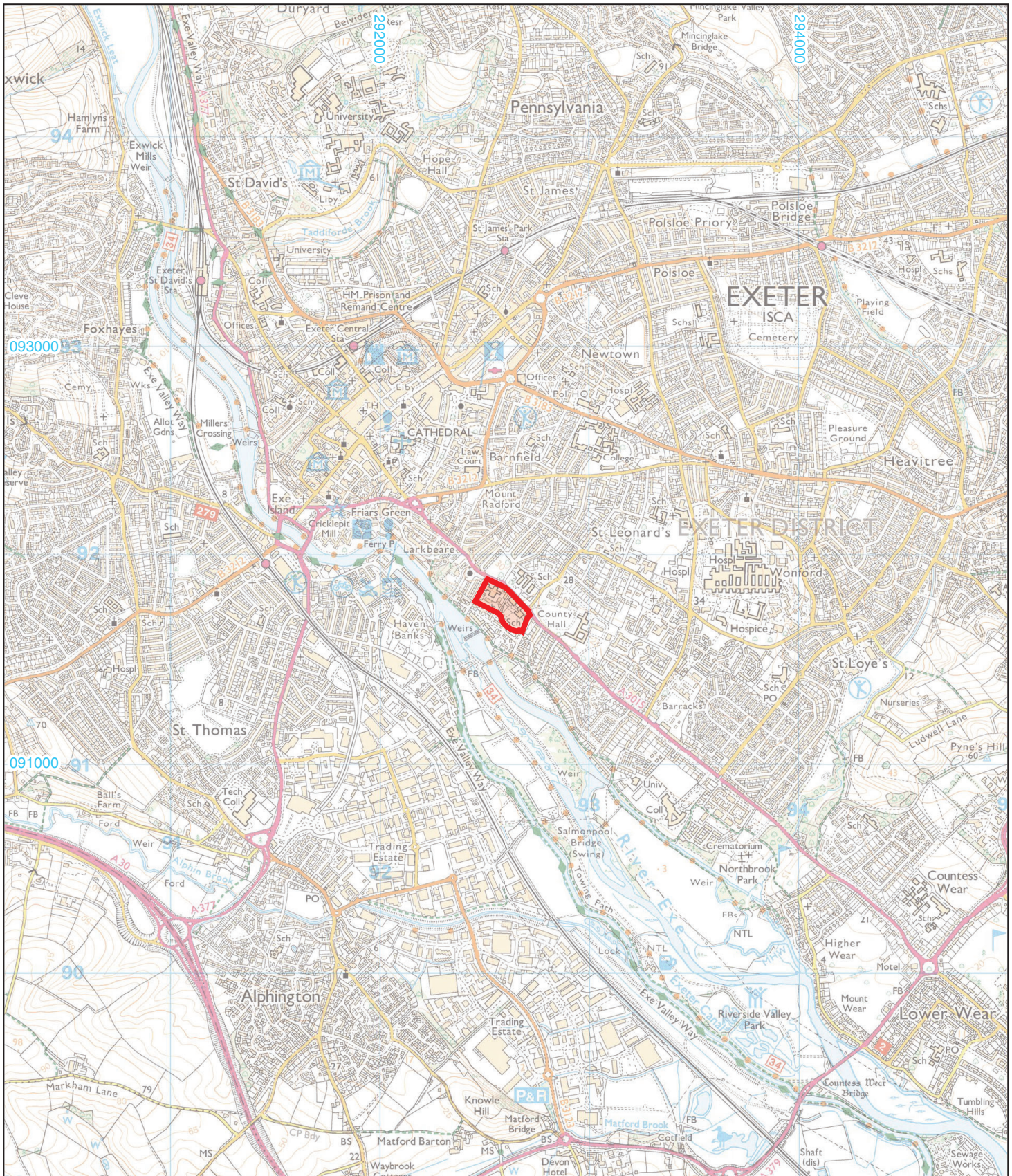
Somerset County Council 2007 The Archaeology of South West England: South West Archaeological Research Framework – Resource Assessment and Research Agenda

Recorder: Ray Kennedy, Cotswold Archaeology	Date sent to HER:
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APPENDIX A: OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		
Project name	Exeter Royal Academy for Deaf Education, Topsham Road, Exeter Devon, Phase A & C	
Short description	<p>In 2020, Cotswold Archaeology carried out an archaeological evaluation at the former site of the Exeter Royal Academy for Deaf Education, Topsham Road, Exeter, Devon. (Fig. 1).</p> <p>A total of 6 trenches were excavated, all of which were archaeologically sterile. Phase A & C represents the first phase of works, to be followed at a later date by Phase B.</p>	
Project dates	6-7 October 2020	
Project type	Evaluation	
Previous work	CA 2017 Watching Brief	
Future work	Phase B evaluation	
PROJECT LOCATION		
Site location	Exeter Royal Academy for Deaf Education, Topsham Road, Exeter Devon	
Study area (m ² /ha)	3.45ha	
Site co-ordinates	292542 091833	
PROJECT CREATORS		
Name of organisation	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project brief originator	N/A	
Project design (WSI) originator	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project Manager	Ray Kennedy	
Project Supervisor	Niomi Edwards	
MONUMENT TYPE	None	
SIGNIFICANT FINDS	None	
PROJECT ARCHIVES		
	Intended final location of archive	Content
Physical	N/A	N/A
Paper	RAMM	N/A
Digital	N/A	N/A
BIBLIOGRAPHY		
Cotswold Archaeology 2020 <i>Exeter Royal Academy for Deaf Education, Topsham Road, Exeter Devon, Phase A & C</i> CA Report No. EX0086_1		



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PROJECT TITLE
 Exeter Royal Academy for Deaf Education,
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FIGURE TITLE
 Site location plan

DRAWN BY	RP	PROJECT NO.	EX0086	FIGURE NO.
CHECKED BY	DJB	DATE	03.11.20	1
APPROVED BY	RK	SCALE@A4	1:25,000	

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 Ordnance Survey 0100031673



- Site boundary
- Area A
- Area B
- Area C
- Evaluation trench
- Proposed evaluation trench
- Modern drain



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PROJECT TITLE
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FIGURE TITLE
Trench location plan

DRAWN BY	RP	PROJECT NO.	EX0086	<small>FIGURE NO.</small>
CHECKED BY	DJB	DATE	03.11.20	2
APPROVED BY	RK	SCALE@A3	1:1000	



C:\Users\rosanna.price\Desktop\EX0086 Exeter RADE - Devon EVAL Fig 02.dwg

091800

091700

292500

292600

292700



3

Trench 1, looking south-east (1m scale)



4

Trench 2, looking north-west (1m scale)



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FIGURE NO.

3 & 4



5

Trench 3, looking north-east (1m scale)



6

Trench 4, looking south-east (1m scale)



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FIGURE NO.

5 & 6



7

Trench 5, looking north-east (1m scale)



8

Trench 6, looking north-east (1m scale)



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FIGURE NO.

7 & 8

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