

# **Newtown Primary School, Exeter, Devon.**

**Minor Works: Negative Archaeological Watching Brief Statement**

for

**Chris Dent, Architect and Planning Consultant on behalf of Newtown Primary School**

by



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**COAS reference:** COAS/WBF/07/NED

**National Grid Reference:** centred on NGR SX 92950 92800

**Devon County Council Planning application reference:** 06/01028/2006

**Fieldwork team:** Peter Fairclough

**Statement:** Fay Robinson

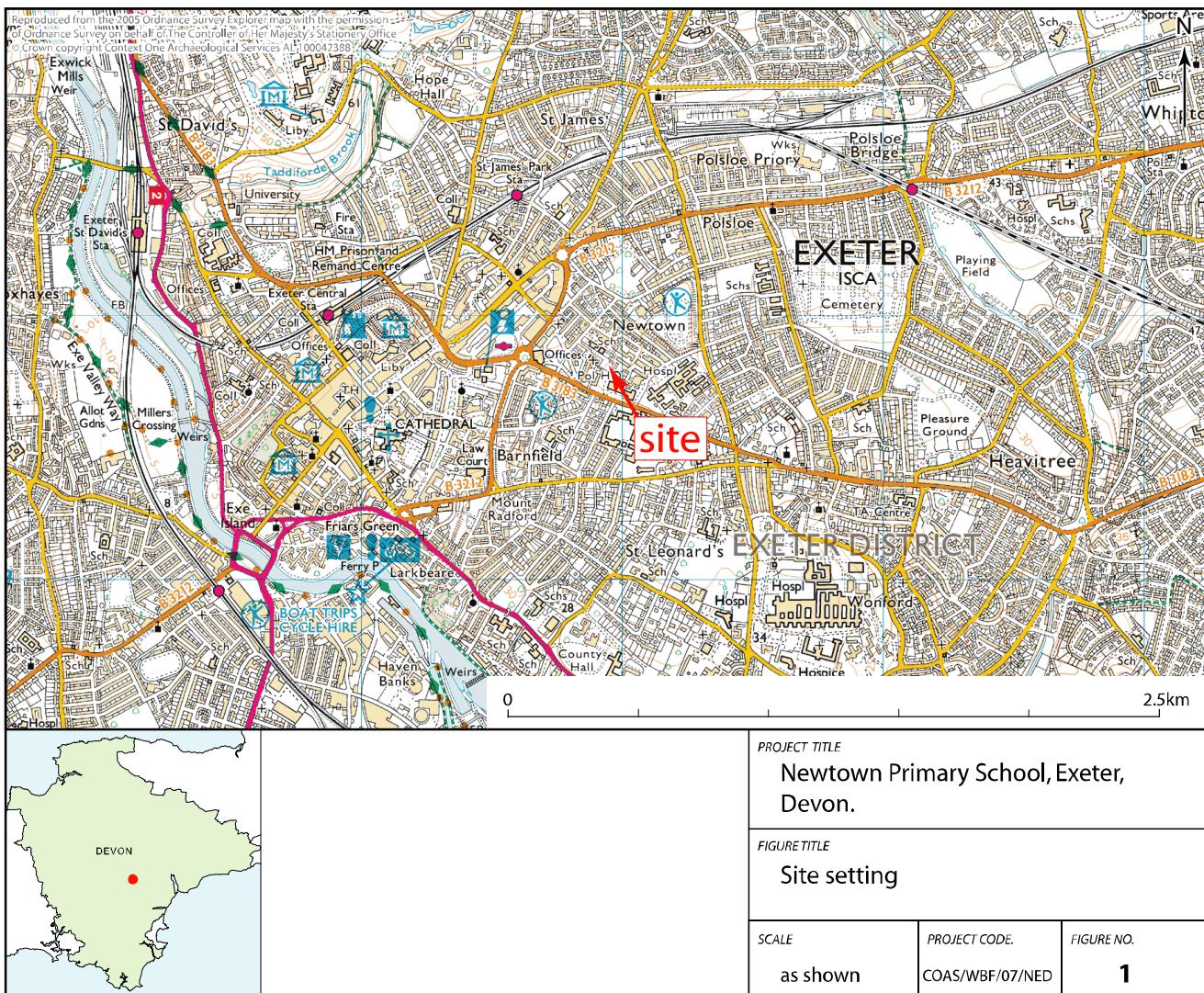
**Graphics:** Liz Gardner

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## 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1. Context One Archaeological Services Ltd (COAS) carried out an Archaeological Watching Brief at Newtown Primary School, Clifton Road, Exeter (centred on NGR SX 92950 92800) (hereafter referred to as the Site) (**Figure 1**), over three days between the 11<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> April 2007. The project was commissioned and funded by Devon County Council.
- 1.2. The investigation was requested by the Local Planning Authority (Devon County Council) on the advice of Ms Ann Dick (Archaeological Officer, Devon County Council) as a condition of planning consent (planning application reference: 06/01028/2006) for a new level playing surface.
- 1.3. The request for the investigation was made as it was considered that archaeological remains/deposits could be present on the Site, and that these would be affected by development. However, as the nature or presence of such remains/deposits has not been proven on the basis of currently available information, it was determined that a reasonable archaeological response would be to carry out a watching brief during all ground disturbance associated with the development.
- 1.4. At the request of Ms Dick, COAS issued a *Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Watching Brief: Newtown Primary School, Exeter* (March 2007), which provided a strategy for the archaeological works. This was submitted to and approved by Ms Dick prior to the commencement of the Watching Brief.
- 1.5. The request for the archaeological work follows advice given by Central Government as set out in *Planning Policy Guidance Note 1* (PPG1), *General Policy and Principles*, 1997 and *Planning Policy Guidance: Note 16* (PPG16), issued by the DoE in 1990. The recommendation also conforms to Policy CO8 of the *Devon Structure Plan 2001 to 2016* (adopted October 2004).



## 2.0. Methodology

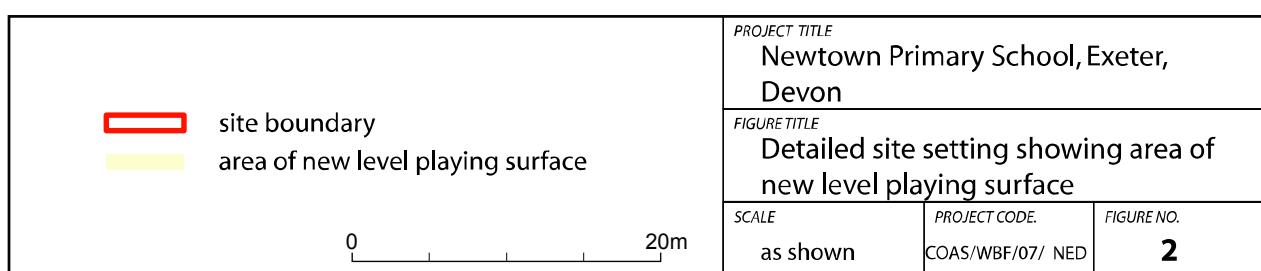
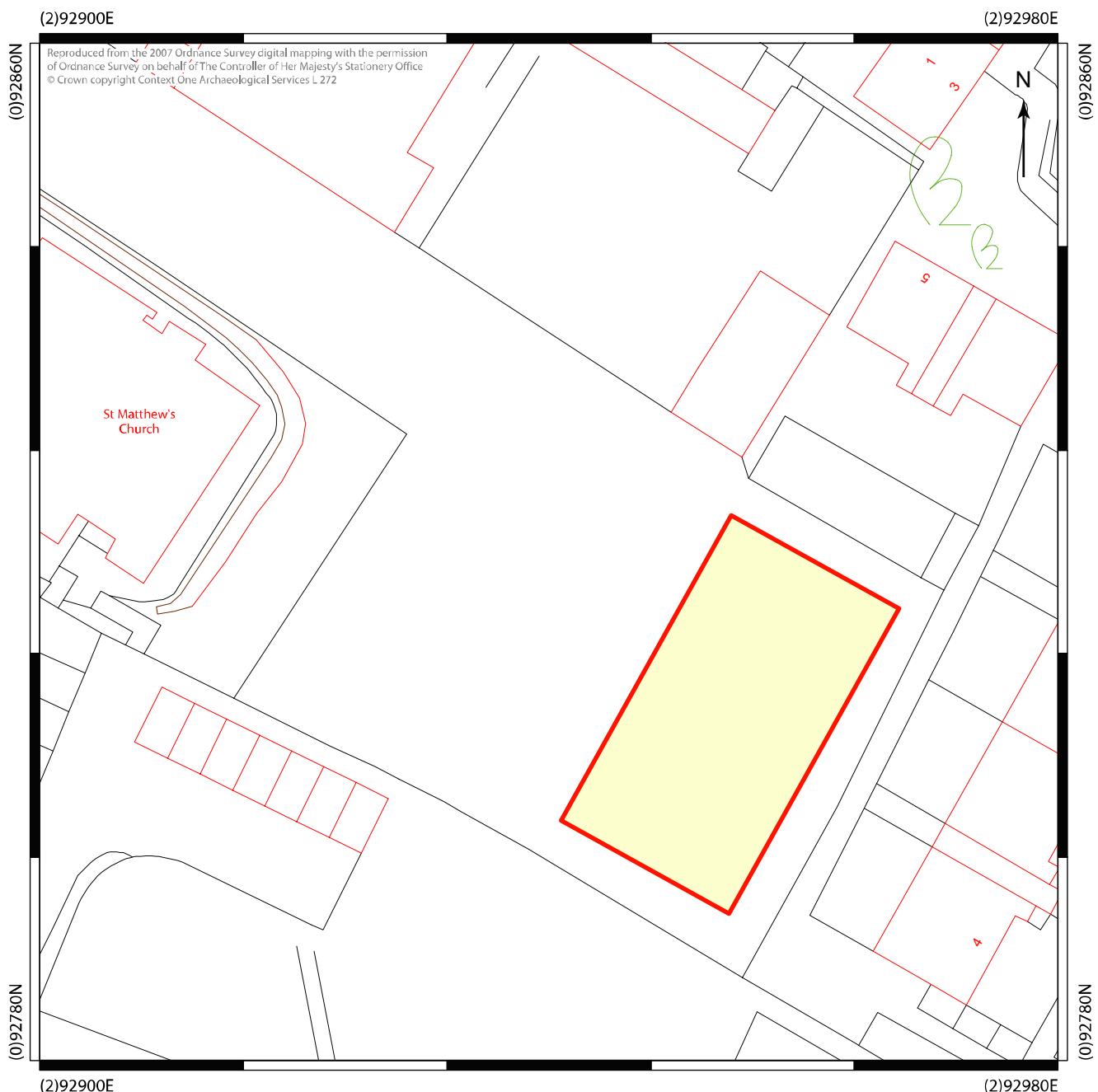
### Developer methodology

- 2.1 Soil deposits covering an area measuring 28.4m x 15.3m (**Figure 2**) in the extreme south-east corner of the School grounds were excavated by a 360° tracked machine equipped with a toothless grading bucket, under archaeological supervision. The excavation included terracing into a gentle slope that rose from west to east to provide a level surface.

### Archaeological Methodology

- 2.2 The programme of archaeological work was carried out in accordance with the *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* published by the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA) in October, 1994 (rev. September, 1999). COAS adhered to the *Code of Conduct* issued by the IFA in October, 1997, and the *Code of Approved Practice for the Regulation of Contractual Arrangements in Field Archaeology* (1990, rev. September, 2000), at all times during the course of the investigation. The current Health and Safety legislation and guidelines were followed on site.

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- 2.3 The archaeological watching brief comprised the monitoring of the mechanical excavation of the topsoil and overburden deposits and the systematic scanning of the residual topsoil for archaeological remains/deposits.
  - 2.4 A representative profile was recorded using a COAS *pro-forma* profile log sheet to illustrate the principal stratigraphic and physical characteristics of the deposits encountered.
  - 2.3 A photographic record consisting of digital photographs was maintained to demonstrate the general nature of development operations.



### 3.0 Results

- 3.1 No archaeological remains/deposits or artefacts were observed during the course of the watching brief.
- 3.2 A representative profile (Profile 1) of the deposit sequence was recorded on the eastern edge of the stripped area. This revealed a modern horizontal levelling layer (100) 0.20m thick of friable, brown (7.5YR) silty sand, comprising rounded gravel inclusions measuring less than 0.02m in diameter. Directly beneath this lay a further levelling layer (101) although this was much shallower at only 0.05m thick. This consisted of a friable, red (10YR 4/6) clay/gravel with angular gravel inclusions. This in turn, overlay a localised demolition/construction layer (102) deriving from a former modern brick built store/outbuilding. This deposit was 0.35m deep and the matrix included a dark brown, clay/gravel sand (10YR 3/3). This layer lay directly on natural, firm red clay (10R 4/6) (103). A depth of up to 0.50m of the natural geology was exposed.

### 4. Bibliography

<b>Department of the Environment, 1997</b>	<i>Planning Policy Guidance Note 1: General Policy and Principles</i> , London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office
<b>Department of the Environment, 1990</b>	<i>Planning Policy Guidance Note 16: Archaeology and Planning</i> , London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office
<b>Devon County Council, 2004</b>	<i>Devon Structure Plan 2001 to 2016</i> (adopted October 2004)
<b>English Heritage, 2002</b>	<i>Environmental Archaeology: A guide to the theory and practice of methods, from sampling and recovery to post-excavation</i> English Heritage Publications
<b>Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA), 1985 (rev. 2000)</b>	<i>Code of Conduct</i> , Reading: IFA
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<b>Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA), 1994 (rev. 1999)</b>	<i>Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief</i>
<b>Milby, S., 2007</b>	<i>Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Watching Brief: Newtown Primary School, Exeter</i> . Unpublished