

JOHN MOORE HERITAGE SERVICES

**EYNHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL,
OFF BEECH ROAD, EYNHAM, OXFORDSHIRE**

NGR SP43650978

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

On behalf of

Carillion Building

OCTOBER 2014

REPORT FOR Carillion Buildind

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Location

The site lies within the grounds of Eynsham Primary School (NGR SP43650978) at approximately 65m OD and the underlying geology is Thames Second Terrace Gravel deposits overlying Oxford clays.

1.2. Planning background

Oxfordshire County Council had approved planning permission to construct a single storey, two classroom building to include an office, storage and toilet facilities. This involved ground works for the footings and soakaway associated with the building. Due to the high archaeological potential of the site Oxfordshire County Archaeological Services (OCAS) produced a Design Brief for an archaeological watching brief and John Moore Heritage Services produced a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI), which detailed the methodology by which the watching brief was to be carried out.

1.3. Archaeological background

The site lies on the edge of Newland, a borough formally laid out by the Abbot of Eynsham in 1215. Just to the north an Anglo Saxon sunken feature building was revealed in 1938 during ground works. Anglo Saxon and Romano British pottery was recovered from a linear feature, probably a ditch that was adjacent to the building; quantities of later Romano British pottery have also been found in the area and a ditch containing Iron Age pottery was found at the School during a previous evaluation.

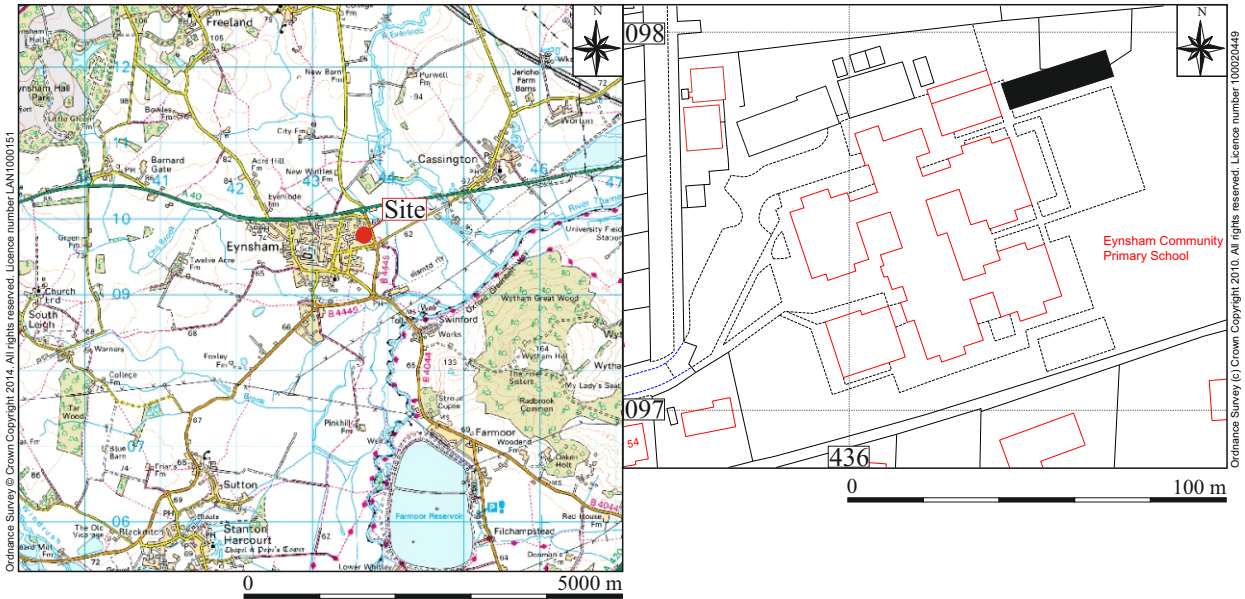
2. AIMS OF THE INVESTIGATION

The aims of the watching brief as laid out in the Written Scheme of Investigation were:

- To make a record of any significant remains revealed during the course of any operations that may disturb or destroy archaeological remains.
- In particular to record any evidence relating to Romano British and Saxon activity

3. METHODOLOGY

A 20 tonne 360° excavator fitted with a 2m ditching bucket carried out the topsoil strip and ground reduction works. The footings and soakaway were excavated with a 0.6m toothed bucket. The archaeologists were only notified when part of the foundation trenches were to be dug. The remaining parts and the drainage trench were not seen.



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Key ■ Development area ■ Monitored trenches ■ Not monitored trench areas

Figure 1: Site location

4. RESULTS

4.1. Topsoil strip and ground level reduction

Initial work on site consisted of a topsoil strip in the area of the footings trenches. Topsoil (100), a dark greyish brown clayey silt loam, was present across the whole site, ranging in depth from 50 to 100mm. Underlying topsoil (100) was subsoil (101), a soft dark greyish brown clayey silt; this layer was also present across the whole site. No archaeological features or deposits were present. After the topsoil had been stripped, the ground level was reduced across the site in order to create a level platform for the building; this necessitated removing between 0.3 – 0.4m of soil, predominantly from the higher western half of the site. This revealed (102), a firm mid brownish yellow clayey silt, interpreted as a deposit of supranatural, that was present across the whole area of reduced ground level.

4.2. Footings trenches

The footings consisted of three parallel trenches, numbered 1-3, 28m in length and 0.6m in width. The trenches were excavated to the natural geology, (103), which was a compact brownish yellow sandy gravel identified as the underlying Thames Second Terrace Gravel Deposit. The depth at the western end of the trenches was 2.6m, decreasing to 0.5m at the eastern end. In section, the subsoil (101) was shown to be 0.5m thick at the western end of the footings, decreasing to 0.2m at the eastern end, while supranatural (102) was 2.1m thick at the western end, decreasing to 0.3m at the eastern end.

4.3. Soakaway

Excavation of the soakaway took place without the presence of an archaeologist, due to lack of notification by site operatives.

5. FINDS

No artefacts were found

6. DISCUSSION

No archaeological remains were found..

7. ARCHIVE

The records will be kept with John Moore Heritage Services.

8. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Institute for Archaeologists, 2008 *Standard and Guidance for an archaeological watching brief*

Plate 1: Site after topsoil strip, looking west.





Plate 2: Site after ground reduction and excavation of footings trench 1, looking west.



Plate 3: Section of northern footings trench showing (101), (102) and (103); looking north.