

The Canterbury Academy Knight Avenue Canterbury Kent

Archaeological evaluation


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Ross Lane

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Canterbury Archaeological Trust Limited

92a Broad Street · Canterbury · Kent · CT1 2LU

Tel +44 (0)1227 462062 · Fax +44 (0)1227 784724 · email: admin@canterburytrust.co.uk

www.canterburytrust.co.uk



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Summary

Between 1st and 2nd June 2016, the Canterbury Archaeological Trust (CAT) undertook an archaeological evaluation of land within the grounds of The Canterbury Academy, Knight Avenue, Canterbury, Kent CT2 8QA. The work was commissioned by The Canterbury Academy as part of preparations for the proposed development of a new school building.

A total of three evaluation trenches were excavated that represented a 5.5% sample of the proposed development area. The site lay on a moderate 14° slope, falling from a height of 24.82m OD in the west to 22.98m OD in the east. The evaluation identified natural geology at a depth of between 1.1 and 1.95m beneath the present ground surface. It consisted of brown silty clay with no evidence for a buried topsoil. This indicates that the true level of the natural had been truncated.

No archaeological features were observed cutting the natural horizon and no features or layers of archaeological significance were identified during the evaluation.

The natural was covered across the PDA by a large laminated sequence of redeposited natural alluvium, London Clay, Clay with flint and gravel. This formed part of landscaping works associated with historical construction works for the present school buildings and playing field.

The confidence rating for this evaluation is HIGH

1 Introduction

1.1 Project background

1.1.1 An archaeological evaluation of land within the grounds of The Canterbury Academy, Knight Avenue, Canterbury, Kent CT2 8QA was undertaken by Canterbury Archaeological Trust (CAT) between 1st and 2nd June 2016.

1.1.2 The work was commissioned by The Canterbury Academy as part of preparations for the proposed development of new school buildings. This is to comprise the erection of a classroom block providing 20 new classrooms, drama suite and ancillary accommodation adjoined to the existing school building via a single-storey link. The creation of 40 new car parking spaces will be covered by a separate phase of watching brief work.

1.1.3 A planning application CA/16/00064/FUL has been submitted to the Local Planning Authority (Canterbury City Council), and was granted permission with the following condition (5);

'No development other than the formation of the hereby approved car park, shall take place until the applicant, or their agents or successors in title, has secured the implementation of

i archaeological field evaluation works in accordance with a specification and written timetable which has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority; and

ii following on from the evaluation, any safeguarding measures to ensure preservation in situ of important archaeological remains and/or further archaeological investigation and recording in accordance with a specification and timetable which has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority.

REASON: To ensure that features of archaeological interest are properly examined and recorded in accordance with policy BE16 of the Canterbury District Local Plan 2006, policy HE11 of the Canterbury District Local Plan Publication Draft 2014 and the National Planning Policy Framework.

1.1.4 The evaluation therefore represents the first phase of archaeological assessment for the Proposed Development Area (PDA), and was conducted in accordance with a specification (written scheme of investigations; WSI), prepared by CAT and approved by Canterbury City Council's Archaeological Officer (CAT 2016).

1.2 Location, topography and geology

1.2.1 The Canterbury Academy lies approximately 0.5km to the west of the historic walls of Canterbury city and 0.74km to the south-west of the line of St Dunstan's Street. It is situated directly to the south of London Road estate on the south side of Knight Avenue. The PDA under evaluation (Fig. 1) was situated directly to the south of existing school buildings (at NGR 613751, 157621 centred) and was approximately 870m² in extent.

1.2.2 The PDA was roughly rectangular in shape, approximately 39.5m at its longest by 22m wide aligned north-west to south-east. It was bounded to the north by existing school buildings that included the Discovery Building and the John Tyler building, to the west by a large terraced playing field, to the east by a terraced tennis court and to the south by open grassland that extended for approximately 50m before truncation by a railway cutting.

1.2.3 According to current data from the British Geological Survey (<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html> accessed 26.05.16), bedrock geology

within the site is shown to be Thanet Formation – Sand, Silt and Clay, overlain by Head – Silt and Clay.

- 1.2.4 The PDA lies on an artificially terraced slope that rises moderately steeply from 23.78m OD in the east to the level of the playing field of 27.41m OD in the west (Plate 1). The ground within the PDA was laid to grass and was bisected to the north-east by a tarmac surfaced footpath. The site lies on the parish boundaries of St Dunstan's to the east and Harbledown to the west within the Canterbury district.

1.3 Archaeological background and potential

- 1.3.1 The potential of this area has been gauged in relation to the proximity of known archaeological remains as set out in the WSI (CAT 2016), the findings of which are presented here in summary.

Prehistoric (c 500,000BP – AD 43)

- 1.3.2 River terrace gravels that have the potential to hold Palaeolithic material dating to over 100,000 years before present (BP) are not expected within the PDA.
- 1.3.3 Work undertaken by the Canterbury Archaeological Trust in 1999 beneath the running track and sports hall c 60m to the east of the PDA, revealed a scattering of features of probable Iron Age date to the north and north-east of the site (Rady 1999, 6). Further work undertaken immediately to the north of the school buildings (c 90m from the PDA) in 2004 identified additional features, two of which contained flint cores and flakes. Work undertaken at Canterbury Primary School in 2014, about 200m to the west of the PDA, identified no surviving archaeological remains (Webster 2014, 8).
- 1.3.4 It is possible that the 1999 and 2004 sites lie on the periphery of a settlement that is perhaps centred on the higher ground to the north. The material from the 1999 evaluation suggests that this settlement was almost certainly Iron Age in date (Rady 1999, 7).
- 1.3.5 Earlier work has shown evidence of prehistoric settlement activity on the west banks of the River Stour. Traces of Neolithic and Belgic settlement were revealed in the Whitehall Gardens area in the 1950s, but this activity seems to have been localised and probably concentrated around an early crossing point of the Stour (Frere *et al* 1987, 45). Roman Watling Street lies approximately 200 metres to the north of the present site and may have utilised this crossing point.

Romano-British (c AD 43 – 450)

- 1.3.6 The site lies approximately half a kilometre west of the third-century walls of the Roman town of Canterbury (*Durovernum Cantiacorum*). The majority of what is known about the extra-mural activity on the western side of the Roman town has come from excavations and observations to the south-west of St Dunstan's Street where over twenty sites have been excavated since 1926. The more recent excavations suggest an extra-mural suburb was established in the early second century and abandoned by the end of the third century. The suburb appears to have been industrial in nature and was served by a regular network of gravel paved streets (Rady 1999, 4; Bennett 1991, 8).
- 1.3.7 Much of the area south-west of St Dunstan's Street and south-east of London Road was used for burial in extensive formal cremation and inhumation cemeteries with recent work undertaken in 1982 and 2001 (Frere *et al* 1987, 70-1-73; Bennett 1987 54-55; Diack 2003: 14). The known extents of these Roman cemeteries and a possible Anglo-Saxon successor lie approximately 400m to the east of the present development (Rady 1999, 4).

Anglo-Saxon and medieval (c 450 – 1540)

- 1.3.8 No Anglo-Saxon or medieval remains were identified within the site or within a 500m radius.

Post-medieval and modern (c 1540 – 2000)

- 1.3.9 No post-medieval archaeological sites are identified near the PDA but several standing structures are recorded within a 500m radius. These all relate to the small village of Harbledown located 540m to the north-west of the PDA and include the nineteenth-century Harbledown court and cottages.
- 1.3.10 Further information on the above is provided in the County Historic Environment Record (HER) for Kent, which is located at KCC Strategic Planning, County Hall, Maidstone, and the online Canterbury Urban Database (UAD).

1.4 Aims and objectives

- 1.4.1 The archaeological investigation was undertaken in accordance with those methods outlined in the WSIs (CAT 2016), and in accordance with methods of practice outlined by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA 2014).
- 1.4.2 The principal objective of the evaluation was to establish whether there are any surviving archaeological deposits or features at the site which may be affected by the proposed development, and relate them, where possible, to the known archaeological/historical background. In doing so the evaluation would aim to ascertain the extent, depth below ground surface, depth of deposit, character, significance and condition of any archaeological remains on the site and the impact of the proposed development on them.

1.5 Methodology

- 1.5.1 The works were undertaken within the overall supervision of The Canterbury Academy's Vice Principal. The PDA was enclosed on all sides by heras fencing and accessed via a pre-determined route.
- 1.5.2 The evaluation was to have comprised three 20m long by 1.6m wide trenches that provided an approximate 11% sample of the PDA (870m²). During the evaluation the depth of overburden deposits above the natural and the lack of any archaeological evidence, meant that it was not thought necessary to excavate all parts of the trench to full depth. After consultation with the Canterbury City Archaeological Officer (2nd June 2016) it was considered acceptable to excavate the trenches in 5 to 10m segments where possible. This resulted in four 5m long by 1.6m wide trenches and one 10m long by 1.6m wide trench that provided an approximate 5.5% sample of the PDA.
- 1.5.3 Mechanical excavation was limited to the removal of overburden to expose the uppermost archaeological deposits or the natural geological surface, whichever was the higher. Ground reduction was undertaken using an eight tonne back-acting 360° tracked mechanical excavator with a flat-bladed bucket under constant archaeological supervision. All undifferentiated topsoil, made ground, and modern overburden was removed in spits of c100mm thickness. Following the mechanical clearance of overburden, excavation was undertaken by hand to expose the top of any significant archaeological horizon.
- 1.5.4 Excavation was generally limited to a depth of 1.2m below the existing ground surface as required by health and safety regulations. To attain a meaningful result however, it was necessary to excavate some parts of the trenches to a significantly greater depth than this. These deeper parts of the trench were mostly recorded from ground level and were not entered.

1.5.5 Any archaeological features encountered were mapped, recorded and photographed.

1.5.6 Care was taken not to damage archaeological deposits or structures by unnecessary excavation. In particular the underlying geological deposits were not reduced but identified and recorded in terms of extent and depth below the present surface (also expressed as height above the Ordnance Datum).

Soil sampling

1.5.7 No suitable deposits were identified for environmental soil sampling

Safety

1.5.8 A general site safety strategy was formulated and implemented prior to the commencement of all fieldworks. Safety procedures followed the guidelines established by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists in *Policy statement on Health and Safety* and in the *Standards and guidance* and the practical guidance in the SCAUM manual *Health and Safety in field archaeology*.

1.5.9 All necessary precautions to the satisfaction of the Statutory or other Service Authorities and the landowner concerned were taken to avoid interference with or damage to services, and complied with any of their Codes of Practice that were applicable. Prior to excavation all trench locations were subjected to a magnetic survey by CAT scan to determine the location of existing services.

General

1.5.10 A detailed calendar for the implementation and completion of the archaeological investigation was arranged between the archaeological contractor and the Canterbury City Council Archaeological Officer. All archaeological works were monitored by the officer and any changes to the specified WSI were confirmed. The officer was informed as to both the commencement and completion of the archaeological evaluation.

Recording

1.5.11 All archaeological contexts were recorded individually on CAT *pro forma* trench record sheets. One long section was drawn at a scale of 1:20, and the base planned at a scale of 1:50 on polyester based drawing film.

1.5.12 Any deposit that could be distinguished from those above and below was considered as a context and recorded individually; these stratigraphic units were numbered sequentially and are shown below in brackets e.g. (101). Where cut archaeological features have been identified, the cut is also considered a separate context or stratigraphic unit and is shown in square brackets, thus [100].

1.5.13 All survey was undertaken and tied to the Ordnance Survey National Grid and Datum using differential GPS (Leica Viva GS08) connected to Ordnance Survey correctional data in real time via live internet feed from Leica SmartNet. A positional accuracy of within 50mm (3D) is achieved using the ETRS89 to OSGB conversion via the OSTN02 projection and the OSGM Geoid.

1.5.14 A full record of levels above Ordnance Datum of archaeological features and deposits exposed and excavated has been compiled and documented within the site report.

1.5.15 All Ordnance Survey data was reproduced by permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of HMSO © Crown Copyright. All rights reserved. Licence No. AL100021009.

- 1.5.16 A full colour digital photographic record of all phases of the excavation works was produced. The photographic record comprises part of the site archive.
- 1.5.17 The site archive, including all the project records and cultural material produced by the project, is to be prepared in accordance with the United Kingdom Institute for Conservation guidelines for the preparation of archives for long term storage (UKIC 1990). A site code (CAC EV 16) was provided by CAT, and all records can be referenced from this code.
- 1.5.18 The project archive is presently held in the offices of the Canterbury Archaeological Trust (92a Broad Street, Canterbury, Kent CT1 2LU).

Assessment and reporting

- 1.5.19 The site archive was collated after the completion of the investigations, with all site drawings digitised, and records and finds cross-referenced and ordered as an internally consistent permanent record. The site archive comprises two elements, the documentary (written, drawn, photographic and electronic) record and the material remains where recovered. A full archival indexed catalogue of the documentary site archive has been prepared.
- 1.5.20 No parts of the documentary site archive is to be discarded. The documentary site archive is also to be distinguished from records created during project management.

2 Results

- 2.1.1 The evaluation comprised a total of 3 trenches arrayed across the footprint of the proposed building within the PDA. Due to the depth of the overburden that exceeded in places the safe maximum depth of 1.2m beneath the current ground surface the volume excavated was reduced. Two segments up to 5m length were cut at either end of Trench 1 and 2 that reached the height of surviving natural, while Trench 3 was shortened to 10m.

2.2 Trench 1 (Figure 2; Plates 2–4)

- 2.2.1 The trench was 20m long and 1.6m wide aligned roughly east to west; two segments were excavated, up to 5m long at the east end and a short 2m long slot at the west end. The existing ground surface laid to grass sloped at an 83° moderate angle from 26.36m OD in the west to 23.79m OD in the east. The slope appeared to be artificially created and may not represent the natural slope of the ground that could not be identified in the immediate vicinity.
- 2.2.2 The natural consisted of unweathered brown silty clay that lay at a height of between 22.98m OD to the east and 24.25m OD to the west approximately 1.12m to 1.97m beneath the current ground surface. The natural sloped at a 14° moderate angle and contained areas of grey staining and occasional small to medium flint inclusions.
- 2.2.3 No archaeological features were observed cutting the natural horizon. At the western end of the trench the natural was covered by a 0.45m thick deposit (105) of dark grey firm silty clay with common small flint, metal, timber and common building material (CBM) inclusions.
- 2.2.4 Deposit (105) and the remainder of the trench was covered by a laminated deposit (103) that was 0.82m thick at the eastern end and 1.2m thick at the western end of the trench. This consisted of alternate 0.15m thick layers of orange brown firm sandy clay with common small sub angular flint inclusions and light blueish grey firm clay.
- 2.2.5 Mixed deposit (103) was sealed throughout the trench by a 0.2m thick deposit (102) of grey clay silt with occasional small to medium flint inclusions. This in turn was sealed by a 0.2m thick deposit (101) of brown friable clay silt topsoil with occasional small flint inclusions.

2.3 Trench 2 (Figure 2; Plates 5–6)

- 2.3.1 The trench was 20m long and 1.6m wide, aligned roughly north to south and two segments were excavated, up to 5m long at the south end and 3m long at the north end. The existing ground surface laid to grass sloped gently down from 25.43m OD in the north to 25.21m OD in the south.
- 2.3.2 The natural consisted of brown silty clay with occasional small rounded flint inclusions at a height of between 24.16m in the north to 24.04m OD in the south, between 1.2 and 1.3m beneath the existing ground surface. No archaeological features were identified cutting the natural.
- 2.3.3 At the south end of the trench the natural was covered by a 0.02m thick lens (204) of reddish brown iron rich clay. This lens and the natural throughout the trench was covered by a laminated deposit (203) that was 0.9m thick to the north and 1m thick to the south. This consisted of alternate 0.2m thick layers of light reddish yellow sandy clay with occasional flint inclusions, fine blueish grey clay and to the north light reddish brown silty clay with chalk inclusions.
- 2.3.4 Deposit 203 was sealed across the trench by a 0.2 to 0.1m thick layer (202) of brown silty clay with occasional small flint inclusions. This was capped by a 0.15m thick layer (201) of dark grey silty clay topsoil with occasional small flint inclusions.

2.4 Trench 3 (Figure 2; Plates 7–8)

- 2.4.1 The trench was 10m long and 1.6m wide aligned roughly north-west to south-east. The existing ground surface was laid to grass and sloped at a 14° moderate angle from 25.93m OD in the north-west to 24.67m OD in the south-east. The slope appeared to be artificially created and may not represent the natural slope of the ground that could not be identified in the immediate vicinity.
- 2.4.2 The natural consisted of brown silty clay that lay at a height of between 24.82m OD to the north-west and 24.02m OD to the south-east, approximately 0.81m to 0.72m beneath the current ground surface. The natural sloped at an 86° moderate angle and contained occasional small to medium flint inclusions.
- 2.4.3 No archaeological features were identified cutting the natural. It was covered across the trench by a 0.2m thick deposit (305) of firm dark grey sandy silty clay with occasional small flint inclusions. Extending for 6.5m from the north-west end of the trench deposit 305 was covered by a 0.2m thick deposit (304) of dark brown silty clay with occasional to common medium to large flint inclusions. This in turn was sealed by a 0.2m thick deposit (303) of fine brown blueish grey clay.
- 2.4.4 Deposit 303 was cut by a north-west to south-east aligned service trench [302] up to 0.6m wide that contained a mixed fill (301) of grey, orange and yellow clay with occasional small to medium flint inclusions. The service trench and the entire trench was covered by a 0.25m thick deposit (300) of dark grey clay silt topsoil with occasional small flint inclusions.

3 The finds

- 3.1.1 No dateable artefactual material was recovered during the present stage of archaeological investigation.

4 Archaeological interpretation, conclusion and development impact

4.1 Interpretation

- 4.1.1 Natural geology was encountered in all three trenches and lay on a 14° moderate slope at a height of between 24.82m OD in the west and 22.98m OD in the east. Across the PDA the natural was located at between 1.1m in the east and 1.97m in the west beneath the current ground surface. The slope of the natural reflected the 83° slope of the present ground surface.
- 4.1.2 No archaeological features were observed cutting the natural horizon. There was no presence of a buried topsoil or other natural deposits. This, and the absence of weathering of the subsoils indicates that the true level of the natural had been truncated across the PDA during historic construction work for school buildings and the playing field. Thus the slope of the natural and current ground surface had been artificially modified.
- 4.1.3 Across the PDA the level of the ground had been significantly raised by over 1m with the introduction of bulk material. An initial deposit of what appeared to be natural Alluvium with modern intrusive material (105) and (305) present in Trenches 1 and 3 was sealed by a large laminated sequence (103, 203 and 303) of redeposited natural London Clay and clay with flint and gravel. This type of geology is present in areas approximately 1.2km to the north, while Alluvium is present to the south and it seems likely therefore that both were imported to the present PDA.
- 4.1.4 The made ground was compacted and consolidated with a deposit of subsoil silty clay that formed a bedding deposit across the PDA for topsoil and turf.

4.2 Conclusion

- 4.2.1 The archaeological survey provided a good 5.5% sample of the proposed footprint of the new building and associated groundworks within the PDA. The confidence rating for the results is HIGH.
- 4.2.2 The investigation identified no archaeological features within the PDA due in part perhaps, to historic landscaping that appears to have truncated the true level of the natural geology. The area within the PDA was dominated by an artificially created bank that was formed by up to 1.2m of redeposited natural of mixed types, at least some of which must have been imported from elsewhere.
- 4.2.3 This report outlines the results of the archaeological evaluation and forms part of the primary archive under the project code CAC-EV-16. A summary report has been prepared (appendix 1) to be submitted to Kent County Council in the form of a HER record. A full accessioned version of this report will be available online at www.canterburytrust.co.uk.

4.3 Development impact

- 4.3.1 The proposed development will include ground reduction across the western part of the PDA, to form a level terrace for the new build. According to drawing No. 15/ 0337_05, revision C, supplied by OSG Architecture Ltd (Wyseplan Building, Occupation Road, Wye, Ashford, Kent TN25 5EN, tel. 01233 812148) the new ground level for the build will be at 25.270 m OD on the western side of the footprint and 25.120 to the east (with some internal levels being higher). This is above the level of the natural subsoil (24.82m OD in the west and 22.98m OD in the east). Even with base formation levels, barring any foundations below this for which details are not known, it is unlikely that the new build will have any significant effect on the natural subsoil horizon below the made ground. In addition, no archaeological features or layers of significance were encountered within the present programme of works. The level of the natural geology had

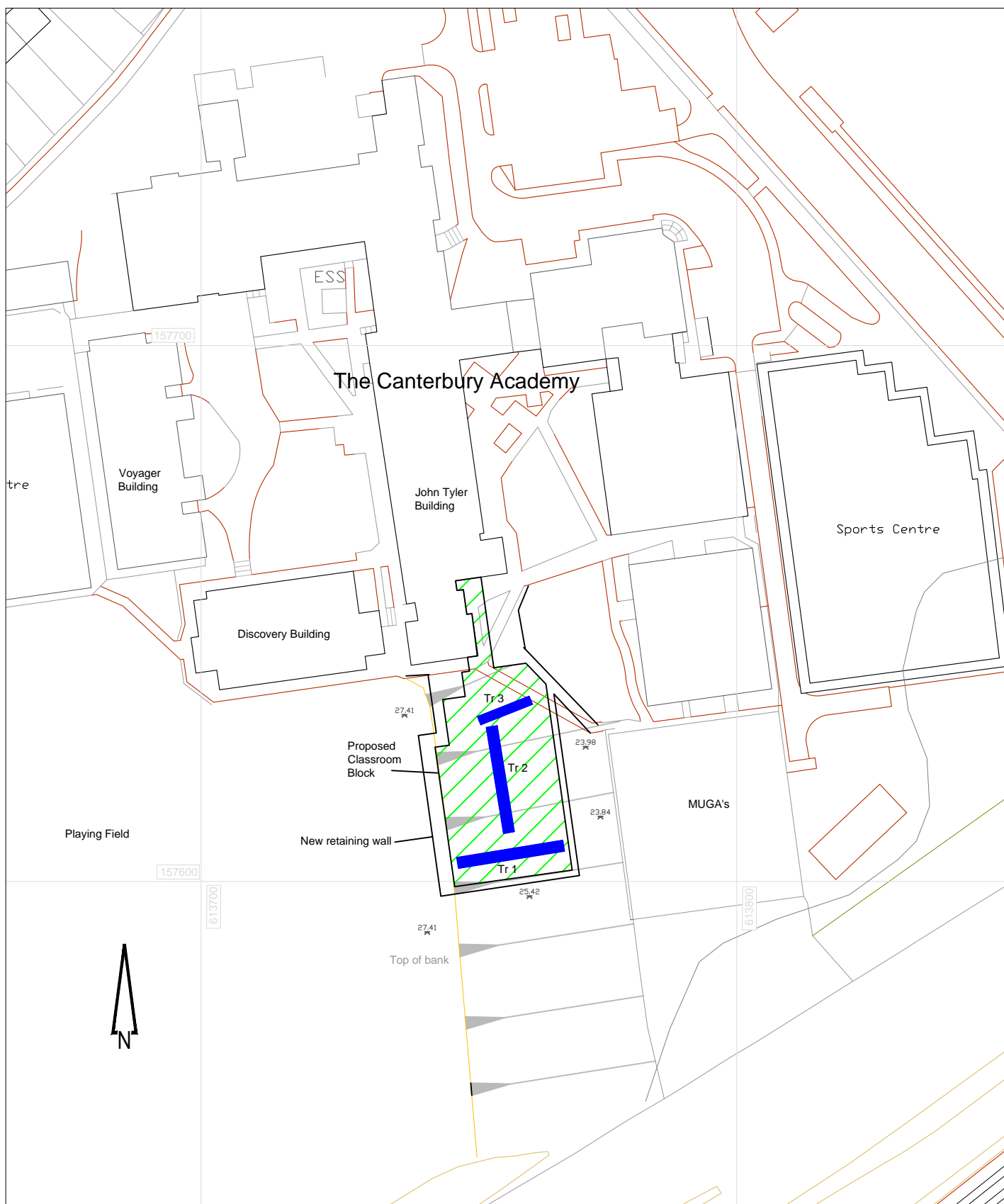
been historically truncated and hence the potential impact of the development on the archaeological resource is considered to be very low.

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5 Appendix I: Kent County Council Sites and Monuments Record Form

Site Name: Canterbury Academy, Canterbury Site Code: CAC EV 16	
Site Address: The Canterbury Academy, Knight Avenue, Canterbury, Kent CT2 8QA District : Canterbury Parish : St Dunstan's / Harbledown	
<i>Between 1st and 2nd June 2016, the Canterbury Archaeological Trust (CAT) undertook an archaeological evaluation of land directly to the south of existing buildings at The Canterbury Academy, Canterbury, Kent. The work was commissioned The Canterbury Academy as part of preparations for the proposed redevelopment of land for a new school building.</i>	
Periods : • None	
National Grid Reference: 613751, 157621 centred	
Type of Fieldwork: Evaluation	
Date of Recording: 06 June 2016	
Contractor : Canterbury Archaeological Trust 92A Broad Street. Canterbury. Kent. CT1 2LU Tel: (01227) 462062 Fax: (01227) 784724	
Title and Author of accompanying report: The Canterbury Academy, Knight Avenue, Canterbury, Kent Archaeological Evaluation Report Ross Lane	
Summary of Field Results: <i>A total of three evaluation trenches were excavated that represented a 5.5% sample of the proposed development area. The site lay on a moderate 14° slope from a height of 24.82m OD in the west to 22.98m OD in the east. The evaluation identified natural geology at a depth of between 1.1 and 1.95m beneath the present ground surface. It consisted of brown silty clay with no evidence for a buried topsoil deposits that indicated the true level of the natural had been truncated. No archaeological features were observed cutting the natural horizon and no features or layers of archaeological significance were identified during the evaluation.</i> <i>The natural was covered across the PDA by a large laminated sequence of redeposited natural alluvium, London Clay, Clay with flint and gravel. This formed part of landscaping works associated with historical construction works for the present school buildings and playing field.</i>	
Location of Archive: CANTERBURY ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST	
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	The Canterbury Academy	RL	1:1000 @A4
	PROJECT CODE	DATE	LAST REVISION
	CAC-EV-16	06/06/16	---
SITE ADDRESS	CHECKED		

REF/DRG NO.		N/Projects Active/Project Managers/Jon Rady/Canterbury Academy, Canterbury/Trench plan	
Canterbury Academy Knight Avenue Canterbury Kent		Fig 1: Canterbury Academy trench plan	

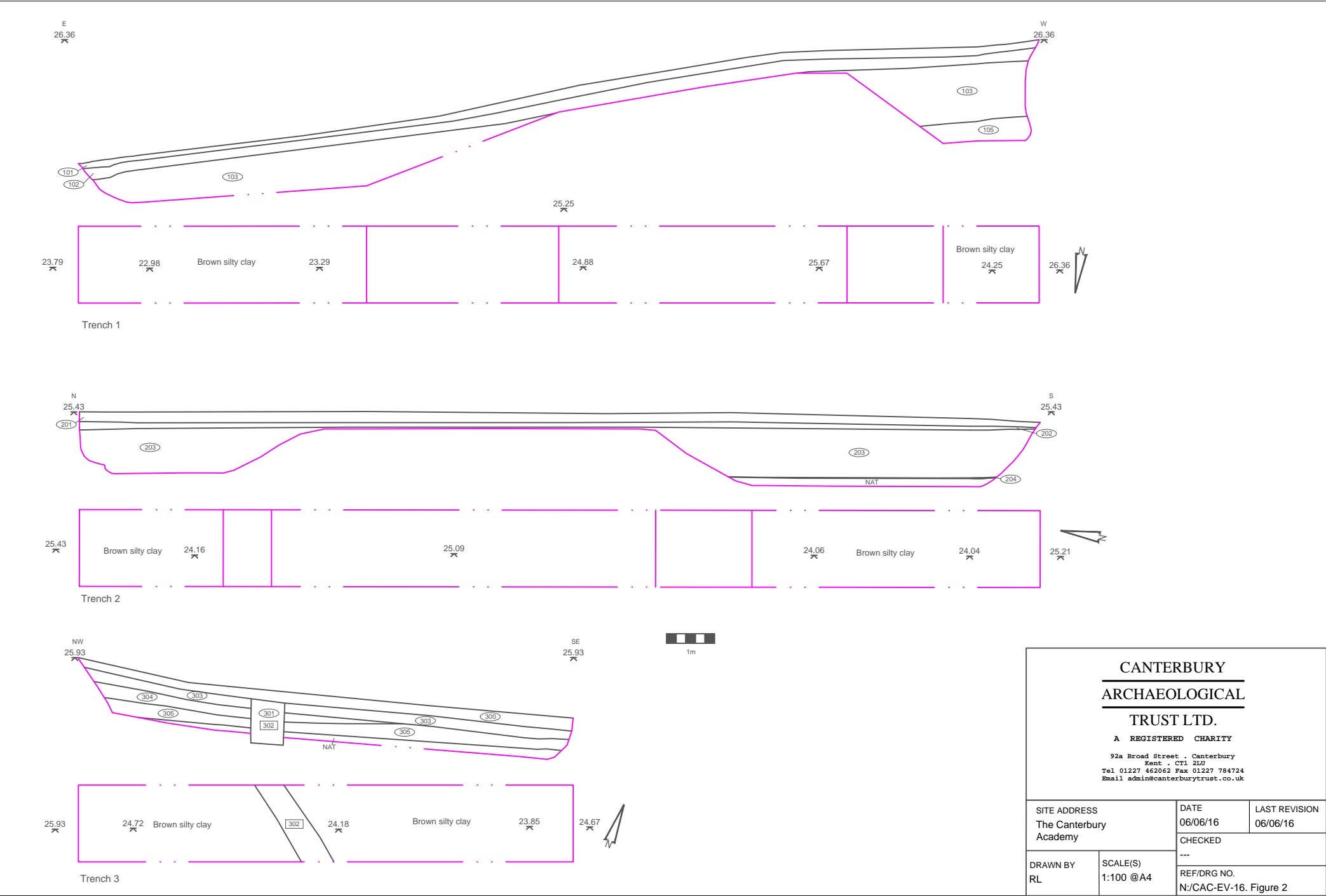


Figure 2: Trenches 1, 2 and 3 plan and sections



Plate 1: Pre excavation looking northeast



Plate 2: Trench 1 east end looking west scale 1m



Plate 3: Trench 1 looking east scale 1m



Plate 4: Trench 1, north facing section western end scale 1m



Plate 5: Trench 2 looking north scale 1m



Plate 6: Trench 2 west facing section north end looking east scale 1m



Plate 7: Trench 3 south facing section looking northeast scale 1m



Plate 8: Trench 3 south facing section looking north scale 1m