
KNAVESMIRE SCHOOL, CAMPLESHON ROAD, YORK.

REPORT ON
AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF
OSA REPORT No: OSA13WB07

February 2013

OSA

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Report Summary.

REPORT NO: OSA13WB07

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COUNTY: North Yorkshire

NATIONAL GRID REFERENCE: SE 5987 5013

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1.0 Abstract.

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by On-Site-Archaeology Ltd during ground-works associated with the construction of a new hall and classroom extension at Knavesmire School, Campleshon Road, York.

The earliest deposits detected during the investigation were a plough/subsoil sealed by former land surface probably of a post-medieval or later date. A sequence of tipping deposits were also recorded that are most likely related to the backfilling of the Campleshon Pond, which occupied part of the area prior to the school construction during the early 20th century.

No deposits or features earlier than the post-medieval or later date were detected during the investigation.

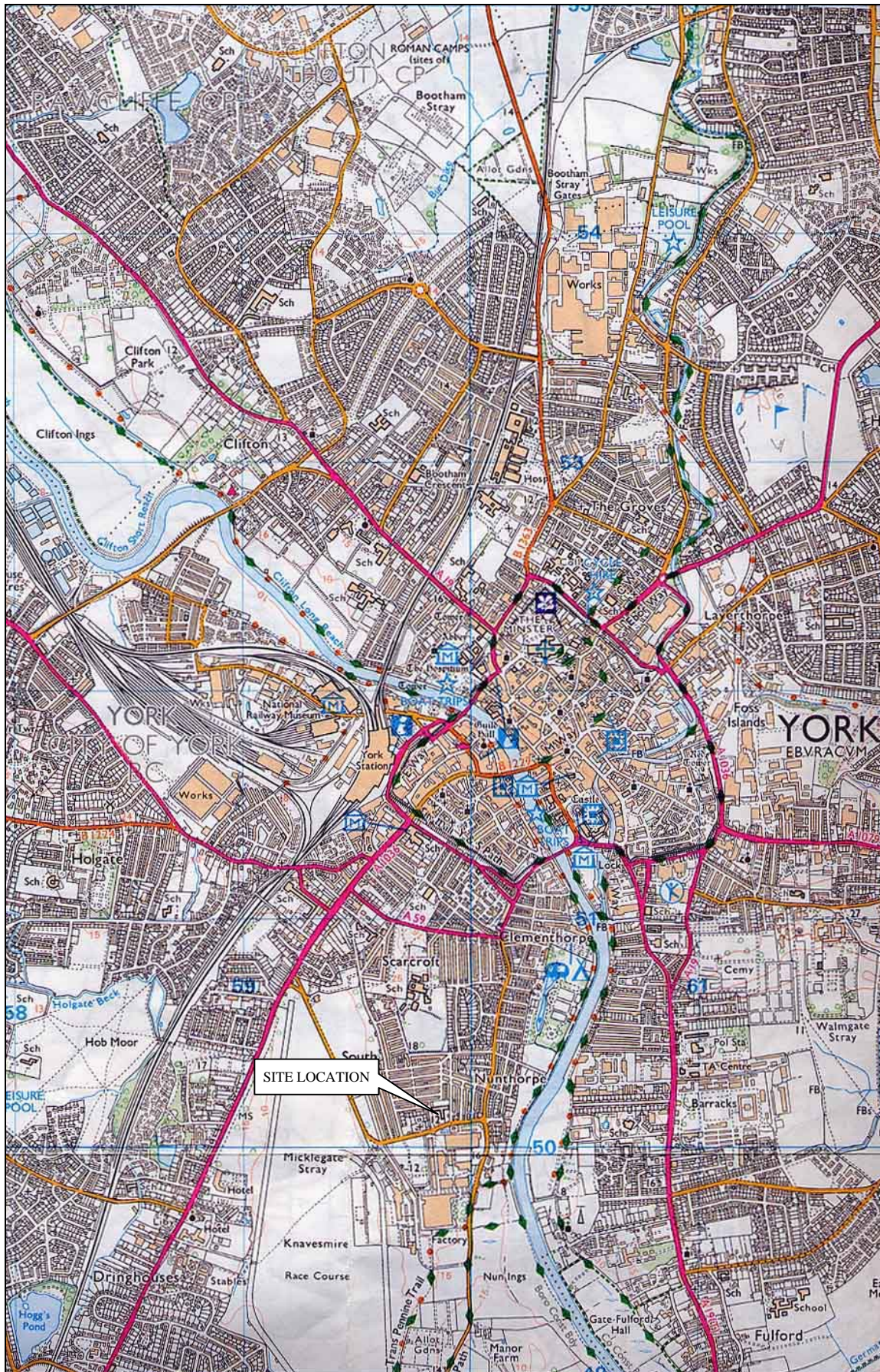


Figure 1. Site Location SE 5987 5013 (NGR).

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2.0 Site Location, Geology and Topology.

Knavesmire School is situated within the southern part of the city of York and centred at National Grid Reference SE 5987 5013 (Figure 1). The school is bounded by Campleshon Road to the south, Lorne Street to the west, Trafalgar Street to the east and residential properties to the north (Figure 2). The site had an approximate ground surface level on the northern most boundary at 11.90mAOD. The superficial geology is comprised of clayey-gravelly-sand - York Moraine Member and the bedrock is Sherwood Sandstone Group (British Geological Survey - bgs.ac.uk). The investigation area was located within the southeastern corner of the school property within a tarmac surfaced playground area that sloped down to the north to approximately 11mAOD.

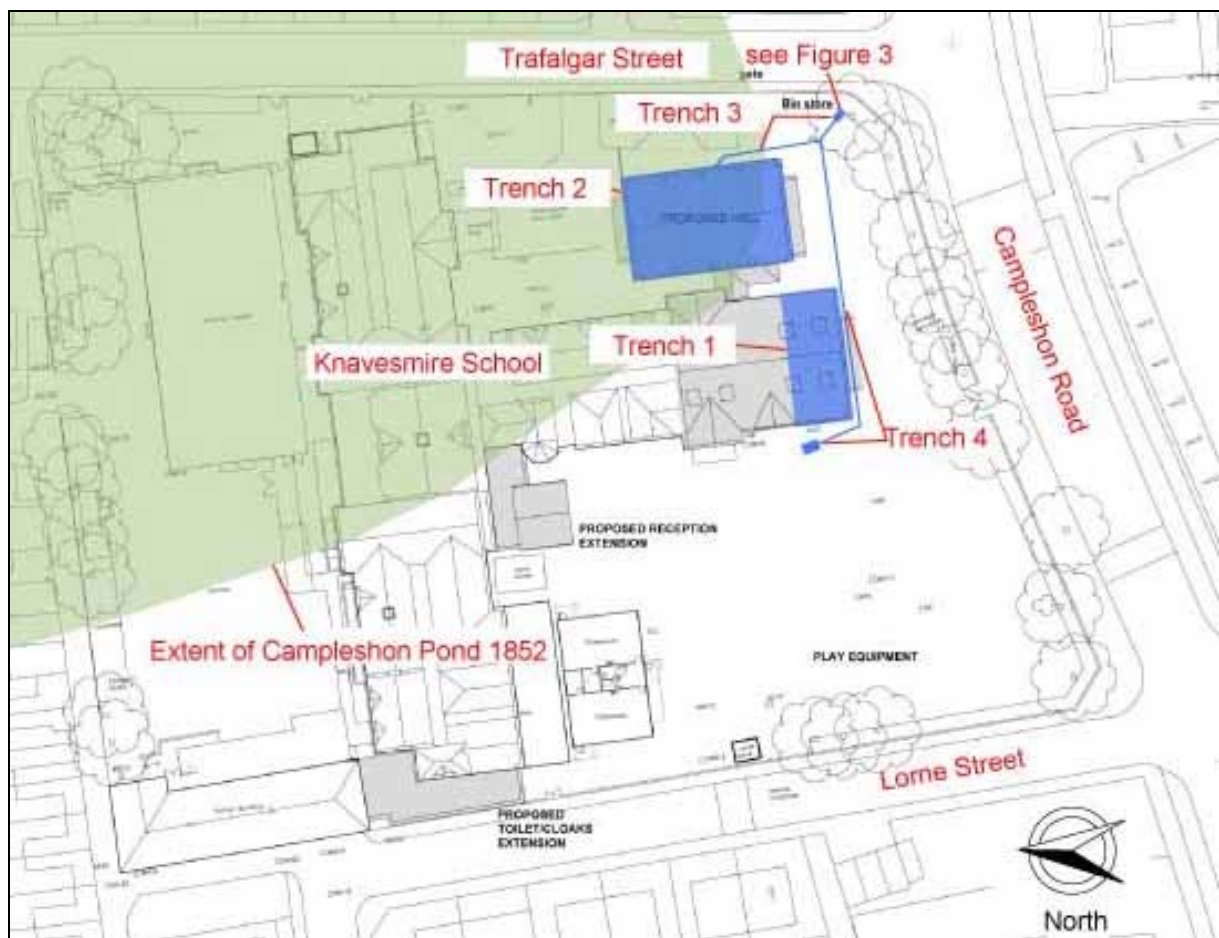


Figure 2. Trench locations and southern extent of former Campleshon Pond as shown on 1852 OS map.

3.0 Archaeological and Historical Background

The following information has been reproduced from 'Archaeological Statement; Knavesmire School, Campleshon Road' produced by City of York Council;

There are eight archaeological events recorded within this 500m search area (Knavesmire School). Three are aerial photographs; four are archaeological interventions (evaluations or watching briefs).

Events EYO128 and EYO438 are of most relevance to this proposed development. These events relate to an archaeological evaluation and watching brief at 292 Bishopthorpe Road. Four archaeological evaluation trenches (EYO128) were excavated in 1998. Trench 1 produced deposits relating to Roman and Medieval agricultural activity. Trench 2 produced drainage ditches that dated to the 2nd or 3rd centuries AD. A shallow feature of uncertain function and dated by pottery sherds to around 14th -16th centuries was also noted in this trench. The other trenches proved to be remarkably sterile archaeologically with modern debris overlying the natural clay and gravel levels. These findings were confirmed during the watching brief (EYO438) held during construction works.

On the 1852 OS plan of the City of York Campleshon Pond covers a large part of the site now occupied by Knavesmire School (Figure 2). The site of Campleshon Pond has been identified by the Environmental Protection Unit as “unknown filled ground”. The pond is not marked on the Epoch 2 OS maps (c 1897). It can be assumed therefore that the pond was backfilled between 1852 and 1897. It is possible that the material used to backfill the pond may comprise 19th century domestic refuse. The extent of Campleshon Pond shown on the 1852 OS plan may represent the vestiges of a larger area of wetland that might have developed in a depression in the glacial moraine. These so-called Kettle Holes are frequently characterised by peat deposits. Elsewhere in the city these deposits have demonstrated that they have the potential to preserve environmental and cultural material dating from the immediate post-glacial period (c 8000BC) to the medieval period.

There are seven monuments recorded within 500m of the development site. Four of these relate to York Racecourse (including three listed buildings); three are areas of ridge and furrow earthwork remains of medieval open-fields.

Knavesmire School is not recorded at present as a monument in the HER. However, the Victoria County History, City of York gives the following account:

Knavesmire County Primary and Secondary Modern Schools.

South Bank Temporary School was opened in St. Clement's mission room, South Bank Avenue, in 1906. South Bank Temporary Infants' School was opened in the premises of the Adult School, Balmoral Terrace, in 1911. There were 159 children enrolled in the 2 temporary schools in 1914. Both these schools were closed in 1916 when the Knavesmire Council School, Campleshon Road, Bishopthorpe Road, was opened. There was accommodation for 800 boys, girls, and infants. In 1919 202 boys, 211 girls, and 227 infants were enrolled. Extensions, including a new wing, were made in 1931 to increase the accommodation by 160 places. The school was reorganized before 1932 when there were 151 senior boys, 183 senior girls, and 336 juniors and infants attending. In 1956 there were 380 girls enrolled in the secondary school and 350 juniors and infants in the primary school.

4.0 Methodology.

A document 'Knavesmire School, Campleshon Road, Archaeological Scheme of Investigation; Watching Brief' was produced by City of York Council. *On-Site Archaeology Ltd* followed the archaeological programme detailed in the above mentioned document.

The investigation included the monitoring of groundwork associated with the construction of a school building extension (Trench 1; ground reduction of extension), a new school hall (Trench 2; series of linking trenches between previously installed piling caps) and associated drainage (Trenches 3 and 4). Ground reduction, linking and drainage trenches were excavated using a 360° mechanical excavator using with a toothless bucket formation level.

Standard *On-Site Archaeology* techniques were followed throughout the watching brief. This involved the completion of a context sheet for each deposit or cut encountered, along with plans and sections drawn to scale. A photographic record of the features and deposits was also maintained. A full catalogue of context descriptions, are provided with Appendix 1 drawings and photographs are provided within Appendix 2.

5.0 Results.

Trench 1 – Ground reduction school building extension

Trench 1 covered the footprint of the school building new extension (Figure 2; Plate 1). It was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.6m BGL (below ground level) to the west and 0.2m BGL to the east. The natural (104) comprised of a pale yellowish-brown sandy-clay, was encountered at 0.58m BGL within the southwestern corner of the trench section (Plate 2). This was sealed by a dark greyish-black clayey-silt layer (103) that measured 0.1m deep and contained occasional charcoal inclusions. No finds were recovered from layer (103) that probably represented a former land surface, most likely of a pre-19th century date, possibly post-medieval. Overlying layer (103) was a black/red clinker tipping layer (102) that was 0.1m deep. This was sealed by layer (101) that measured 0.15m deep and was comprised of a mid-brown clayey-sandy-silt with frequent CBM (ceramic building material) inclusions. This layer provided a levelling/base for the above playground tarmac surface (100) that was 0.16m deep.

Trench 2 – Linking trenches between piling caps

This trench covered the footprint of a new school hall building and involved monitoring a number of foundation linking trenches between previously installed piling caps (Figure 2; Plate 3). The linking trenches were approximately 1m wide and had a maximum depth of 0.75m BGL. The natural deposits were not encountered during the excavation of the trenches. The earliest deposits appeared to represent probable tipping layers (Plate 4). Layer (206) was exposed for a depth of 0.04m and comprised of brown sandy-silt with occasional mortar and gravel inclusions. This was sealed by a greyish-white chalk fragment layer (205) that was 0.05m deep. Above (204) was layer (203) that consisted of a pale yellowish-brown sandy-clay re-deposited natural that was 0.1m deep. The final tipping layer was (202) that

was 0.1m deep and comprised of grey sandy-silt with frequent gravel inclusions. No finds were recovered from any of the tipping layers, although they appeared to be indicative of 18th or 19th century depositions.

The last of the tipping layers (203) was sealed by levelling deposit (201) that was 0.25m deep and comprised of mid-brown clayey-sandy-silt with frequent CBM inclusions. Layer (201) was sealed by playground tarmac surface (200).

Trench 3

Trench 3 was a run of drainage roughly aligned north to south to the east of Trench 1 (Figure 2). This was excavated to a maximum depth of 1.1m and a minimum of 0.75m (Plate 5). For the most part the trench along its northern half had a similar sequence of deposits as those recorded within Trench 2. A manhole located to the southern extent of the trench revealed natural (308) comprising of a reddish-brown sandy-clay at approximately 10.61mAOD (Figure 3; Plate 6). This was sealed by a probable plough/subsoil layer (307) that was 0.3m deep and consisted of brown sandy-clay silt with occasional gravel stone, rare CBM and charcoal fleck inclusions. The CBM inclusions within (307) appeared to be indicative of post-medieval or later material. Sealing layer (307) was a former land surface soil (306) that was 0.09m deep and comprised of a dark greyish-black clayey-silt with occasional charcoal inclusions. A small fragment of clay pipe stem of an early modern date was recovered from layer (306).

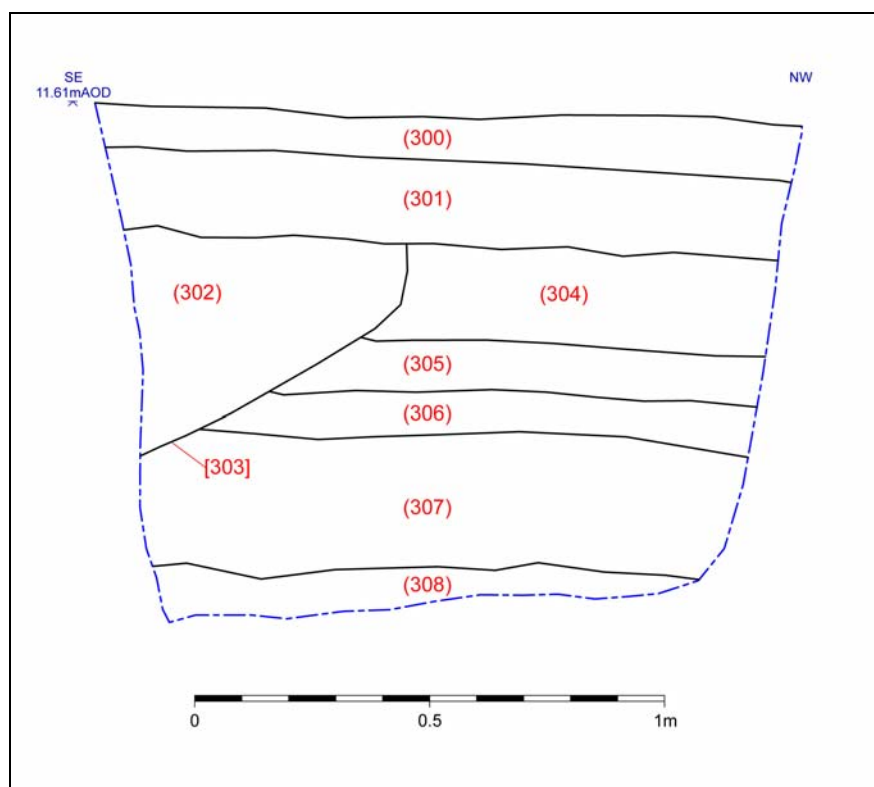


Figure 3. Northeast facing section manhole Trench 3.

Above layer (306) was a compacted layer (305) that was 0.11m deep and consisted of a pinkish-brown sandy-silt with frequent pebble stone inclusions. No finds were recovered

from (305), which probably represented an area of former hard standing or possible road/track material. Sealing (305) was an early modern tipping (304) that was 0.2m deep and comprised of lenses of sandy-silts, ash and cinder. This layer was truncated by a service trench [303] that contained a single fill (303) of a grey clayey-silt with occasional 19th/20th century CBM inclusions. Overlying the service trench was a levelling/make up deposit (301) that was 0.2m deep that provided a base for the playground tarmac surface (300).

Trench 4

This trench ran along the northern sides of Trench 1 and 2 (Figure 2; Plate 7). Trench 3 excavated to a maximum depth of 1m. This trench revealed almost a similar sequence and description of deposits recorded within Trench 3. These included natural (405) sealed by a plough/subsoil (404) that was 0.4m deep. Sealing (404) was a 0.1m deep former land surface (403). Overlying this was a levelling/make up deposit (401) that was 0.28m deep sealed by playground tarmac surface (400).

6.0 Discussion and Conclusions.

The earliest deposits detected during the investigation were the probably the plough/subsoil sealed by former land surface recorded within Trenches 3 and 4. The plough/subsoil and land surface are probably of a post-medieval or later date.

The tipping deposits recorded within Trench 2 are most likely related to the backfilling of the Campleshon Pond sometime between 1852 and 1897.

The remaining deposits probably relate to the construction of the school during the start of the 20th century.

7.0 Bibliography

A History of the County of York: the City of York (1961), *'Schools and colleges'*, pp. 440-460. URL: <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/>.

British Geological Survey - bgs.ac.uk.

City of York Council, 2012. Knavesmire School, Campleshon Road, York. Archaeological Scheme of Investigation: Watching Brief.

8.0 Appendix 1 ~ List of Contexts.

Context no.	Description	Thickness max.	Extent
<i>Trench 1</i>			
100	Layer. Tarmac	0.16m	-
101	Layer. Mid-brown clayey-sandy-silt frequent CBM (ceramic building material). Inclusions. Base for (100).	0.15m	-
102	Layer. Dark red/black clinker.	0.1m	-
103	Layer. Dark greyish-black clayey-silt occasional charcoal inclusions. Former land surface.	0.1m	-
104	Layer. Pale yellowish-brown sandy-clay. Natural.	0.1m exc.	-
<i>Trench 2</i>			
200	Layer. Tarmac	0.18m	-
201	Layer. Mid-brown clayey-sandy-silt frequent CBM (ceramic building material). Inclusions. Levelling.	0.25	-
202	Layer. Grey sandy-silt with frequent gravel inclusions. Tipping.	0.1m	-
203	Layer. Pale yellowish-brown sandy-clay. Re-deposited natural.	0.1m	-
204	Layer. Grey/brown sandy-silt frequent gravel inclusions. Levelling.	0.05m	-
205	Layer. Greyish-white chalk fragments. Tipping.	0.05m	-
206	Layer. Brown sandy-silt with occasional mortar and gravel inclusions. Tipping.	0.04m	-
<i>Trench 3</i>			
300	Layer. Tarmac	0.1m	-
301	Layer. Frequent cobblestone. Bedding for (300).	0.2m	-
302	Fill. Grey clayey-silt with occasional CBM. Fill of [303].	0.48m	-
303	Cut forming 19 th century service trench.	0.48m	-
304	Lenses. Series of sandy-silt of ash and cinder. Tipping.	0.2m	-
305	Layer. Pinkish-brown sandy-silt frequent pebble stone inclusions.	0.11m	-
306	Layer. Dark greyish-black clayey-silt occasional charcoal inclusions. Former land surface.	0.09m	-
307	Layer. Brown sandy-clay silt. Subsoil.	0.3m	-
308	Layer. Reddish-brown sandy-clay. Natural.	0.1m exc.	-
<i>Trench 4</i>			
400	Layer. Tarmac	0.03m	-
401	Layer. Mid-brown clayey-sandy-silt frequent CBM (ceramic building material). Inclusions. Base for (400).	0.28m	-
402	Layer. Mid-brownish-orange sandy-gravel with occasional CBM. Levelling.	0.13m	-
403	Layer. Light grey compacted clayey-sand. Former land surface.	0.1m	-
404	Layer. Brown sandy-clay silt. Subsoil.	0.4m	-
405	Layer. Yellowish-brown sandy-silt frequent pebble stone and gravel inclusions. natural	-	-

9.0 Appendix 2 ~ Archive Index.

9.1 Drawing Register.

Drawing no.	Description	Scale	Initials	Date
1	Northeast facing section Trench 3.	1:10	BJMcC	5/02/13

9.2 Photographic Register.

Frame no.	Description	View	Scale	Inits
<i>Digital download 14/01/13</i>				
1 – 29	General shots Trenches 1 and 2	various	1m	BJMcC
<i>Digital download 15/01/13</i>				
114 – 135	General shots Trench 2	various	1m	KL
<i>Digital download 06/02/13</i>				
1 – 7, 160 – 174	General shots Trench 3	Various	1m	BJMcC
<i>Digital download 12/02/13</i>				
38 – 47	General shots Trench 4	Various	1m	KL
<i>Digital download 21/08/09</i>				
41 – 46	General shots Trench 4	Various	1m	BJMcC

10.0 Appendix 3 ~ Plates.



Plate 1. Trench 1, footprint of school building extension looking north.



Plate 2. Trench 1, southwest corner looking south.



Plate 3. Trench 2 linking trenches looking southwest.



Plate 4. Trench 2 east facing section looking west.



Plate 5. Trench 3 drainage trench looking southeast.



Plate 6. Trench 3 manhole, northeast facing section looking southwest.



Plate 7. Trench 4 drainage trench looking west.