



# **Rokeby Free Secondary School, Rugby, Warwickshire**

## **Archaeological Observation and Recording Report**

**August 2018**

**Client: Education and Skills Funding Agency**

Issue No: 1

OA Reference No: 22207

NGR: SP 50264 73838

**oxford**archaeology



**southsouthsouth**



Client Name: Education and Skills Funding Agency  
Document Title: Rokeby Free Secondary School, Rugby, Warwickshire  
Document Type: Archaeological Observation and Recording Report  
Grid Reference: SP 50264 73838  
Planning Reference: RBC/18CC003  
Site Code: ROSS18  
Invoice Code: ROSSWB  
Receiving Body: Rugby Art Gallery & Museum  
Accession No.: RTA 1084

OA Document File Location: X:\r\Rugby\_Rokeby Secondary School\Report  
OA Graphics File Location: X:\r\Rugby\_Rokeby Secondary School\010Geomatics

Issue No: 1  
Date: August 2018  
Prepared by: John Carne (Supervisor)  
Checked by: John Boothroyd (Senior Project Manager)  
Edited by: Ed Biddulph (Senior Project Manager)  
Approved for Issue by: David Score (Head of Fieldwork)  
Signature:

*David Score*

.....

**Disclaimer:**

*This document has been prepared for the titled project or named part thereof and should not be relied upon or used for any other project without an independent check being carried out as to its suitability and prior written authority of Oxford Archaeology being obtained. Oxford Archaeology accepts no responsibility or liability for the consequences of this document being used for a purpose other than the purposes for which it was commissioned. Any person/party using or relying on the document for such other purposes agrees and will by such use or reliance be taken to confirm their agreement to indemnify Oxford Archaeology for all loss or damage resulting therefrom. Oxford Archaeology accepts no responsibility or liability for this document to any party other than the person/party by whom it was commissioned.*

**OA South**

Janus House  
Osney Mead  
Oxford  
OX2 0ES

t. +44 (0)1865 263 800

**OA East**

15 Trafalgar Way  
Bar Hill  
Cambridge  
CB23 8SG

t. +44 (0)1223 850 500

**OA North**

Mill 3  
Moor Lane Mills  
Moor Lane  
Lancaster  
LA1 1QD

t. +44 (0)1524 880 250

e. [info@oxfordarch.co.uk](mailto:info@oxfordarch.co.uk)  
w. [oxfordarchaeology.com](http://oxfordarchaeology.com)

Oxford Archaeology is a registered Charity: No. 285627



## Rokeby Free Secondary School, Rugby, Warwickshire

### *Archaeological Observation and Recording Report*

*Written by John Carne*

*With illustrations by Gary Jones and Charles Rousseaux*

#### Contents

List of Figures .....	v
List of Plates .....	v
Summary .....	vii
Acknowledgements .....	viii
<b>1 INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Scope of work.....	1
1.2 Location, topography and geology.....	1
1.3 Archaeological and historical background.....	1
1.4 Trial trench evaluation.....	2
<b>2 EVALUATION AIMS AND METHODOLOGY .....</b>	<b>3</b>
2.1 Aims .....	3
2.2 Methodology.....	3
<b>3 RESULTS .....</b>	<b>4</b>
3.1 Introduction and presentation of results .....	4
3.2 General soils and ground conditions.....	4
3.3 General distribution of archaeological deposits.....	4
<b>4 DISCUSSION .....</b>	<b>5</b>
4.1 Reliability of field investigation .....	5
4.2 Evaluation objectives and results.....	5
4.3 Interpretation.....	5
4.4 Significance .....	5
<b>APPENDIX A BIBLIOGRAPHY .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>APPENDIX B SITE SUMMARY DETAILS.....</b>	<b>7</b>

## List of Figures

- Fig. 1            Site location  
Fig. 2            Foundation pads and pipe trenches

## List of Plates

- Plate 1            General shot of works, view to SE  
Plate 2            Foundation pad 4, view to NE  
Plate 3            Foundation pad 28, view to SE  
Plate 4            Foundation pad 14, view to NE  
Plate 5            Shot of pipe trench, view to SE  
Plate 6            Shot of pipe trench, view to NW  
Plate 7            Eastern pipe trench, view to NE



## Summary

Over the course of four weeks, from 16<sup>th</sup> July to 9<sup>th</sup> August 2018, Oxford Archaeology monitored the excavation of 32 foundation pads and a series of pipe trenches in the grounds of Rokeby Free Secondary School for the Education and Skills Funding Agency. No archaeological features or deposits were observed and no artefacts were observed.

## Acknowledgements

Oxford Archaeology would like to thank the Education and Skills Funding Agency for commissioning this project.

The project was managed for Oxford Archaeology by John Boothroyd. The fieldwork and survey were undertaken by John Carne. The figures were produced by Gary Jones and Charles Rousseaux.

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Scope of work**

- 1.1.1 Oxford Archaeology (OA) was commissioned by the Education and Skills Funding Agency to undertake a programme of archaeological observation and recording during works associated with the construction of a temporary teaching facility at Rokeby Free Secondary School, Rugby, Warwickshire.
- 1.1.2 The work was undertaken as a condition of planning permission (planning ref. RBC/18CC003). The scope of work was established by Anna Stocks, Planning Archaeologist for Warwickshire County Council and a written scheme of investigation was produced by OA detailing the local authority's requirements for the work necessary to discharge the planning condition. This document outlines how OA implemented the specified requirements.
- 1.1.3 All works were undertaken in accordance with local and national planning policies and appropriate Chartered Institute for Archaeologists guidance documents (CIfA 2014).

### **1.2 Location, topography and geology**

- 1.2.1 The site lies to the south of the town of Rugby, Warwickshire (Fig. 1; NGR: SP 50264 73838). It is bounded to the west by Anderson Avenue, to the north by residential properties, to the east by agricultural fields and to the south by Rokeby Primary School.
- 1.2.2 The area of proposed development lies to the east of the main buildings which form Rokeby Free Secondary School, and consists of a disused swimming pool and tarmacked area.
- 1.2.3 The geology of the area is mapped as the Charmouth Mudstone Formation, sedimentary bedrock formed approximately 183 to 199 million years ago in the Jurassic Period. This is overlain by deposits of Dunsmore Gravel, superficial deposits formed 2 million years ago in the Quaternary Period (BGS Online).

### **1.3 Archaeological and historical background**

- 1.3.1 The archaeological and historical background of the site has been described in detail in the desk-based assessment (DBA) produced for the adjacent Primary School (OA 2016)
- 1.3.2 There is a moderate potential for prehistoric archaeology to be present within the site. Linear features and rectilinear enclosures identified as cropmarks on aerial photographs in the fields to the south of the site are likely to represent prehistoric activity.
- 1.3.3 The site is considered to have low to moderate potential for Roman archaeological features. Although the majority of archaeological activity of this period is likely to be centred on the settlement at Tripontium located 6.5km north-east of the site, there is also evidence of rural settlement and activity in the area. A trial trench evaluation carried out in 2012 1.9km south east of the site identified evidence of a farmstead of middle Roman date in the form of field or settlement boundaries and pottery.

1.3.4 The site is located 1.4km north of the medieval village of Rugby. The urban development to the north and west of the site did not begin until the mid-20th century. The village of Rugby is recorded in the Domesday Book as a small settlement, with the medieval core concentrated around St Andrew's church. There is a high possibility of finding post-medieval field boundaries and irrigation or drainage ditches on the site, but these are unlikely to be of high archaeological significance. In addition, it is highly likely that medieval to post-medieval ridge and furrow exists on the southern part of the site as seen from the LIDAR data. The site is considered to have low potential for medieval and post-medieval archaeological features.

## 1.4 Trial trench evaluation

1.4.1 As part of the proposed development of the adjacent Rokeby Primary School a trial trench evaluation was undertaken to assess the archaeological potential of the site (OA 2017).

1.4.2 The evaluation comprised 42 trenches. The trenches were positioned to ground-truth the results of a geophysical survey previously undertaken. Extensive landscaping, including both cuts and fills were recorded and only a small area appeared to have potential for archaeological remains to survive.

1.4.3 Within this area two ditch terminals were recorded. Of these, one contained an assemblage of 2nd- to 3rd-century Roman pottery. No other archaeological features predating the post-medieval period were recorded across the development area.

1.4.4 Evidence for post-medieval agricultural activity was observed towards the southern area, consisting of former field boundaries and furrows. Features identified in the geophysical survey were confirmed in the trenches, along with additional features

## **2 EVALUATION AIMS AND METHODOLOGY**

### **2.1 Aims**

2.1.1 The project aims and objectives were as follows:

- i. To determine the location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any archaeological remains within the development.
- ii. To determine or confirm the approximate date or date range of any remains, by means of artefactual or other evidence.
- iii. To determine the potential of the site to provide palaeoenvironmental and/or economic evidence.
- iv. To assess the level of truncation associated with the creation of the school.
- v. To disseminate the results through the production of a site archive for deposition with an appropriate museum and to provide information for accession to the Warwickshire HER.

### **2.2 Methodology**

2.2.1 The programme of archaeological observation and recording was carried out intermittently over the course of four weeks and comprised the monitoring of foundation pads and pipe installation trenches.

2.2.2 All ground works were undertaken by the principal contractor under archaeological supervision, with the exception of foundation pads located within the backfilled swimming pool and short segment of pipe trench (Fig. 2).

2.2.3 Excavation works were undertaken using a mechanical excavator with a toothless bucket. The foundation pads were excavated to a depth of between 0.3m and 1m below ground level and were between 0.7m and 1.2m wide. The pipe trenches were excavated to a maximum depth of 0.5m below ground level and were on average 0.3m wide.

## 3 RESULTS

### 3.1 Introduction and presentation of results

- 3.1.1 The results of the watching brief are presented below, and include a stratigraphic description of the foundation pad pits and the pipeline trenches.
- 3.1.2 Representative photographs of the foundation pad and pipe trenches are provided in Plates 1-7.

### 3.2 General soils and ground conditions

#### *Foundation pads*

- 3.2.1 A total 32 foundation pad pits were subject to archaeological review (Fig. 2; Plate 1).
- 3.2.2 Foundation pad pits 3–10 were between 1.1m and 1.2 wide and between 0.8m and 1m deep (Plate 2). Within these trenches the natural geology was overlain by mixed made ground deposit up to 0.45m thick, which in turn were sealed by a 0.08m thick concrete deposit.
- 3.2.3 Foundation pad pits 1-2 and 27-32 were between 0.7m and 1m wide and between 0.3m and 1m deep (Plate 3). The sequence of deposits for these pads was relatively uniform: 0.15m. The natural geology, a silty sand with well sorted pebble and manganese inclusions, was overlain by up to 0.6m of made ground, a loose, brownish grey, clayey silt with inclusions of modern construction. This was in turn overlain by topsoil.
- 3.2.4 Foundation pad pits 11–26 were all 0.7m wide and between 0.3m and 0.35m deep (Plate 4). A similar sequence to those seen in pads 3-10 was recorded, although the depth of these pads did not impact below the made ground deposits.

#### *Pipe trenches*

- 3.2.5 Pipe trenches were excavated in 10m to 15m long sections and measured 0.30m wide on average (Fig. 2; Plates 5 and 6).
- 3.2.6 The easternmost trench was excavated to a depth of 0.5m through topsoil, subsoil and into the underlying natural geology. No archaeological features or deposits were observed within this section (Plate 7).
- 3.2.7 The remaining pipe trenches were excavated through tarmac to an average depth of 0.2m below ground level and do not impact beyond deposits of made ground.

### 3.3 General distribution of archaeological deposits

- 3.3.1 No archaeologically significant features or deposits were encountered, and no artefacts or environmental remains were recovered.

## **4 DISCUSSION**

### **4.1 Reliability of field investigation**

- 4.1.1 The deposits in the foundation pad pits and the pipe trenches were clearly visible throughout the excavation works, without hindrance from the weather or the construction works.
- 4.1.2 It should be noted that although clearly visible, observing any deposit within such a narrow trench does make it difficult to confidently interpret the nature and origin of any material. However, in this instance, the simplicity of the stratigraphy and the lack of associated material culture mean it is possible to be confident in interpreting the observations.

### **4.2 Evaluation objectives and results**

- 4.2.1 The watching brief demonstrated that there were no archaeological remains or deposit present within the foundation pad pits or along the route of the pipe trenches.

### **4.3 Interpretation**

- 4.3.1 The layers of made ground and modern construction material visible in the foundation pad pits are likely to be associated with the construction of the school. The depth of made ground observed, up to 0.65m in places, suggest that the site has been heavily landscaped. While it is clear from the absence of a remnant topsoil below the made ground that the site has been truncated, the level of truncation of the natural geology is unclear.

### **4.4 Significance**

- 4.4.1 No archaeological features or deposits were identified during the course of these works. The limited area investigated should not be considered to indicate the absence of archaeological remains within the site.

## APPENDIX A      BIBLIOGRAPHY

BGS Online, British Geological Survey, Geology of Britain viewer,  
<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html> accessed May 2018

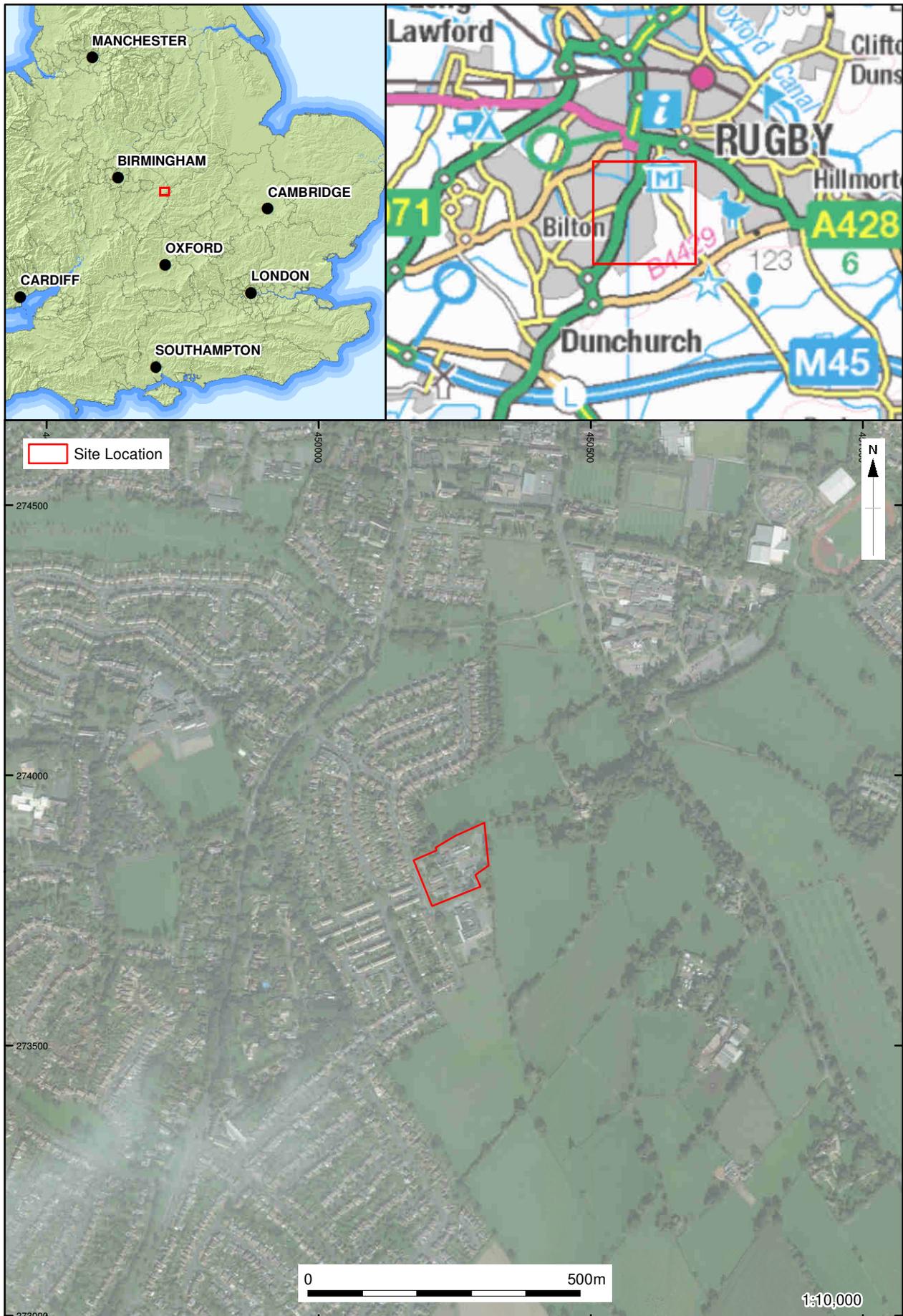
CifA, 2014, *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs*, Chartered Institute for Archaeologists

OA, 2016, Land adjacent to Rokeby Primary School, Rugby, Warwickshire, Archaeological Desk-based Assessment, Oxford Archaeology

OA, 2017, Rokeby Primary School, Ruby, Archaeological Evaluation Report, Oxford Archaeology

## APPENDIX B      SITE SUMMARY DETAILS

<b>Site name:</b>	Rokeby Free Secondary School
<b>Site code:</b>	ROSS18
<b>Grid Reference</b>	SP 50264 73838
<b>Type:</b>	Watching Brief
<b>Date and duration:</b>	July to August 2018
<b>Area of Site</b>	Approximately 2400m <sup>2</sup>
<b>Location of archive:</b>	The archive is currently held at OA, Janus House, Osney Mead, Oxford, OX2 0ES, and will be deposited with Rugby Art Gallery and Museum in due course, under the following accession number: RTA 1084.
<b>Summary of Results:</b>	The excavation of a series of foundation pad pits and pipe-line trenches was monitored over the course of 4 weeks, from the 16 <sup>th</sup> July to 9 <sup>th</sup> August, 2018. No archaeologically significant remains were observed.



Contains OS data © Crown Copyright and database right 2017  
Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA,

Figure 1: Site location

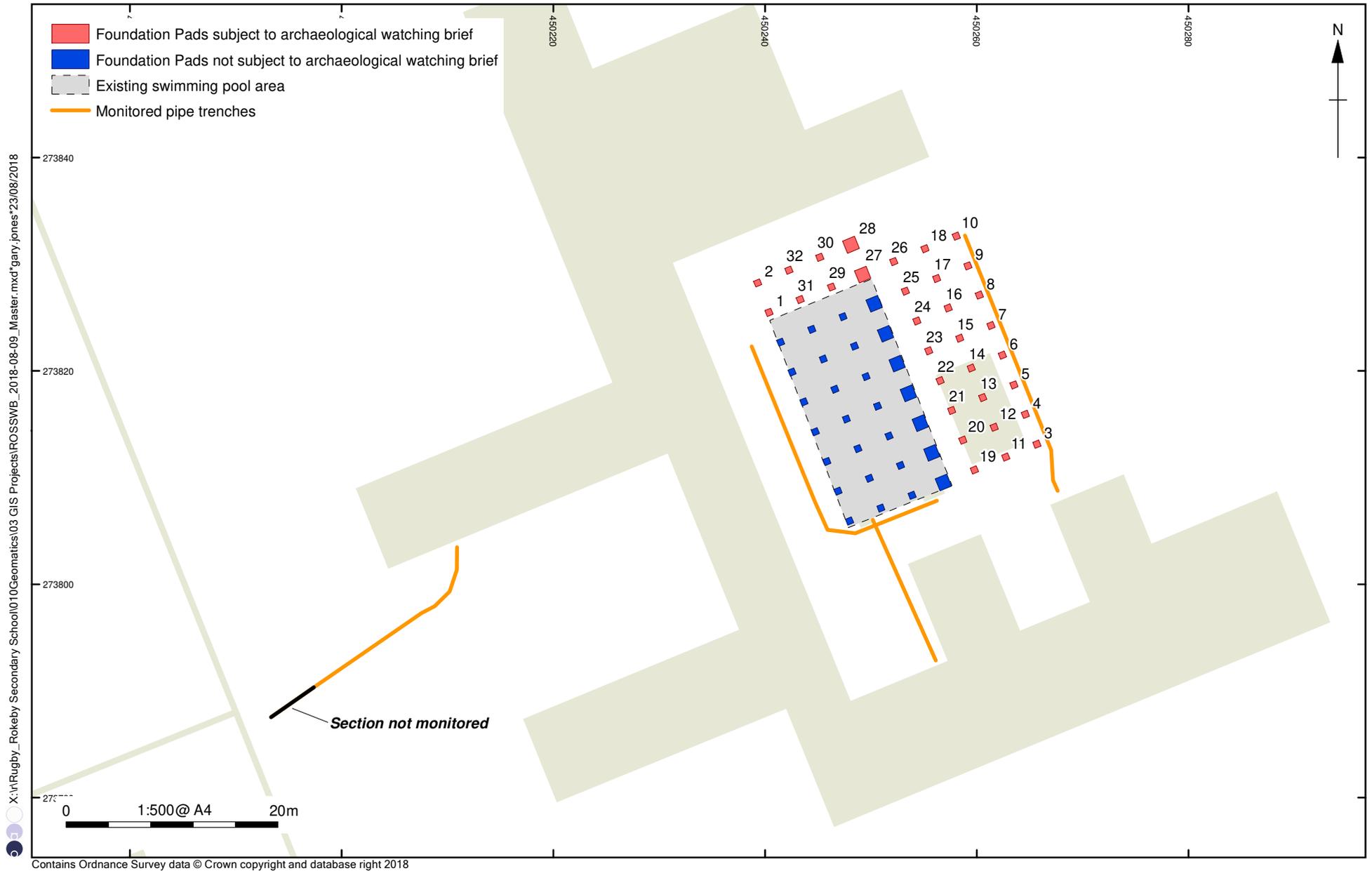


Figure 2: Foundation pads and pipe trenches

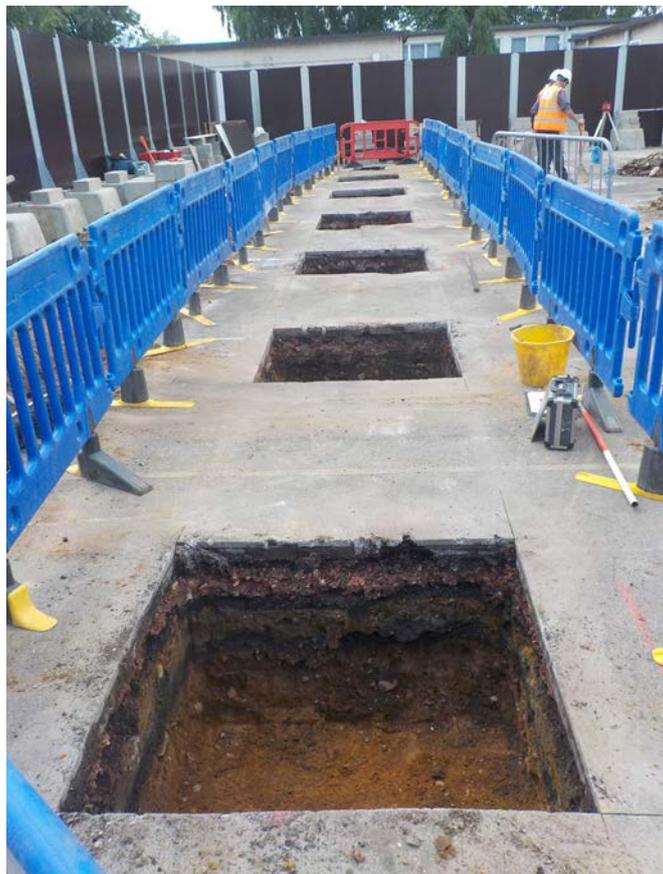


Plate 1: General shot of works, view to SE



Plate 2: Foundation pad 4, view to NE



Plate 3: Foundation pad 28, view to SE



Plate 4: Foundation pad 14, view to NE



Plate 5: Shot of pipe trench, view to SE

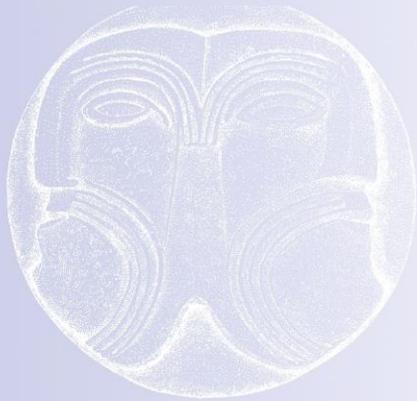


Plate 6: Shot of pipe trench, view to NW



Plate 7: Eastern pipe trench, view to NE





**Head Office/Registered Office/  
OA South**

Janus House  
Osney Mead  
Oxford OX20ES

t: +44 (0) 1865 263 800  
f: +44 (0) 1865 793 496  
e: [info@oxfordarchaeology.com](mailto:info@oxfordarchaeology.com)  
w: <http://oxfordarchaeology.com>

**OA North**

Mill 3  
Moor Lane  
Lancaster LA1 1QD

t: +44 (0) 1524 541 000  
f: +44 (0) 1524 848 606  
e: [oanorth@oxfordarchaeology.com](mailto: oanorth@oxfordarchaeology.com)  
w: <http://oxfordarchaeology.com>

**OA East**

15 Trafalgar Way  
Bar Hill  
Cambridgeshire  
CB23 8SQ

t: +44 (0) 1223 850500  
e: [oaeast@oxfordarchaeology.com](mailto: oaeast@oxfordarchaeology.com)  
w: <http://oxfordarchaeology.com>



**Director:** Gill Hey, BA PhD FSA MCIfA  
*Oxford Archaeology Ltd is a  
Private Limited Company, N<sup>o</sup>: 1618597  
and a Registered Charity, N<sup>o</sup>: 285627*