

Report on a watching brief CAT Report 340

Site address: Stanway Secondary School, Winstree Road, Colchester, Essex
Date of fieldwork: 6th December 2004-26th August 2005
NGR: TL 9560 2440
CBC brief?: No
Location plan attached?: Yes (Fig 1)
Museum accession code: 2005.14

Archaeological background:

Although there are no recorded finds from the school site itself, it is located within a rich archaeological landscape. 600m to the east is Grymes Dyke, the remains of a defensive bank and ditch constructed in the Roman period. A section across this dyke was cut in 1932 by C F C Hawkes and R J Appleby (*CAR 11*; EHER nos 12648, 11637, 11638).

Cropmark trackways and field boundaries to the east and west of the school have been recorded on aerial photographs (EHER nos 11884, 11942).

The conjectured line of a Roman road passes 250m to the south of the school (EHER no 11823).

Worked flints (suggestive of prehistoric activity) were found to south-west in 1963 (EHER no 11789).

Brief report:

Twenty-five visits were made during groundworks associated with the building of the new three-storey school block. This included large soakaways (six dug to the north of the existing science and technology building and three to the east of the new block), a septic tank (to the north of the existing science and technology building), and drains (to the south of the existing sports hall; between the existing science and technology building and the new block; to the south of the existing science and technology building; and near the playing field). The foundation pads for the school block were shallow and generally did not go deeper than those of the previous building on the site. However, two large deep holes for stanchion posts for the new block were monitored. Natural sand and gravel was reached in most trenches.

Four possible features were recorded in the sections of some trenches which may or may not be archaeologically significant. In soakaway 8, at the front (east side) of the new block, a pit was seen in section which may be of glacial origin. A foul-drain trench dug between the existing science and technology building and the new block exposed two parallel ditches on an east to west alignment. These features were cut into natural sand and gravel, were 1m wide and were filled by buff grey clayey silt, without any finds. They were sealed by a blackish grey layer that contained modern brick. To the south of the existing science and technology building, a drain trench exposed some disturbance which is likely to date from the 19th or 20th century.

Finds:

None.

References:

CAR 11 1995 *Colchester Archaeological Report 11: Camulodunum 2*, by C F C Hawkes & P Crummy

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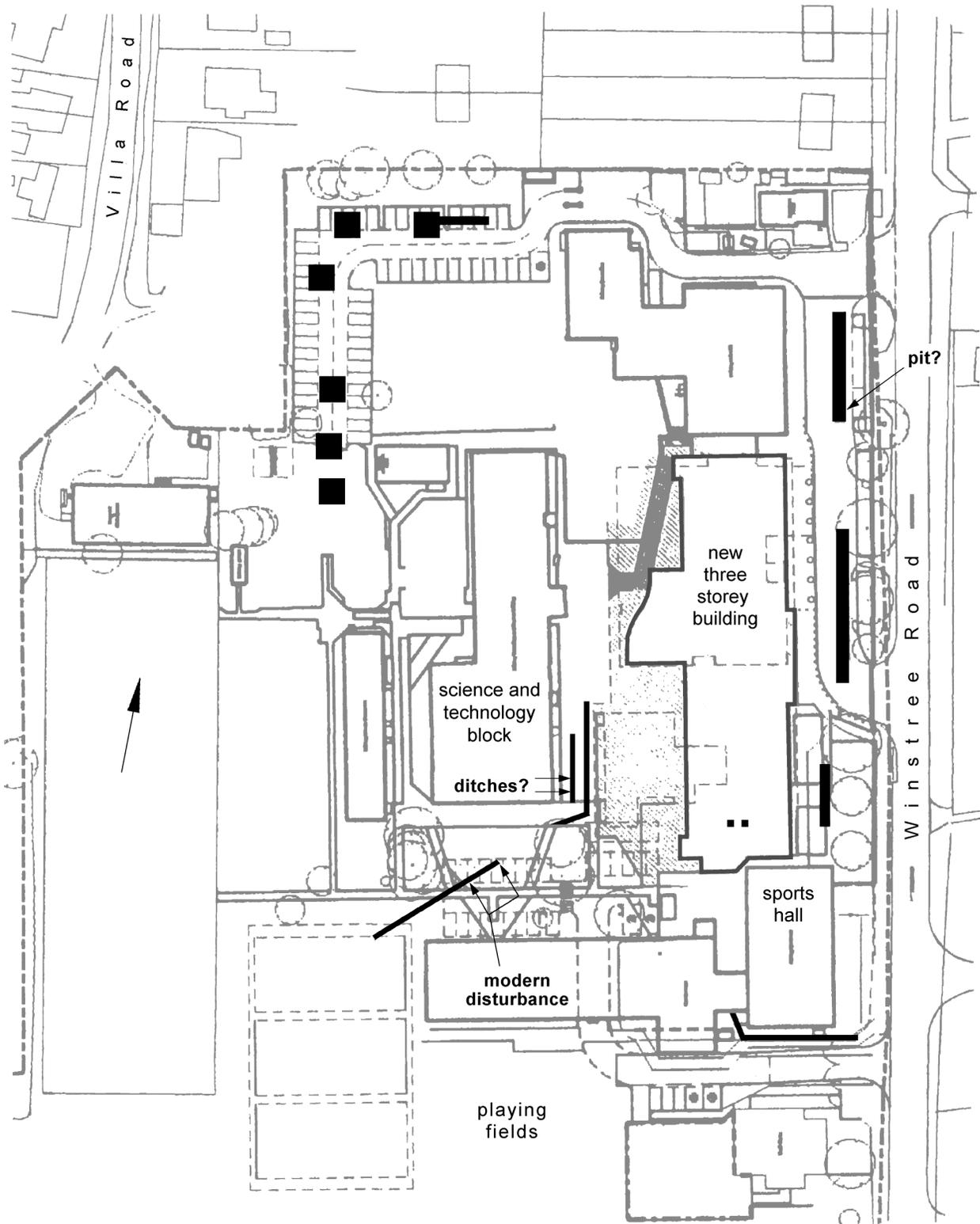
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Date: 10.10.05

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Fig 1 Plan of site, with monitored areas shaded in black. (Not to scale.)