

**Two Archaeological Watching Briefs at The Police Staff College,  
Bramshill, Hampshire.**

**Central National Grid Reference: SU 7580 5960**

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**Commissioning Clients: MITIE Group PLC and Turner & Townsend LLP**

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# **1 ABSTRACT**

- 1.1 This report details the results and working methods of two archaeological watching briefs. The first, (Area A), was undertaken during the digging of a trench for a new service pipe and the second, (Area B), during the excavation of footing trenches during stabilisation work on the seventeenth to eighteenth century wall. They both took place in the grounds of The Police Staff College, Bramshill, Hampshire. The site is centred at National Grid Reference SU 7580 5960 (fig.1).
- 1.2 The first watching brief monitored the mechanical excavation of a trench for a new service pipe between post-1945 accommodation blocks at the Police Staff College (fig.2).
- 1.3 A make-up layer of dark grey ash was observed, sealed by garden soil that constituted the ground surface.
- 1.4 The second watching brief monitored the excavation and widening of the footings of a seventeenth to eighteenth century wall that ran north/south along the east side of the kitchen garden in order to stabilise it with a concrete foundation. Secondary to this, two geotechnical test pits were dug in order to test the effectiveness of excavating soakaways in order to improve drainage in the immediate vicinity of the wall.
- 1.5 In the excavation beside the wall natural silty clay was observed, truncated by the wall footings. Made ground and garden soil had built up against the wall.
- 1.6 The two geotechnical test pits revealed natural clay overlain by silty sand overlain by garden topsoil.

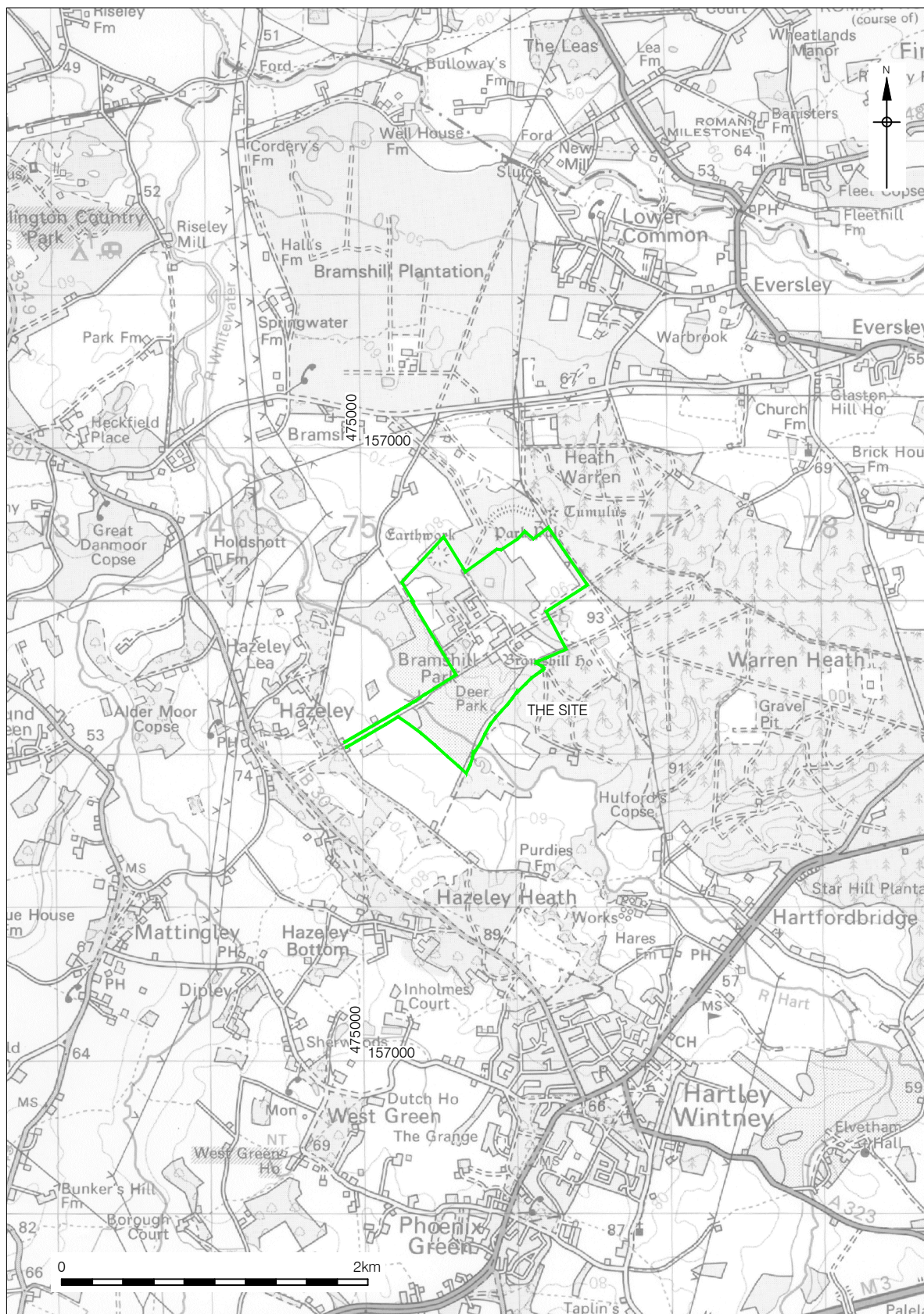
## 2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 Two archaeological watching brief were undertaken at The Police Staff College, Bramshill, Hampshire by Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd between 05/09/2005 and 09/11/2005.
- 2.2 The commissioning clients were MITIE Group PLC and Turner & Townsend LLP. The watching briefs were undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd under the supervision of Roddy Mattinson and the project management of Peter Moore.
- 2.3 The sites were between the accommodation blocks and in the kitchen garden below the Old Stable Block. To the south is the Mansion of Bramshill, which was built in the 16<sup>th</sup> century and is a Grade 1 listed building (fig.1).
- 2.4 The completed archive comprising written and drawn records will be deposited at the local museum. <sup>1</sup>
- 2.5 A previous watching brief carried out by Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd immediately to the west of the Mansion in September 2004 identified the presence of 19<sup>th</sup> century made-ground and services<sup>2</sup>.
- 2.6 A previous watching brief carried out by Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd on the sports ground to the south west of the mansion in March 2005 identified natural gravel overlain by made ground overlain by garden soil<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Elliott Wragg, Oasis Form for an Archaeological Watching Brief at the Police Staff College, Bramshill, Hampshire. Unpublished Report, September 2004.

<sup>2</sup> Stewart Watson, *An Archaeological Watching Brief at the Police Staff Training College, Bramshill, Hampshire*. Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd, Unpublished report, June 2005.



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Figure 1  
Site Location  
1:50,000

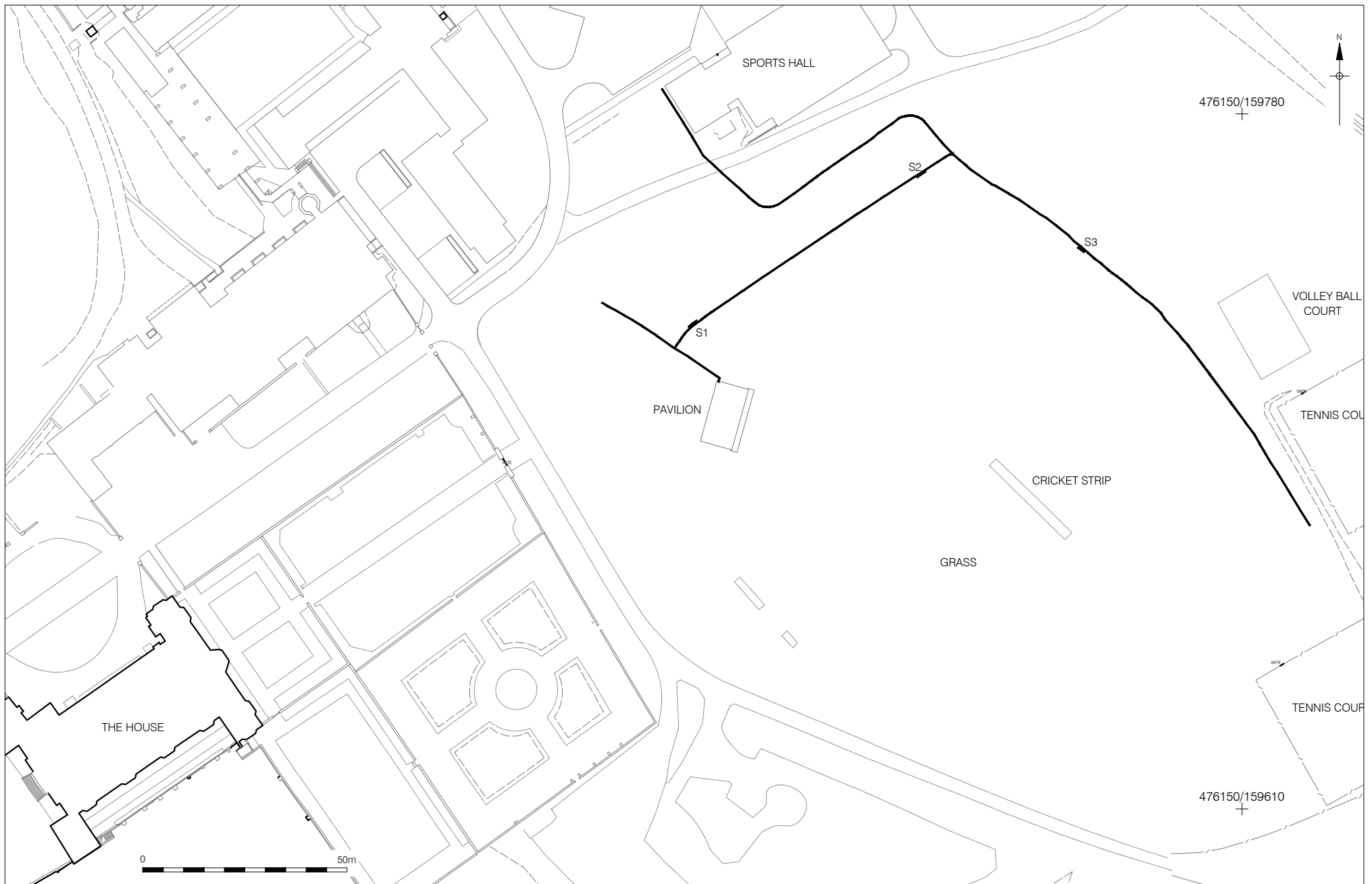


Figure 2  
WB1 Trench Location  
1:1250

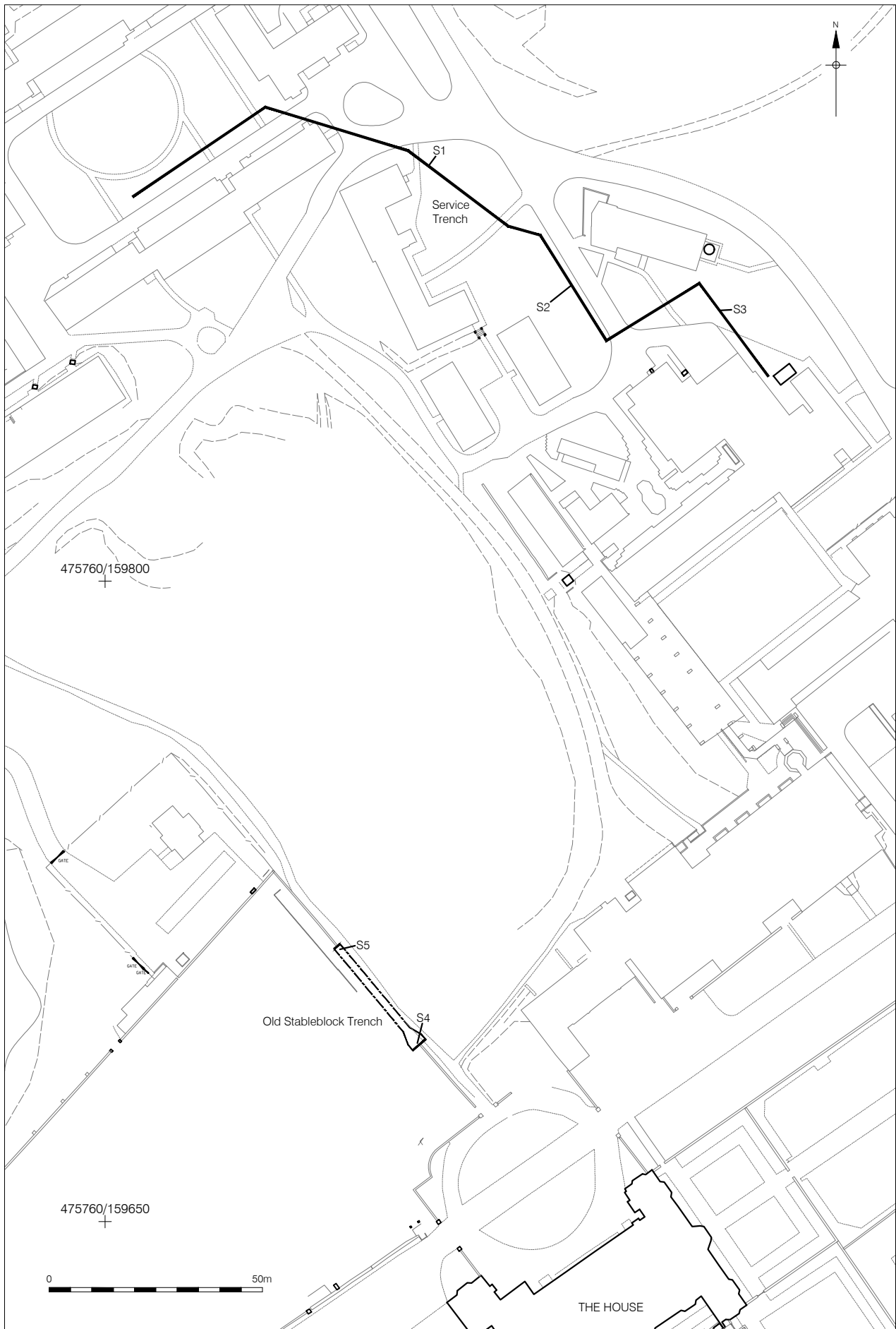


Figure 3  
WB2 Trench Location  
1:1250

### 3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

- 3.1 The first watching brief, (Area A), monitored the mechanical excavation of a trench for a new service pipe to supply accommodation blocks (fig.2).
- 3.2 The watching brief trench was 0.40m wide, excavated to 0.50m in depth and had a total length of c120m.
- 3.3 Deposits within the trench were removed by a mechanical excavator under archaeological supervision until the appropriate project level was attained.
- 3.4 Representative sections of the trench were drawn at a scale of 1:10 (fig.3).
- 3.5 Recording on site was undertaken using the single context recording system as set out in the Museum of London Site Manual. Contexts were numbered sequentially and recorded on *pro-forma* context sheets.
- 3.6 The second watching brief, (Area B), monitored the mechanical excavation of the footings against the seventeenth to eighteenth century wall in the kitchen garden for the insertion of a concrete foundation in order to stabilise the wall.
- 3.7 The trench was up to 4.10m wide, between 2.75m and 0.80m in depth and c.30m in length.
- 3.8 Deposits within the trench were removed by a mechanical excavator until the appropriate project level was attained.
- 3.9 Sections were drawn at both ends of the trench at scales of 1:10 and 1:20 respectively (fig.4).
- 3.10 Two geotechnical test pits were dug c.20m to the northwest of the wall to establish the effectiveness of soakaways in order to facilitating better drainage in the immediate area of the wall.
- 3.11 The first test pit measured 2.70m x 0.80m x 2.40m in depth. The second test pit measured 2.60m x 0.80m x 2.0m in depth. Both were recorded by measuring the depth of deposits from the surface, and then using *pro-forma* test pit recording sheets.



## **4 THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SEQUENCE**

- 4.1 The earliest deposit recorded in Area A (accommodation blocks) was a friable dark grey ash, (102) and (104), lying 0.40m-0.45m below the surface, constituting a make-up layer associated with the construction of the post-war accommodation blocks.
- 4.2 Sealing the make-up layer and forming the present topsoil was a friable mid to dark grey brown sandy clay, (101), (102) and (103). This constituted a garden soil, again probably deposited in landscaping after the construction of the accommodation blocks.
- 4.3 In Area B, (garden wall and geo-test pits), the earliest observed deposit was a stiff bluish green clay between 0.60m and 2.40m (project level). This constituted natural clay, (108), (113), (116) and (119).
- 4.4 Sealing this in the test pits was a sub-soil of firm greyish brown silty sand with inclusions of flint and chalk, (112) and (115). It lay 0.15m-0.20m below the surface.
- 4.5 Sealing the sub-soil and forming the present top soil was a garden soil, (111) and (114).
- 4.6 In the exposed foundation trench of the north/south wall running along the east side of the kitchen garden the natural clay was trench cut by the footings of the wall. Constructed of unfrogged orange/red brick with light brown sandy mortar, (110) and (121), the footing comprised of four horizontal courses measuring 0.50m x 1.05m in depth. At the base of the footings were the remains of a timber sole board.
- 4.7 Constructed over the footings were the standing remains of the garden wall, (109) and (120), built of the same brick and mortar as the footings, though some parts of the wall were rebuilds with later nineteenth/twentieth century bricks. Its highest standing remains measured up to 3.20m in height, by 0.40m in width, with a coursing of stretchers and headers.
- 4.8 Butting against the two sides of the wall were a garden soil, (107), and a made ground, (106). Both formed the present highest deposit. To the west of the wall was a soft dark greyish brown sandy clayey silt constituting the garden soil and to the east was a loose brownish grey gravelly sandy silt comprising the made ground.

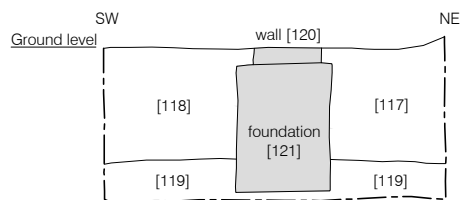
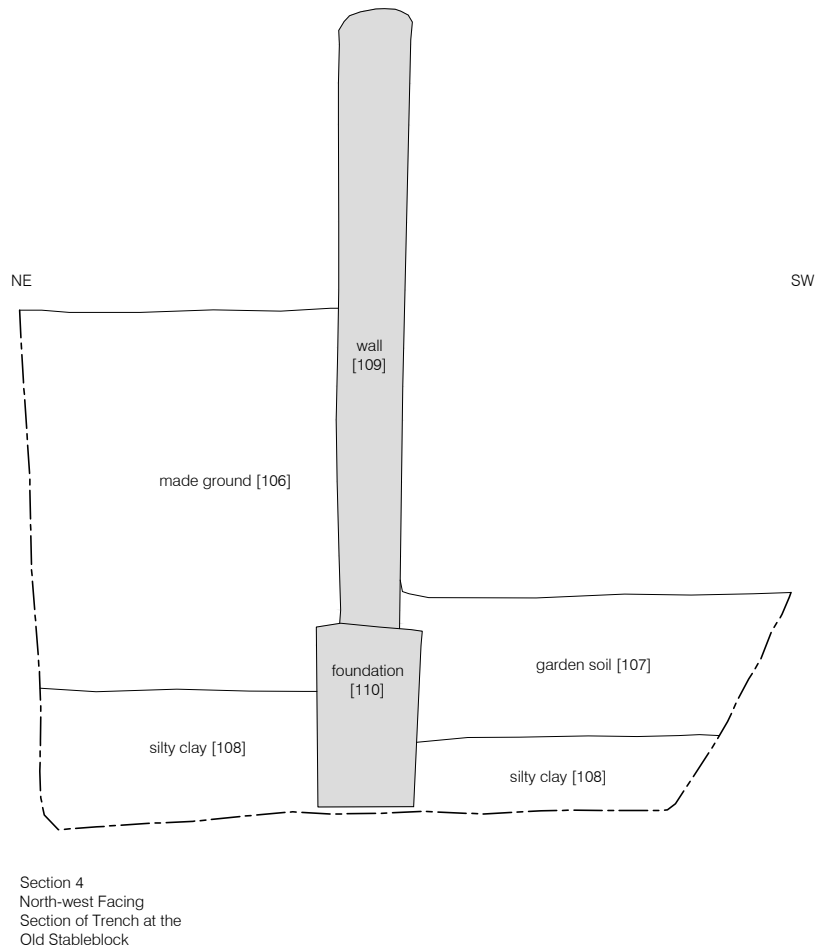
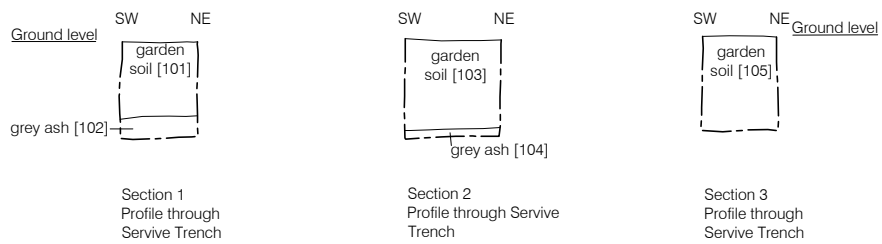


Figure 4  
Sections 1-5  
1:40

## **5 CONCLUSIONS**

- 5.1 In Area A garden soil overlay a make-up of grey ash both probably deposited during landscaping associated with the post-war construction of accommodation blocks.
- 5.2 In Area B a seventeenth to eighteenth century garden wall was trench cut in to natural clay. Sealing the clay was a silty subsoil which was overlain by a garden soil to the west of the wall and made ground to the east.

## **6 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

- 6.1 Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited would like to thank David Halliwell of MITIE Group PLC and Amandel Wyatt of Turner & Townsend LLP for commissioning the work.
- 6.2 The author would like to thank Adrian Nash for the illustrations and Peter Moore for his project management and editing.

## **7 BIBLIOGRAPHY**

Peter Moore, *A Written Scheme Of Investigation For An Archaeological Watching Brief On The Digging Of A Water Pipe At The Police Staff College, Bramshill, Hampshire*. Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd., Unpublished Report, 2005.

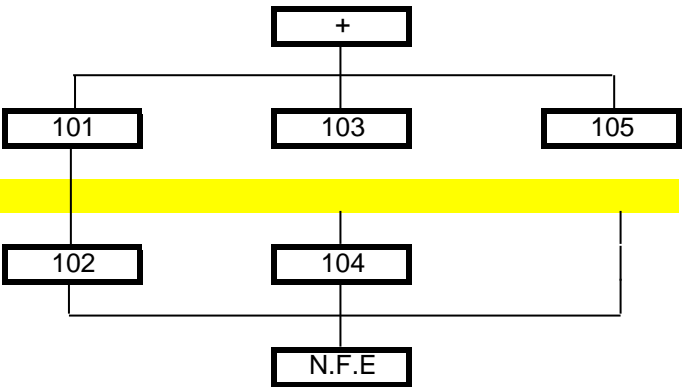
Stewart Watson, *An Archaeological Watching Brief at the Police Staff Training College, Bramshill, Hampshire*. Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd, Unpublished report, June 2005.

Elliott Wragg, *Oasis Form for an Archaeological Watching Brief at the Police Staff College, Bramshill, Hampshire*. Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd, September 2004.

**Appendix 1: Site Matrices**

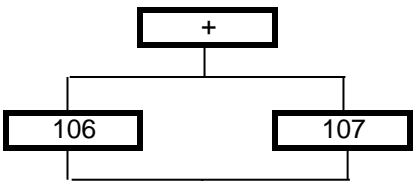
Area 1 Accomodation Blocks

gardening soil



Area 2 Garden Wall

later deposits



seventeenth/eighteenth century wall

natural clay

## Appendix 2: Context Index

Context no.	Type	Description	Area	Section
101	layer	top soil	accom.blocks	1
102	layer	make-up	accom.blocks	1
103	layer	top soil	accom.blocks	2
104	layer	make-up	accom.blocks	2
105	layer	top soil	accom.blocks	3
106	layer	made ground	stable wall	4
107	layer	top soil	stable wall	4
108	layer	nat.clay	stable wall	4
109	masonry	wall	stable wall	4
110	masonry	footings	stable wall	4
111	layer	top soil	test pits	
112	layer	sub-soil	test pits	
113	layer	nat.clay	test pits	
114	layer	top soil	test pits	
115	layer	sub-soil	test pits	
116	layer	nat.clay	test pits	
117	layer	made ground	stable wall	5
118	layer	top soil	stable wall	5
119	layer	nat.clay	stable wall	5
120	masonry	wall	stable wall	5
121	masonry	footings	stable wall	5

## Appendix 3: OASIS Form

OASIS ID: preconst1-11196

### Project details

Project name	Watching briefs at Bramshill Police College
Short description of the project	Two watching briefs in the grounds of Bramshill college. The first observed 20th C. make-up layer and gardensoil, the second a seventeenth/eighteenth century wall trench cut into natural clay, sealed by sub-soil, garden soil and made ground.
Project dates	Start: 05-09-2005 End: 09-11-2005
Previous/future work	Yes / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	K771 - Contracting Unit No.
Any associated project reference codes	PBRA04 - Sitecode
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	Listed Building
Current Land use	Other 5 - Garden
Monument type	GARDEN Modern
Monument type	WALL Post Medieval
Significant Finds	NONE None
Investigation type	"Watching Brief"
Prompt	Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPG16

### Project location

Country	England
Site location	HAMPSHIRE HART BRAMSHILL Bramshill Police Staff Training College
Study area	135 Square metres
Site coordinates	SU 7580 5960 51.329934121249 -0.911907040495 51 19 47 N 000 54 42 W Point

### Project creators

Name of Organisation	Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd
Project brief	unknown

originator

Project design Peter Moore  
originator

Project Peter Moore  
director/manager

Project supervisor Roddy Mattinson

Type of MITIE Group PLC and Turner and Townsend LLP  
sponsor/funding  
body

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### Project archives

Physical Archive No  
Exists?

Digital Archive Hampshire County Council  
recipient

Digital Contents "Stratigraphic"

Digital Media "Spreadsheets", "Text"  
available

Paper Archive Hampshire County Council  
recipient

Paper Contents "Stratigraphic"

Paper Media "Context  
available sheet", "Photograph", "Plan", "Report", "Section", "Unpublished Text"

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### Project bibliography 1

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

Title Two Watching Briefs at Police Staff Training College, Bramshill,  
Hampshire

Author(s)/Editor(s) Mattinson, R.

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