



DOCUMENT VERIFICATION

LAND AT 1 DALE ROAD, PURLEY  
LONDON BOROUGH OF CROYDON

WATCHING BRIEF

Quality Control

Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited			K1152
	Name & Title	Signature	Date
Text Prepared by:	Alexis Haslam		April 2006
Graphics Prepared by:	Adrian Nash		April 2006
Graphics Checked by:	Chris Mayo		April 2006
Project Manager Sign-off:	Chris Mayo		April 2006

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Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd  
Unit 54  
Brockley Cross Business Centre  
96 Endwell Road  
London  
SE4 2PD

**An Archaeological Watching Brief At 1 Dale Road, Purley, London  
Borough of Croydon CR8**

**Site Code: DRC 06**

**Central National Grid Reference: TQ 3160 6120**

**Written and Researched by Alexis Haslam  
Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited, April 2006**

**Project Managers: Tim Bradley and Chris Mayo**

**Commissioning Client: Classgrade Ltd**

**Contractor:  
Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited  
Unit 54  
Brockley Cross Business Centre  
96 Endwell Road  
Brockley  
London  
SE4 2PD**

**Tel: 0207 732 3925  
Fax: 0207 732 7896**

**Email: [cmayo@pre-construct.com](mailto:cmayo@pre-construct.com)**

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## CONTENTS

1	Abstract	2
2	Introduction	3
3	Planning Background	5
4	Geological Background	7
5	Archaeological and Historical Background	7
6	Archaeological Methodology	11
7	Archaeological Phase Discussion	13
8	Interpretations and Conclusions	17
9	Acknowledgements	18

## Appendices

Appendix 1	Context Descriptions	19
Appendix 2	Oasis Form	20

## Illustrations

Figure 1	Site Location	4
Figure 2	Trench Location	12
Figure 3	Trench Detail	15
Figure 4	Sections	16

## 1 ABSTRACT

- 1.1 This report details the results of an archaeological watching brief undertaken on land at 1 Dale Road, Purley, London Borough of Croydon CR8 (Fig. 1). The evaluation was commissioned by Classgrade Ltd in advance of the proposed redevelopment of the land and took place between the 4<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> of April 2006. The site was located on the western side of Godstone Road (A23), and was bordered to the north and west by Dale Road.
- 1.2 A Desktop Assessment<sup>1</sup> had been prepared prior to the excavation of the site, indicating that the new development would extend over the eastern portion of the site. The watching brief monitored the machine excavation of footings being prepared for the construction of new residential flats. Work began in the southern half of the site.
- 1.3 All of the footings were sealed by tarmac and make up forming the hard standing for a car park. Once this tarmac had been broken out and removed, a sequence emerged in all of the footings, revealing a thin layer of clay sand overlying the unclassified gravel terraces of the Quaternary period. These gravels in turn sealed the Upper Chalk of the Cretaceous period. The footings themselves varied in depth from between 1 and 1.6m in depth. In a large proportion of the footings modern truncations were evident and are likely to have dated to the construction of a row of terraced houses on the site, present on the Ordnance Survey map of 1914.
- 1.4 No archaeological remains were encountered, with no evidence of human occupation on the site prior to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. At the completion of approximately 50% of the groundworks under archaeological supervision, it was agreed with the representative of the LPA that work should cease due to the lack of any archaeological resource.

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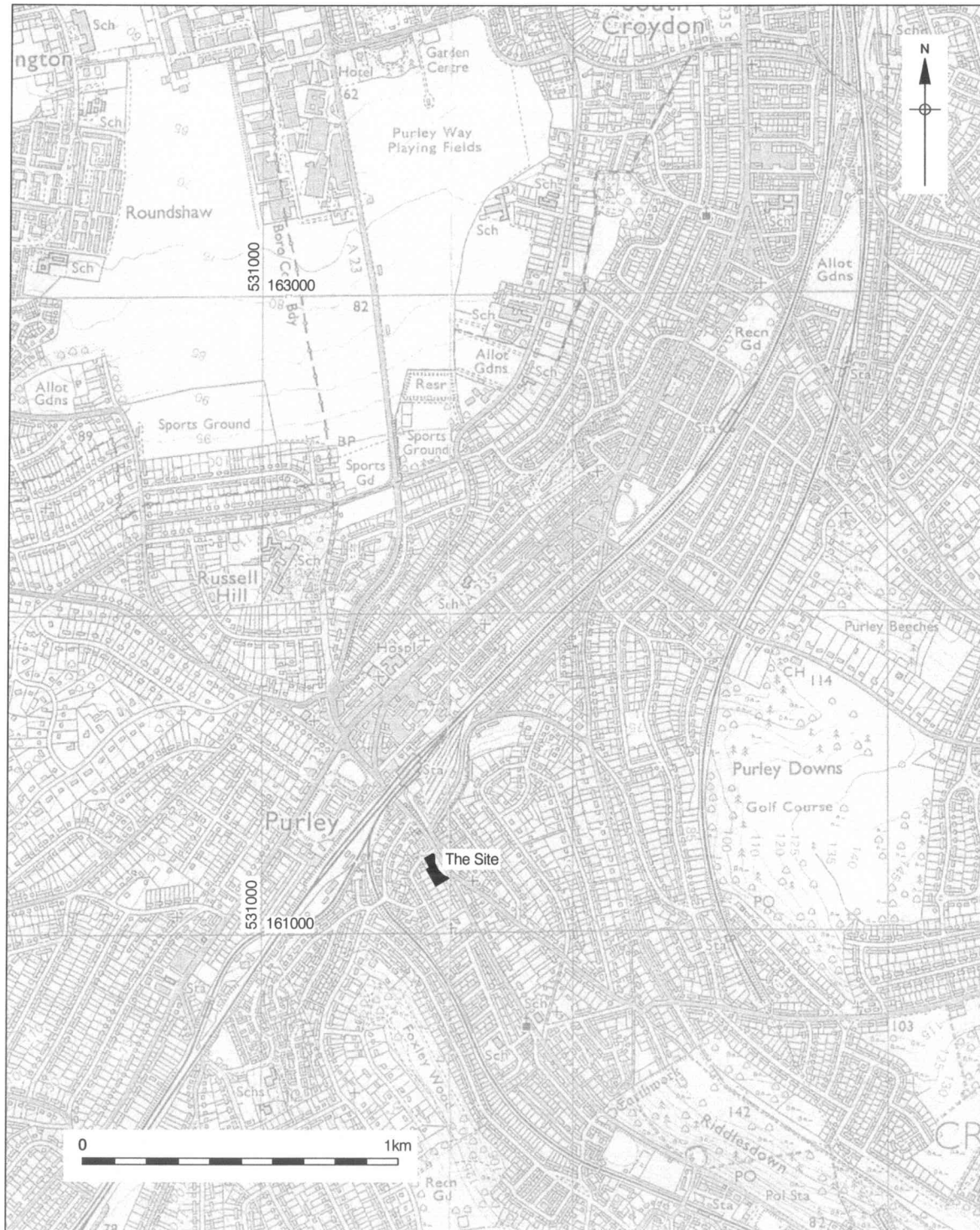
<sup>1</sup> Clough, H. 2004 'An Archaeological Desktop Assessment of Land at 1, Dale Road, Purley, London Borough of Croydon CR8' Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd unpublished report.

## 2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 This report details the results and working methods of an archaeological watching brief undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd. on land at 1 Dale Road, Purley, Croydon (Fig. 1). The watching took place between the 4<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> of April 2006.
- 2.2 The groundworks were all located within the boundaries of 1 Dale Road, which was an abandoned car park at the time of the fieldwork. The site was bounded to the north and west by Dale Road, to the south by 50 Godstone Road and to the east by Godstone Road.
- 2.3 A detailed proposal for archaeological monitoring during the watching brief was included within the Method Statement<sup>2</sup> and was prepared prior to the fieldwork.
- 2.4 The National Grid Reference of the site is TQ 3160 6120.
- 2.5 The site was given the code DRC 06.
- 2.6 The project was monitored for the client by Moiz Siddiqui and Saeed Jannati of Classgrade Ltd and for the local planning authority by Mark Stevenson of the Greater London Archaeology Advisory Service (GLAAS). The site was project managed by Tim Bradley and Chris Mayo, and supervised by the author, Alexis Haslam.

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<sup>2</sup> Bradley, T. 2006 'Method Statement for an Archaeological Watching Brief at 1 Dale Road, Purley London Borough of Croydon CR8' Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd unpublished report.



Reproduced from Ordnance Survey 1:25,000. Crown Copyright 1988.

Figure 1  
Site Location  
1:20 000

### 3 PLANNING BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The proposed scheme involves the redevelopment of the site as residential flats, with the footings for these buildings being located along the eastern portion of the site. The western portion of the site is to be utilised for car parking facilities.
- 3.2 The London Borough of Croydon fully recognises the importance of the buried heritage for which they are custodians. The council's deposited draft 'Croydon Unitary Development Plan' adopted in 1997 contains policy statements in respect of protecting the buried archaeological resource.
- 3.3 The proposed development is subject to the council's Archaeology and Urban Conservation policies:

#### **SP6 – The Council will protect and enhance Croydon's archaeological heritage.**

##### Site Evaluation

AR1. An archaeological site evaluation report will be required for development proposals which involve significant ground disturbance in the Archaeological Priority Zones defined on the Proposals Map. Elsewhere, an evaluation report will be required if the Council has good reason to believe that remains of archaeological importance would be affected. The reports should be prepared by professionally qualified and competent archaeologists.

##### Minimising Disturbance

AR2. The siting and design of development should have regard to the desirability of minimising the disturbance of archaeological remains.

##### Preserving Important Remains

AR3. There will be a presumption against development which would harm archaeological remains of national importance. Decisions on development proposals affecting other remains will take account of the archaeological importance of these remains, the need for the development, the likely extent of any harm, and the prospects of the proposals successfully preserving by record the archaeological interest of the site.

##### Recording Other Remains

AR4. On sites where archaeological remains do not need to be preserved in situ, the Council will make sure that there is investigation, excavation, recording, analysis and

publication to a specification agreed by the Council, secured where appropriate by the use of agreements.

#### Interpretation

AR5. The council will encourage the provision of facilities which interpret and explain archaeological sites to the public

- 3.4 The Croydon UDP mirrors advice contained in the Department of Environment document 'Planning Policy Guidance: Archaeology and Planning (PPG 16). This document identifies the need for early consultation in the planning process to determine the impact of the construction schemes upon buried archaeological strata. Once the results of the Desktop Assessment are known, and where follow-up trial work is known to be necessary or otherwise, an informed decision on the necessity or otherwise for further archaeological strategies may be taken. These strategies may be preservation in situ, excavation, or watching brief.
- 3.5 The site is located within an Archaeological Priority Zone as defined in the Borough's U.D.P.



## **4 GEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND**

- 4.1 British Geological Survey Sheet 270 (South London – 1:50,000 series for England and Wales) shows that the proposed development site lies on unclassified gravel terraces of the Quaternary period, which overlie the Upper Chalk of the Cretaceous period. The gravel terrace covers the western side of the site and the eastern side of the site overlies the chalk.
- 4.2 The study site is mostly flat, at a level of c. 67m AOD. It is situated in a small valley between the hills of Russell Hill and Riddlesdown, to the east of the London to Brighton railway line.

## **5 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

### **5.1 Introduction**

- 5.1.1 An Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment has been undertaken for the site<sup>3</sup>. The following is summarised from that document.

### **5.2 Undated Earthworks**

The main undated earthwork in this area identified by the SMR is the Newe (or Wide) Ditch, located at Riddlesdown, to the south-east of the site. This originally consisted of two banks and two ditches, one of which has now been eradicated. This is a probable cross-ridge dyke reduced to a ditch with traces of the coverbank on the south-eastern side. Its date is currently unclear. Riddlesdown Hill is covered with other earthworks, which may all be contemporary with the Newe Ditch but which also remain undated. The features may have defined the Manor of Coulsden during the 14<sup>th</sup> century or may be prehistoric in date.

### **5.3 Prehistoric**

There are a number of undated prehistoric finds from the vicinity of the study site. An excavation at 112-114 High Street revealed a number of prehistoric finds, and other

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<sup>3</sup> Clough, H. 2004 'An Archaeological Desktop Assessment of Land at 1, Dale Road, Purley, London Borough of Croydon CR8' Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd unpublished report.

undated spot finds include flint scrapers and a flint 'chisel'.

#### **5.3.1 Palaeolithic**

Two Palaeolithic spot finds have been recorded in the area. A triangular shaped handaxe was found at Wilmot Road and an implement described as a saw was found at Russell Hill.

#### **5.3.2 Mesolithic**

A number of Mesolithic spot finds have been found in the Purley area. At Russell Hill, to the north-west of the site, a possible chisel or adze was found. At Riddlesdown, two tranchet axes have been found. Other finds include a tranchet axe from Foxley Wood, a flint axe or pick from Purley Downs Road and a lithic implement from Purley Downs.

#### **5.3.3 Neolithic**

A large number of Neolithic spot finds have been found in Purley, scattered throughout the area with a small concentration on Russell Hill. At Riddlesdown Road, various flint artefacts have been found including a hollow scraper, axes, flakes etc. At Russell Hill, finds include a polished axe and two side scrapers. Other, more scattered finds include three parts of chipped axes from Wilmot Road, a flint core and a side scraper from Beggars Bush. An archaeological evaluation at Station Road, Kenley found 23 flints of Neolithic to Bronze Age date.

#### **5.3.4 Bronze Age and Iron Age**

The Bronze Age spot finds from the area tend to cluster on Russell Hill. Finds of this period from this location include a plain socketed axe, a large copper ingot, pottery and a Bronze socketed gouge. A looped and socketed axe with copper ingot was found to the east of the study site. From the Iron Age the evidence is more flimsy, and focussed wholly in Riddlesdown.

### **5.4 Roman**

The main Roman road from London to Brighton passed directly to the north of the study site. This road followed the line of Down's Court Road, and continued through Riddlesdown as Riddlesdown Road, now a footpath. Modern development has

removed all traces of the road, but it is possible that ditches or quarries associated with it may remain in the vicinity of the study site. Part of the road was found in the 1920's when Purley Way was built.

Only three Roman features appear in the SMR records. There is a local tradition that a Roman settlement was based at Russell Hill, the remains of which were destroyed in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Two skeletons found at Oakwood Avenue were dated to the Roman period although there was no direct evidence for dating them as no grave goods or coffins were found. An archaeological evaluation at Station Road, Kenley found an isolated Roman pot sherd.

## **5.5 Saxon**

A large number of Saxon skeletons and graveyards have been found in the vicinity of the study site. Again, these finds cluster mostly around Russell Hill, with an outlying group at Riddlesdown. The group at Riddlesdown include three skeletons at 119 Riddlesdown Road which may be related to the Saxon cemetery at Mitchley Avenue. Eight or more burials were found here in 1927, with a domestic knife and a blue and white glass bead. The other group of burials which focus on Russell Hill and its environs probably form another cemetery group, also centred on a hill site. The majority of these skeletons were found in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and as such, the exact locations of the finds may be inaccurate. The largest group comprised 107 skeletons with grave goods, which were interpreted at the time as indicating a battlefield although their grid references show that they were scattered over a large area. Another group of 74 skeletons was found in 1854-6 just to the north of the first group. Some weapons were found, but the finds and skeletons have since been lost. More graves were found to the north-west of the previous two groups in 1854 and also during roadworks of 1921. A group of graves found in the southern half of Pampisford Road may be part of the larger group LO12280.

## **5.6 Medieval**

- 5.6.1 The name 'Purley' may derive from the Old English for a peartree grove, or it may relate to a local family name. During the medieval period, the estate was in the Parish of Sanderstead, with a manor house at Purley Bury.
- 5.6.2 No medieval finds have been recorded in the SMR and as few archaeological investigations have taken place in the area, there is very little evidence for the

medieval period in the vicinity of the study site. It is likely that the area was open land during this period, and was probably mostly unused, except perhaps for small scale farming.

## **5.7 Post-Medieval**

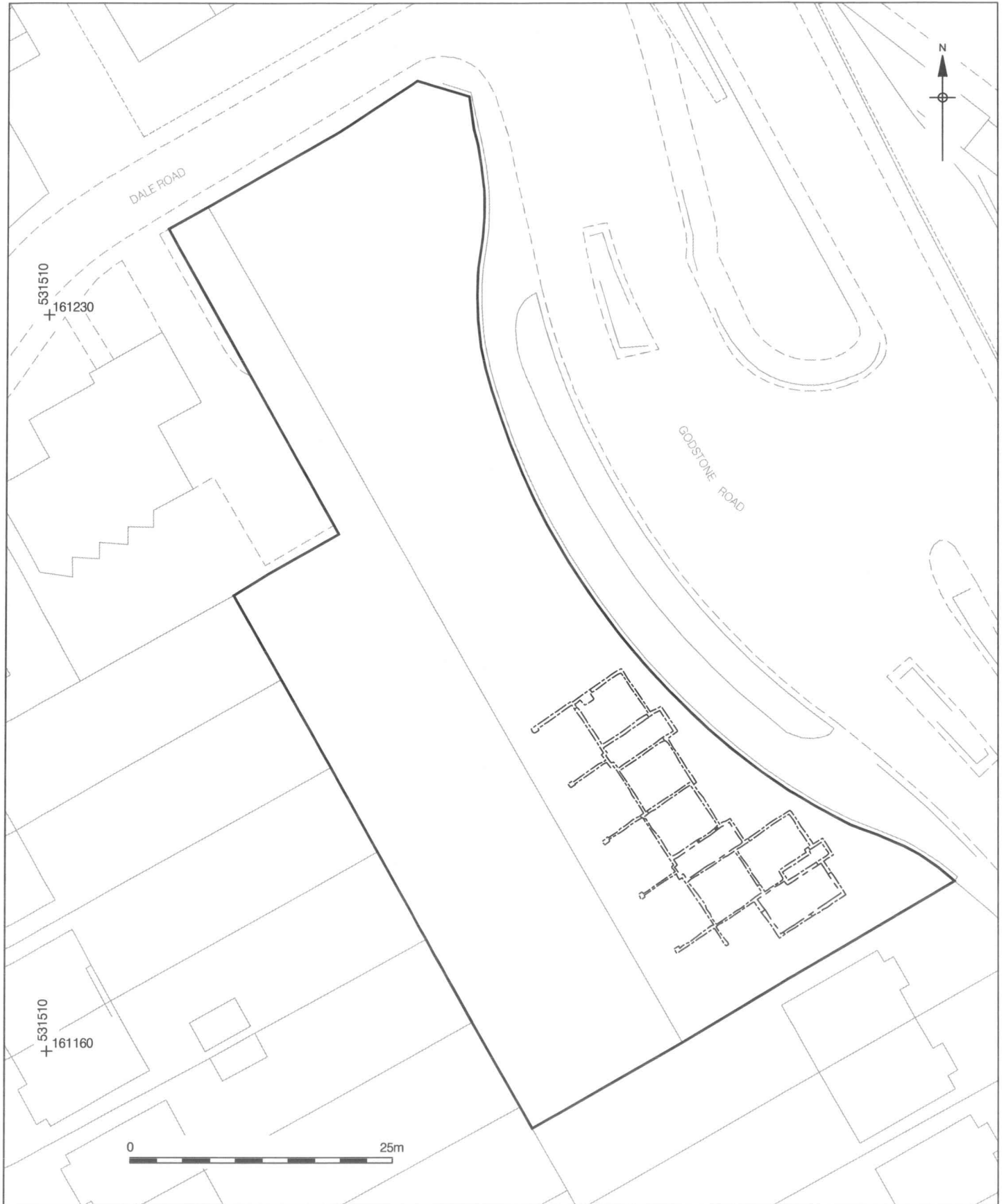
Until the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Purley area remained largely undeveloped. Purley was part of Coulsdon in the Rural District of Croydon until 1915 when it was constituted as a separate Urban District. With the arrival of the railway and the station at Caterham Junction in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century, the area began to see a wave of suburban development. The Tithe Map of 1867 shows the study site unoccupied, lying to the south-west of Godstone Road, which was located in the same position as it is today. The Ordnance Survey Map of 1868 also shows the same situation. Limekilns are marked to the north of Godstone Road, and the land here was marshy. By 1898 Dale Road had been constructed and large detached houses built to the north, east and south of the study site, which remained vacant. By 1914, a number of terraced houses had been built on the east side of the study site and the whole area had become much more heavily populated. The houses were still located on the study site in 1952 but by 1973 they had been demolished, and replaced by a car park.

## 6 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

- 6.1 In accordance with the method statement<sup>4</sup> the area of the groundworks was broken out and excavated by the contractors under archaeological supervision. The objective of the Watching Brief was to allow a archaeologist to identify, record and retrieve (as far as possible) any archaeological remains that were uncovered in the course of the development programme.
- 6.2 The footings were opened up with the use of a jackhammer and a 360° mechanical excavator using a 1.6m wide toothless ditching bucket. As the machining progressed the archaeologist present examined the nature of the in situ and removed soils whilst checking for features and finds and recording the results.
- 6.3 The groundworks were examined and recorded in both plan and section.
- 6.4 The single context system was used for recording, developed out of the Department of Urban Archaeology Site Manual, now published by the Museum of London Archaeology Service (MOLAS 1994). Plans were recorded at a scale of 1:100, and sections were recorded at a scale of 1:10.
- 6.5 Levels on the base of the footings and the top of the sections were calculated using an average height of 66.84m OD. This was a spot height on a manhole cover present in the centre of the site. The site itself was fairly level.
- 6.6 No unusual health and safety issues were encountered during the evaluation.

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<sup>4</sup> Bradley, T. 2006 'Method Statement for an Archaeological Watching Brief at 1 Dale Road, Purley London Borough of Croydon CR8' Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd unpublished report.



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Figure 2  
Trench Location  
1:500

## **7      ARCHAEOLOGICAL PHASE DISCUSSION**

7.1      Five days were spent monitoring the excavation of the footings to the south of the site (Fig. 2). No archaeological remains were discovered during this period, the ground appearing to have been heavily truncated by a row of terraced houses constructed on the site during the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The construction of a car park during the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century also appeared to have impacted heavily on the site most likely in the form of landscaping. For this reason it was decided that the likelihood of finding any archaeological remains on the site was minimal. The watching brief ceased, with the monitoring of the northern footings being deemed unnecessary. What follows is an archaeological phase discussion of the footings excavated in the south of the site. The footings themselves consisted of one large block, forming the foundations for the new flats.

### **7.2      Phase 1 – Natural (Figs. 3 and 4)**

7.2.1      The earliest deposit encountered at the base of the footings was the natural Upper Chalk of the Cretaceous period [3]. This chalk was recorded as a somewhat weathered and degraded deposit, likely to represent the upper limits of the sequence. It was off white in colour and recorded between 65.48m OD and 66.12m OD (Fig. 4). It was not fully excavated, but was present at the base of the footings at 64.94m OD and up to 0.64m thick.

7.2.2      Immediately overlying the natural chalk [3] were the unclassified gravel terraces of the Quaternary period [2]. These gravels were recorded as a firm to loose deposit consisting of both gravel and flint mixed with a dark red brown deposit of clay sand matrix. They were recorded as being up to 0.40m thick at a highest level of 66.34m OD (Fig. 4).

7.2.3      Overlying [2] was a thin, mid red brown deposit of clay sand matrix with inclusions of occasional small sub angular pebbles [1]. This deposit was up to 0.15m in thickness at highest levels between 66.27m OD and 66.44m OD.

### **7.3      Phase 2 – Modern (Figs. 3 and 4)**

7.3.1      Sealing layer [1] were modern made ground material and tarmac [+], measuring up to 0.80m in thickness at a highest level of 66.84m OD. A large modern intrusion was recorded as truncating the natural deposits in the south of the site. This intrusion was sealed by the modern made ground material and tarmac, and is therefore likely to

represent some form of foundation for the row of terraced houses present on the Ordnance Survey map of 1914. The modern intrusion measured at least 9.30m from east to west, 10m from north to south and was not fully excavated at a depth of 0.80m (see section 2, Fig. 3).

- 7.3.2 Modern walls were also observed (see section 5, Fig. 3). These walls are most likely to represent some form of small basement or underground service and again most probably related to the row of terraced houses constructed in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.
- 7.3.3 Towards the middle of the site, or the north of the monitored area of footings, modern made ground and tarmac [+] immediately sealed [2], measuring up to 0.80m in thickness at a highest level of 66.84m OD. This may indicate that during the construction of the car park in the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century a certain degree of landscaping took place. This might have involved the grading down and removal of some natural deposits.



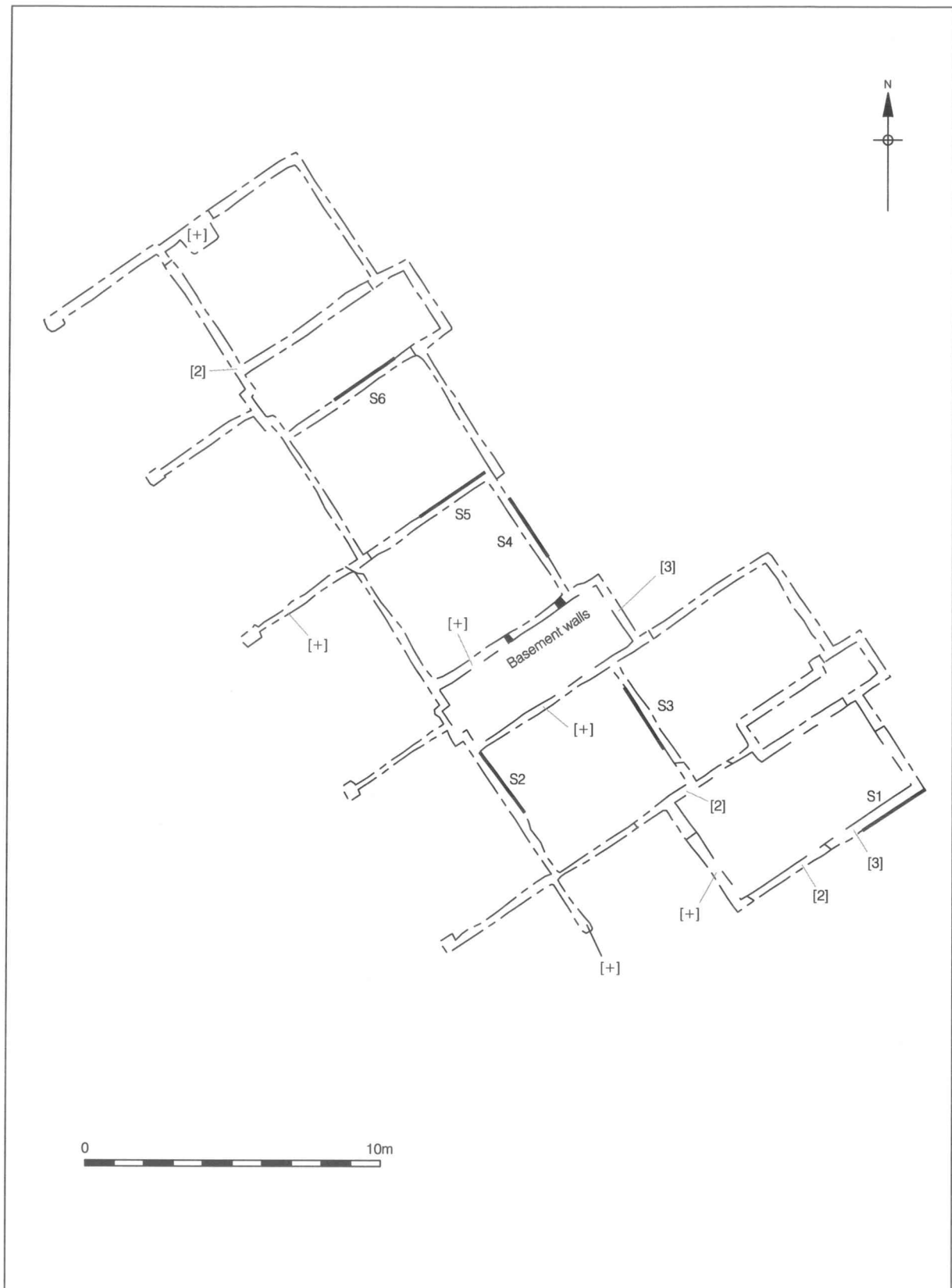


Figure 3  
Trench Detail  
1:200

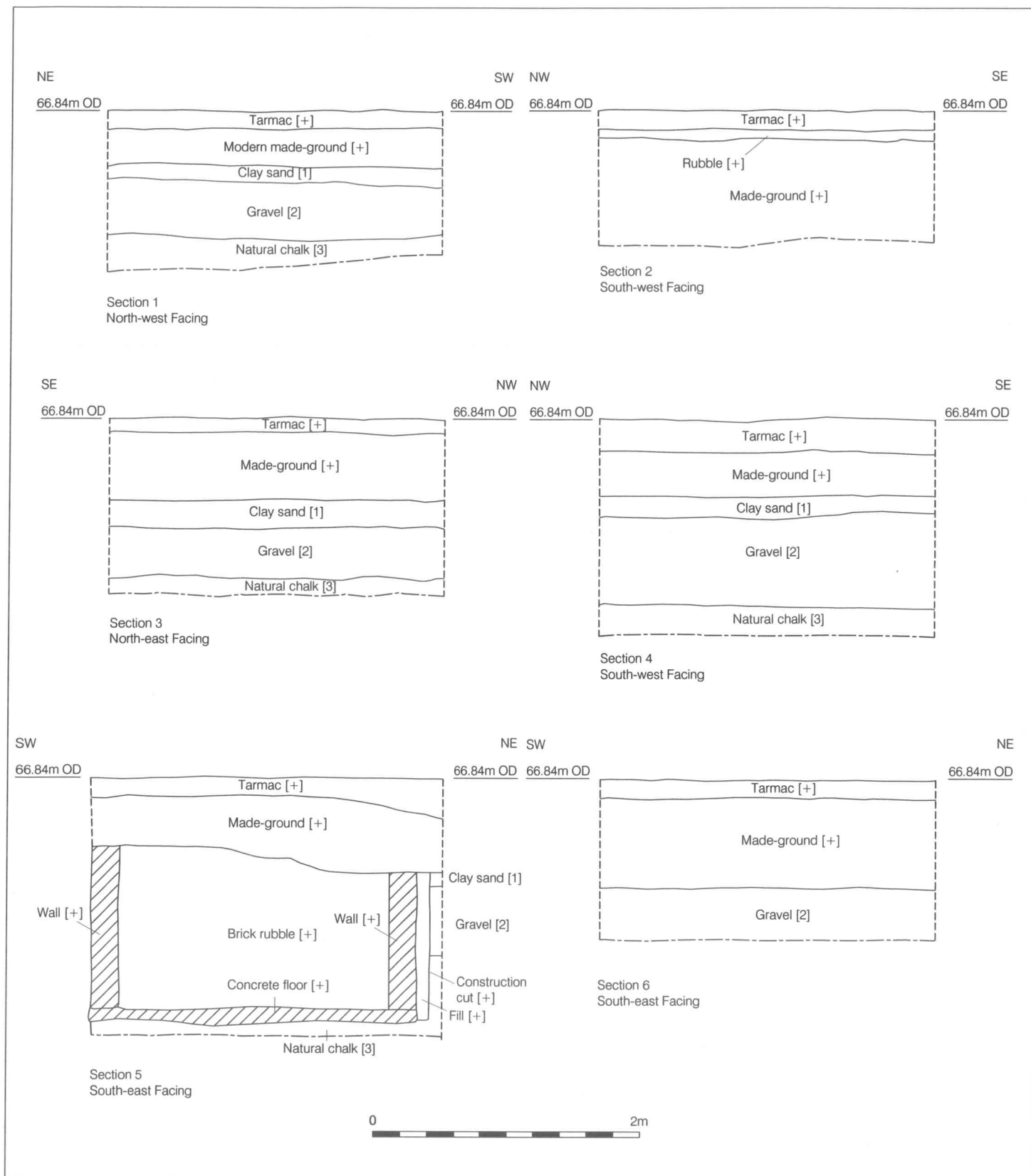


Figure 4  
Sections 1-6  
1:40

## **8 INTERPRETATION AND CONCLUSIONS**

- 8.1 One of the principal objectives of the archaeological Watching Brief was to determine the presence or absence of archaeological activity of any period. No archaeology was uncovered on the site, with no evidence of human occupation prior to the 20<sup>th</sup> century.
- 8.2 It is likely that the modern truncations discovered within the footings represent evidence of the foundations belonging to a row of terraced houses. These houses appear on the Ordnance Survey map of 1914. They are not present on the earlier Ordnance Survey map of 1898. The construction of the car park present on the Ordnance Survey map of 1973 also appears to have had a significant impact on the site, with a large layer of demolition rubble make up immediately underlying the tarmac surface. It seems likely that a certain degree of landscaping took place on the site, not only during the construction of the row of terraced houses, but also during the later construction of the car park. This would have had a serious impact on both any buried archaeological deposits or features.
- 8.3 The natural on the site was discovered to be Cretaceous Upper Chalk. This in turn was overlain by unclassified gravel terraces of the Quaternary period. A thin layer of clay sand sealed the gravel terraces in places.

## **9 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

- 9.1 Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited would like to thank Moiz Siddiqui of Classgrade Ltd for commissioning the work and Saeed Jannati for monitoring it on behalf of Classgrade Ltd. Thanks also to Mark Stevenson of the Greater London Archaeology Advisory Service (GLAAS) for monitoring the site on behalf of the local planning authority.
- 9.2 The author would also like to thank Adrian Nash for the illustrations and Chris Mayo for his project management and editing.

## APPENDIX 1 – CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

Context	Type	Trench no	Sec. No	Description
1	Layer	Footings	1, 3, 4, 5	Layer of Clay Sand
2	Layer	Footings	1, 3, 4, 5, 6	Natural Gravel
3	Layer	Footings	1, 3, 4, 5	Natural Chalk

## APPENDIX 2 - OASIS Form

OASIS ID: preconst1-13952

### Project details

Project name	1 Dale Road, Purley, London Borough of Croydon CR8
Short description of the project	An archaeological watching brief took place on the above site between the 4th and 10th of April 2006. The watching brief involved the monitoring of groundworks (in the form of footings) being excavated in order to provide foundations for a new block of residential flats. No archaeology was encountered and it appears likely that the site had been heavily impacted upon during the construction of a row of terraced houses on the site in the early 20th century. The site is also likely to have been heavily landscaped when it was turned into a car park during the latter half of the 20th century. Only the southern block of footings were observed during the watching brief (totalling approximately 50 % of the groundworks). Due to the lack of archaeological evidence on site it was decided that the northern block of footings would not need further archaeological observation.
Project dates	Start: 04-04-2006 End: 10-04-2006
Previous/future work	Yes / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	DRC 06 - Sitecode
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	Local Authority Designated Archaeological Area
Current Land use	Vacant Land 1 - Vacant land previously developed

### Project location

Country	England
Site location	GREATER LONDON CROYDON PURLEY 1 Dale Road, Purley, London Borough of Croydon
Postcode	CR8
Study area	4278.00 Square metres
National grid reference	TQ 3160 6120 Point
Height OD	Min: 66.34m Max: 66.04m

### Project creators

Name of Organisation	Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd
Project brief originator	Pre-Construct Archaeology
Project design originator	Tim Bradley
Project director/manager	Chris Mayo

Project supervisor	Alexis Haslam
Sponsor or funding body	Classgrade Ltd

#### **Project archives**

Physical Archive recipient	LAARC
Digital Archive recipient	LAARC
Digital Contents	'none'
Digital Media available	'Text'
Paper Archive recipient	LAARC
Paper Media available	'Context sheet', 'Drawing', 'Photograph', 'Plan', 'Report', 'Section', 'Unpublished Text'

#### **Project bibliography 1**

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
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