

**DEPTFORD GREEN UPPER SCHOOL
AMERSHAM VALE, NEW CROSS, SE8
LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM**



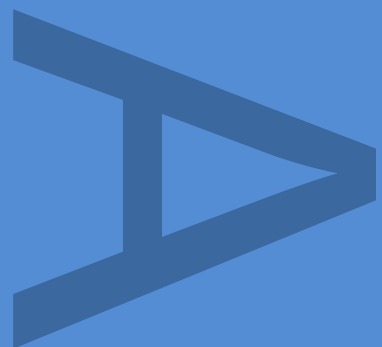
ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF



PCA REPORT NO: R11361

SITE CODE: DGU13

JANUARY 2013





PRE-CONSTRUCT ARCHAEOLOGY

DOCUMENT VERIFICATION

DEPTFORD GREEN UPPER SCHOOL
LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM
ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

Quality Control

Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited			K2998
	Name & Title	Signature	Date
Text Prepared by:	Sarah Barrowman		January 2013
Graphics Prepared by:	Jennifer Simonson		January 2013
Graphics Checked by:	Josephine Brown		January 2013
Project Manager Sign-off:	Tim Bradley		January 2013

Revision No.	Date	Checked	Approved

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

**DEPTFORD GREEN UPPER SCHOOL, AMERSHAM VALE, NEW CROSS, SE8
LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM; AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING
BRIEF**

Site Code: DGU13

Central NGR: TQ 366 774

Local Planning Authority: London Borough of Lewisham

Planning Reference: DC/10/73438

Commissioning Client: CgMs Consulting

Written/Researched by: Sarah Barrowman
Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited

Project Manager: Tim Bradley (MIfA)

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

Tel: 020 7732 3925
Fax: 020 7732 7896
E-mail: tbradley@pre-construct.com
Web: www.pre-construct.com

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January 2013

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1 ABSTRACT

- 1.1 An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited during demolition groundwork at Deptford Green Upper School, Amersham Vale, in the London Borough of Lewisham. The work was undertaken on 7th January 2013.
- 1.2 The watching brief was targeted on the north-eastern corner of the site, where there was increased potential for post-medieval archaeological remains to be present, and monitored the removal of modern footings and foundations from recently demolished buildings.
- 1.3 The aim of the work was to preserve by record any archaeological remains present, to determine the earliest human activity in the area where possible, to determine the occupation sequence with an emphasis in the post-medieval period, and to help further the understanding of past activity in the area.
- 1.4 The only archaeological feature observed was a late 19th to early 20th century well, likely to have been associated with the former terrace houses or public house which occupied the site. No earlier archaeological features or evidence was observed, with natural deposits seen to be directly overlain by sub-soil horizons or truncated by the footings and foundations which were being removed during the monitoring process.

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 A targeted archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited (PCA) during the groundwork associated with demolition/site clearance works at Deptford Green Upper School, Amersham Vale, New Cross, in the London Borough of Lewisham. The watching brief was undertaken on the 7th January 2013. The archaeological project was commissioned by CgMs Consulting. Tim Bradley managed the project for PCA and the watching brief was undertaken by Sarah Barrowman, also of PCA.
- 2.2 The site lies within the London Borough of Lewisham, is 11350.70m² in size, and is located on the western side of Amersham Vale, with the boundary delineated by Amersham Vale, Edward Street, and Amersham Grove (Figures 1 and 2). It is centred at National Grid Reference TQ 366 774. The site is located within an Archaeological Priority Area.
- 2.3 The groundwork was undertaken by the on-site demolition contractor, and was monitored by the attendant archaeologist.
- 2.4 The project was allocated the Museum of London Site Code DGU13. Following the completion of the project the entire site archive will be deposited at the London Archaeological Archive and Research Centre under that code.
- 2.5 All works were undertaken in accordance with an approved Written Scheme of Investigation (Meager 2012b) and the following guidance:
- The Institute for Archaeologists *Code of Conduct* (1999).
 - The Institute for Archaeologists *Code of Approved Practice for the Regulation of Contractual Arrangements in Field Archaeology* (1999).
 - The Institute for Archaeologists *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Brief* (1994, Revised 2001).
 - The Institute for Archaeologists *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Evaluation* (1994, Revised 2001)
 - The Institute for Archaeologists *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Excavation* (1995, Revised 2001).
 - The European Association of Archaeologists *Principles of Conduct for Archaeologists Involved in Contract Archaeological Work* (1998).
 - The Institute for Archaeologists *Standard and Guidance for the Collection, Documentation, Conservation and Research of Archaeological Materials* (2001).
 - Brown, Derek *Archaeological Archives: A guide to Best Practice in creation, transfer and curation* (IfA 2007).
 - The Museum of London *General standards for the preparation of archives deposited with the Museum of London* (1998).
 - The *Treasure Act* (1996).
 - The *Burial Act* (1857).
- 2.6 No prior archaeological investigations are known to have been undertaken on the site.

3 PLANNING BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The site is located within an Archaeological Priority Zone as defined by the London Borough of Lewisham.
- 3.2 Planning permission has been granted for the redevelopment of the site (Lewisham Planning Ref: DC/10/73438) with the following condition attached regarding archaeology:
- No development shall take place on the site until the applicant, or any successors in title, has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation, which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.*
- 3.3 To meet with the requirements of the above, this document details the results of an archaeological monitoring and recording exercise to record any significant archaeological deposits which may be exposed during the demolition work.
- 3.4 The fieldwork was undertaken in accordance with the approved Written Scheme of Investigation (Meager 2012b).

4 GEOLOGICAL AND TOPOGRAPHICAL BACKGROUND

4.1 Geology

4.2 The solid geology of the site is shown by the Institute of Geological Sciences (IGS 1979) as London Clay deposits forming the London Basin.

4.3 Further detail is provided by British Geological Survey Sheet 270 (South London: 1998) which shows the site to be underlain by deposits of the Kempton Park River Terrace gravels, defined as 'Post-diversionary Thames River Terrace Deposits: gravel, sandy and clayey in part'.

4.4 No site-specific geotechnical data was available prior to the investigation.

4.5 Topography

4.6 The site is level at c.4.4-4.5m OD.

4.7 No watercourses or naturally occurring bodies of water are known within the vicinity of the site. The course of the River Ravensbourne runs c.1km to the northeast of the site, and course of the River Thames runs c.1.2km northeast of the site.

5 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

5.1 The historical and archaeological background of the site has been documented in the Archaeological Desk Based Assessment (Meager 2012a) which was prepared for the site, from which the following is derived.

5.2 Prehistoric

5.2.1 Kempton Park Gravels, which underlie the site, have been categorised as part of the Devensian Stage, the last glacial stage of the British Pleistocene epoch. Organic material within the Kempton Park Gravels has been dated to c.45,000-30,000 BP, within the Middle Devensian Stage. While vertebrate remains have been identified within the Kempton Park Gravels, the identification of archaeological artefacts to date has not been common.

5.2.2 From around 4000 BC the mobile hunter-gathering economy of the Mesolithic gradually gave way to a more settled agriculture-based subsistence. The pace of woodland clearance to create arable and pasture-based agricultural land varied regionally and locally, depending on a wide variety of climatic, topographic, social and other factors. The trend was one of a slow, but gradually increasing pace of forest clearance.

5.2.3 By the 1st millennium BC the landscape was probably a mix of extensive tracts of open farmland, punctuated by earthwork burial and ceremonial monuments from distant generations, with settlements, ritual areas and defended locations reflecting an increasingly hierarchical society.

5.2.4 However, there has been a paucity of prehistoric material recovered from within the area, the potential of the prehistoric periods for the site itself was identified as low.

5.3 Roman

5.3.1 Archaeological work at Deptford Broadway to the southeast of the site revealed two Roman features interpreted as possibly interconnecting enclosure ditches. To the west of the site, a masonry depiction of Janus was found, while to the east a bronze lamp was found (possibly in the River Thames).

5.3.2 The Deptford Broadway features are probably related to the line of Watling Street which passed through Deptford and New Cross, some distance to the south of the site.

5.3.3 However, given the general paucity of Roman material within the vicinity of the site, the potential of this period for the site itself was identified as generally low.

5.4 Saxon

5.4.1 The name Deptford is believed to be derived from 'deep ford' and is understood to have been named after a crossing of the River Ravensbourne, to the north of the site.

5.4.2 The sole finds of Saxon date within a 750m radius of the site comprised two inhumation burials dated to the Saxon period identified through archaeological work at Deptford Broadway, some distance to the southeast.

5.4.3 The potential for the Saxon period at the study site itself was considered generally low.

5.5 Medieval

5.5.1 During the Medieval period, settlement at Deptford appears to have been divided between

- centres based around St Nicholas Church, northeast of the site, with the other at Deptford Broadway to the southeast of the site.
- 5.5.2 The site is thought to have lain in an area of open land throughout the medieval period, away from known areas of occupation. The potential of the site for the medieval period was considered to be low. Evidence of agricultural activity and land division could conceivably be present.
- 5.6 **Post-Medieval**
- 5.6.1 Early maps show the site to lie in open land, with buildings at the north-eastern end, southwest of Deptford and north of New Cross (1745 John Rocque; 1797 Stockdale; 1821 Laurie).
- 5.6.2 The Deptford Tithe Map (1844) and the associated Award shows the bulk of the site to lie in an area of market gardens, with two detached buildings in the north-eastern corner.
- 5.6.3 The First Edition Ordnance Survey (1868) shows the site occupied by terraced houses with a public house in the north-eastern corner. Essentially the site does not change until the later twentieth century; it underwent general blast damage during World War Two.
- 5.6.4 The 1951 Ordnance Survey shows the site unchanged from previous editions, but the 1978-1980 Ordnance Survey shows that the houses formerly occupying the site have been removed and replaced by the school building which still occupies the site. The 2011 Ordnance Survey shows minor alterations within the site.
- 5.6.5 The potential of the site for the Post Medieval and Modern periods was therefore identified as low, save for the north-eastern corner, where the remains of buildings of eighteenth century date, and possibly earlier, may have survived subsequent development.

6 METHODOLOGY

- 6.1 The watching brief was conducted according to a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) prepared by CgMs Consulting (Meager 2012b).
- 6.2 The WSI stated that the principle aims and objectives were to record any archaeological artefacts and ecofacts and their context. It also stated the following specific objectives:
- To determine if possible the date of the earliest human activity in this area and the subsequent sequence of occupation, with a particular emphasis on the Post Medieval period.
 - To help further inform our understanding of past activity in the Deptford area.
 - To record any significant archaeological deposits which may be exposed during construction work.
- 6.3 The watching brief was undertaken on 7th January 2013, during the removal of below ground obstructions in the form of the foundations associated with the recently demolished building in the northeast corner of the site. This area had been selected for the targeted archaeological monitoring due the potential for earlier post-medieval buildings being present in this area, as identified in the Desk Based Assessment of the site (Meager 2012a).
- 6.4 The aforementioned modern structural remains were removed by a mechanical excavator, then the remaining non-archaeological deposits were reduced by machine until the surface of the terrace gravels were revealed to ensure no obstructions remained. All work was undertaken under archaeological supervision.
- 6.5 All deposits were monitored and recorded by the attendant archaeologist using the single context recording system. The deposits were assigned individual context numbers.
- 6.6 Depths of the deposits were recorded being as 'below ground level'. The ground level of the site lay between 4.4 and 4.5m OD, with the latter being relevant for the area investigated.
- 6.7 The completed archive, comprising all plans, section drawings, context sheets and photographic records will be deposited with the London Archaeological Archive and Research Centre (LAARC) under the Site Code DGU13.

7 ARCHAEOLOGICAL SEQUENCE

7.1 Phase 1

7.1.1 The earliest deposit recorded during the watching brief was the *in-situ* geological deposit of the terrace gravel [3], which was composed of loose mid brownish-orange sandy gravel. This were seen across the area monitored, recorded between 3.50 and 3.45m OD, and was often directly overlain by the modern foundations and footings.

7.2 Phase 2

7.2.1 Following the lifting of the footings located in the centre of the area monitored, a circular brick structure [5] was observed to be cut through the gravel horizon [3]. This was constructed without any bonding material from a mix of red, pink and yellow frogged bricks, both full and half bricks, with the brickwork being identified from 2.25m OD. Two brick samples were collected – one of a machined yellow weald brick stamped with '1 B V' which was dated to 1860-1940, and another a pink brick of Fletton fabric which was possibly stamped with 'LBC' and dated to 1890-1930. The structure was sub-circular in plan, being 1.80m east-west by 1.92m north-south in diameter, with the brickwork being 0.20m in width, and was interpreted as a well. The associated construction cut [7] was slightly larger than the masonry, measuring 1.96m east-west by 2.02m north-south, and seen from 3.50m OD, with the space between the two filled by a friable dark greyish-brown sandy-silt [6] with frequent medium sized round to sub-angular gravels.

7.2.2 The well was backfilled by a deposit of friable mid greyish-brown sandy silt [4] with a moderate amount of medium sub-rounded gravels, from which two sherds of pottery were recovered, dating from 1630-1846 and 1830-1900. The well was only exposed in plan, and left *in situ*, therefore the full depth of the feature could not be established.

7.2.3 In areas where the footings were shallow or absent, a sub-soil horizon [2] was observed to be overlying the gravels [3]. This was up to 0.15m thick, composed of friable mid yellowish-brown silty-sand with occasional small to medium sub-rounded gravels, and seen from 3.60m OD. This was overlain by a soil horizon [1] of friable dark greyish-brown sandy-silt with occasional fragments of ceramic building material and small sub-angular gravels. This was up to 1.00m thick and seen from between 4.50 and 4.17m OD.

8 INTERPRETATION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 8.1 The only archaeological feature encountered during the watching brief was the late 19th – early 20th century well. Based on the date of the building material this feature is likely to have been associated with the terrace houses, or perhaps the Public House, depicted cartographically as having been on the site between 1868 and 1951.
- 8.2 No evidence associated with the cartographically depicted 18th century buildings was encountered. Equally, no evidence of early human activity was encountered, even in a residual capacity.
- 8.3 The foundations and footings of the late 20th buildings which most recently occupied the monitored area of the site were seen to have truncated the potential archaeological deposits to within the underlying terrace gravels. The depth of the above mentioned well ensured that it survived below this impact, despite having been directly overlain by the concrete foundations.
- 8.4 In areas where truncation had not occurred deposits of sub-soil and then possible garden soil were observed to be directly overlying the terrace gravels, though no archaeological evidence was encountered within these deposits.
- 8.5 The results of the archaeological investigation of the site will be published as an entry in the *London Archaeologist* 'Round Up'.

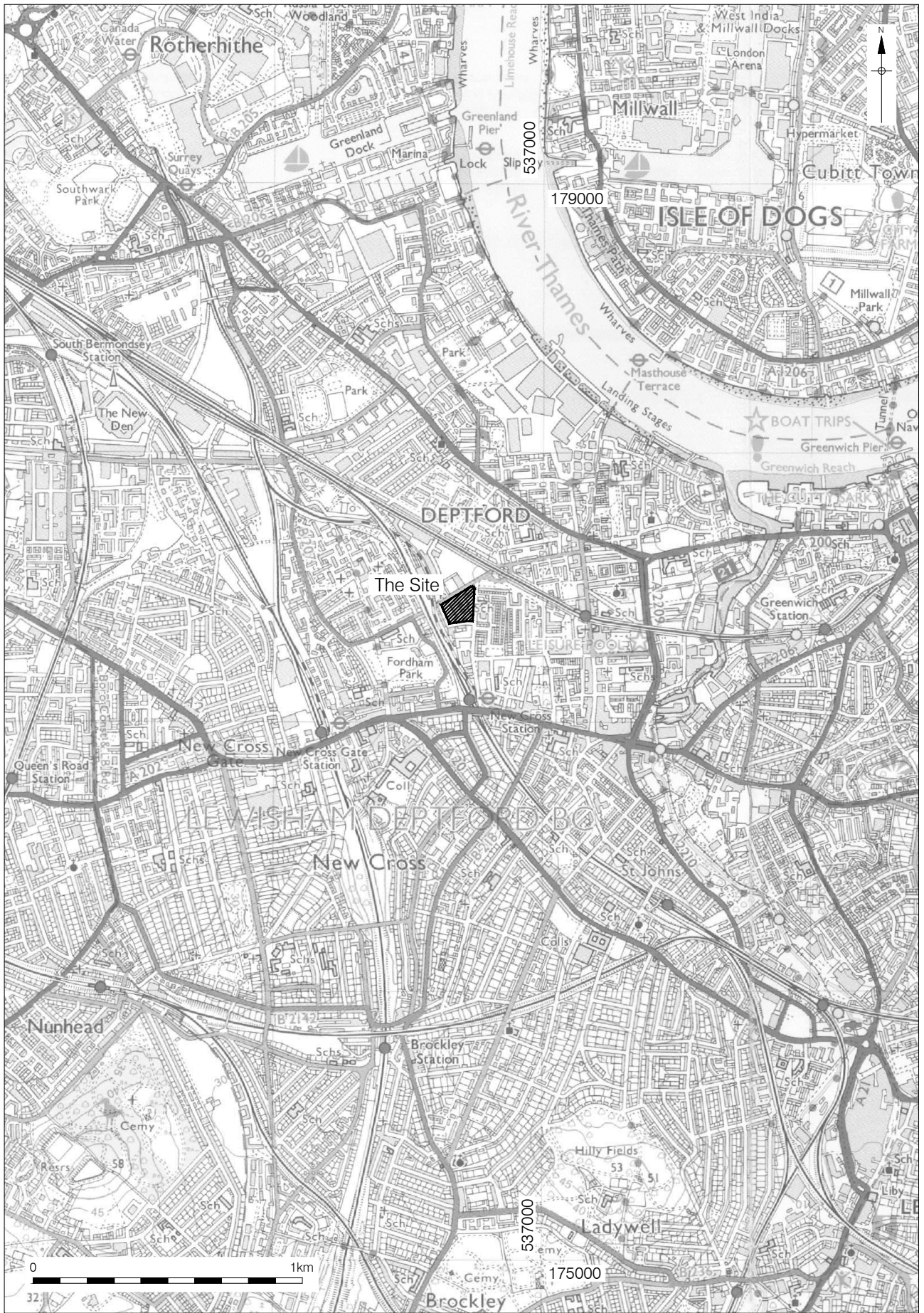
9 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- 9.1 Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited would like to thank Richard Meager of CgMs Consulting for commissioning the work, and to demolition team for their assistance on site.
- 9.2 The author would like to thank Tim Bradley for his project management and editing, Jennifer Simonson for the illustrations, and Chris Jarrett and Kevin Hayward for providing the spot dates.

10 BIBLIOGRAPHY

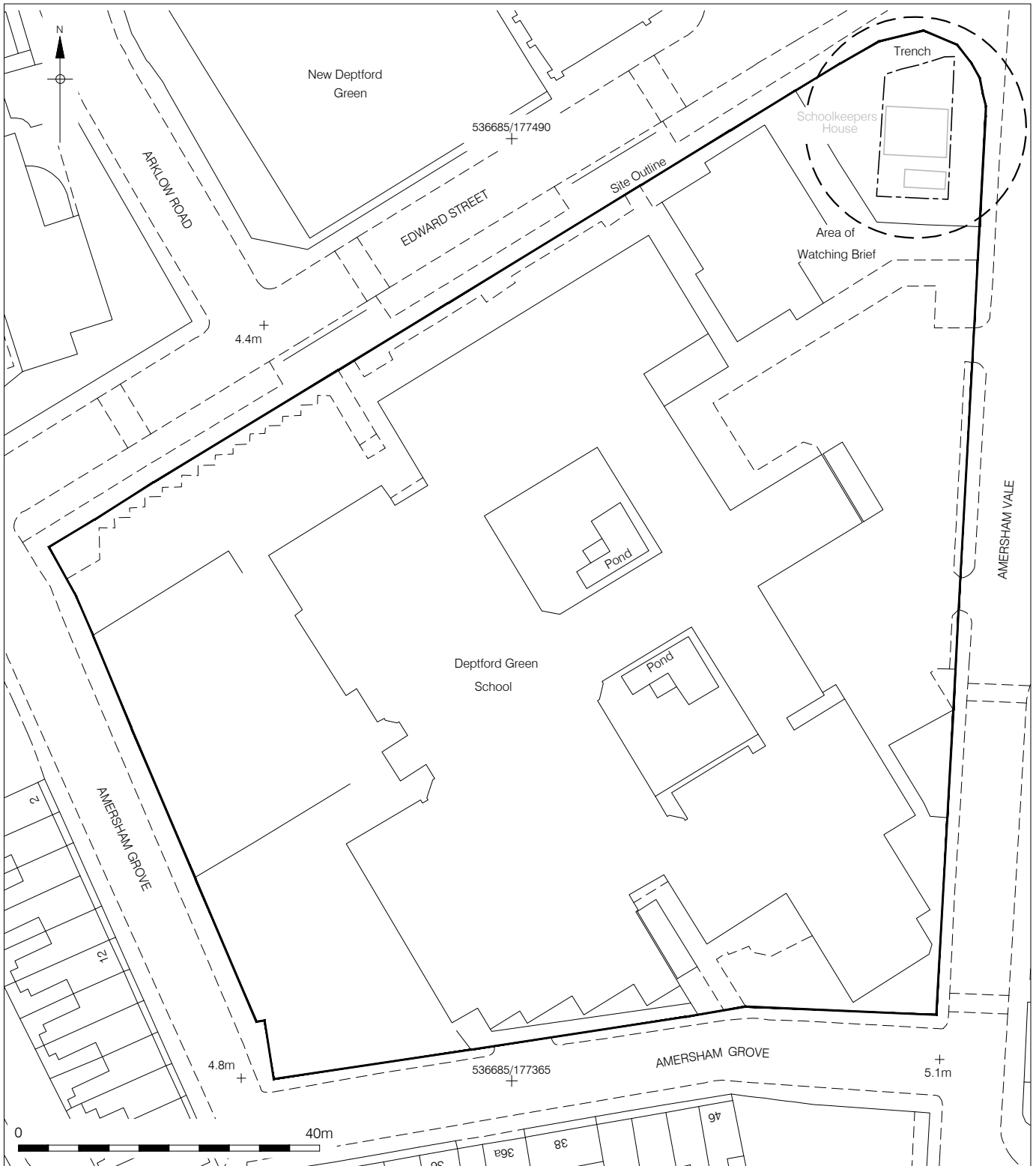
Meager, R. 2012a. *Archaeological Desk Based Assessment – Deptford Green Upper School, Amersham Vale, Lewisham*. CgMs Consulting. Unpublished Report.

Meager, R. 2012b. *Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Monitoring Exercise – Deptford Green Upper School, Amersham Vale, Lewisham*. CgMs Consulting, Unpublished Report.



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Figure 1
 Site Location
 1:20,000 at A4

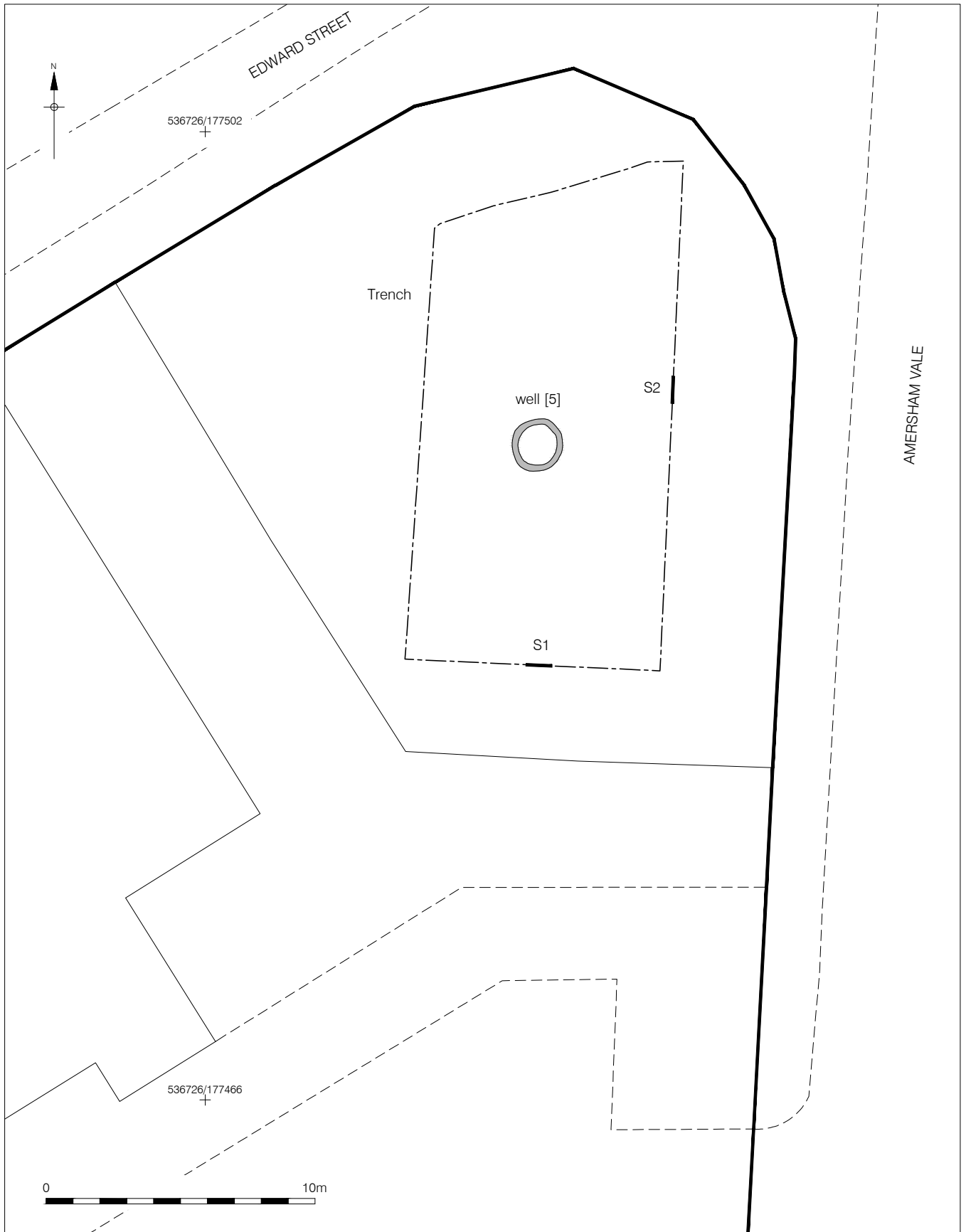


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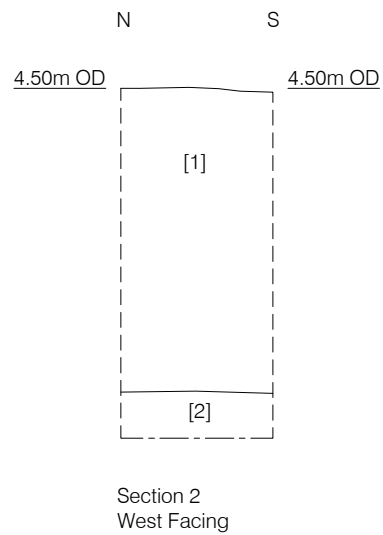
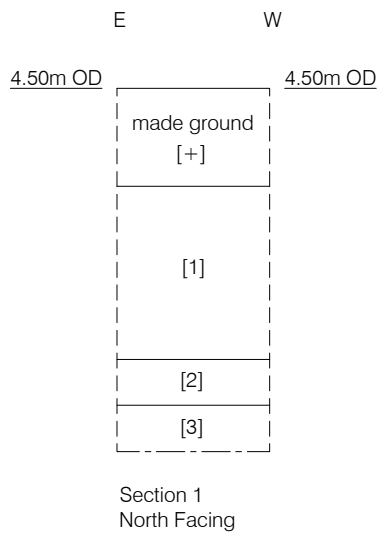
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Figure 2
Trench Location
1:750 at A4



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Figure 3
 Trench Plan
 1:200 at A4



0 1m

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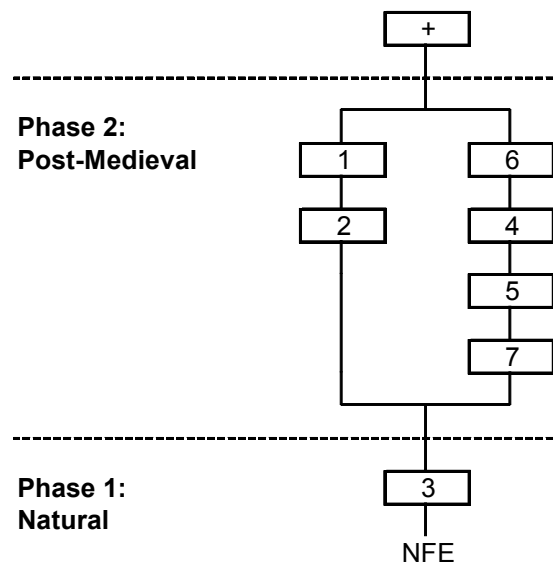
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Figure 4
Sections
1:25 at A4

APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT INDEX

Context No.	Plan	Section	Type	Description	Date	Phase
1	-	1 2	Layer	Soil Horizon	Post-Medieval	2
2	-	1 2	Layer	Sub-Soil Horizon	Uncertain	2
3	WB	1 2	Natural	Terrace Gravels	Natural	1
4	5	-	Fill	Backfill of [5] and [7]	Post-Medieval	2
5	5	-	Masonry	Well or Soak Away	Post-Medieval	2
6	5	-	Fill	Fill of [8]	Post-Medieval	2
7	5	-	Cut	Construction Cut for [5]	Post-Medieval	2

APPENDIX 2: SITE MATRIX



APPENDIX 3: PLATES



Plate 1: Overview of the Area Monitored



Plate 2: Example of the Surviving Stratigraphy in Section



Plate 3: The 19th to 20th Century Well (1.0m scale)



Plate 4: The Exposed Elevation of the Well (0.5m scale)

APPENDIX 4: OASIS FORM

OASIS ID: preconst1-140464

Project details

Project name	An Archaeological Watching Brief at Deptford Green Upper School, Amersham Vale, London Borough of Lewisham
Short description of the project	An Archaeological Watching Brief was undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited during demolition ground works at Deptford Green Upper School, London Borough of Bromley. The watching brief was targeted on the north-eastern corner of the site and monitored the removal of modern footings and foundations from recently demolished buildings. The only archaeological feature observed was a late 19th - early 20th century well, likely to have been associated with the former terrace houses or public house which occupied the site. No earlier archaeological features or evidence was observed, with natural deposits seen to be directly overlain by sub-soil and soil horizons or truncated by footings and foundations which were being removed.
Project dates	Start: 07-01-2013 End: 07-01-2013
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	DGU13 - Sitecode
Any associated project reference codes	DC/10/73438 - Planning Application No.
Any associated project reference codes	K2998 - Contracting Unit No.
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	Local Authority Designated Archaeological Area
Current Land use	Other 3 - Built over
Monument type	WELL Post Medieval
Significant Finds	POTTERY Post Medieval
Significant Finds	BRICKS Post Medieval
Investigation type	"Watching Brief"
Prompt	Planning condition

Project location

Country	England
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Site location	GREATER LONDON LEWISHAM DEPTFORD AND NEWCROSS Deptford Green Upper School, Amersham Vale
Postcode	SE8
Study area	11350.70 Square metres
Site coordinates	TQ 366 774 51 0 51 28 42 N 000 01 57 W Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 3.45m Max: 3.50m

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd
Project brief originator	Local Planning Authority (with/without advice from County/District Archaeologist)
Project design originator	CgMs Consulting Ltd.
Project director/manager	Tim Bradley
Project supervisor	Sarah Barrowman
Type of sponsor/funding body	Developer
Name of sponsor/funding body	Unknown

Project archives

Physical Archive recipient	LAARC
Physical Contents	"Ceramics"
Digital Archive recipient	LAARC
Digital Contents	"Ceramics"
Digital Media available	"Database", "Images raster / digital photography", "Spreadsheets", "Text"
Paper Archive recipient	LAARC
Paper Contents	"Ceramics"
Paper Media available	"Context sheet", "Plan", "Report", "Section", "Survey "

**Project
bibliography 1**

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	Deptford Green Upper School, Amersham Vale, New Cross, SE8, London Borough of Lewisham - An Archaeological Watching Brief
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<hr/>	
Entered by	Sarah Barrowman (sbarrowman@pre-construct.com)
Entered on	9 January 2013

PCA

PCA SOUTH

UNIT 54
BROCKLEY CROSS BUSINESS CENTRE
96 ENDWELL ROAD
BROCKLEY
LONDON SE4 2PD
TEL: 020 7732 3925 / 020 7639 9091
FAX: 020 7639 9588
EMAIL: info@pre-construct.com

PCA NORTH

UNIT 19A
TURSDALE BUSINESS PARK
DURHAM DH6 5PG
TEL: 0191 377 1111
FAX: 0191 377 0101
EMAIL: info.north@pre-construct.com

PCA CENTRAL

7 GRANTA TERRACE
STAPLEFORD
CAMBRIDGESHIRE CB22 5DL
TEL: 01223 845 522
FAX: 01223 845 522
EMAIL: info.central@pre-construct.com

PCA WEST

BLOCK 4
CHILCOMB HOUSE
CHILCOMB LANE
WINCHESTER
HAMPSHIRE SO23 8RB
TEL: 01962 849 549
EMAIL: info.west@pre-construct.com

PCA MIDLANDS

17-19 KETTERING RD
LITTLE BOWDEN
MARKET HARBOROUGH
LEICESTERSHIRE LE16 8AN
TEL: 01858 468 333
EMAIL: info.midlands@pre-construct.com

