

**LAND AT 410 WHITEHORSE  
ROAD, THORNTON HEATH,  
CROYDON, SURREY, CR7 8SD  
AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
WATCHING BRIEF**

**SITE CODE: WHR13**

**REPORT NO: R11558**

**NOVEMBER 2013**



**Land at 410 Whitehorse Road, Thornton Heath, Croydon, Surrey, CR7 8SD**  
**An Archaeological Watching Brief**

**Site Code:** WHR 13

**Central NGR:** TQ 3282 6812

**Local Planning Authority:** London Borough of Croydon

**Planning Reference:** 11/01252/P

**Report Number:** R11558

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**DOCUMENT VERIFICATION**


**Site Name**

**410 Whitehorse Road, Thornton Heath, Croydon, Surrey, CR7 8SD**

**Type of project**

**Archaeological Watching Brief**

Quality Control

Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited Project Code			K3294
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## **1 ABSTRACT**

- 1.1 This report details the results of an archaeological watching brief commissioned by Mainstreet Residential Ltd and carried out by Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited on land at 410 Whitehorse Road, Thornton Heath, Croydon, CR7 8SD in the London Borough of Croydon, prior to the site's redevelopment.
- 1.2 A Written Scheme of Investigation (Hawkins 2013), approved by the Archaeological Adviser to the London Borough of Croydon, outlined the methodology for the archaeological monitoring of the excavation of four geotechnical test pits. These measured between 1.00m by 1.00m and 1.40m by 1.00m in plan.
- 1.3 The stratigraphic sequence recorded during the watching brief comprised natural clay overlain by 18<sup>th</sup>/19<sup>th</sup> century made ground.

## **2 INTRODUCTION**

- 2.1 On 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2013 Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited (PCA) carried out an archaeological watching brief during geotechnical investigations on land at 410 Whitehorse Road, Thornton Heath, Croydon, Surrey, CR7 8SD (Figures 1 and 2). The site was located in the London Borough of Croydon and was centred at National Grid Reference TQ 3282 6812 (Figure 1). The work was commissioned by Mainstreet Residential Ltd in response to an archaeological condition attached to planning application (11/01252/P) for the redevelopment of the site
- 2.2 A Written Scheme of Investigation was prepared by PCA (Hawkins 2013) and approved by Mr Mark Stevenson, Archaeological Adviser to the London Borough of Croydon. It detailed the proposed working methods of a watching brief carried out during the excavation of four geotechnical test pits measuring between 1.00m by 1.00m and 1.60m by 1.00m in plan (Figure 2). Further provision for a watching brief during the excavation of foundation and service runs was also made.
- 2.3 Project management of the archaeological work and report editing was carried out by Helen Hawkins, the fieldwork was supervised by Stuart Watson and this report was written by Paw Jorgensen. Mr Mark Stevenson monitored the work on behalf of the London Borough of Croydon.
- 2.4 The boundaries of the site are defined to the north by residential properties fronting Whitehorse Road, to the east by the gardens of properties fronting Talbot Road, to the south by Whitehorse Manor Junior School and to the west by Whitehorse Road.
- 2.5 The project was assigned the unique Museum of London site code WHR13. Upon completion of all phases of the work the project archive will be deposited with the London Archaeological Archive and Research Centre (LAARC).

### 3 PLANNING BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The site is located within the Bensham Manor Archaeological Priority Zone (APZ 7) as defined by the Croydon Replacement Unitary Development Plan (adopted 13 July 2006). Although planning permission has been granted for the proposed development (Planning reference 11/01252/P) it was granted on the proviso that a number of conditions were met. One of these pertains to the need to assess the archaeological potential of the site. This condition reads as follows:

**Condition**

‘No development shall take place until the applicant has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme for investigation which has been submitted by the applicant and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall only take place in accordance with the detailed scheme pursuant to this condition. The archaeological works shall be carried out by a suitably qualified investigating body acceptable to the Local Planning Authority.’

**Informative**

The development of this site is likely to damage archaeological remains. The applicant should therefore submit detailed proposals in the form of an archaeological project design. The design should be in accordance with appropriate English Heritage guidelines.

- 3.2 Following consultation with Mr Mark Stevenson, Archaeological Advisor to the London Borough of Croydon, it was decided that the archaeological potential of the site could be assessed by undertaking a proactive archaeological observation and recording exercise during the geotechnical investigation of the site. The working aims, objectives and proposed working methods of the archaeological watching brief were laid out in a Written Scheme of Investigation (Hawkins 2013) which was subsequently approved by Mr Mark Stevenson.
- 3.3 The archaeological watching brief sought to answer the following research questions:
- What is the nature, depth, survival and date of any archaeological deposits on the site?
  - Is there any evidence for prehistoric remains?
  - Is there any evidence for Roman activity?
  - Is there any evidence for medieval activity?
  - Is there any evidence for post-medieval activity, particularly relating to the 17<sup>th</sup> century farm?
  - What has been the impact on the site by previous development?

## **4 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY**

### **4.1 Geology**

4.1.1 The site is located on the boundary between three geological units; the Harwich Formation and London Clay Formation which both formed during the Eocene Epoch and form part of the Thames Group and the older Lambeth Group upon which the Thames Group rests. Lithologically these units primarily comprise clays with localised gravel beds and gravelly silts and sands (British Geological Survey 2013).

### **4.2 Topography**

4.2.1 Topographically the site is mostly flat and is not located adjacent to any watercourses.



## **5 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

- 5.1 Presented in the Written Scheme of Investigation (Hawkins 2013) was a brief outline of the historical background of the site. This has been reproduced below.
- 5.2 The site is situated in relation to a former medieval farm of at least seventeenth century date, positioned in the area southeast of the junction between Whitehorse Road and Whitehorse Lane.
- 5.3 The 1887 Ordnance Survey map shows the site lies in open ground to the south of the Whitehorse Farm building. The 1896 Ordnance Survey map shows the site is located to the south of the end of a row of terraces, as it is today. School buildings are shown to the south. No changes to the site are visible on later maps.

## **6 METHODOLOGY**

- 6.1 During the investigation the excavation of four geotechnical test pits was monitored (Figure 2). These were excavated under constant archaeological supervision using a tracked 360° mechanical excavator fitted with a flat bladed grading bucket.
- 6.2 The recording systems adopted during the investigations was fully compatible with those most widely used elsewhere in the London Borough of Croydon; that is those developed out of the Department of Urban Archaeology Site Manual, and presented in Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd's Operations Manual 1 (Taylor 2009).
- 6.3 The site archive was organised as to be compatible with the other archaeological archives produced in the Local Authority area. Individual descriptions of all archaeological strata and features excavated and exposed were entered onto prepared pro-forma recording sheets which included the same fields of entry as are found on the recording sheets of the Museum of London. Accession catalogues and the photography record cards followed the Museum of London equivalents.
- 6.4 A record of the full extent in plan and/or section of all archaeological deposits as revealed in the investigation were made; these plans were drawn on polyester based drawing film at a scale of 1:20. Upon completion of each test pit one representative section was drawn at a scale of 1:20. In addition an adequate photographic record of the investigations was prepared. This consisted of high quality, colour digital photographs taken in jpeg format.
- 6.5 The completed archive will be deposited with the London Archaeological Archive and Research Centre (LAARC) under the unique site code WHR 13.

## **7 THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SEQUENCE**

### **7.1 Natural**

7.1.1 In all four test pits the earliest deposit encountered comprised firm mid- yellowish brown sandy clay, [1], with no recorded inclusions. The bottom of this naturally deposited horizon was not reached although it could be seen to continue below the base of the test pits. It was exposed to its greatest depth in Test Pit 2 where it could be seen to be in excess of 0.35m thick (Figure 3).

### **7.2 18<sup>th</sup>/19<sup>th</sup> Century**

7.2.1 The natural clay was sealed in all four test pits by a 0.40m thick layer made ground [2], comprising dark greyish brown silty sand with moderately frequent ceramic building material fragments of an 18<sup>th</sup> or 19<sup>th</sup> century date (Figure 3).

## 8 CONCLUSIONS

### 8.1 General

8.1.1 The earliest deposit reached during the investigation was a horizon of natural clay, presumably either belonging to the Harwich Formation or the Lambeth Group. This was directly overlain by an 18<sup>th</sup>/19<sup>th</sup> century made ground deposit. The absence of subsoil or agricultural horizons suggests that the natural clay has been subjected to truncation across the entire site. It is possibly the result of the levelling of the area prior to the development of the terraced houses fronting onto Whitehorse Road in the late 1880s or early 1890s.

### 8.2 Original Research Objectives

- **What is the nature, depth, survival and date of any archaeological deposits on the site?**

No significant archaeological deposits were encountered during the investigation. The earliest evidence for cultural activity on the site was a layer of made ground, which was probably the result of preparing the area for development in the final decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. This deposit survived to a depth of approximately 0.50m below the present ground level and was sealed by a 0.10m thick layer of tarmac, which forms the current ground surface across the entire site.

- **Is there any evidence for prehistoric remains?**

The investigation found no evidence for prehistoric remains.

- **Is there any evidence for Roman activity?**

Despite Roman coins and pottery having been found in the area during the 19<sup>th</sup> century the current investigation did not find evidence for Roman activity on the site.

- **Is there any evidence for medieval activity?**

During the construction of the railway line south of Thornton Heath Station in 1865, less than one kilometre from the current site, a hoard of some 250 coins of 9<sup>th</sup> century date was found. Despite the relative proximity of the site to this find, no evidence was found for Saxon or medieval activity during the current investigation.

- **Is there any evidence for post-medieval activity, particularly relating to the 17<sup>th</sup> century farm?**

The only evidence for post-medieval activity found during the investigation was a deposit of made ground, which seemed to stretch across the entire site. It is likely that this was related to the levelling of the site prior to the development of the area during the last decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Prior to at least 1887 the site appears to have been situated within an area of agricultural land belonging to Whitehorse Farm.

- **What has been the impact on the site by previous development?**

The top of the natural clay appears to have been truncated as is evident from the lack of subsoil and/or agricultural horizons. Within the site the natural clay was overlain by a layer of made ground, which was likely the result of preparing the area for the construction of a row of terraced houses fronting Whitehorse Road in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century.

## **9 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

- 9.1 Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd would like to thank Mainstreet Residential Ltd for commissioning this archaeological watching brief and Mr Mark Stevenson for monitoring the work on behalf of the London Borough of Croydon.
- 9.2 The author would like to thank Helen Hawkins for project managing the site and editing this report, Stuart Watson for carrying out the fieldwork and Hayley Baxter for the illustrations.

## 10 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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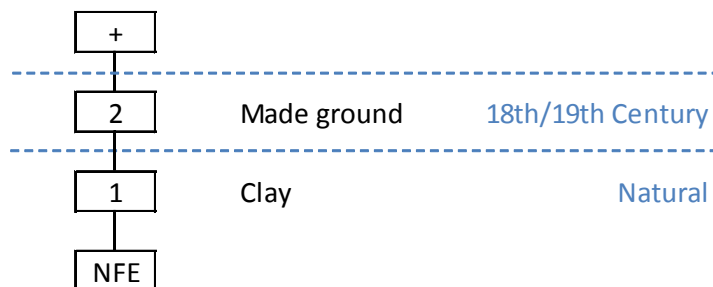
Hawkins, H. 2013, 410 Whitehorse Road, Thornton Heath, Croydon, Surrey, CR7 8SD: *Written Scheme of Investigation for Proactive Archaeological Observation and Recording*, Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd.

Taylor, J. with Brown, G. 2009, *Fieldwork Induction Manual: Operations Manual 1*, Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd.

## Appendix 1: Context Index

Site Code	Context	Trench	Type	Description
WHR13	1	TR 1, 2, 3, 4	Natural	Natural clay
WHR13	2	TR 1, 2, 3, 4	Layer	Made ground

## Appendix 2: Site Matrix





### Appendix 3: OASIS Form

OASIS ID: preconst1-163213

#### Project details

Project name	410 Whitehorse Road, Croydon
Short description of the project	An archaeological watching brief was carried out by Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited during the excavation of four small geotechnical test pits. The watching brief recorded a deposit of natural clay sealed by 18th or 19th century made ground.
Project dates	Start: 22-10-2013 End: 22-10-2013
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	WHR13 - Sitecode
Any associated project reference codes	11/01252/P - Planning Application No.
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	Local Authority Designated Archaeological Area
Current Land use	Vacant Land 2 - Vacant land not previously developed
Monument type	MADE GROUND Post Medieval
Investigation type	"Watching Brief"
Prompt	Planning condition

#### Project location

Country	England
Site location	GREATER LONDON CROYDON CROYDON 410 Whitehorse Road, Croydon
Postcode	CR7 8SD
Study area	182.00 Square metres
Site coordinates	TQ 3282 6812 51 0 51 23 45 N 000 05 26 W Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 51.05m Max: 51.10m

#### Project creators

Name of Organisation	Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited
Project brief originator	Local Planning Authority (with/without advice from County/District Archaeologist)
Project design originator	Helen Hawkins
Project director/manager	Helen Hawkins
Project supervisor	Stuart Watson
Type of sponsor/funding body	Developer
Name of sponsor/funding body	Mainstreet Residential Limited

#### Project archives

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	LAARC
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography","Text"
Paper Archive recipient	LAARC
Paper Media available	"Context sheet","Plan","Report","Section"

#### Project bibliography 1

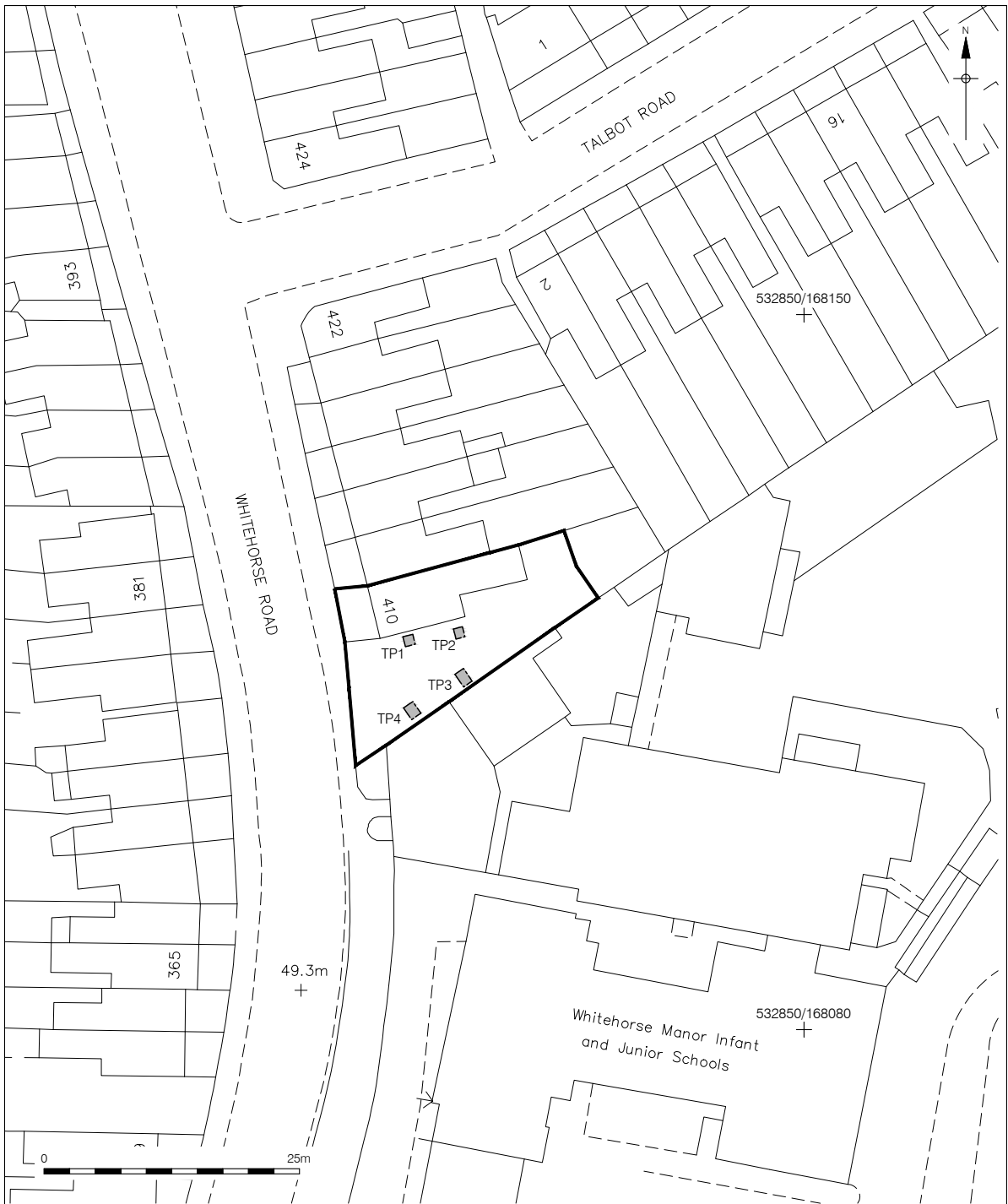
Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
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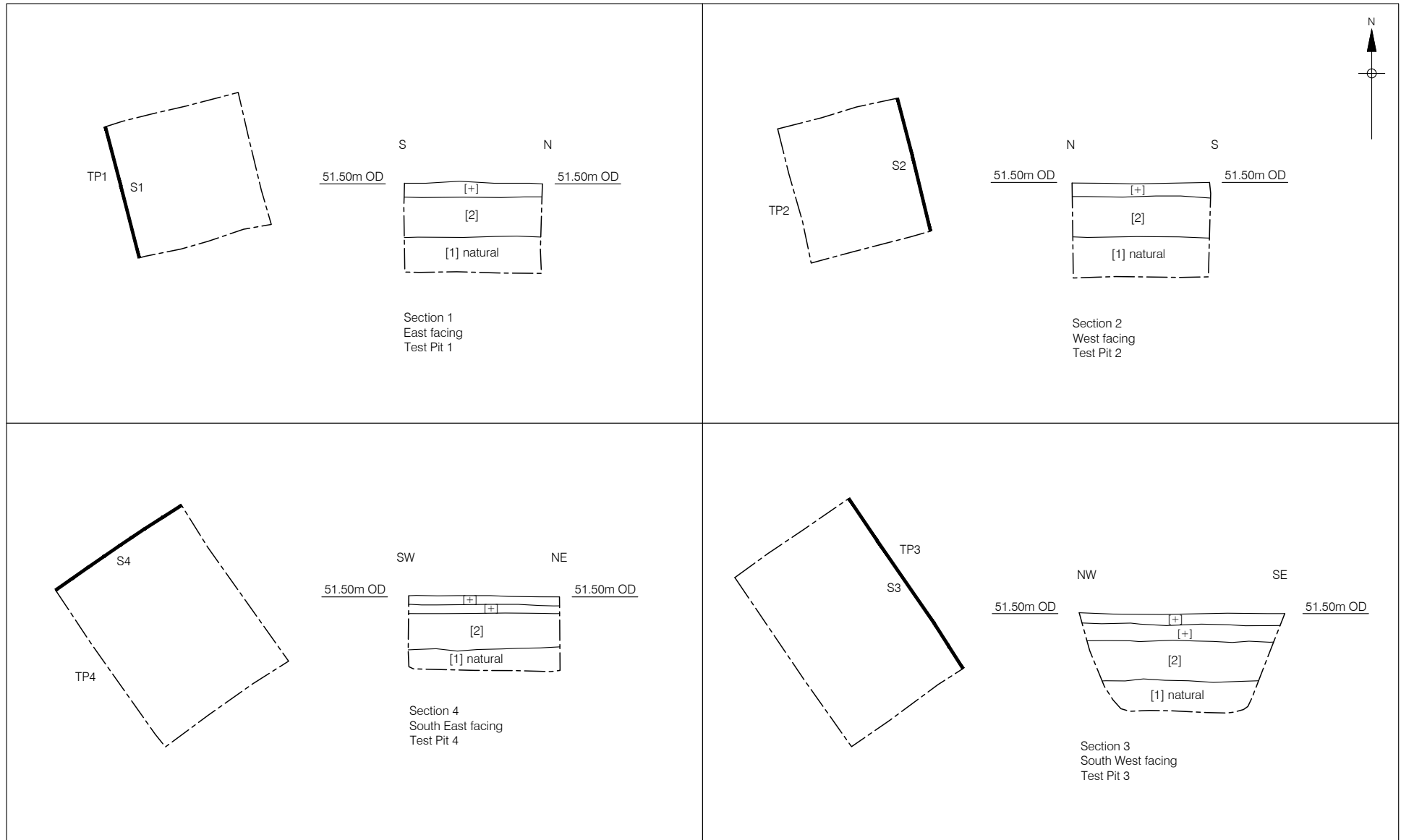
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Figure 1  
 Site Location  
 1:20,000 at A4



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Figure 2  
 Trench Location  
 1:625 at A4



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Figure 3  
Section Locations & Sections 1-4  
1:40 at A4

# PCA

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