

**An Archaeological Evaluation at 455 London Road, Isleworth, London
Borough of Hounslow**

Central National Grid Reference: TQ 1580 7640

Site Code: LHO 06

Written and researched by James Young Langthorne

Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd, July 2006

Project Manager: Chris Mayo

Commissioning Client: CgMs Consulting

Contractor :

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

Tel. 020 - 7639 9091

Fax 020 - 7639 9588

E-mail – info@pre-construct.com

© Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd

August 2006

The material contained herein is and remains the sole property of Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd and is not for publication to third parties without prior consent. Whilst every effort has been made to provide detailed and accurate information, Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd cannot be held responsible for errors or inaccuracies herein contained.

CONTENTS

1	Abstract	3
2	Introduction	4
3	Archaeological and Historical Background	7
4	Geology and Topography	10
5	Archaeological Methodology	11
6	The Archaeological Sequence	12
7	Trench Summary	13
8	Interpretation and Conclusions	18
9	Acknowledgements	19
10	Bibliography	20

Appendices

1	Site Matrix	21
2	Context Descriptions	22
3	OASIS form	24

Illustrations

Figure 1	Site Location	5
Figure 2	Trench Locations	6
Figure 3	Plan of Trench 1	14
Figure 4	Plan of Trench 2	15
Figure 5	Plan of Trench 3	16
Figure 6	Sections 1-3	17

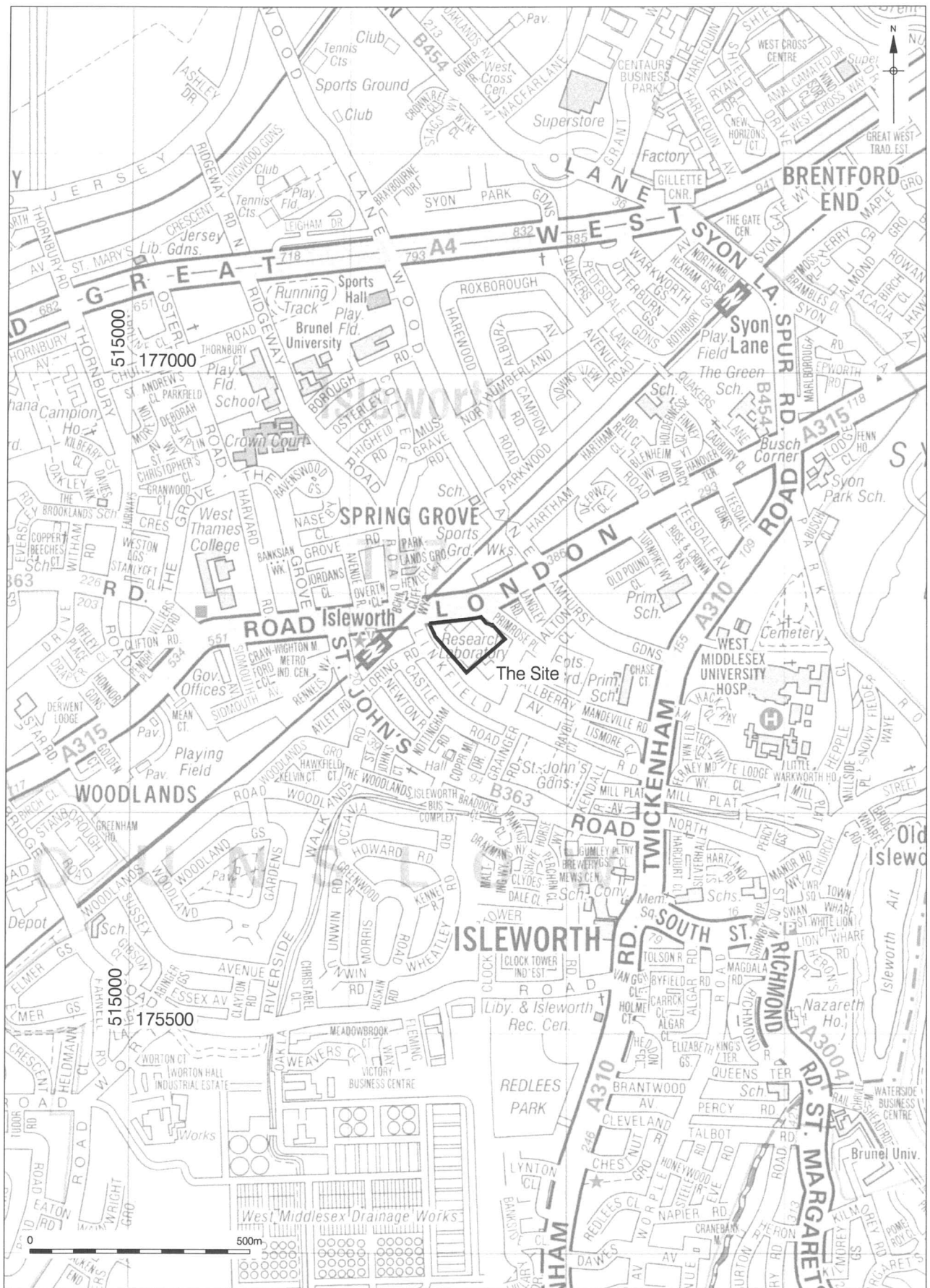
1 ABSTRACT

- 1.1 This report details the results and working methods of an archaeological evaluation undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd at 455 London Road, Isleworth, London Borough of Hounslow. The central National Grid Reference of the site is TQ 1580 7640. The field evaluation was undertaken between 17th and 20th July 2006, and was commissioned by Duncan Hawkins of CgMs Consulting.
- 1.2 The evaluation consisted of three trial trenches designed to provide coverage of the site.
- 1.3 The earliest deposit encountered was natural brickearth.
- 1.4 All three trenches revealed that the brickearth had been heavily truncated by modern intrusions presumably associated with the known soap factory and office building currently standing on site. The only exception to this was in the north-eastern part of the site where a 19th century rubbish pit cut a garden soil layer that lay above the natural brick earth.

2 INTRODUCTION

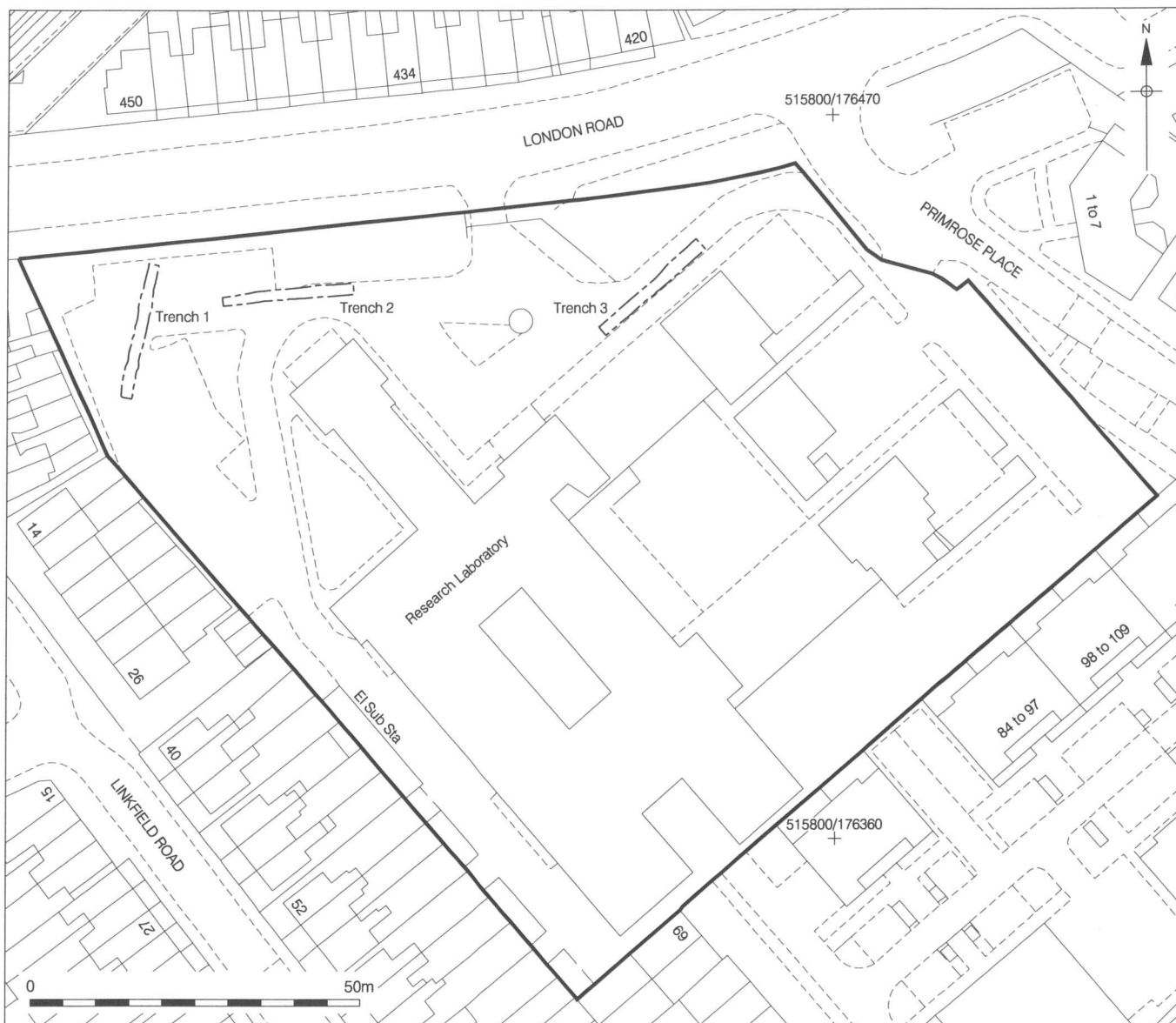
- 2.1 An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd between 17th and 20th July 2006 in advance of a housing development at 455 London Road, Isleworth, London Borough of Hounslow (Fig.1). The site lies on land formerly occupied by tennis courts and a car park. The site was bounded to the north by London Road, to the east by the rear of houses fronting onto Langley Road, to the south by a sports ground and to the west by the rear of houses fronting onto Linkfield Road.
- 2.2 The commissioning client was Duncan Hawkins of CgMs Consulting. The evaluation was supervised by James Langthorne and project managed by Chris Mayo, both of Pre-Construct Archaeology. It was monitored on behalf of the LPA by Kim Stabler of English Heritage.
- 2.3 Pre-Construct Archaeology have previously undertaken an evaluation of adjoining land at 455, London Road, Isleworth, which revealed prehistoric and post-medieval activity.¹
- 2.4 The completed archive comprising written, drawn and photographic records will be deposited with the Museum of London.
- 2.5 The site was allocated the site code LHO 06

¹ Wragg 2003



© Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd

Figure 1
Site Location
1:12,500



© Crown copyright. All rights reserved. License number PMP36110309

© Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd

Figure 2
Trench Location
1:1,000

3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

3.1 An Archaeological Desk Based Assessment has been prepared by Duncan Hawkins of CgMs Consulting² and the following discussion draws heavily from this document.

3.2 Middle and Upper Palaeolithic

3.2.1 Langley Silt Brickearth occurs across the site and elsewhere in West London (W. Drayton and Creffield Road, Acton) quantities of Levallois material have been found in these deposits.

3.3 Mesolithic

3.3.1 Eight tranchet axes, three blades or flakes and a pick have been recovered from the stretch of the Thames within 1km of the site, although nothing definitely belonging to this period has been found inland.

3.4 Neolithic

3.4.1 Archaeological investigations in the area have suggested a highly developed Neolithic landscape with 144 flint flakes/implements and 97 sherds of flint tempered pottery being recovered from the site at Syon Lane, Busch Corner, and a small assemblage of struck and burnt flint being recovered from 308-322 London Road. A Neolithic axe is recorded as a casual find within 1km of the site.

3.5 Bronze Age- Iron Age

3.5.1 The site lay within a highly developed agricultural and ritual landscape during these periods. Nine bronze rapiers, a stone battleaxe and several spearheads, all dating to the Bronze Age, have been found along the Thames within 1km of the site. A Bronze Age fired clay slab was recorded at Busch Corner London Road along with a wide gully containing large quantities of Late Iron Age pottery, fragments of loomweights and animal bone. An assemblage of burnt and worked flints and pottery was recovered from the site of the West Middlesex Hospital.

3.6 Roman

3.6.1 The Roman road from London to Staines, Silchester and south-west England follows broadly the route of the present London Road. Roadside settlements have been

recorded at Brentford and Staines, along with finds of Roman pottery from plough soil at 308-322 London Road, a box/flue tile “found near Isleworth”, a coin of Constantius I recovered at Worton Lane and the remains of at least two huts found on the foreshore of the Thames associated with Roman and Late Iron Age pottery. A Roman coin has been recorded from Isleworth Ait and a pewter plate recovered from the Thames itself.

3.7 Saxon- Early Medieval

- 3.7.1 The name Isleworth itself suggests some form of Saxon activity and Gilshere’s enclosure or homestead is recorded in AD695 as a gift to the nuns of Barking Abbey. A hoard of 28 Late Saxon coins and coin fragments was discovered in 1880 by workmen at Twickenham Road, although this may reflect more on the uncertain nature of the times than on the likelihood of a Saxon settlement

3.8 Medieval

- 3.8.1 By 1086 it is likely that the enclosure had grown to the size of a hamlet or small village and by 1183 it formed the centre of the Hundred. In 1227 Richard of Cornwall built the moated manor house, while in 1421 Isleworth was granted to Syon Abbey by Henry V. Excavations have revealed evidence for extensive field systems and agricultural activity in the Isleworth area dating to this period. Evidence suggests that the medieval core of Isleworth was located south of the West Middlesex Hospital, while the site occupied arable land throughout this period.

3.9 Post Medieval

- 3.9.1 A map of 1635 by Moses Glover seems to show the study site as an area of common land. The Rocque maps of 1746 and 1754 show the site as mainly comprising agricultural land with a fairly large building fronting onto the road in the north eastern area of the site. The Ordnance Survey map of 1865 shows most of the site as orchards with a building in the same place as that of the earlier maps, while that of 1896 shows that the west of the site, south of the building, is now occupied by horticultural greenhouses. A relief of the adjacent soap factory in 1894 shows part of the building next to the orchards. The Ordnance Survey map of 1915 shows that the soap factory has extended westwards and that the building mentioned above has gone. By 1935 the study site was occupied by tennis courts in the north of the site, a bowling green and part of the Orchard soap factory. The site was subsequently changed only in detail, with the buildings on site being substantially rebuilt.

² Hawkins 2001

3.9.2 The evaluation at 455, London Road³ by Pre-Construct Archaeology found no archaeological deposits of a Roman, Saxon, or medieval character. Though slight traces of late prehistoric activity came to light (a piece of abraded pottery and flakes of burnt or struck flint) in the main the archaeological deposits were all post-medieval, particularly dating from the 18th, 19th, and 20th centuries.

³ Wragg 2003

4 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

- 4.1 The study site comprises two terraces, in the north at a height of around 11.30m OD and in the south at a height of around 10.00m OD. There are no water courses or bodies of water within the site.
- 4.2 The British Geological Survey (England and Wales Sheet 270) indicates that the geology of the site is formed of Quaternary River Terrace Gravels overlying London clay. To the north west of the site the London Clay may outcrop through the gravels. The gravels are overlain by brickearth, also of Quaternary Age.

5 **ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY**

- 5.1 Three evaluation trenches (Trenches 1 - 3) were excavated across the site (Fig.2). All trenches were machine excavated in spits using a toothless bucket under archaeological supervision until the first archaeological horizon, or natural, was encountered; these were then cleaned by hand.
- 5.2 All deposits were recorded on *pro forma* context sheets, trench plans being drawn at a scale of 1:20, features of archaeological interest at 1:20 and the sections at a scale of 1:10. The locations of the trenches were surveyed by triangulation from fixed landmarks in the surrounding area. A photographic record was also kept of all the trenches in both black and white print and colour slide. Finds were collected according to standard retrieval methods.
- 5.3 Two temporary benchmarks were set up on the site with values of 11.46m OD and 11.39m OD, which were transferred from a benchmark located on the north-east pillar of the railway bridge that spans London Road, which is at a height of 11.97m OD.

6 THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SEQUENCE

6.1 Phase 1: Natural (Figure 6)

- 6.1.1 Natural brick earth deposits were seen in all trenches. In Trenches 1 and 2 the brickearth was a fairly compact light orangey brown clay between heights of 11.07m OD and 11.08m OD respectively while in Trench 3 it was a firm light yellowish brown slightly silty clay at a height of 10.97m OD.

6.2 Phase 2: 19th Century – Modern (Figures 3 – 6)

- 6.2.1 In the middle section of Trench 1 a patchy garden soil [21], containing fragments of red brick, charcoal and concrete, was found at an upper height of 10.92m OD with a maximum thickness of 0.29m. In the northern end of the trench were two postholes [25] and [27] containing fragments of concrete, tarmac and brick in fills [24] and [26]. These were cut from 10.68m OD and had maximum dimensions of 0.26m by 0.24m ([25]). Another garden soil layer [15] at an upper height of 11.13m OD was found in Trench 3 to have been cut by a rubbish pit [14]. This had near vertical sides, a flattish base, a width of 0.1.30m and a depth of 0.50m. It was filled by [13], a firm, dark greyish-brown silty clay containing very occasional sub-angular flint pebbles and fragments of at least two flowerpots and the top of a glass bottle dating from the 19th / early 20th century. These remains represent horticultural activity as shown on the 19th and early 20th century maps.
- 6.2.2 A series of service trenches, cuts and concrete foundations were recorded in all trenches, attesting to 20th century development of the site. These had been sealed by layers of made ground [1], [12] and [18] comprising demolition material and burnt deposits. They were recorded between heights of 11.27m OD ([12] in Trench 3) and 11.51m OD ([1] in Trench 2). The made ground formed the basis for the Tarmac cover to the site.

7 TRENCH SUMMARY

7.1 Trench 1 (Figures 3 & 6)

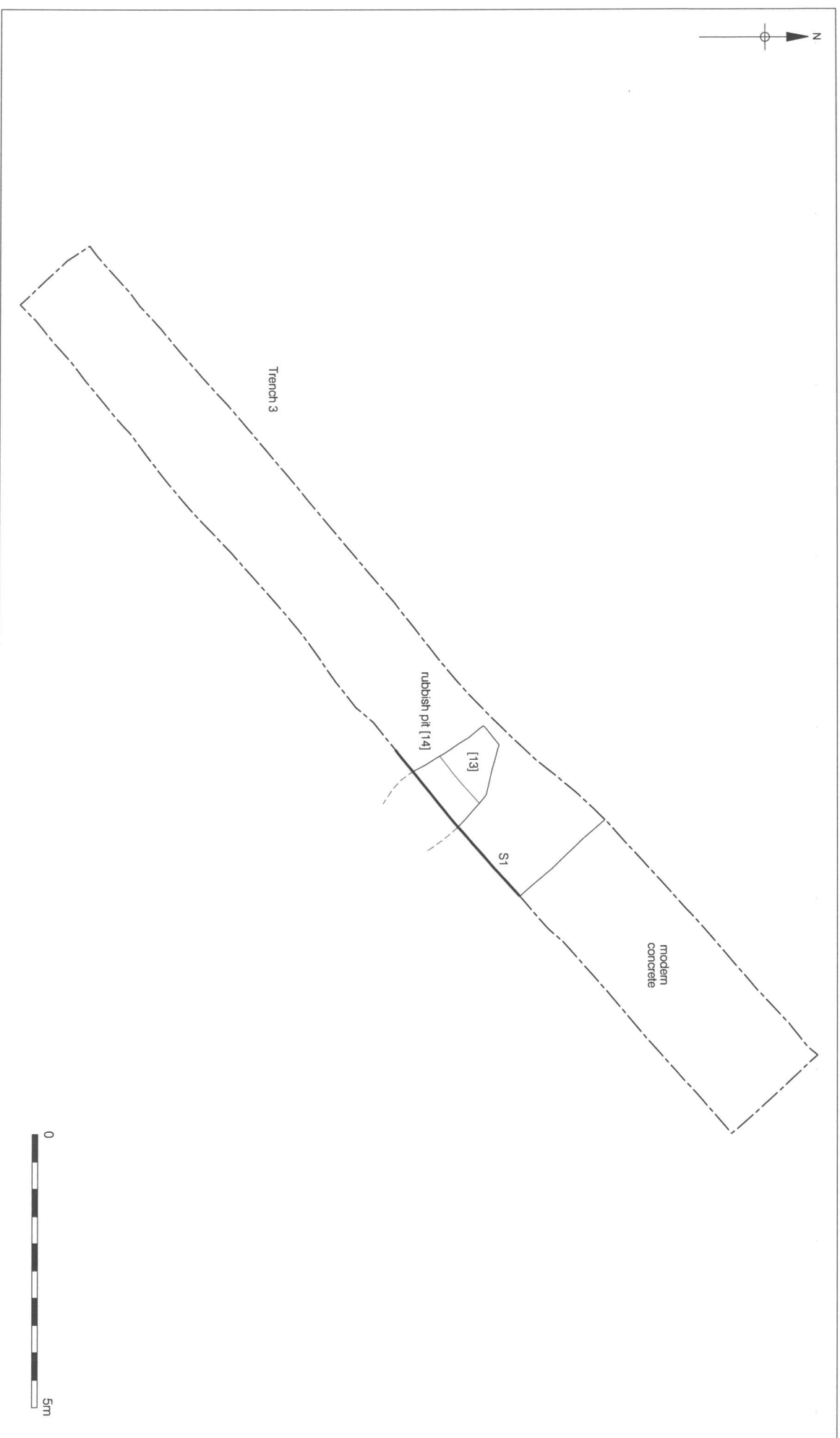
- 7.1.1 Natural brickearth [19] was revealed throughout the trench. It had been sealed by a layer of garden soil [21] which was then cut by a series of 19th – 20th century features relating to the sites' horticultural and, later, structural use. The trench was sealed by made ground [18], 0.47m thick and at an upper height of 11.28m OD, and then Tarmac.

7.2 Trench 2 (Figures 4 & 6)

- 7.2.1 Natural brickearth [11] was revealed throughout the trench. It had been truncated by modern service features which were in turn sealed by a layer of made ground [1] between 11.51m OD and 11.34m OD. This demolition layer formed a made ground base of the tarmac of the current car park.

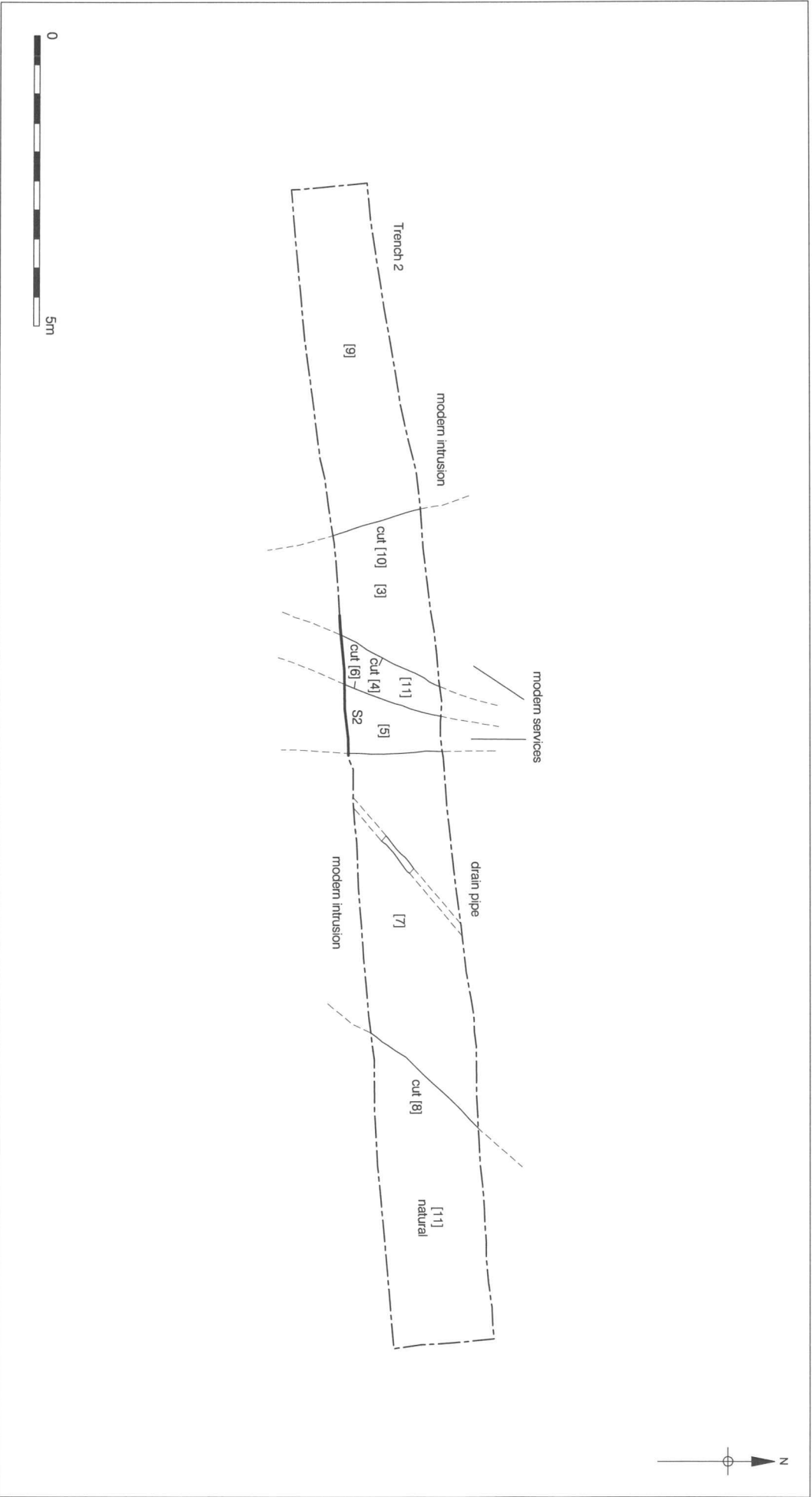
7.3 Trench 3 (Figures 5 & 6)

- 7.3.1 Natural brickearth [17] was revealed throughout the trench. It had been sealed by a layer of 19th century garden soil [25] which was then cut by 19th – 20th century rubbish pit [14]. Sealing the above was made ground layer [12] composed of loose, black clinker (ash and other debris from a furnace), and then Tarmac.



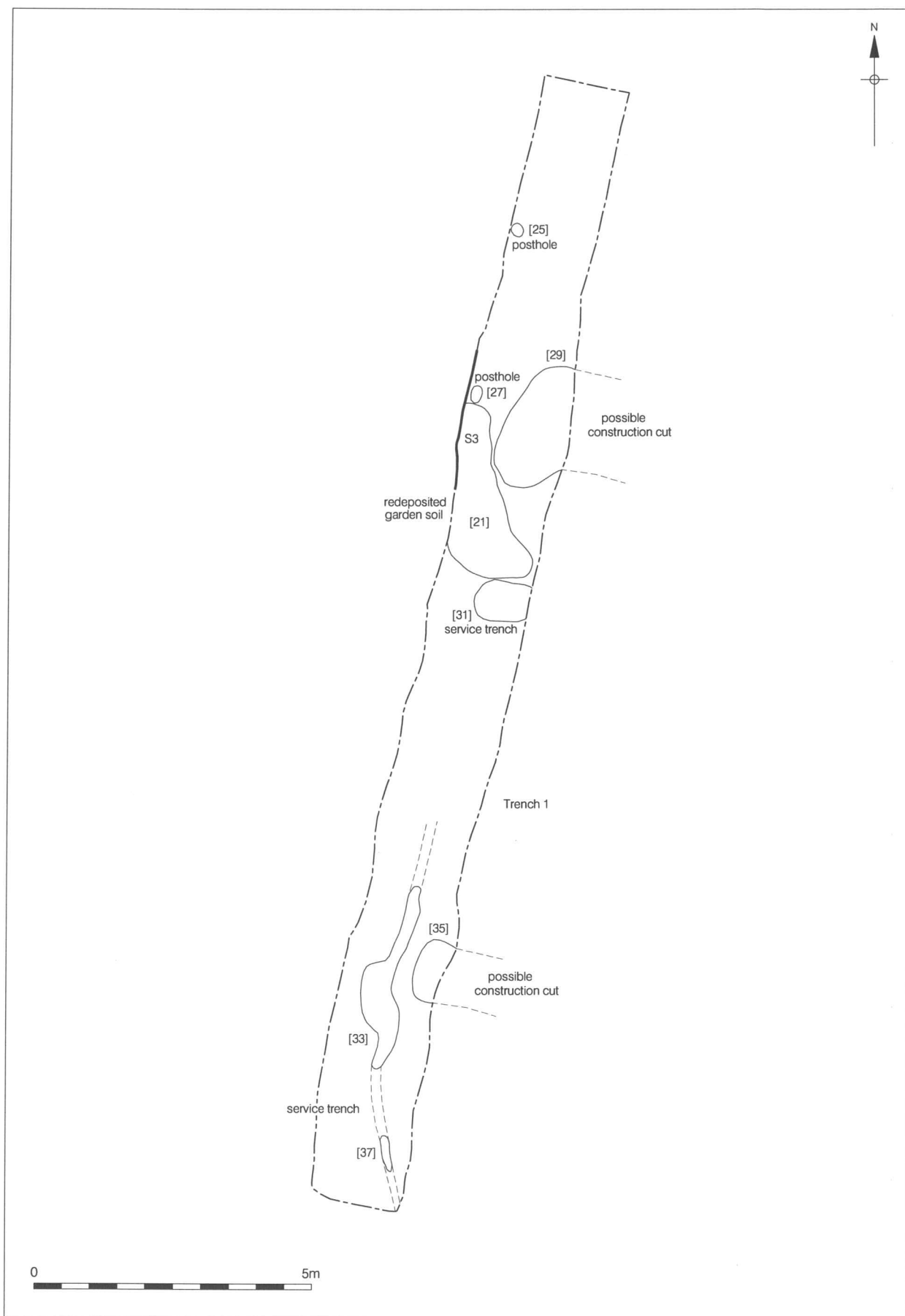
© Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd

Figure 5
Trench 3
1:100



© Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd

Figure 4
Trench 2
1:100



© Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd

Figure 3
Trench 1
1:100

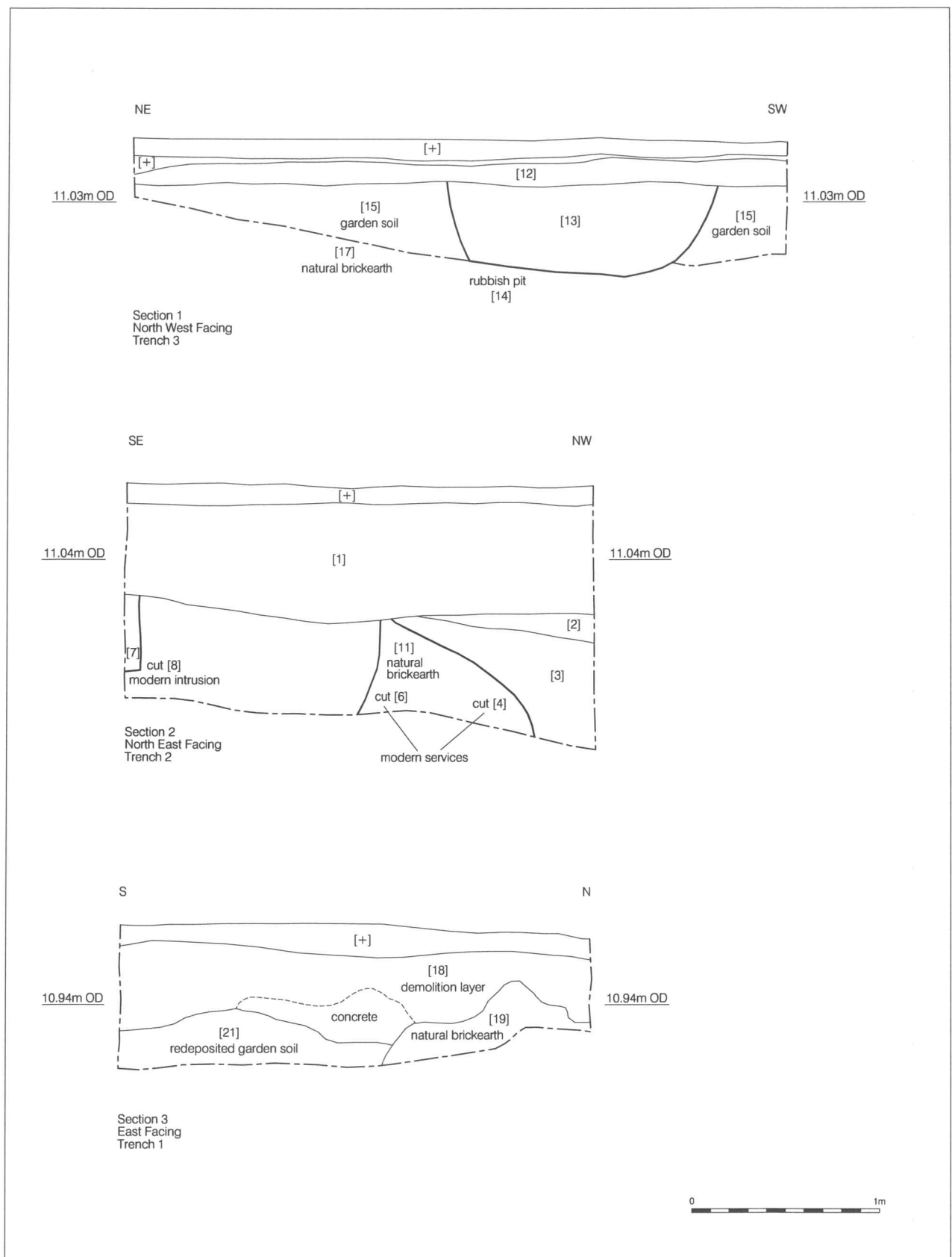


Figure 6
Sections 1 - 3
1:30

8 INTERPRETATION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 8.1 No evidence of prehistoric, Roman, Saxon or medieval activity was recorded on the site. It seems unlikely that features from these periods, if they were present, survive anywhere on the site due to post-medieval, and, as seen in Trench 3 particularly, 19th century horticultural activity in addition to later extensive truncations of the natural brick earth caused by services trenches and concrete foundations within the northern extent of 455 London Road.
- 8.2 Archaeological evidence for the previous uses of this northern part of 455 London Road consists of a 19th century rubbish pit cut through a garden soil layer in the easternmost of the trenches which were subsequently superseded by many modern intrusions including services trenches and concrete foundations from the 20th century. The entire area appears to have been sealed by made ground composed of demolition material before a tarmac surface was laid for the car park of the present office building.
- 8.3 These trial trenches complement the earlier evaluation carried out in the southern and eastern portions of 455, London Road⁴. This evaluation concluded that though slight traces of late prehistoric activity came to light (a piece of abraded pottery and flakes of burnt or struck flint) in the main the archaeological deposits were all post-medieval, particularly dating from the 18th, 19th, and 20th centuries.

⁴ Wragg 2003

9 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- 9.1 Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd would like to thank Duncan Hawkins of CgMs Consulting for commissioning the work and Kim Stabler of English Heritage for monitoring the project.
- 9.2 The author would like to thank the project manager, Chris Mayo, for his support during the project.
- 9.3 Thanks to Stuart Watson and Malgorzata Malecka for their work on site. The author would also like to thank Hayley Baxter for the illustrations and Lisa Lonsdale for technical support.

10 BIBLIOGRAPHY

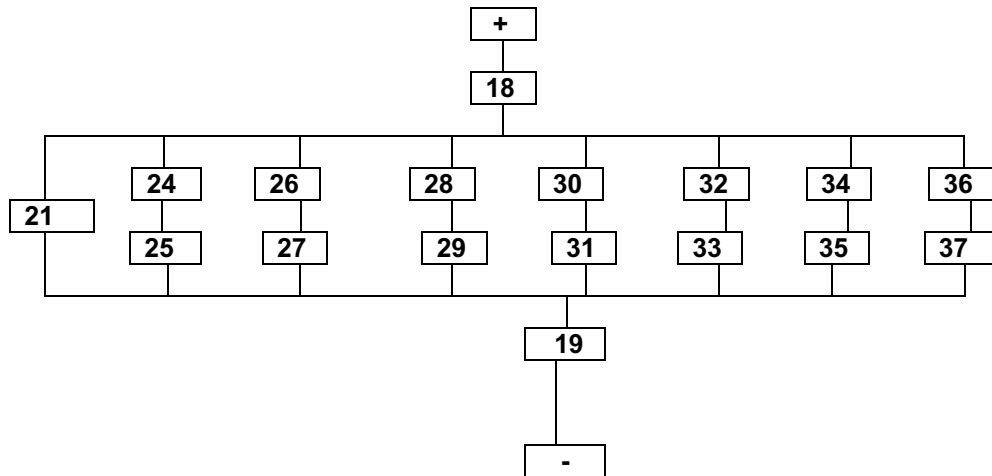
Chadwick, P. 2003 "Specification for an Archaeological Evaluation. Land at London Road Isleworth", unpublished report, CgMs Consulting.

Hawkins, D. 2001 "Archaeological Desk Based Assessment, Land at London Road, Isleworth", unpublished report, CgMs Consulting.

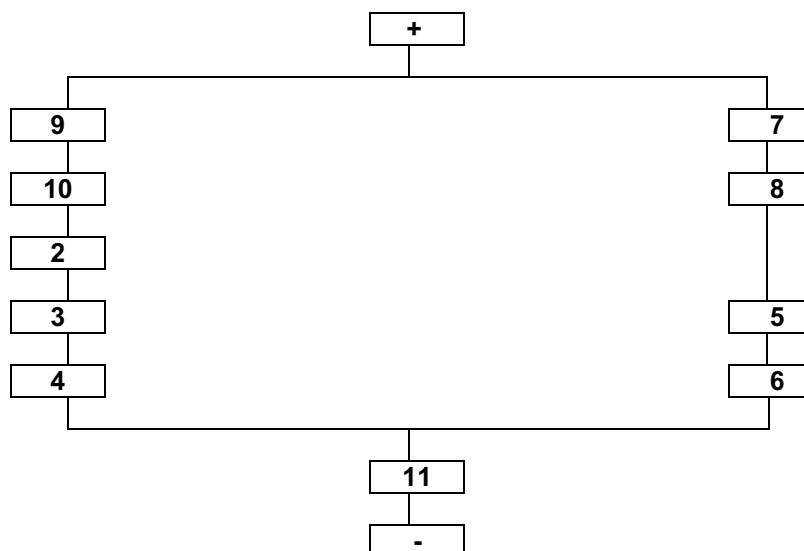
Wragg, E. 2003 "An Archaeological Evaluation at 455, London Road, Isleworth, London Borough of Hounslow", unpublished report, Pre-Construct Archaeology.

APPENDIX 1: Stratigraphic Matrix, Trenches 1, 2, & 3

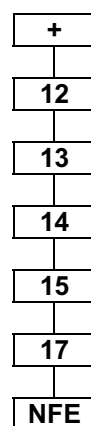
Trench 1



Trench 2



Trench 3



APPENDIX 2: Context Index

Context	Type	Description	Trench
1	Layer	Demolition layer/ Made Ground	2
2	Fill	Fill of [4]	2
3	Fill	Primary Fill of [4]	2
4	Cut	Modern Services Trench	2
5	Fill	Fill of [6]	2
6	Fill	Modern Services Trench	2
7	Deposit	Concrete slab incorporating drainpipe	2
8	Cut	Construction cut for [7]	2
9	Deposit	Concrete footing	2
10	Cut	Construction cut for [9]	2
11	Natural	Brick earth natural in base of trench 2	2
12	Layer	Layer of clinker/made ground	3
13	Fill	Fill of [14]	3
14	Cut	19 th century rubbish pit	3
15	Layer	Garden soil	3
16		VOID	
17	Natural	Brick earth natural in base of trench 3	3
18	Layer	Demolition layer/Made Ground	1
19	Natural	Brick earth natural in base of trench 1	1
20		VOID	
21	Layer	Redeposited ploughsoil/garden soil	1
22		VOID	
23		VOID	
24	Fill	Fill of [25]	1
25	Cut	Modern posthole	1
26	Fill	Fill of [27]	1
27	Cut	Modern posthole	1
28	Fill	Fill of [29]	1
29	Cut	Modern intrusion poss. Services or Foundation Trench	1
30	Fill	Fill of [31]	1

31	Cut	Possible Foundation Trench	1
32	Fill	Fill of [33]	1
33	Cut	Modern Services Trench	1
34	Fill	Fill of [35]	1
35	Cut	Modern intrusion poss. Services or Foundation Trench	1
36	Fill	Fill of [37]	1
37	Cut	Modern Services Trench	1

APPENDIX 3: OASIS form

OASIS ID: preconst1-16794

Project details

Project name	455, London Road Isleworth
Short description of the project	An evaluation consisting of three trial trenches. The earliest deposit encountered was natural brick earth which had been cut by a 19th century rubbish pit and garden soil layer in the east of the site. All the trenches were heavily truncated by modern foundation and service trenches. No evidence was found for prehistoric, Roman, Saxon, or medieval deposits.
Project dates	Start: 17-07-2006 End: 20-07-2006
Previous/future work	Yes / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	LRI 03 - Sitecode
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	None
Current Land use	Industry and Commerce 2 - Offices
Monument type	RUBBISH PIT Post Medieval
Monument type	HORTICULTURAL SOIL Post Medieval
Monument type	SERVICE TRENCHES Modern
Monument type	BUILDING FOUNDATIONS Modern
Significant Finds	CLAY TOBACCO PIPE Post Medieval
Significant Finds	GLASS BOTTLES Post Medieval
Significant Finds	WILLOWPATTERN POTTERY Post Medieval
Methods & techniques	'Test Pits'
Development type	Housing estate
Prompt	Planning condition
Position in the planning process	Not known / Not recorded

Project location

Country	England
Site location	GREATER LONDON HOUNSLOW HOUNSLOW 455, London Road, Isleworth
Study area	80.00 Square metres
National grid reference	TQ 1580 7640 Point
Height OD	Min: 10.64m Max: 11.07m

Project creators

Name of	Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd
---------	-------------------------------

Organisation

Project brief originator	CgMs Consultants Ltd
Project design originator	CgMs Consultants Ltd
Project director/manager	Chris Mayo
Project supervisor	James Young Langthorne
Sponsor or funding body	Barratts West London

Project archives

Physical Archive recipient	LAARC
Physical Contents	'Ceramics','Glass'
Digital Archive Exists?	No
Paper Archive recipient	LAARC
Paper Contents	'none'
Paper Media available	'Context sheet','Diary','Drawing','Matrices','Photograph','Plan','Section','Unpublished Text'

Project bibliography 1

Publication type	A forthcoming report
Title	An archaeological evaluation at 455, London Road, Isleworth, London Borough of Hounslow
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Langthorne, J.Y.
Date	2006
Issuer or publisher	Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd.
Place of issue or publication	London
Description	A4 report - spiral bound.

Entered by	Chris Mayo (c_mayo@pre-construct.com)
Entered on	21 July 2006