

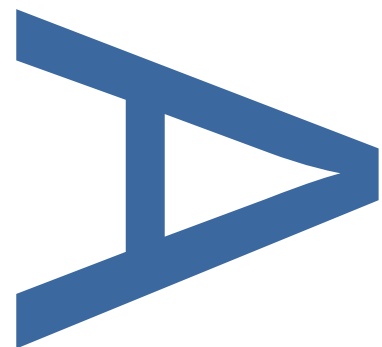
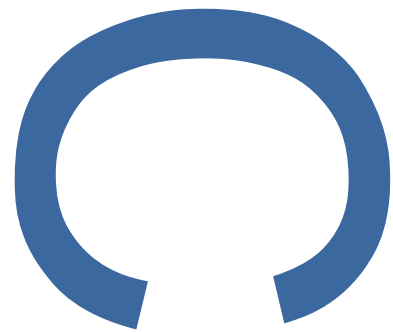
**FULHAM PALACE,  
BISHOPS AVENUE, FULHAM,  
LONDON SW6 6EA**

**NEW COMPOST UNIT: AN  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING  
BRIEF**

**PCA REPORT NO: 12045**

**SITE CODE: FLB03**

**APRIL 2015**



**PRE-CONSTRUCT ARCHAEOLOGY**



DOCUMENT VERIFICATION

FULHAM PALACE, BISHOPS AVENUE, FULHAM,  
LONDON SW6 6EA

NEW COMPOST UNIT: AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
WATCHING BRIEF

Quality Control

Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd	
Project Number	K3747
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**NEW COMPOST UNIT: AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF**

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**Site Code:** FLB03

**Local Planning Authority:** LONDON BOROUGH OF HAMMERSMITH AND FULHAM

**Central National Grid Reference:** TQ 2424 7606 (524245,176065)

**Written by:** Joe Brooks  
Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited, March 2015

**Project Manager:** Chris Mayo

**Commissioning Client:** Fulham Palace Trust

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**April 2015**

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## **1 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 An archaeological watching brief was conducted by Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd within the grounds of Fulham Palace, Bishops Avenue, Fulham, London SW6 6EA to monitor groundworks required to construct a new compost unit for use by the Palace's garden team. The work was undertaken in order to observe and record anything of archaeological significance. The work was commissioned by Fulham Palace Trust.
- 1.2 The area of the new compost unit is located within the Fulham Palace moated site, which is scheduled as an Ancient Monument (No. 134) under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979, amended by the National Heritage Act 1983. Scheduled Monument Consent for the work was obtained by Fulham Palace Trust. The works were concentrated in a part of the grounds located to the northeast of the Walled Garden.
- 1.3 The investigation was conducted over several days between the 7th and 16th October 2014, and was supervised by Joe Brooks and managed by Chris Mayo, both of Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited. The archaeological works were inspected and monitored by English Heritage's Inspector of Ancient Monuments, Jane Sidell, and was overseen by Phil Emery, a Trustee of Fulham Palace.
- 1.4 The watching brief monitored the hand excavation of a large area of ground reduction to reach formation level followed by the hand excavation of fifteen postholes which were to receive some upright I-section steel posts (henceforth referred to as "RSJ") to support the compost unit. The greatest depth of impact was only 0.50m below ground level, and as such the works did not penetrate below garden soil horizons. During these excavations some small cuts containing mortar were seen along with buried remains of a disused path.
- 1.5 The site is centred at National Grid Reference TQ 2424 7606 (524245,176065).
- 1.6 The site archive was prepared continuing site code FLB03 which has been used to identify all work by PCA at Fulham Palace between 2003 and 2014. The completed archive comprising written and photographic records from the excavation will be deposited at the Museum of Fulham Palace.
- 1.7 The immediate area in which the new compost unit is located has seen little in-depth archaeological investigation; to date works have primarily been focussed to the west, nearer to Fulham Palace, or to the south within the Walled Garden. This area forms part of the Palace's landscaped gardens and had been laid to lawn beneath tree canopies.

## 2 METHODOLOGY

- 2.1 The excavations were undertaken by the client's contractor using hand-held tools, continuously monitored by the attendant archaeologist. All deposits and features were investigated as far as was reasonably practical and safe.
- 2.2 The groundworks for the compost unit required ground reduction by a depth of approximately 50mm over a rectangular area measuring 12m north-south by 7.5m east-west. This work was designed to remove the extant mulched topsoil surface and reach a level stratum. Thereupon the appointed contractor laid out a grid to locate the required postholes which were to be dug for the RSJ uprights; these comprised 15 number square holes each measuring approximately 0.5m by 0.5m and centred at approximately 2m intervals. The appointed contractor then excavated each of the fifteen postholes using hand tools to the required formation level, which was between 0.4m and 0.45m in depth.
- 2.3 In addition to the above, a small sump was excavated to the north of the compost unit measuring 0.52m east-west by 0.30m north-south by 0.50m deep. This intervention was to receive the leachate tank which would drain the run-off from the compost unit.
- 2.4 All interventions were recorded under the heading of 'Trench 400'; within this the fifteen postholes were recorded as "RSJ Holes A-J", and the leachate tank excavation recorded as "Drainage Tank".
- 2.5 The archaeological watching brief was designed to determine the presence or absence of surviving deposits and features at the site and, where appropriate, to record them accordingly. It also sought to clarify the nature and extent of existing disturbance and intrusions and hence assess the degree of archaeological survival.
- 2.6 Following all excavations the relevant faces of each intervention were cleaned using appropriate hand tools and were recorded in plan at a scale of 1:20 and in section at a scale of 1:10.
- 2.7 All deposits were recorded on proforma context sheets. Trench plans and sections were drawn at a scale of 1:20 and 1:10 respectively. A digital photographic record was maintained of all of the site works and remains found. Figure 2 shows the trench locations as excavated.
- 2.8 Heights above Ordnance Datum shown in this report are derived from an ODS benchmark within the Fulham Palace grounds with a value of 3.86m OD. Prior to the start of work the ground level in the vicinity of the new compost unit, which was generally flat, was at approximately 4.10m OD.
- 2.9 Site records were compiled in accordance with the guidance set out in PCA's Operations Manual 1 (Taylor, 2009).

### **3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESULTS**

- 3.1 All of the observations from the compost unit works are considered to relate to the post-medieval period.
- 3.2 The earliest deposit encountered during the watching brief was a layer of light yellowish brown, sandy silt [3000] which underlay all of Trench 400. This deposit, which contained two sherds of redeposited Roman pottery, occasional flecks of CBM and charcoal flecks, represents a post-medieval garden soil horizon. It was recorded between 3.82m OD in RSJ Hole I and 3.93m OD in the Drainage Tank, and was at least 0.35m thick.
- 3.3 Within RSJ Hole I, a post-medieval layer [3007] of dark yellowish brown, sandy silt with occasional fragments of CBM and charcoal was observed to be sealing layer [3000] (Figure 2). The top of the deposit was recorded at 3.95m OD, and it was 0.15m thick. This layer is considered to be a relic topsoil horizon.
- 3.4 Truncating layer [3000] in RSJ Holes N and K were two parallel linear cuts [3006] and [3009] orientated on south-east to north-west alignments with shallow sloping sides and flat bases. These features were filled with compact light yellowish grey, sandy silt with frequent mortar and large CBM fragments [3005] and [3008] respectively. These features were interpreted as post-medieval garden paths, most likely associated with the path [3001] found above. Deposits [3005] and [3008] were recorded at 3.95m OD and 3.90m OD respectively.
- 3.5 Overlying these linear features [3006] and [3009], on the same south-east to north-west alignment was a compact sandy gravel deposit [3001] found within a linear cut [3002]. This feature was 0.13m deep, 2m wide and 11.5m in length and was interpreted as a post-medieval pathway. Deposit [3001] was recorded at 4.02m OD.
- 3.6 Cutting the south-western edge of this path in RSJ Holes N and K was a shallow pit [3004] filled with light grey, sandy silt with very frequent inclusions of crushed snail shells [3003].
- 3.7 A horizon of modern topsoil [+] sealed the area of the watching brief constituting the modern ground level at approximately 4.10m OD.

*Plate 1: Compost Unit ground reduction prior to excavation of RSJ Holes, view north-east*



*Plate 2: RSJ Hole K, view west*





*Plate 3: RSJ Hole N, view west*



*Plate 4: RSJ Hole I, view north*



## 4 CONCLUSIONS

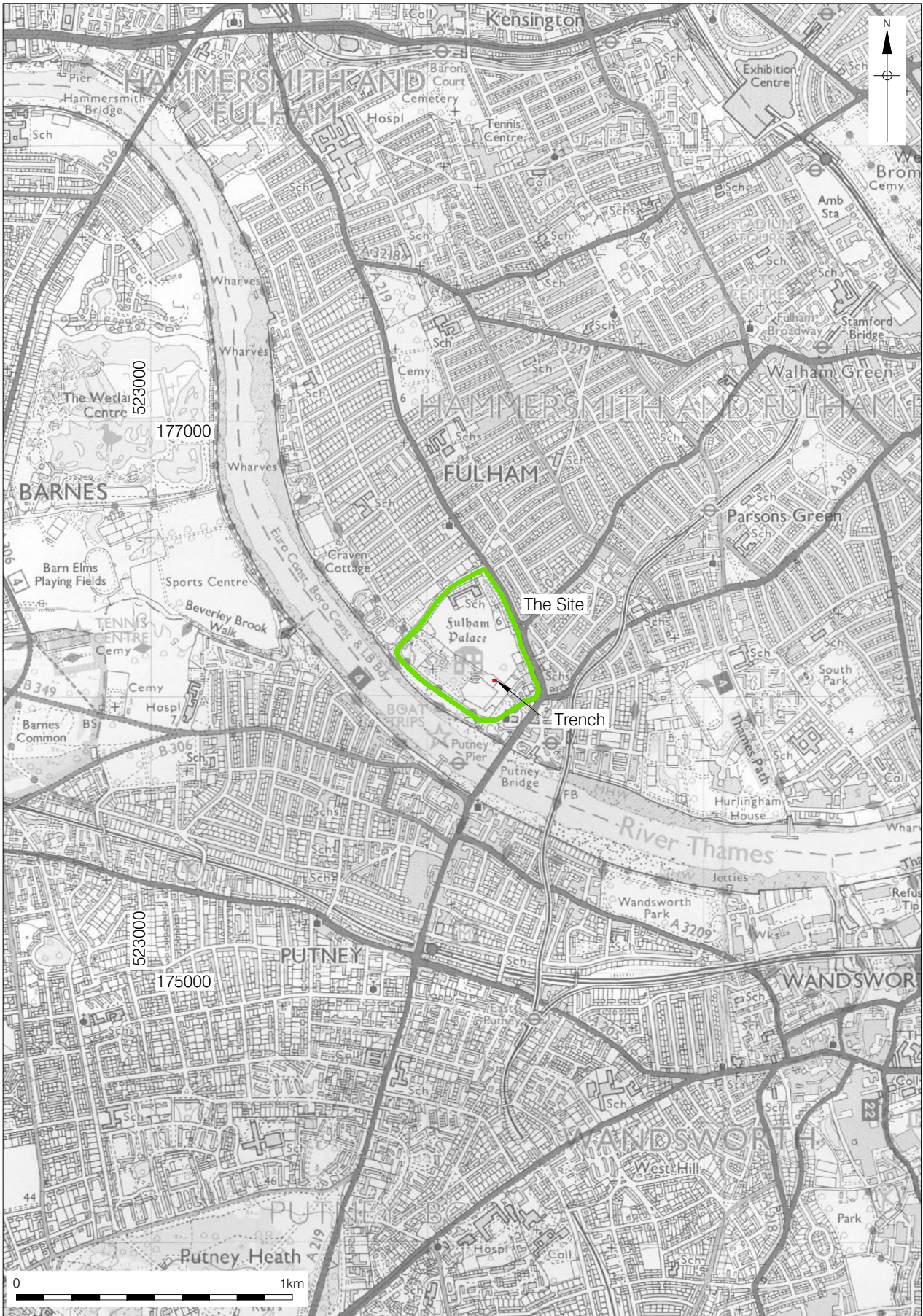
- 4.1 The watching brief revealed a number of features associated with horticultural activity. A subsoil horizon of sandy silt containing re-deposited Roman pottery sherds was truncated by two parallel linear cuts traversing the area diagonally south-east to north-west and backfilled with mortar rubble. These features, which represent garden paths, were overlain by another gravel path on the same alignment.
- 4.2 This path was truncated on its south-western edge by a shallow pit filled with crushed shells and grey silt, possibly indicating the location of a garden waste pit or planting bed. Due to the limited extent of the excavation the shape and size of this feature could not be discerned during the watching brief.
- 4.3 Loose, organic modern topsoil overlay the path forming the current ground level.
- 4.4 The path as recorded during the watching brief is discernible from historic maps for the site, and can be confidently reconciled to that shown on the 1865 Ordnance Survey (Figure 5). Study of later OS maps (1896, 1916, 1951, 1968-72) suggest that the alignment of this path was retained through to at least the time of the later map.

## 5 ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

- 5.1 Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited thanks Sian Harrington of Fulham Palace Trust for commissioning the works and Phil Emery for his input. We also acknowledge the input of Jane Sidell and Iain Bright (English Heritage).
- 5.2 The author would like to thank Chris Mayo for his project management and editing, and Jennifer Simonson for the illustrations

## 6 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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

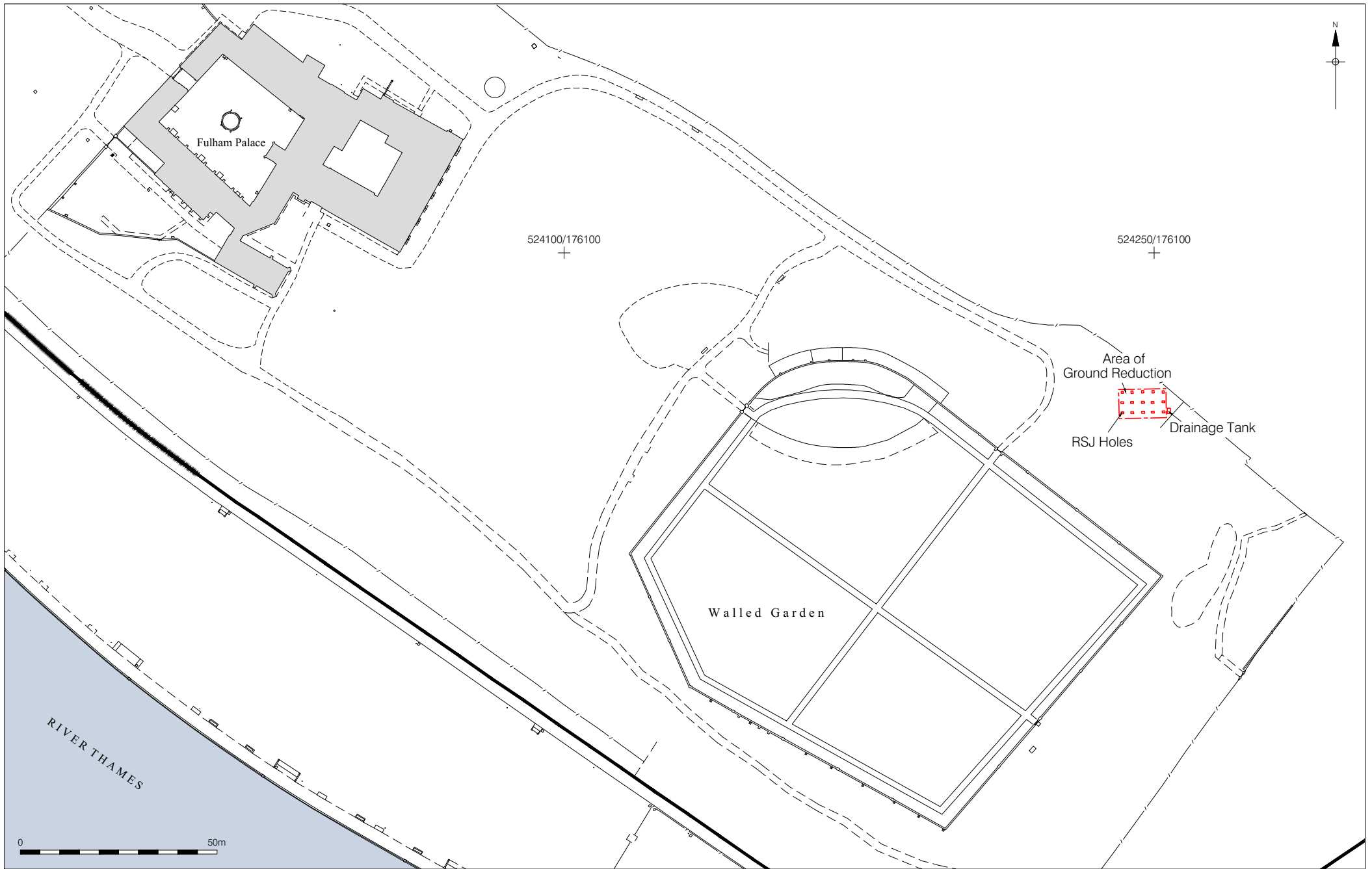


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Figure 1  
Site Location  
1:20,000 at A4



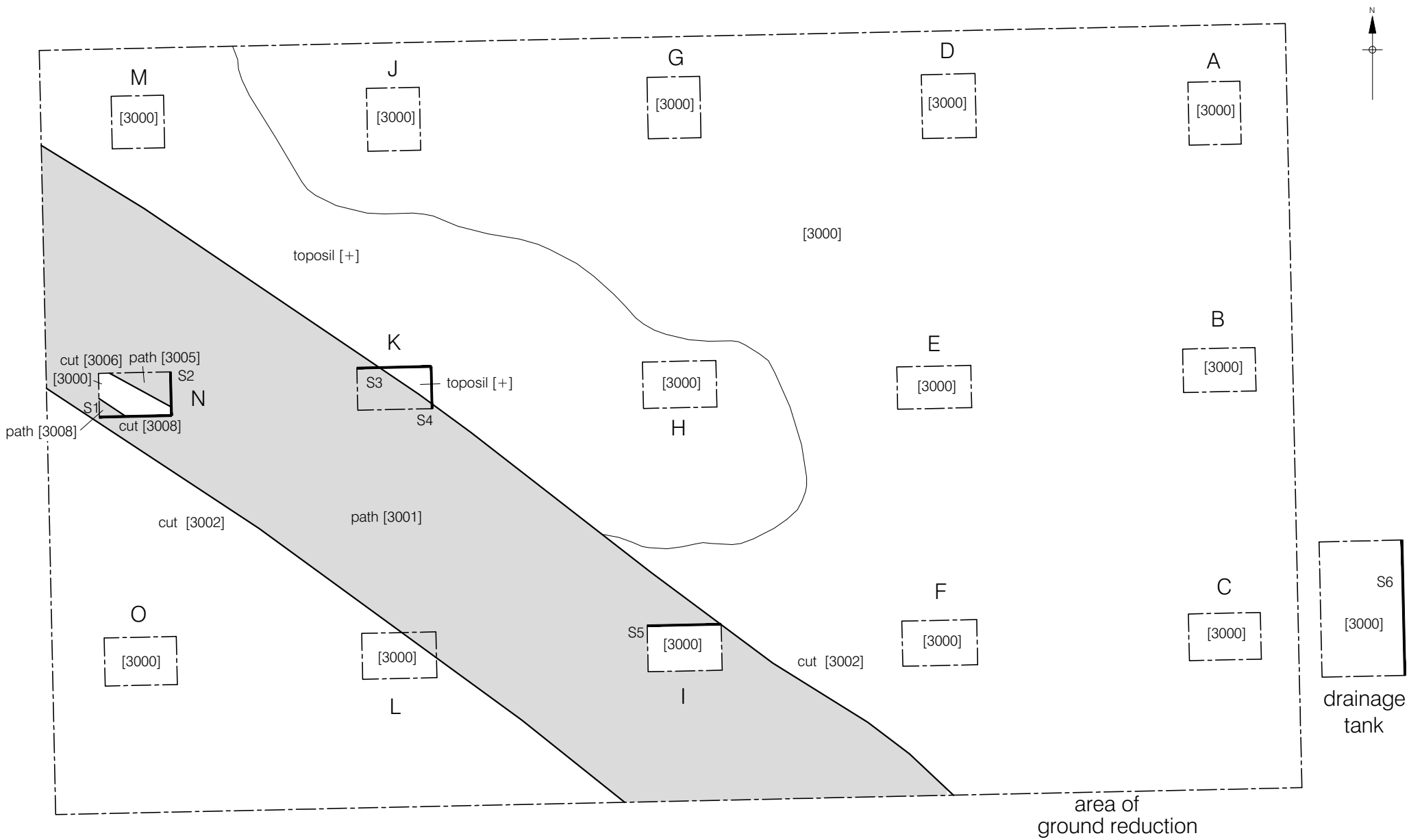
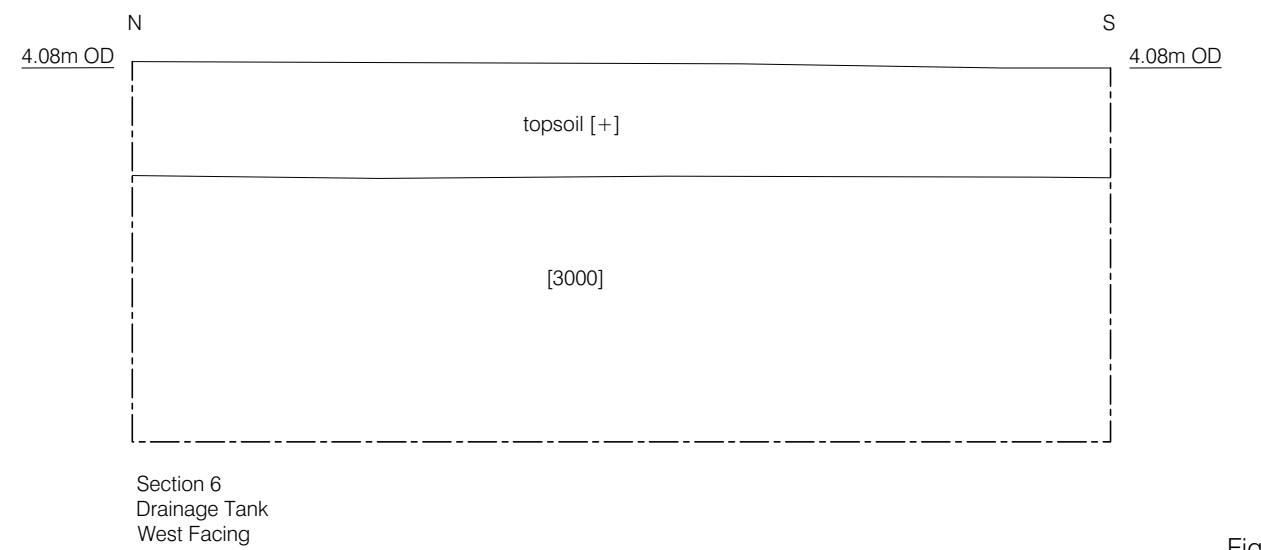
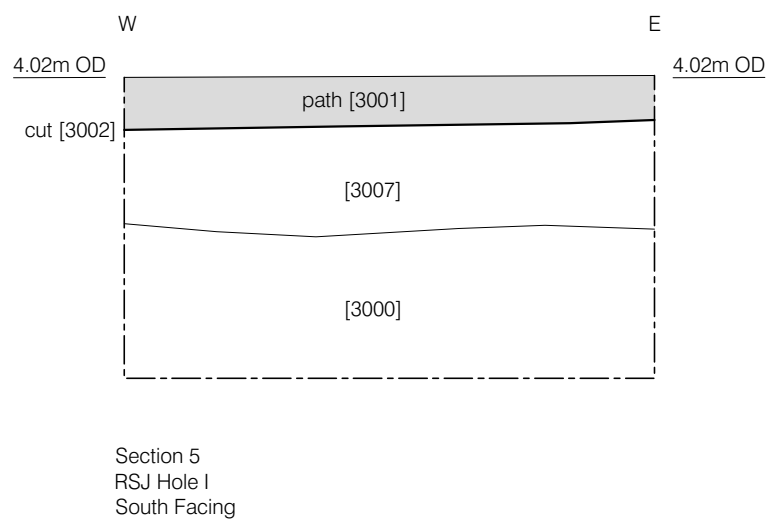
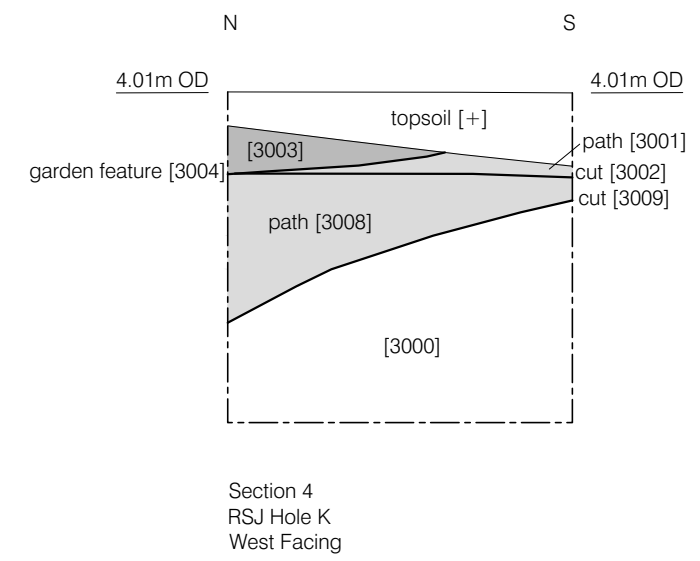
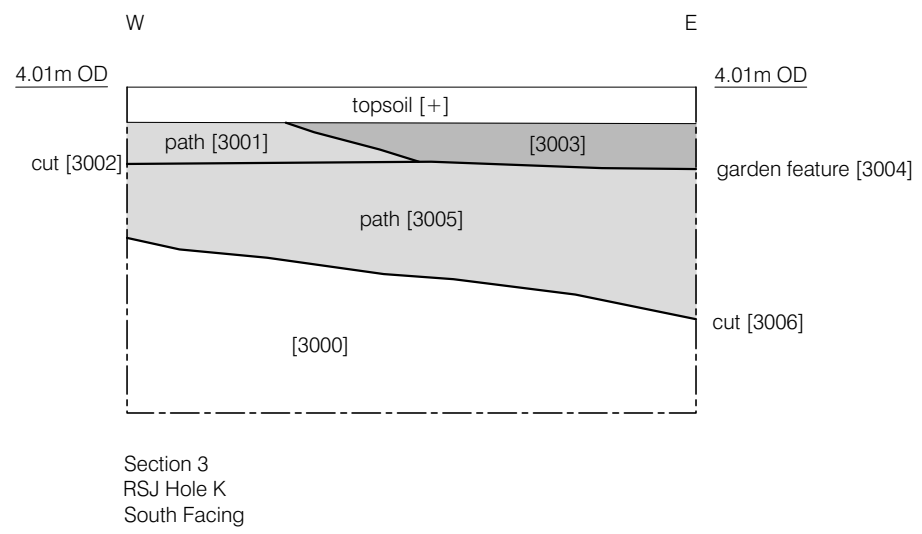
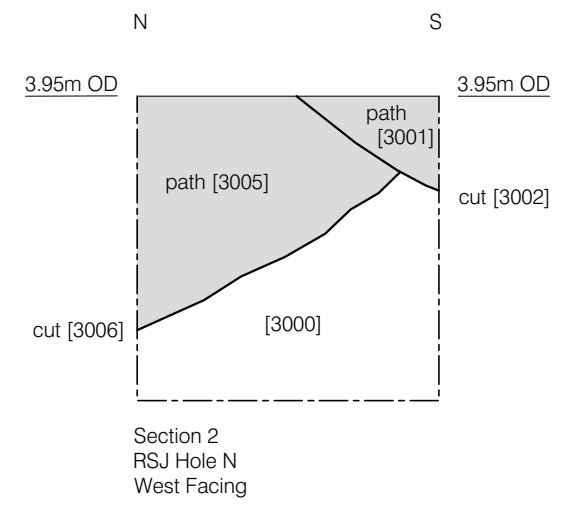
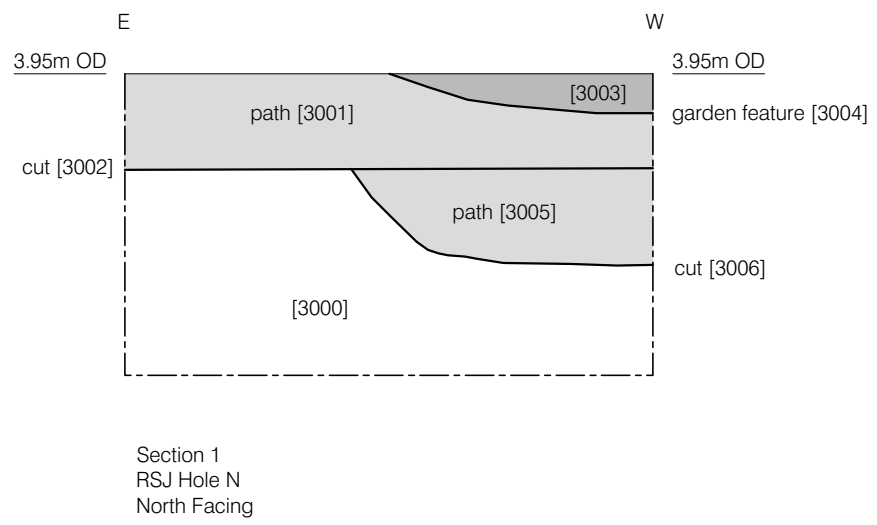


Figure 3  
 Trench Plan  
 1:50 at A4



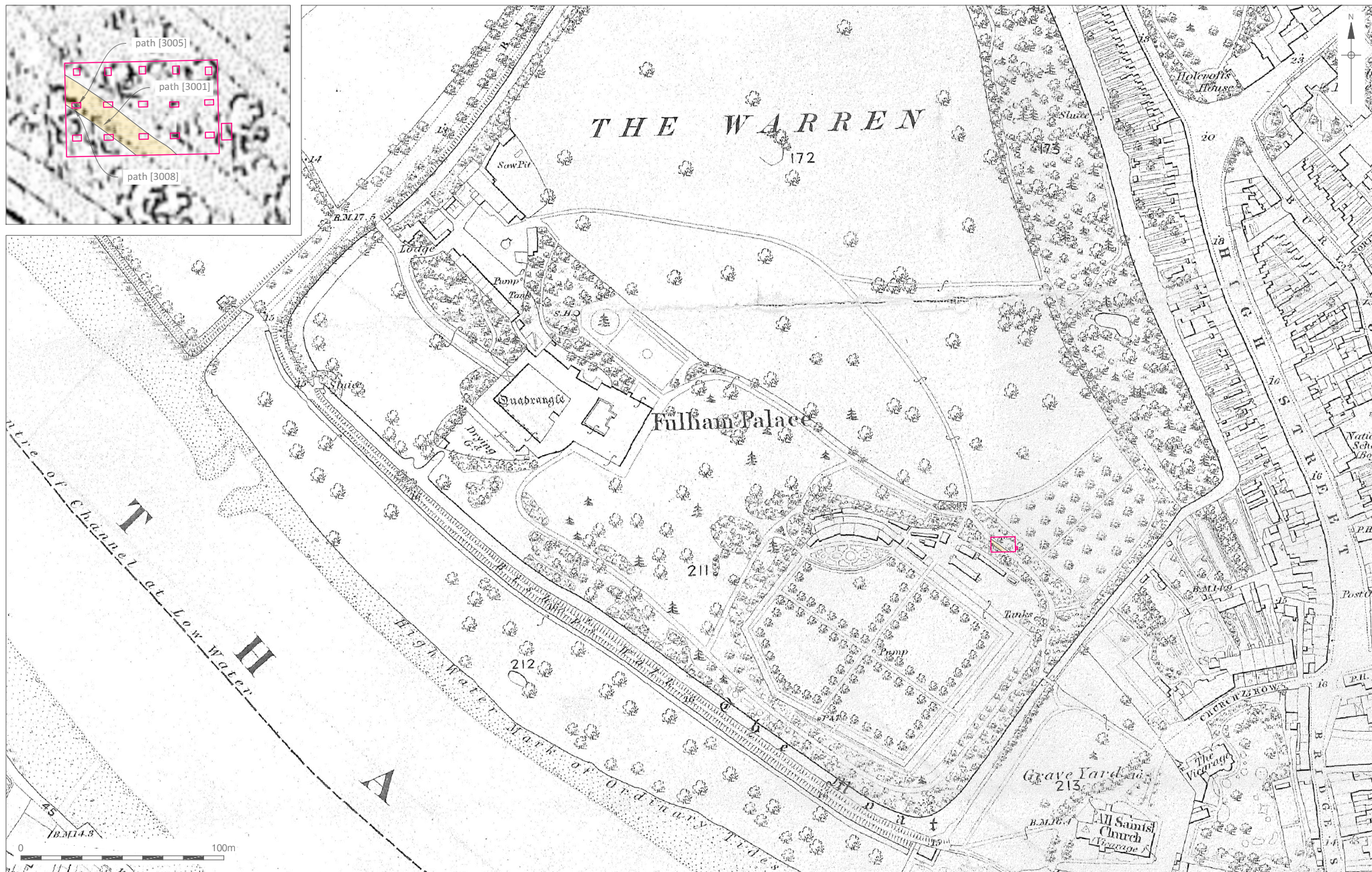


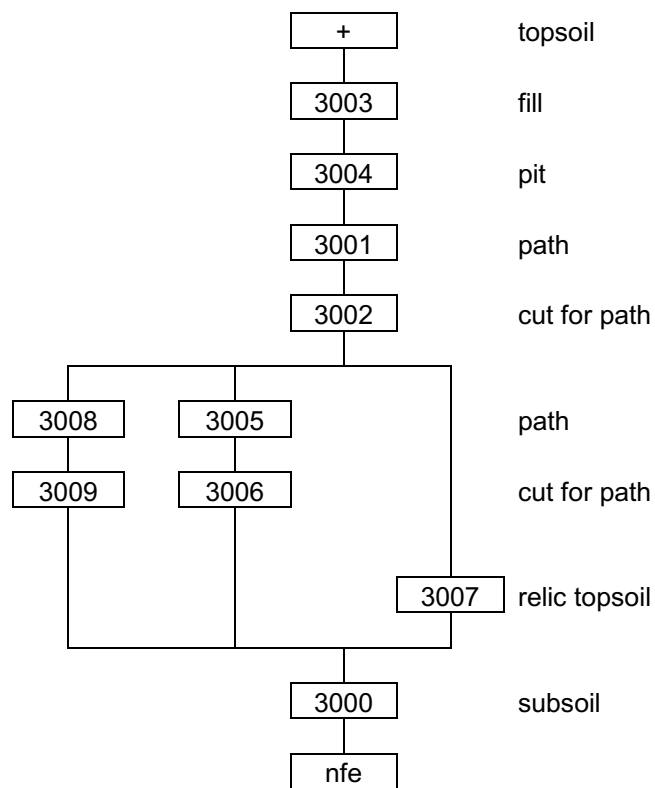
Figure 5  
Plan of features overlain onto Ordnance Survey, 1865  
1:2,500 & 400 at A4

## APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT INDEX

CONTEXT	TYPE	DESCRIPTION	INTERPRETATION
3000	Deposit	Light yellowish brown, sandy silt	Relic topsoil
3001	Fill	Yellowish brown, sandy gravel	PM path
3002	Cut	Straight sides, flat base	cut of PM path
3003	Fill	light grey, sandy silt	fill of garden feature
3004	Cut	Concave sides, flat base	cut of garden feature
3005	Fill	Yellowish grey, sandy silt and mortar	PM path
3006	Cut	Concave sides, irregular base	cut of PM path
3007	Deposit	Yellowish brown, sandy silt	Relic topsoil
3008	Fill	Yellowish grey, sandy silt and mortar	PM path
3009	Cut	Concave sides, irregular base	cut of PM path



## APPENDIX 2: MATRIX



## APPENDIX 3: OASIS REPORT FORM

**OASIS ID: preconst1-207340**

### Project details

Project name	Fulham Palace, New Compost Unit: An Archaeological Watching Brief
Short description of the project	The watching brief monitored the hand excavation of a large area of ground reduction to reach formation level followed by the hand excavation of fifteen postholes which were to receive some upright RSJ's to support the compost unit. The greatest depth of impact was only 0.50m below ground level, and as such the works did not penetrate below garden soil horizons, in the process of which some small cuts containing mortar were seen along with an antiquated path.
Project dates	Start: 07-10-2014 End: 16-10-2014
Previous/future work	Yes / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	FLB03 - Sitecode
Any associated project reference codes	134 - SM No.
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	Scheduled Monument (SM)
Current Land use	Other 5 - Garden
Monument type	PATH Post Medieval
Monument type	PIT Post Medieval
Significant Finds	POTTERY Roman
Investigation type	"Watching Brief"
Prompt	Scheduled Monument Consent

### Project location

Country	England
Site location	GREATER LONDON HAMMERSMITH AND FULHAM FULHAM FULHAM PALACE, BISHOPS AVENUE, FULHAM, LONDON
Postcode	SW6 6EA
Study area	96.00 Square metres
Site coordinates	TQ 2424 7606 51.4693504067 -0.211088888799 51 28 09 N 000 12 39 W Point
Lat/Long Datum	Unknown

### Project creators

Name of Organisation	Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited
Project brief originator	English Heritage
Project design originator	Chris Mayo
Project director/manager	Chris Mayo
Project supervisor	Joe Brooks
Type of sponsor/funding body	Charitable Trust
Name of sponsor/funding	Fulham Palace Trust

body

### Project archives

Physical Archive recipient	Fulham Palace Museum
Physical Archive ID	FLB03
Physical Contents	"Ceramics"
Digital Archive recipient	Fulham Palace Museum
Digital Archive ID	FLB03
Digital Contents	"Stratigraphic"
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography", "Images vector", "Spreadsheets", "Text"
Paper Archive recipient	Fulham Palace Museum
Paper Archive ID	FLB03
Paper Contents	"Stratigraphic"
Paper Media available	"Context sheet", "Miscellaneous Material", "Notebook - Excavation", 'Research', 'General Notes', "Plan", "Section"

### Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	Fulham Palace, New Compost Unit: An Archaeological Watching Brief
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Other bibliographic details	PCA R12045
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Description	A4 Client document with PCA front and back covers

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Entered by Chris Mayo (cmayo@pre-construct.com)

Entered on 25 March 2015

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