

**ACTON GARDENS, PHASE 5,
SOUTH ACTON ESTATE, ACTON**

**AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL
EVALUATION**

**LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY:
LONDON BOROUGH OF EALING**

SITE CODE: ORD15

**OCTOBER 2015
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PRE-CONSTRUCT ARCHAEOLOGY

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ESTATE, ACTON,
LONDON BOROUGH OF EALING

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION REPORT

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ACTON GARDENS, PHASE 5, SOUTH ACTON ESTATE, ACTON, LB EALING: AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

Museum of London Site Code: ORD 15

Local Planning Authority: Ealing

Planning Application Number: P/2012/0708

Central NGR: TQ 19670 79440

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CONTENTS

1	ABSTRACT	3
2	INTRODUCTION	4
3	PLANNING BACKGROUND.....	5
4	GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY	8
5	ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORIC BACKGROUND.....	9
6	ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY	12
7	ARCHAEOLOGICAL SEQUENCE (FIGURE 3 AND PLATES 1-6)	13
8	TRENCH SUMMARY.....	15
	Plate 1: South facing shot of Trench 1	17
	Plate 2: North facing shot of Trench 2	17
	Plate 3: North-west view of Trench 4.....	18
	Plate 4: Plan view of post-holes [32] and [38] (to left and right respectively).....	18
	Plate 5: View to north-east of trench 5	19
	Plate 6: View to south-west of linear cuts [6], [12], [15] and [17] (from left to right).....	19
9	INTERPRETATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS	20
10	ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	22
11	BIBLIOGRAPHY	23
	Figure 1: Site Location.....	24
	Figure 2: Detailed Site and Trench Location	25
	Figure 3: Plan of Trench 4	26
	Figure 4: Plan of Trench 5	27
	Figure 5: Sections 1, 2, 4 and 5.....	28
	Appendix 1: Phased Matrix.....	29
	Appendix 2: Context Index	30
	Appendix 3: OASIS Report Form	34

1 ABSTRACT

- 1.1 This report details the results and working methods of an archaeological evaluation undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd. at the Phase 5 site, South Acton Estate, Acton, LB Ealing, in advance of development.
- 1.2 The fieldwork was carried out between 5th and 9th October 2015. This comprised four evaluation trenches in the south-west, north-west and central areas of the study site. A fifth proposed trench in the north-eastern corner was abandoned due to the presence of extensive live services. The work was commissioned by Countryside Properties.
- 1.3 The evaluation identified natural horizons overlain by weathered natural and subsequently truncated or overlain by post-medieval activity. The latter was concentrated within the central two trenches and comprised an earlier phase of agricultural activity, post-dated by a series of post-holes representing later development, which were in turn post-dated by levelling and a single pit containing possible domestic refuse in addition to demolition debris. All features dated from the late 18th/mid 19th century up to the later 19th/early 20th century. A number of undated dump layers were recorded within other trenches, which are likely to relate to the levelling of the site prior to the construction of the extant estate.
- 1.4 No archaeological features or deposits relating to the prehistoric, Roman, medieval or early post-medieval periods were encountered during the investigation.

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd. (PCA) in advance of redevelopment at Acton Gardens (Phase 5), South Acton Estate, LB Ealing.
- 2.2 The site is located within the London Borough of Ealing, and centred at National Grid Reference TQ 19670 79440, and comprises a roughly square shaped plot of land currently occupied by a series of residential blocks (Caroll Court, Meredith Tower, Galsworthy Court and Conrad Tower) which front onto a central grass plot. The site is bound by Bollo Lane, Osbourne Road and Bollo Bridge Road to the west, north and south respectively. The eastern limits of the site are bound by further residential blocks in the process of being redeveloped on Hanbury Road.
- 2.3 PCA was commissioned for the watching brief by Countryside Properties in advance of proposed redevelopment. The site lies within an Archaeological Priority Area as defined by the London Borough of Ealing. The site does not encompass, nor lie within the immediate vicinity of any Scheduled Ancient Monuments.
- 2.4 The project was undertaken in accordance with an approved Written Scheme of Investigation (Brown 2015).
- 2.5 Following the completion of the project the site archive will be deposited in its entirety with the London Archaeological Archive and Research Centre (LAARC) identified by the unique code ORD 15.
- 2.6 The evaluation was conducted between 5th and 9th October 2015.
- 2.7 The project was monitored by Mr Sandy Kidd of Historic England on behalf of the London Borough of Ealing, and project-managed for PCA by Gary Brown. The evaluation was supervised by the author.

3 PLANNING BACKGROUND

3.1 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

- 3.1.1 In March 2012 the Department for Communities and Local Government issued the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), replacing Planning Policy Statement 5 (PPS5) 'Planning for the Historic Environment' which itself replaced Planning Policy Guidance Note 16 (PPG16) 'Archaeology and Planning'. It provides guidance for planning authorities, property owners, developers and others on the investigation and preservation of heritage assets.
- 3.1.2 In considering any planning application for development, the local planning authority will be guided by the policy framework set by government guidance, in this instance the NPPF, by current Unitary Development Plan policy and by other material considerations.

3.2 Regional Guidance: The London Plan

- 3.2.1 The over-arching strategies and policies for the whole of the Greater London area are contained within the Greater London Authority's London Plan (July 2011) which includes the following statement relating to archaeology.

Policy 7.8: Heritage assets and archaeology

Strategic

A London's heritage assets and historic environment, including listed buildings, registered historic parks and gardens and other natural and historic landscapes, conservation areas, World Heritage Sites, registered battlefields, scheduled monuments, archaeological remains and memorials should be identified, so that the desirability of sustaining and enhancing their significance and of utilising their positive role in place shaping can be taken into account.

B Development should incorporate measures that identify, record, interpret, protect and, where appropriate, present the site's archaeology.

Planning decisions

C Development should identify, value, conserve, restore, re-use and incorporate heritage assets, where appropriate.

D Development affecting heritage assets and their settings should conserve their significance, by being sympathetic to their form, scale, materials and architectural detail.

E New development should make provision for the protection of archaeological resources, landscapes and significant memorials. The physical assets should, where possible, be made available to the public on-site. Where the archaeological asset or memorial cannot be preserved or managed on-site, provision must be made for the investigation, understanding, recording, dissemination and archiving of that asset.

LDF preparation

F Boroughs should, in LDF policies, seek to maintain and enhance the contribution of built, landscaped and buried heritage to London's environmental quality, cultural identity and economy as part of managing London's ability to accommodate change and regeneration.

G Boroughs, in consultation with English Heritage, Natural England and other relevant statutory organisations, should include appropriate policies in their LDFs for identifying, protecting, enhancing and improving access to the historic environment and heritage assets and their settings where appropriate, and to archaeological assets, memorials and historic and natural landscape character within their area.

3.3 Local Guidance: London Borough of Ealing

3.3.1 The relevant Local Development framework is provided by the following saved policies from the Ealing Borough Unitary Development Plan (adopted 2004) in addition to the adopted Development (or Core) Strategy adopted April 2012. These plans contain policies which provide a framework for the consideration of development proposals affecting archaeological and heritage features:

UNITARY DEVELOPMENT PLAN:

4.9 Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Interest Areas

1. The protection of Scheduled Ancient Monuments and their settings is required by law. Any development affecting such an ancient monument requires an impact evaluation, including an archaeological assessment where appropriate.
2. It is the Council's intention to also protect archaeological sites, and any proposal must:
 - (i) Provide adequate opportunities for archaeological investigation prior to development;
 - (ii) Be carried out in accordance with the British Archaeologists and Developers Liaison Code of Practice.
3. Where development would adversely affect Archaeological Interest Areas or archaeological remains, the applicant will normally be required to:
 - (i) Modify designs to avoid adverse effects;
 - (ii) Design suitable land use and management strategies to safeguard any important remains, with the option to seek an agreement covering access and interpretation arrangements;
 - (iii) Preserve in situ: where this is not feasible, provide appropriate provision for excavation.

ADOPTED DEVELOPMENT (OR CORE) STRATEGY:

1.2 (g)

To support the proactive conservation and enjoyment of Ealing's heritage assets and their significance. In this regard the Council will continue to update and revise its evidence relating to the Borough's designated and undesignated heritage assets. In particular, we will regularly review our Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans and review and update our Local List of heritage assets to ensure that local assets are identified and their significance properly understood during the planning process. In addition to promote heritage led regeneration, ensure a balanced approach to climate change measures, encourage greater understanding and access to heritage assets and reduce the number of assets at risk.

In addition to the identification and review of evidence relating to significant heritage assets, the primary method for the delivery of Ealing's heritage strategy will be area specific planning documents such as SPDs/AAPs. The level of detail contained in these documents is best suited to achieving a heritage-driven urban design programme of place shaping. Development management policies will ensure that proper consideration will be given to heritage matters when determining planning applications, and applications for listed building consent and conservation area consent.

3.3.2 The following planning condition was attached to the granting of consent (LB Ealing planning reference: P/2012/0708):

20. No development shall commence on any Phase or Development Zone (as relevant) until the applicant has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological mitigation in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation for that phase/development zone, which shall be submitted and approved by the local planning authority.

No development or demolition shall take place other than in accordance with the approved Written Scheme of Investigation. The development shall not be occupied until the site investigation and post investigation assessment has been completed in accordance with the programme set out in the Written Scheme of Investigation, and the provision for analysis, publication and dissemination of the results and archive deposition has been secured.

Reason: Heritage assets of archaeological interest may survive on the site. The planning authority wishes to secure the provision of archaeological investigation and the subsequent recording of the remains prior to development, in accordance with Section 12 (Conserving and enhancing the historic environment) of the National Planning Policy Framework; policy 7.8 of the London Plan 2011; policy 1.1(h) of Ealing's adopted Development (or Core) Strategy 2012; and policy 4.9 of the adopted Ealing Unitary Development Plan 'Plan for the Environment' (2004)

3.3.3 In terms of designated heritage assets, as defined above, no Scheduled Ancient Monuments, Historic Wreck sites or Historic Battlefields lie within the immediate vicinity of the site. The site does however lie within an Archaeological Priority Area as defined by the London Borough of Ealing.

4 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

4.1 Geology

4.1.1 The British Geological Survey shows the site to be underlain by the London Clay formation, a clay, silt and sand horizon formed during the Palaeogene Period. These are expected to be overlain by superficial deposits of the Kempton Park Gravel formation of sand and gravel (<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>). The northern limits of the subject site are however located close to a boundary between superficial deposits of Kempton Park Gravel and clay, silt and sand forming the Head formation.

4.1.2 No geotechnical information was available prior to on site investigations.

4.2 Topography

4.2.1 The topography around the study site indicates that it occupies a gentle northwest facing slope. Levels grade down from 30.70m OD adjacent to the southern boundary to 26.50m OD adjacent to the northern boundary.

4.2.2 The former course of the River Brent previously flowed approximately 120m to the north of the site until the 1930s when the river was canalised and its alignment was relocated a further 150m to the north.

5 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORIC BACKGROUND

5.1 Research into the archaeological and historical background of the site has previously been carried out as part of a desk-based assessment of the wider site (all phases) and is summarised below (TO'R 2011).

5.2 Early Prehistoric

5.2.1 Palaeolithic artefacts are well represented in the study area, with a total of 11 find spots recorded. The two closest were located adjacent to the southern site area at Ramsey Road and Colville Road. Two Mesolithic findspots are also recorded as residual material in site investigations at Avenue Gardens in 1981, and as a stray findspot.

5.2.2 Despite a relatively good understanding of Neolithic landscapes on the west London gravels, the evidence for these periods in the study area is limited to Neolithic flint artefacts such as an axe, a collection of arrowheads, blades and flakes and other implements including an additional axe head, saw and knives.

5.2.3 There are a number of noteworthy sites dating to the Bronze Age in the vicinity of the study area. Works at the LRT Bus depot in 1989 revealed multiple pits, postholes and ditches forming what is probably the northern edge of a small, domestic Late Bronze Age settlement. The features contained some hook rimmed jars, which dated to c. 1200-900BC. A cremation burial was also revealed in 1981 during works to 49-51 Avenue Gardens. Further investigation at 36 Avenue Gardens revealed further contemporary evidence of cremations. A group of cinery urns had been recorded as being found during the construction of the house in 1882, but the later investigations yielded over 80 sherds of another Bronze Age urn. An additional urn was recorded at Mill Hill Park. These sites indicate the probable location of a former burial site or monument for the deposition of cremation burials of a contemporary settlement.

5.3 Iron Age and Roman

5.3.1 Evidence for the Iron Age in this area of west London is scarce and limited to ditches and occupation sites to the south, adjacent to tributaries close to the River Thames. There are two recorded entries of coin findspots in the study area.

5.3.2 The alignment of the Roman road of Akeman Street lies on the course of Chiswick High Road to the south of the study area. We know little about settlement structure in the Romano-British landscape in the study area.

5.3.3 Apart from two findspots (a coin and a pot), the known archaeological record in the study area pertains to evidence of former occupation and settlement. Site investigations at 49-51 Avenue Gardens in 1981 revealed a series of intercutting ditches, a bronze ring and an almost complete Samian bowl dating to c.100-130AD. Further evidence of ditches/linear pits of Roman date were uncovered among areas of heavy truncation during site investigations at Acton Shopping Centre.

5.4 Saxon and Medieval

- 5.4.1 There is little evidence of settlement from the study area or in nearby Chiswick. One site is dated to the period in the wider study area, which records the presence of early Saxon and prehistoric pottery from a pit at Acton High Street in 2004.
- 5.4.2 The name 'Acton' meaning 'Oak Town', may have Saxon origins, and the settlement is mentioned in the Domesday Book as being part of the Bishop of London's manor of Fulham. A focus of early settlement in Acton probably centred upon the site of the 12th century Berrymead Priory at a location that is now under the car park on Salisbury Street.
- 5.4.3 The medieval settlement in the parish was concentrated in two hamlets; Church Acton on the London to Oxford road and Acton Green to the south. The main medieval settlement is recorded as being situated at Horn Lane, with two inns recorded within the village in 1380, The Tabbard and The Cock. A medieval pot was uncovered in the course of investigations at the LRT Bus Works in 1989 in the southern part of the study area.

5.5 Post Medieval

- 5.5.1 South Acton developed in the 16th and 17th centuries as a summer retreat for London residents. There is some evidence of early industry in the study area. The former location of a windmill is recorded at Mill Hill Road, first documented in 1622 and last shown on John Rocque's 1746 map. A small cluster of post medieval pits and ditches dating from the 17th to the 19th century, as well as a gravel quarry were revealed during evaluation works at King Street. A second gravel extraction quarry pit is recorded at nos. 193-197 Acton High Street. Analysis and dating of the soil fill of the pit concluded that this area north of Mill Hill Road was used for grazing, then as orchards and gardens between the 18th and 20th centuries.
- 5.5.2 A map of the parish in c.1805 shows the dominance of the large open fields and the remaining wastes and commons (mainly roadside commons and a large area at Old Oak to the north). The land in the south of the parish between Bollo Brook and Acton Lane is a single open field named as Turnham Field. The map marks and names the many gentry scale houses, most of which are still in the old village centre and adjoining the commons.
- 5.5.3 The pressure for division of land for development was confirmed in the 1859 enclosure award for the parish, at that point still dominated by the four open arable fields of Church Field, South Field, Turnham Field and East Field. The award was followed by the rapid sale of large areas of land for development. In the north, the Goldsmiths Company purchased land close to the existing Goldsmiths Almshouses (built 1833, grade II*). Much of the land to the south was purchased by the British Land Co. Their purchases included the area of land where Church Road was laid out and two sites in Turnham Field, which became the estate at South Acton.
- 5.5.4 There was greater demand for lower cost housing and the British Land Co land in South Acton developed rapidly with small houses for the workers in laundries or brickworks locally. Development of South Acton began in Enfield Road, Hanbury Road, Osbourne Road and Bollo Bridge Road in the mid 1860s, spread south west to the NLR railway line from 1867 (requiring an additional land purchase), and continued in a similar pattern of terraces of small houses beyond the railway.

- 5.5.5 Over time the dominant industry was the laundries with so many concentrated in South Acton it became known as 'Soapsuds Island'. Another longstanding local industry was the extraction of brickearth and brick works. A small cluster of post medieval pits and ditches dating from the 17th to 19th century, and a gravel quarry were revealed during the works at the LRT Bus depot. Another series of pits and drains were revealed during evaluation works at King Street. A second gravel extraction quarry pit is recorded at nos. 193-197 Acton High Street.
- 5.5.6 In the 1880s there were changes in the nature of the housing being built at South Acton as a result of new availability of transport; from houses for local workers to houses for commuters. The South Acton station estate began sales in 1882 and the area around Brouncker Road was built by 1890. This development included maisonettes and flats as part of a common pattern. These survive along the eastern edge of the site area. Many were built by the vicar of All Saints parish church, recognising a clear need for small units of low cost housing.
- 5.5.7 From the early 20th century there was increased subdivision and overcrowding as the population of Acton grew by half between 1901 and 1911. The parallel industrial development accelerated during the war with engineering companies being established at the new industrial area at the Vale. In the inter-war period the population continued to expand and private building continued. A new influence was building by the council in the 1930s. There was early slum clearance of some areas of The Steyne within the old village and development of small infill sites and cottage estates common to much inter-war council building. The flats on Enfield Road and on Brouncker Road were built by Acton Council in 1931-2.
- 5.5.8 There was some bomb damage to South Acton during WWII and the condition of the area deteriorated further with a continued lack of maintenance and overcrowding. In 1947 the clearance and comprehensive redevelopment of 182 acres at South Acton was proposed. The plan in Middlesex Development Plan as eventually approved in 1956 was for 66 acres to be completed by 1966.

6 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

- 6.1 In accordance with the approved Written Scheme of Investigation (Brown 2015), four 10m-20m long evaluation trenches were excavated, within the central, south-western and north-western limits of the site at Acton Gardens, Phase 5, South Acton Estate, LB Ealing. This entailed the machine excavation of each trench to a maximum depth of 1.20m BGL or until archaeological or natural horizons were identified. A fifth trench proposed for the north-eastern limits was abandoned due to the close proximity of live services (water, gas and electricity).
- 6.2 All excavation took place under archaeological supervision with the machine excavated trenches taking place with a machine fitted with a ditching bucket. Discrete cut features were hand excavated as slots or half sections through the respective features.
- 6.3 The trenches were cleaned by hand, recorded and photographed. Recording of the deposits was accomplished using the Single Context Recording Method on proforma context and planning sheets, as presented in PCA's Operations Manual 1 (Taylor 2009). Contexts were numbered and are shown in this report within squared brackets. Plans and sections were drawn at a scale of 1:20.
- 6.4 The areas monitored were located by means of a TST. Two temporary benchmarks were established adjacent to trenches 4 and 5, and between trenches 1 and 2, with the values 13.19m OD and 13.40m OD respectively.
- 6.5 The completed archive, comprising all written, drawn and photographic records, will be deposited with the London Archaeological Archive and Research Centre under the unique Site Code ORD 15.

7 ARCHAEOLOGICAL SEQUENCE (FIGURES 3, 4 & 5 AND PLATES 1-6)

7.1 Phase 1: Natural

- 7.1.1 Natural deposits of firm yellow-brown sandy-clay [22] were encountered at the base of trenches 1, 4 and 5 from an uppermost elevation of 12.45m OD. The level of natural was relatively constant between 12.29m OD and 12.34m OD across all of the trenches.
- 7.1.2 A 0.16m thick layer of weathered natural [36] was identified within trench 4 from 12.51m OD.

7.2 Phase 2: Undated

- 7.2.1 A number of undated layers were encountered within trenches 1 and 2. The presence of asbestos fragments within the latter prevented extensive hand examination. A 0.50m wide layer of mid brown-orange silty clay [44] extended in an east-west alignment across the base of trench 2 and was interpreted as redeposited natural given the higher elevation of 12.87m OD by comparison to other natural horizons observed across the study site. This was overlain by a 0.30m thick layer of silty-clay [43] interpreted as levelling. Extending across the southern limits of the trench was an east-west aligned, 0.82m wide, band of gravel [42]. Identified from 13.08m OD this may represent the fill of a service trench.
- 7.2.2 Overlying natural horizon within trench 1 was a 0.44m thick layer of grey-brown sandy silt containing rooting and gravels. Recorded from 12.76m OD, layer [41] was interpreted as mixed sub-soil and levelling horizon.

7.3 Phase 3: Post-medieval

- 7.3.1 A series of cut features were encountered within central trenches 4 and 5 dated to the later post-medieval period.
- 7.3.2 Five east-west aligned shallow linear features were recorded within southerly trench 5 (Figures 4 & 5). These (cuts [21], [17], [15], [12] and [6] from west to east respectively) had been cut into natural horizons from c. 12.23m OD. Each of the features ran roughly parallel to one another to a maximum observed length of 1.82m by up to 0.42m in width and to a depth of between 20mm and 0.10m. Comparable deposits ([20], [16], [14], [11], [5]) of grey brown silty clay containing small sub-angular gravels and occasional pottery sherds had been utilised to backfill the cuts. Pottery recovered from fill [14] was dated from the late 18th to mid 19th century. Discrete layers of silty clay [33], [34] and [35] identified in section were considered to represent continuations of these linear features. The linear features were interpreted as gullies or possible agricultural features, such as 'lazy beds'.

- 7.3.3 In close proximity to the linear features were three square postholes, also apparently cut from the same horizon (Figure 4). These followed a roughly comparable alignment to the linear features and were identified as cuts [4], [1] and [19] from west to east. Shallow, square cut [4] measured 0.36m x 0.26m x 30mm depth and had been backfilled grey brown silty clay [3]. Adjacent to this cut [2] extended 0.40m x 0.24m and extended with steep sides to a concave base, 0.17m in depth. Within the sandy silt backfill [1] were angular gravels and 19th century pottery sherds. To the west of these was a third square cut [19] which extended to 0.35m x 0.29m by 30mm depth with steep sides to a flat base. This had been backfilled with dark brown black sandy silt containing angular gravels [18].
- 7.3.4 Two smaller, rounded postholes [8] and [10] truncated fill [11] of linear gully [12]. These extended up to 0.20m in diameter and exhibited steep sides to a concave base. Each had been backfilled with comparable brown black sandy silt with evidence of rooting (fills [7] and [9] respectively).
- 7.3.5 A further four postholes were identified within adjacent trench 4, of contemporary date (Figure 3). These were largely aligned east-west, with a single cut running north-south. The latter [32] extended 0.43m x 0.30m with steep sides, to a flat base, 0.15m in depth. This had been backfilled with grey brown silty clay [31] containing small angular gravel, pottery, ceramic building material (CBM) and clay tobacco pipe (CTP). The CTP dated to the late 17th century; however the remainder of the assemblage was firmly dated to the early/mid 19th century. The dimensions of the east-west aligned cuts, ([38], [30], [28] and [26]) were between 0.24m and 0.50m east-west, 0.16m and 0.32m north by up to 0.20m deep. The eastern cuts [26] and [28] had steep sides to a flat base, whereas western cuts [38] and [30] had stepped and concave bases respectively. Each posthole had been backfilled with comparable deposits of grey brown sandy silt containing gravel, oyster shell and late 19th century pottery sherds.
- 7.3.6 Both groups of postholes were therefore considered to be contemporary, and interpreted as relating to the 19th century development of the area.
- 7.3.7 Recorded in section within trench 4 from 12.67m OD was a 0.20m thick dump layer [39] of grey brown silty clay (Figure 4). This contained oyster shell, gravel and CBM inclusions with evidence of rooting. This was overlain by additional dump layer [40] comprised of dark brown silty clay, extending up to 0.11m in thickness. Both deposits were subsequently truncated by pit [24] (Figures 3 & 5). The pit followed an east-west alignment, but was not fully exposed, extending beyond the southern and eastern limits of excavation. As seen the cut extended over 1.33m x 0.74m x 0.70m depth. The cut exhibited steep sides to a concave base and had been backfilled with dark black brown sandy silt [23] containing CBM, animal bone and late 19th/early 20th century pottery sherds.
- 7.3.8 A small 40mm thick dump layer [45] was identified in section only (trench 5), and the entirety of the trench was overlain by 0.34m thick levelling deposit [45]. The latter was recorded from 12.59m OD and comprised green brown silty clay containing frequent angular gravels.

8 TRENCH SUMMARY

8.1 The following represents an overview of each of the evaluation trenches:

8.2 Trench 1:

- 8.2.1 Natural horizons were recorded at the base of the trench from 12.34m OD. These extended across the entirety of the trench.
- 8.2.2 A 0.44m thick layer of sandy silt [41] representing a mix of sub-soil and levelling material was observed in section from an uppermost elevation of 12.76m OD. These had been truncated in the south of the trench by squared modern intrusion.
- 8.2.3 Sealing the entirety of the trench was a further 0.42m thickness of modern levelling and topsoil.

8.3 Trench 2:

- 8.3.1 Natural horizons could not be established with any certainty within this trench due to the presence of asbestos fragments, making hand cleaning and access difficult. The earliest deposit identified comprised potentially redeposited natural [44] recorded from 12.87m OD in the base of the trench. This was overlain by a 0.30m thickness of grey brown silty clay subsoil [43].
- 8.3.2 A 0.82m wide, east-west aligned, band of gravel [42] may indicate the presence of backfilled services in the southern part of the trench.
- 8.3.3 The trench was subsequently overlain by 1m of modern made up ground. Within this material was an east-west aligned early modern brick wall (containing asbestos), and disused services presumably relating to the estate buildings.

8.4 Trench 3:

- 8.4.1 This trench was abandoned following consultation with GLAAS due to the presence of live services.

8.5 Trench 4:

- 8.5.1 Natural horizons were observed across the base of this trench from elevations of between 12.45m OD and 12.37m OD, and were overlain by a 0.16m thickness of weathered natural soil [36].
- 8.5.2 Truncating the natural horizon were a series of rectangular postholes [26], [28], [30], [32] and [38] backfilled with sandy silt fills [25], [27], [29], [31] and [37]. The postholes were largely aligned east-west with the single exception of [32] which ran perpendicular along a more north-south alignment. Pottery recovered from the backfills suggested a late 19th century date for these features, which are likely to be related with a further series of postholes identified within adjacent trench 5 (described below).
- 8.5.3 A second phase of development was suggested by dump layers [39] and [40] identified in section, which raised the ground level to 12.57m OD. These were truncated by the excavation of east-west aligned pit [24] which was exposed within the south-eastern corner of the trench. The pit extended to a depth of 0.70m from 12.71m OD and had been backfilled with black brown sandy silt containing CBM rubble, animal bone, glass, charcoal and late 19th/early 20th century pottery sherds.

- 8.5.4 It is likely that these features relate to two sub-phases of late post-medieval activity; an initial phase of development, indicated by the earlier postholes, followed by levelling and disposal of demolition/refuse material.
- 8.5.5 The trench was sealed by a combined 0.64m thickness of made ground and topsoil.
- 8.6 Trench 5:**
- 8.6.1 Natural horizons were truncated by a series of east-west aligned linear cuts interpreted as the possible remnants of agricultural activity. The cuts ([12], [6], [15], [17], [21]) extended up to 0.42m in width and had been backfilled with comparable deposits of grey-brown silty clay ([11], [5], [16], [20]). Although largely devoid of dating material, pottery sherds from fill [14] dated from the late 18th to mid 19th centuries.
- 8.6.2 Post-dating linear [12] were two rounded postholes ([8] and [10]) which had been backfilled with brown-black sandy silt ([7] and [9]) with evidence of rooting. In close proximity to these, with no stratigraphic relationship to the linears, were a series of larger squared postholes. The cuts displayed a comparable alignment to the linear intrusions ([2], [4], [19]) and had similarly been cut into natural horizons. These had been largely backfilled with grey-brown sandy silt and silty clays ([1], [3], [18]) and were interpreted as relating to post-medieval development of the area prior to the extant estate.
- 8.6.3 The trench was subsequently overlain by levelling material (deposits [45], and [46]) and capped by a 0.65m of modern levelling and topsoil.

Plate 1: South facing shot of Trench 1



Plate 2: North facing shot of Trench 2



Plate 3: North-west view of Trench 4



Plate 4: Plan view of post-holes [32] and [38] (to left and right respectively)



Plate 5: View to north-east of trench 5



Plate 6: View to south-west of linear cuts [6], [12], [15] and [17] (from left to right)



9 INTERPRETATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

9.1 Interpretations:

9.1.1 Natural horizons consistent with the natural geology of Head deposits were encountered within three of the four trenches. These suggested the natural surface to be relatively level across the site between 12.29m OD and 12.37m OD. A single deposit of weathered natural was encountered within trench 4 from 12.51m OD.

9.1.2 A number of undated layers of mixed levelling and subsoil were encountered within trench 2. Included within these layers was a deposit of redeposited natural. These are (given the extensive modern intrusion within this area), likely to be post-medieval or modern in date. An additional undated horizon of levelling material was encountered within south-western trench 1, this is also likely to be modern in date, and correspond to the construction of the extant estate.

9.1.3 A concentration of post-medieval activity was identified within central trenches 4 and 5. These comprised an initial phase of shallow linear cut features considered to represent 19th century agricultural activity, immediately preceding development of the area. These were post-dated by numerous postholes (largely squared) which were also identified within adjacent trench 4. These were interpreted as relating to the 19th century development of the area. These features were post-dated in turn by a number of discrete levelling/dump layers and a single pit dating to the late 19th/early 20th century. The latter may therefore relate to levelling and/or demolition immediately prior to the construction of the surrounding estate.

9.2 Research Objectives:

9.2.1 The archaeological investigations sought to address the following research questions:

- To determine the natural topography and geology of the site, and the height at which it survives:
Natural horizons consistent with the Head formation were encountered across the site from the uppermost elevation of 12.45m OD, as encountered within trench 4. Across the remainder of the site, these horizons were recorded between 12.29m OD and 12.37m OD.
- To establish the presence or absence of prehistoric activity, in particular of the Palaeolithic-Bronze age eras:
No features or horizons were encountered during the investigations of prehistoric date. Furthermore, no residual material of this date was recovered from later features, suggesting either a minimal prehistoric presence, or alternatively extensive horizontal truncation.
- To establish the presence or absence of Roman, medieval or post-medieval activity at the site:
The earliest activity encountered within the study site comprised later post-medieval activity dating from the late 18th to mid 19th centuries. These comprised an initial phase of agricultural use, post dated by development and subsequently levelling/demolition prior to the construction of the extant estate.

- To establish the presence or absence of 19th and 20th century domestic and industrial activity at the site:
The only potential trace of domestic activity encountered within the study site comprises a single pit recorded within the south-eastern corner of trench 4. This contained CBM rubble in addition to animal bones and pottery sherds which could suggest domestic refuse. No firmly identified features relating to industrial activity were encountered.
- To establish the extent of all past post-depositional impacts on the archaeological resource:
The lack of features or horizons pre-dating the later post-medieval period suggests that the area was potentially landscaped and levelled during this period. However, the potential for deeper cut features, or 'islands' of untruncated archaeological horizons may survive within other areas of the site.

10 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- 10.1 Pre-Construct Archaeology would like to thank Countryside Properties for commissioning the evaluation. Particular thanks are given to Gary Martin and Graeme Syme of Countryside Properties for their assistance in setting up the site and for the provision of plant and welfare. Thanks also go to Sandy Kidd of GLAAS for monitoring the work on behalf of the London Borough of Ealing.
- 10.2 The author would like to thank Gary Brown for project management and editing, and Mark Roughley for the illustrations. Further thanks are due to Natasha Billson and Rick Archer for their assistance with the fieldwork and surveying respectively.

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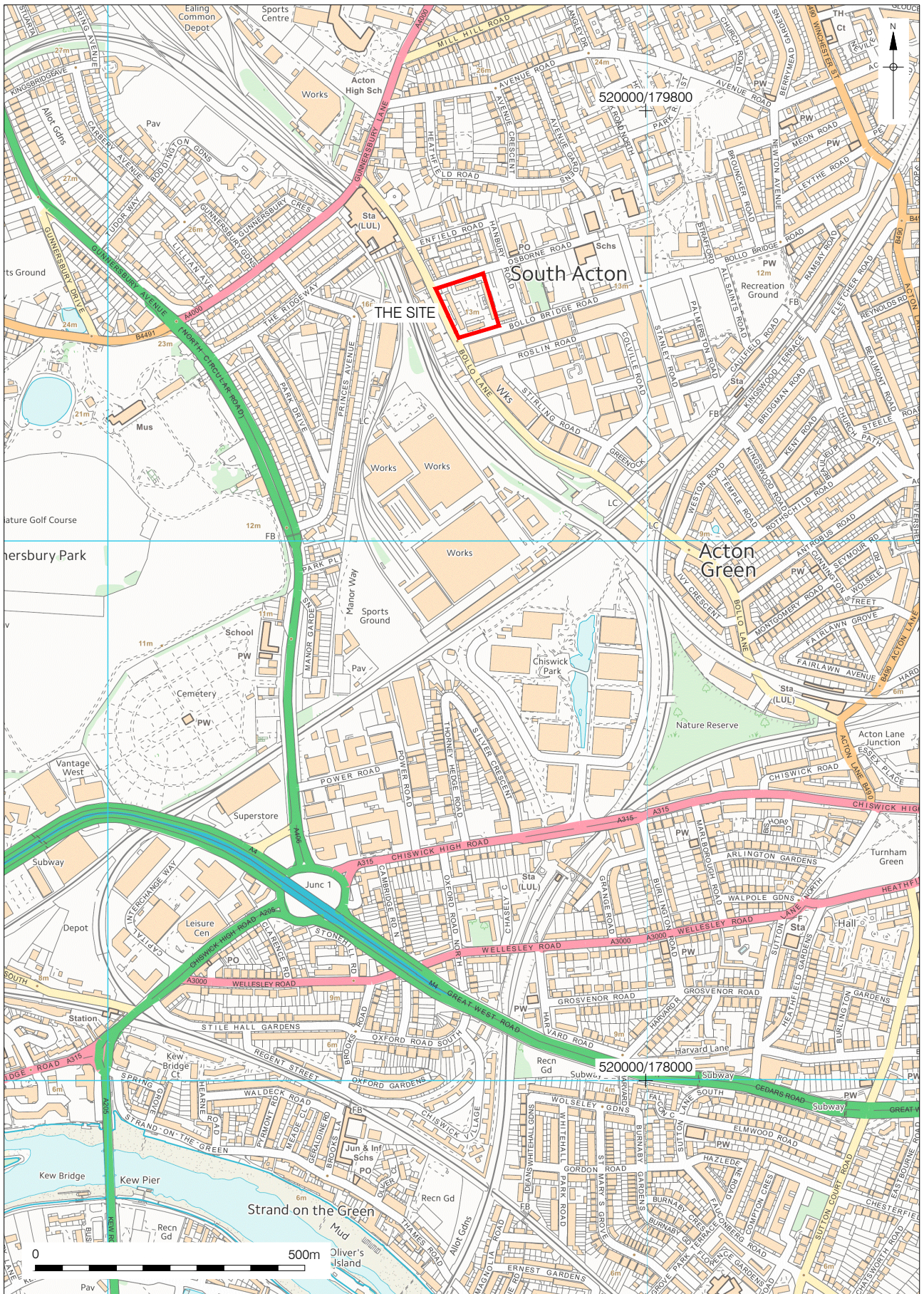
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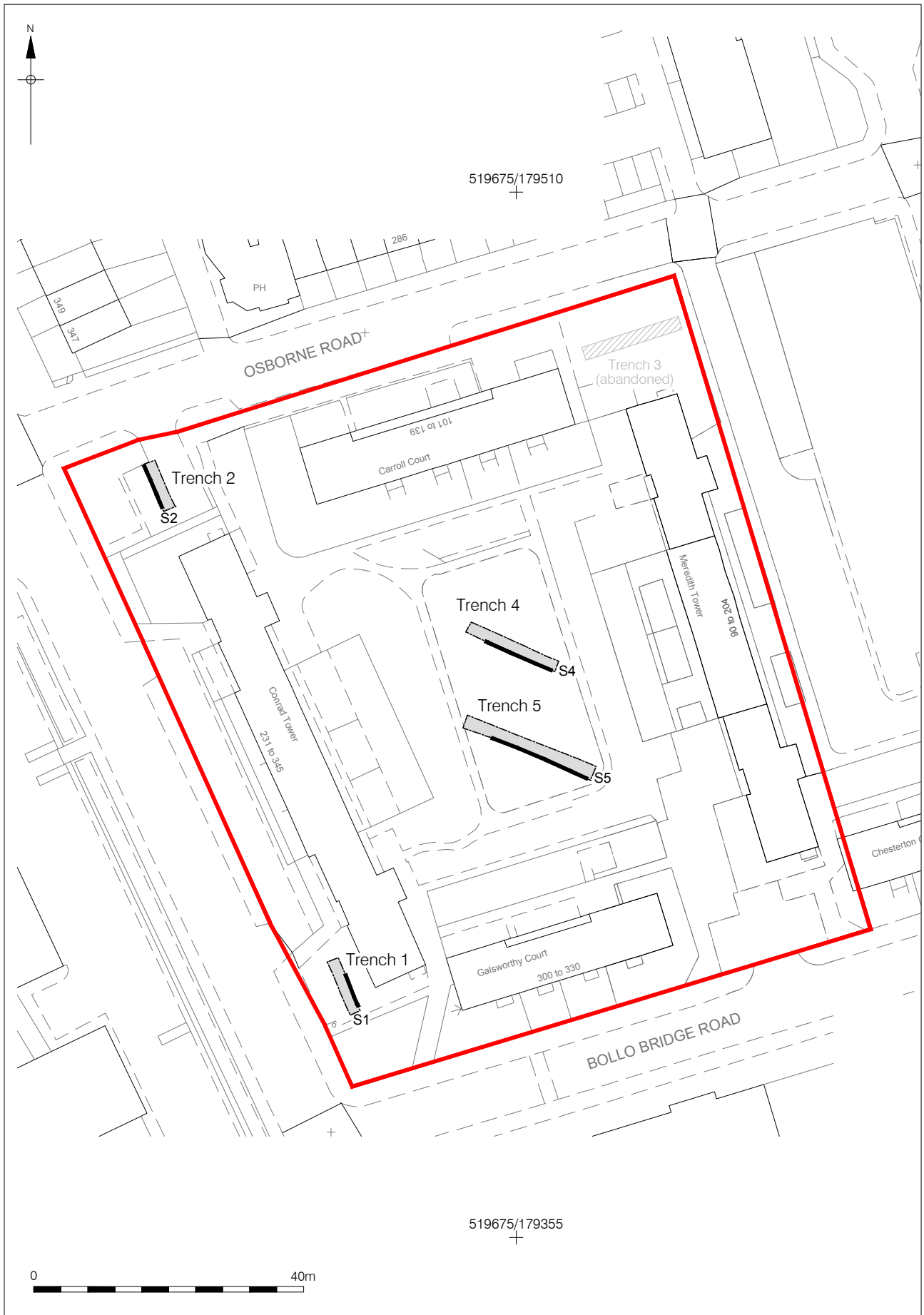


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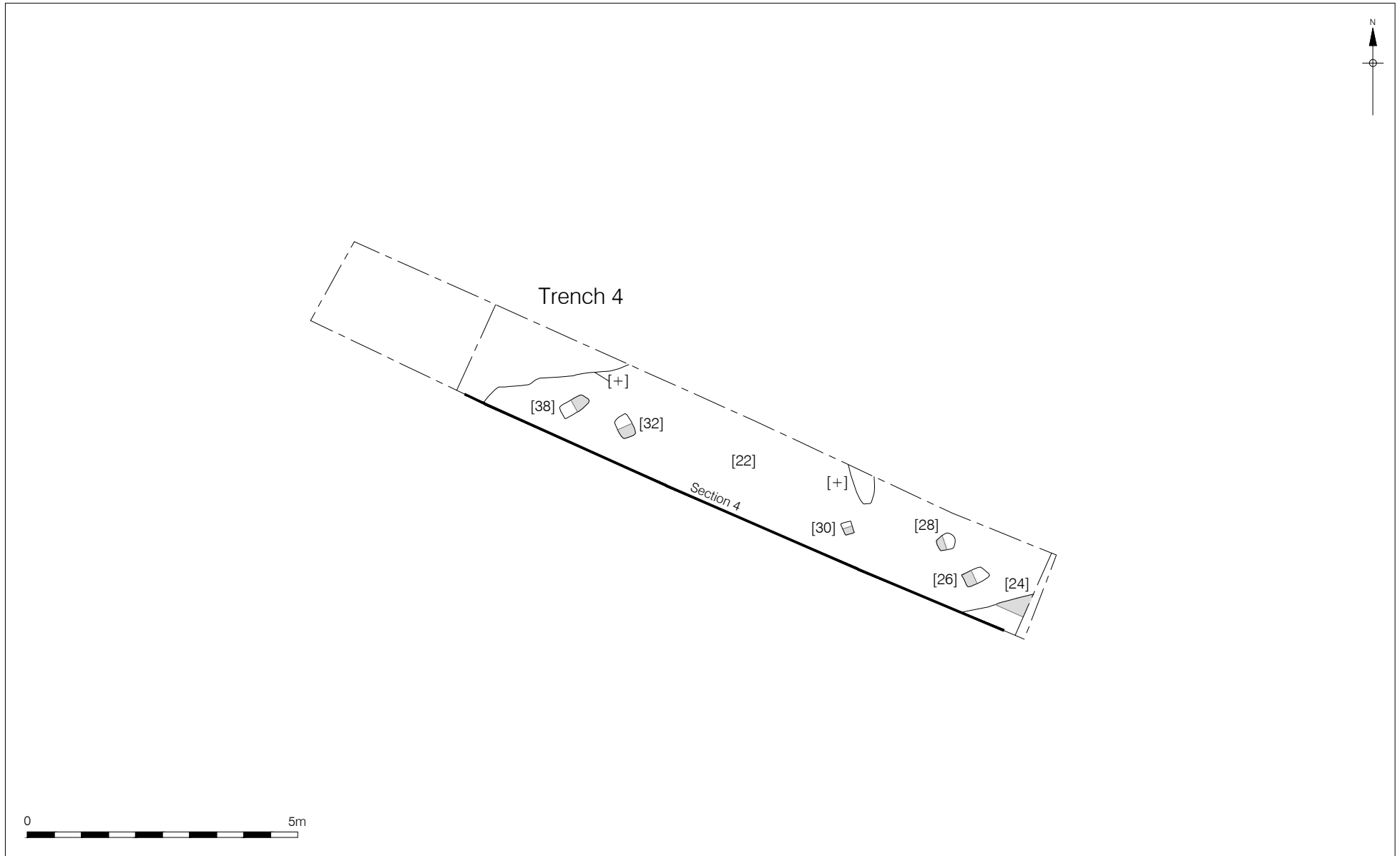
14/10/15 MR

Figure 1
Site Location
1:10,000 at A4



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Figure 2
 Detailed Site and Trench Location
 1:800 at A4



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Figure 3
Plan of Trench 4
1:100 at A4

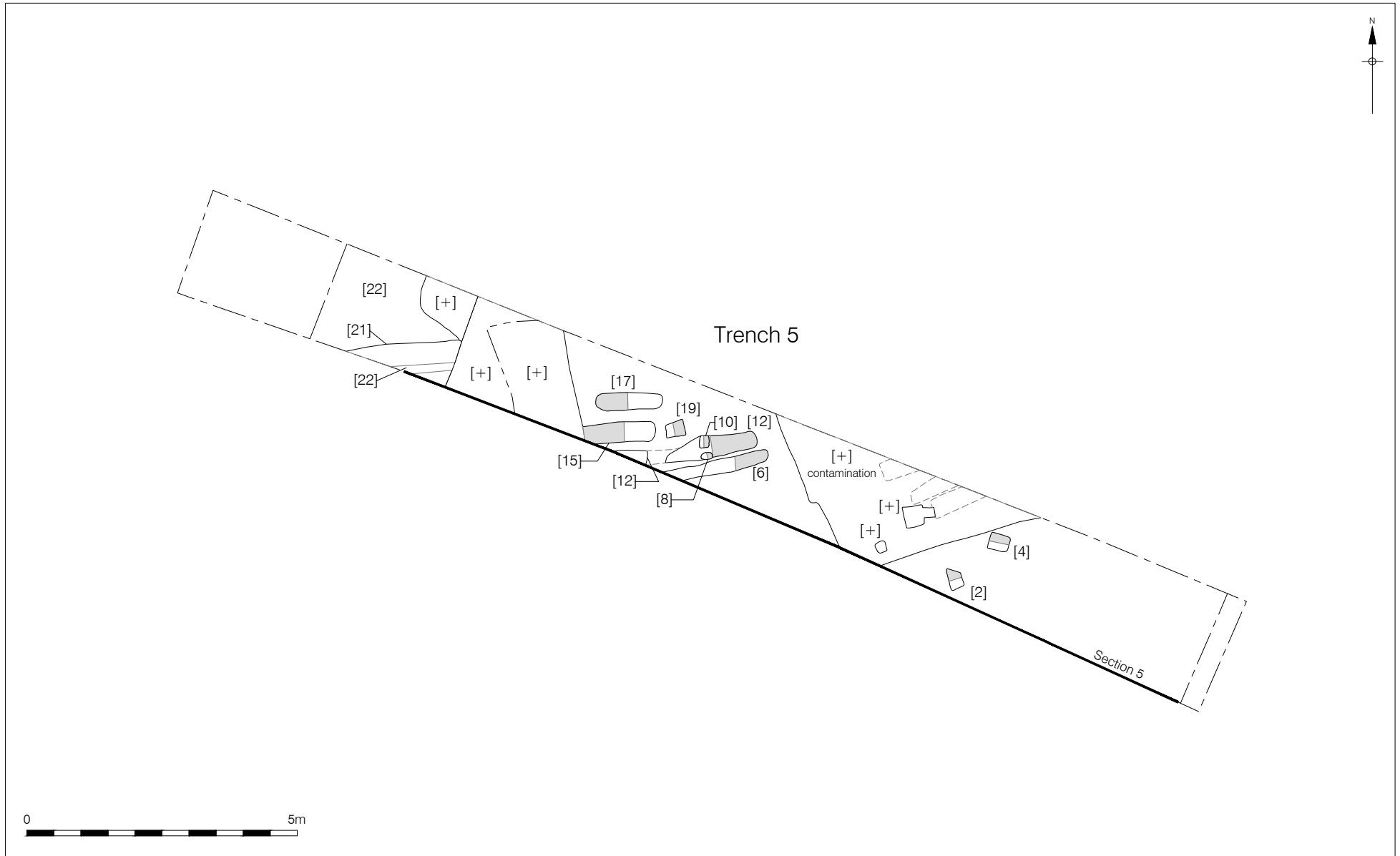
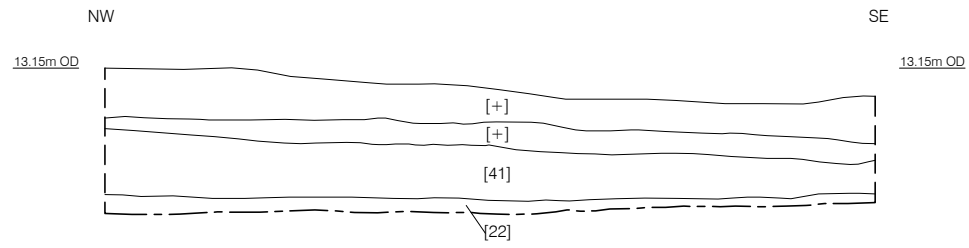
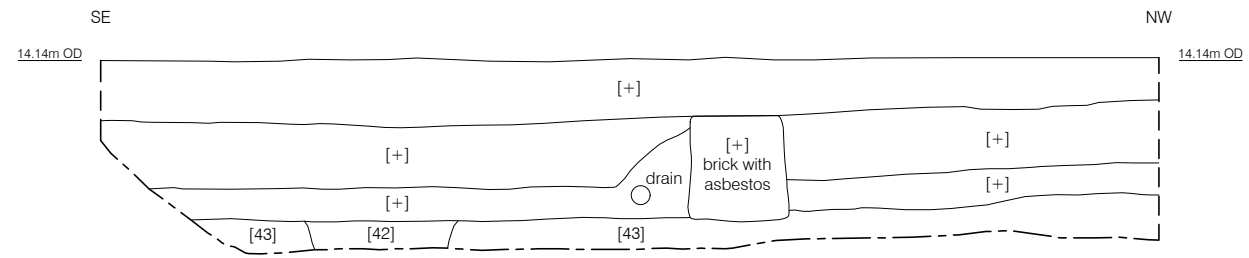


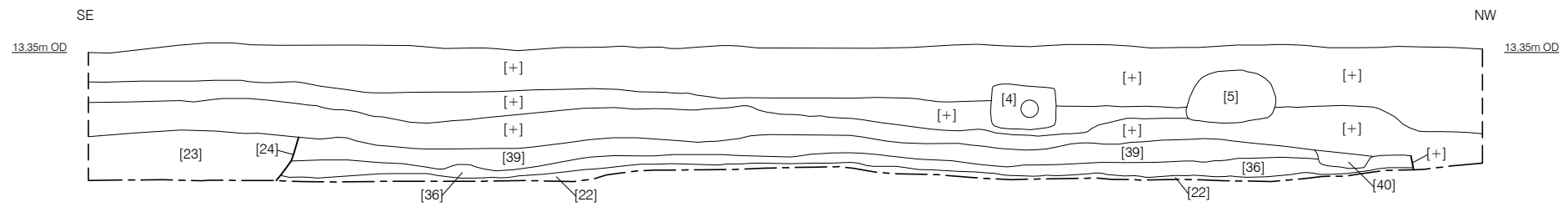
Figure 4
 Plan of Trench 5
 1:100 at A4



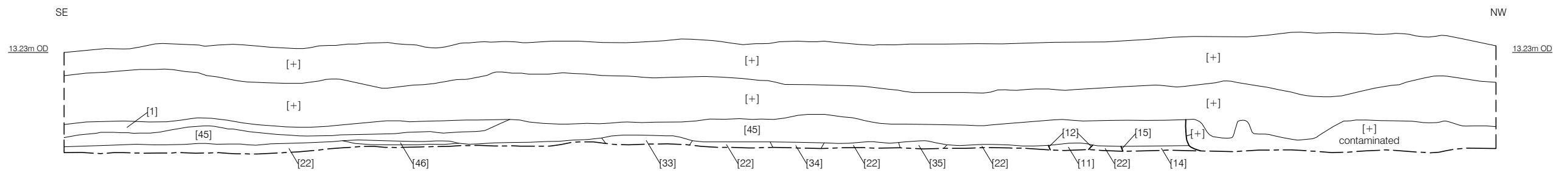
Section 1
Southwest facing
Trench 1



Section 2
Northeast facing
Trench 2



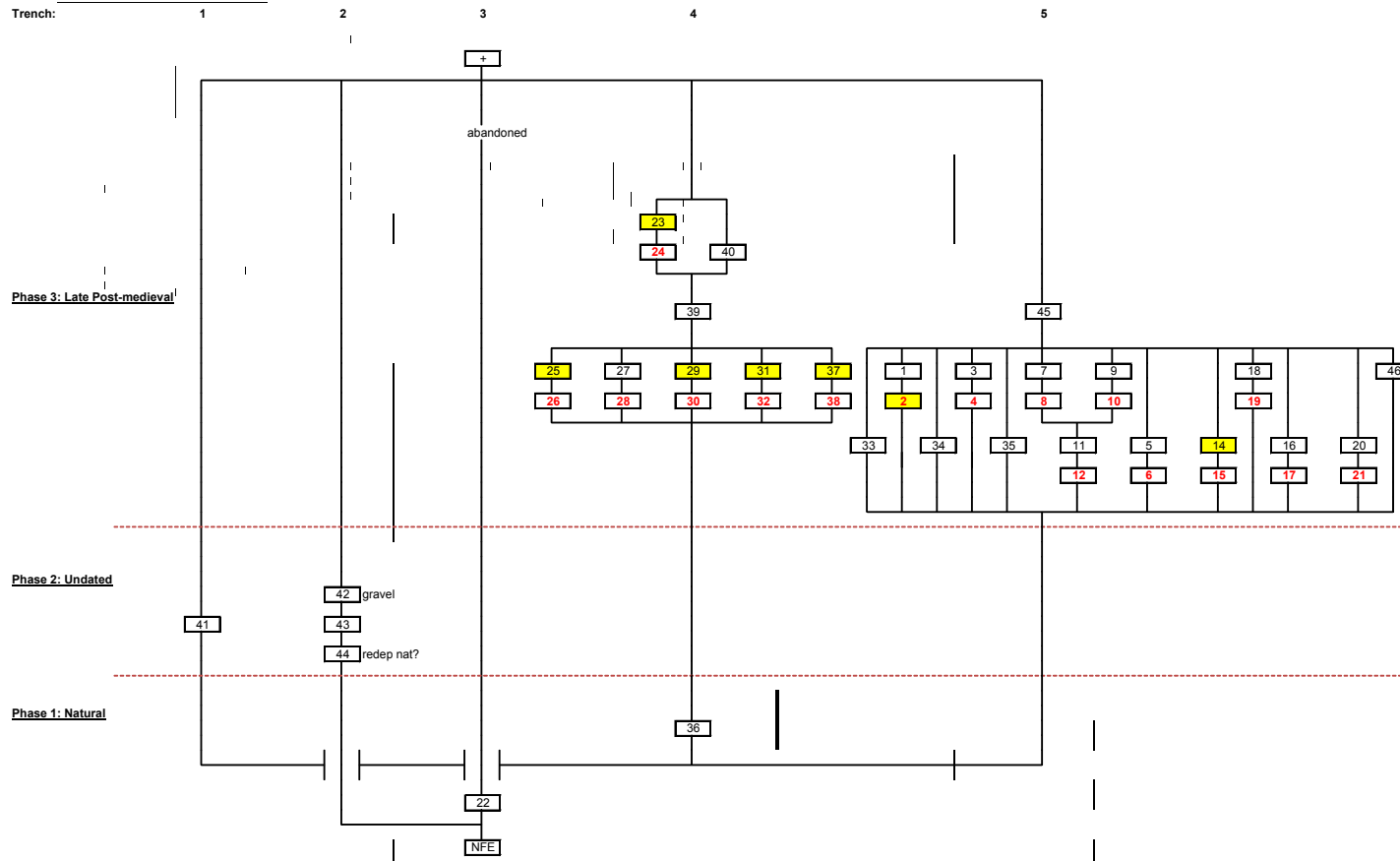
Section 4
Northeast facing
Trench 4



Section 5
Northeast facing
Trench 5



APPENDIX 1: PHASED MATRIX



APPENDIX 2: CONTEXT INDEX

Site Code	Context No.	Plan	Section / Elevation	Type	Description	Date	Phase
ORD-15	1	Trench 5	-	Fill	Grey brown sandy silt with gravel; fill of PH [2]	Late post-medieval	3
ORD-15	2	Trench 5	-	Cut	Sub-circular cut with steep sides to concave base; PH	Late post-medieval	3
ORD-15	3	Trench 5	-	Fill	Grey brown silty clay with ang gravels; fill of PH [4]	Late post-medieval	3
ORD-15	4	Trench 5	-	Cut	Sub-square cut with steep sides to flat base; PH	Late post-medieval	3
ORD-15	5	Trench 5	-	Fill	Grey brown silty clay with sub-ang gravels; fill of linear [6]	Late post-medieval	3
ORD-15	6	Trench 5	-	Cut	E-W aligned linear with concave sides to flat base; gully	Late post-medieval	3
ORD-15	7	Trench 5	-	Fill	Brown-black sandy silt with sub-ang gravels and organics; fill of PH [8]	Late post-medieval	3
ORD-15	8	Trench 5	-	Cut	Circular cut with steep sides to concave base; PH	Late post-medieval	3
ORD-15	9	Trench 5	-	Fill	Brown-black sandy silt with sub-ang gravels and organics; fill of PH [10]	Late post-medieval	3
ORD-15	10	Trench 5	-	Cut	Square cut with near vertical sides to flat base; PH	Late post-medieval	3
ORD-15	11	Trench 5	5	Fill	Grey brown silty clay with sub-ang gravels; fill of linear [12]	Late post-medieval	3
ORD-15	12	Trench 5	5	Cut	E-W aligned linear with concave sides to flat base; gully	Late post-medieval	3
ORD-15	13	VOID	VOID	VOID	VOID	VOID	VOID
ORD-15	14	Trench 5	5	Fill	Grey brown silty clay with sub-ang gravels and occa pot; fill of linear [15]	Late post-medieval	3
ORD-15	15	Trench 5	5	Cut	E-W aligned linear with concave sides to flat base; gully	Late post-medieval	3

Site Code	Context No.	Plan	Section / Elevation	Type	Description	Date	Phase
ORD-15	16	Trench 5	-	Fill	Grey brown silty clay with sub-ang gravels; fill of linear [15]	Late post-medieval	3
ORD-15	17	Trench 5	-	Cut	E-W aligned linear with concave sides to flat base; gully	Late post-medieval	3
ORD-15	18	Trench 5	-	Fill	Brown black sandy silt with sub-ang gravels; fill of PH [19]	Late post-medieval	3
ORD-15	19	Trench 5	-	Cut	Square cut with near vertical sides to flat base; PH	Late post-medieval	3
ORD-15	20	Trench 5	-	Fill	Grey brown silty clay with sub-ang gravels; fill of linear [21]	Late post-medieval	3
ORD-15	21	Trench 5	-	Cut	E-W aligned linear with concave sides to flat base; gully	Late post-medieval	3
ORD-15	22	Trench 1, 4, 5	1, 4, 5	Layer	Firm, yellow brown sandy clay; Natural	Natural	1
ORD-15	23	Trench 4	4	Fill	Black brown sandy silt with CBM, rooting, slate, charcoal, glass, pot and sub-ang gravels; fill of pit [24]	Late post-medieval	3
ORD-15	24	Trench 4	4	Cut	Not fully exposed, with steep sides; pit	Late post-medieval	3
ORD-15	25	Trench 4	-	Fill	Yellow grey sandy silt with clay lenses, iron staining, pot, CBM and bone; fill of PH [26]	Late post-medieval	3
ORD-15	26	Trench 4	-	Cut	Rectangular cut with steep sides to flat base; PH	Late post-medieval	3
ORD-15	27	Trench 4	-	Fill	Grey brown sandy silt with gravel; fill of PH [28]	Late post-medieval	3
ORD-15	28	Trench 4	-	Cut	Sub-rounded cut with near vertical sides to flat base; PH	Late post-medieval	3
ORD-15	29	Trench 4	-	Fill	Grey brown sandy silt with flint, gravels, rooting and CBM; fill of PH [30]	Late post-medieval	3
ORD-15	30	Trench 4	-	Cut	Square cut with near vertical sides to concave base; PH	Late post-medieval	3

Site Code	Context No.	Plan	Section / Elevation	Type	Description	Date	Phase
ORD-15	31	Trench 4	-	Fill	Compact, grey brown silty clay with sub-ang gravels, pot, CBM, CTP; fill of PH [32]	Late post-medieval	3
ORD-15	32	Trench 4	-	Cut	Rectangular cut with steep sides to flat base; PH	Late post-medieval	3
ORD-15	33	Trench 5	5	Layer	Grey brown silty clay with sub-ang gravels seen in section; prob fill of linear	Late post-medieval	3
ORD-15	34	-	5	Layer	Grey brown silty clay with sub-ang gravels seen in section; prob fill of linear	Late post-medieval	3
ORD-15	35	-	5	Layer	Grey brown silty clay with sub-ang gravels seen in section; prob fill of linear	Late post-medieval	3
ORD-15	36	-	4	Layer	Compact, green brown/orange clay; weathered natural	Natural	1
ORD-15	37	Trench 4	-	Fill	Compact brown orange silty clay, with pot, oyster and sub-ang gravels; fill of PH [38]	Late post-medieval	3
ORD-15	38	Trench 4	-	Cut	Rectangular cut with steep sides to irregular stepped base; PH	Late post-medieval	3
ORD-15	39	-	4	Layer	Grey brown silty clay with oyster, rooting, CBM flecks and sub-ang gravels; dump layer	Late post-medieval	3
ORD-15	40	-	4	Fill	Dark brown silty clay with small sub-ang gravels and CBM flecks; seen in section prob fill of linear	Late post-medieval	3
ORD-15	41	-	1	Layer	Firm, grey brown sandy silt with CBM flecks, gravel and rooting; dump layer/sub-soil	Undated	2
ORD-15	42	-	2	Layer	Orange brown gravel; dump layer	Undated	2
ORD-15	43	-	2	Layer	Grey brown silty clay with sub-ang gravels; sub-soil/levelling	Undated	2

Site Code	Context No.	Plan	Section / Elevation	Type	Description	Date	Phase
ORD-15	44	Trench 2	-	Layer	Mid orange silty clay; redeposited natural	Undated	2
ORD-15	45	-	5	Layer	Green brown silty clay with sub-ang stones; dump layer	Late post-medieval	3
ORD-15	46	-	5	Layer	Mid brown silty clay with small sub-ang gravels, CBM flecks; dump layer	Late post-medieval	3

APPENDIX 3: OASIS REPORT FORM

OASIS ID: preconst1-226350

Project details

Project name Acton Gardens, Phase 5, South Acton Estate, Acton, LB Ealing

Short description of the project An evaluation was carried out as part of the phase 5 development of Acton Gardens, South Acton Estate. Of the five proposed trenches, four were excavated, with the fifth abandoned due to extensive live services. Natural horizons were identified across the central and southern trenches, with a greater extent of modern disturbance observed in the northernmost trench. A concentration of late post-medieval activity was encountered within the central trenches, and comprised an initial phase of agricultural activity, post dated by development, followed by levelling and pitting.

Project dates Start: 05-10-2015 End: 09-10-2015

Previous/future work Yes / Not known

Any associated project reference codes ORD-15 - Sitecode

Type of project Field evaluation

Site status Area of Archaeological Importance (AAI)

Current Land use Other 3 - Built over

Monument type LINEAR FEATURE Post Medieval

Monument type PIT Post Medieval

Significant Finds CLAY TOBACCO PIPE Post Medieval

Significant Finds POTTERY Post Medieval

Methods & techniques "Targeted Trenches"

Development type Housing estate

Prompt Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPS

Position in the planning process After full determination (eg. As a condition)

Project location

Country England

Site location GREATER LONDON EALING ACTON Acton Gardens, Phase 5, South Acton Estate, Acton

Postcode W3 8RJ

Site coordinates TQ 19670 79440 51.500718202224 -0.275713163129 51 30 02 N 000 16 32 W Point

Height OD / Depth Min: 12.27m Max: 12.45m

Project creators

Name of Organisation Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited

Project brief originator PCA

Project design originator Gary Brown

Project director/manager Gary Brown

Project supervisor Amelia Fairman

Type of sponsor/funding body Countryside Properties

Name of sponsor/funding body Countryside Properties

Project archives

Physical Archive recipient LAARC

Physical Archive ID ORD-15

Physical Contents "Animal Bones","Ceramics"

Digital Archive recipient LAARC

Digital Archive ID ORD-15

Digital Media available "Images raster / digital photography","Survey"

Paper Archive ID ORD-15

Paper Media available "Context sheet","Map","Matrices","Miscellaneous Material","Plan","Section","Unpublished Text"

Project bibliography 1

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

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