

**LAND AT THE FORMER
TEXSOL MERCHANTS LTD.,
KENWAY, SOUTHEND-ON-
SEA, ESSEX, SS2 5DX.
AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL
WATCHING BRIEF**

**SITE CODE: EKEN 15
REPORT NO: R12285**



**PRE-CONSTRUCT
ARCHAEOLOGY**

**LAND AT THE FORMER TEXSOL MERCHANTS LTD., KENWAY, SOUTHEND-
ON-SEA, ESSEX, SS2 5DX.**

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

SITE CODE: EKEN 15

LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY: SOUTHEND-ON-SEA BOROUGH COUNCIL

PLANNING APPLICATION NUMBER: N/A

CENTRAL NGR: TQ 88159 86644

WRITTEN AND RESEARCHED BY: FERGAL O'DONOGHUE
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NOVEMBER 2015

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November 2015

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DOCUMENT VERIFICATION

Site Name

LAND AT THE FORMER TEXSOL MERCHANTS LTD., KENWAY,

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA, ESSEX, SS2 5DX.

Type of project

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

Quality Control

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| Project Manager Sign-off: | C Mayo | | 18.11.2015 |

| Revision No. | Date | Checked | Approved |
|--------------|------|---------|----------|
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1 ABSTRACT

- 1.1 This report details the results of an archaeological watching brief on land at Former Texsol Builders Merchants Ltd., Kenway, Southend-on-Sea, Essex. The watching brief was undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited, and was commissioned by Hollybrook Homes.
- 1.2 Throughout the site the natural deposits comprised brickearth over terrace gravels. The brickearth was sealed by modern made-ground and was heavily truncated by a very large brickearth quarrying pit and railway structures. The topography of the site was generally flat.
- 1.3 Two small postholes were uncovered by the southern boundary of site. These were the only archaeological features not related to the above mentioned industrial and transportation activities.

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd. on land at the Former Texsol Builders Merchants Ltd., Kenway, Southend-on-Sea, Essex, SS2 5DX. The site was a triangular shaped parcel of land bounded by railway sidings to the west, Kenway Court to the north, an Arriva bus depot to the south and Kenway to the east. The site was centred at NGR TQ 88159 86644.
- 2.2 The site was located north of central Southend-on-Sea, and to the east of Prittlewell.
- 2.3 The archaeological watching brief works were carried out between 5th and 19th October 2015 and were commissioned by Hollybrook Homes. The work was undertaken in accordance with an approved Written Scheme of Investigation (Hawkins 2015) and following English Heritage guidelines (GLAAS 2014).
- 2.4 An Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment was previously carried out for the site by PCA. (Boyer 2015).
- 2.5 The archaeological watching brief was supervised by Fergal O'Donoghue and was project managed by Chris Mayo, both of Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited.
- 2.6 The completed archive comprising written, drawn, and photographic records and artefacts will be deposited with Southend on Sea Museum.
- 2.7 The site was allocated the unique site code EKEN 15.

3 PLANNING BACKGROUND

3.1 National Guidance: National Planning Policy Framework

3.1.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was adopted on March 27 2012, and now supersedes the Planning Policy Statements (PPSs). The NPPF constitutes guidance for local planning authorities and decision-takers both in drawing up plans and as a material consideration in determining applications.

3.1.2 In considering any planning application for development the local planning authority will be guided by the policy framework set by the NPPF, by current Local Plan policy and by other material considerations.

3.2 Conditional planning consent (ref: 11/00231/FULM) was previously granted for redevelopment of the site and included the following condition:

3.2.1 *29 a) No development shall take place until a written scheme of investigation for a programme of archaeological work has been submitted to an approved in writing by the local planning authority. This must include details of the suitably qualified person of organisation that will carry out the archaeological work.*

3.2.2 *b) the archaeological work and development must then be carried out in accordance with the approved scheme. A written report of the investigation and findings must be produced , showing that the archaeological work and development has been carried out in accordance with the approved scheme. Copies of the written report of the investigation and findings must be sent to Southend Borough Council. Essex County Council and English Heritage.*

3.2.3 *C) no part of the new building can be used until the local planning authority has approved written confirmation that the archaeological fieldwork and development has been carried out in accordance with approved scheme. (C29C)*

3.2.4 *Reason: To avoid damage to archaeological remains on site as set out in Planning Policy Statement5, East of England Plan 2008 policy ENV6, DPD1 (Core Strategy) policy KP2 and CP4, Borough Local Plan 1994 policy C1, and SPD1 (design and Townscape Guide).*

3.2.5 The watching brief followed the methodology set out in:

- English Heritage, 2006, 'The Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment' (MoRPHE);
- Institute of Field Archaeologists, revised 2001, 'Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs'; and
- The Written Scheme of Investigation (Hawkins 2015).

4 WATCHING BRIEF OBJECTIVES

4.1 The Written Scheme of Investigation (Hawkins 2015) highlighted the following primary research objectives:

- What is the nature, depth, survival and date of any archaeological deposits on site?
- Is there any evidence for prehistoric and Roman remains?
- Is there any evidence for medieval and post-medieval activity?
- What has been the impact on the site by previous development?

5 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

- 5.1 The geological and topographical background is taken from the archaeological desk based assessment (Boyer 2015).
- 5.2 According to the 1:50,000 British Geological Survey Sheet 258/259, Southend and Foulness, along with online geological mapping the study site is underlain by sedimentary clay, silt and sand of the London Clay Formation formed approximately 56 to 34 million years ago in Palaeogene period in a local environment previously dominated by deep seas. The bedrock is overlain by superficial, sand and gravel Quaternary 2nd and 3rd level Terrace deposits, which formed in a local environment dominated by rivers.
- 5.3 Geotechnical investigations conducted on the site during September 2014 revealed the London Clay Formation at depths between 4.2m and 5.0m below ground level (BGL), overlain by weathered London Clay Formation, which in turn was covered by River Terrace deposits. The latter comprised variable lenses of clay, silt, sand and gravel. The upper c. 1.0m comprising gravelly clay, with varying proportions of secondary soil types overlying. The stratigraphic sequence was completed by a layer of made ground that was generally less than 1m thick, though greater depths of this deposit were recorded in the centre of the site and towards the south of site. These increases of made ground were interpreted as representing areas where historic clay pits had been infilled. It appears that the upper clay in these areas has been removed down to coarse gravel.
- 5.4 The surface topography is generally quite flat across the site, though the modern surface is largely a result of historic ground modification. Current ground levels in the northern portion of the site have been recorded at approximately 21.30m OD, though surface elevations approximating to 20.0m OD have been recorded across central and southern areas, with local variations, such as where building platforms are still extant. The exact nature of the natural topography is not entirely clear but historic maps and the recent geotechnical investigations show that this has been significantly modified in some areas in the relatively recent past.
- 5.5 The nearest surface water features are an unnamed stream and pond located approximately 350m west of the site, whilst the Prittle Brook, which flows through the grounds of Prittlewell Priory, is the nearest significant natural water body in the area and passes approximately 500m to the northwest of the site.

6 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The archaeological and historical background is taken from the Written Scheme of Investigation (Hawkins 2015)

6.1 Prehistoric

6.1.1 There is little evidence for prehistoric activity on or in the immediate vicinity of the study site but there are a number of records of an early presence within the 750m search radius, particularly in areas to the northwest. A little less than 500m northwest of the site, a Palaeolithic implement was found in a sand pit, whilst to the south of this, in the area of St. Mary's Church, an elongated ovate Palaeolithic axe was found in a gravel pit in 1908. At Roots Hall, a short distance northwest of the latter, Palaeolithic handaxes were found in 1914, 1935 and 1948. Contemporary flint flakes were also found in the area, along with a number of Early Iron Age pottery vessels and Roman pottery and coins.

6.1.2 In 1933 a Neolithic flint axehead was found during construction of a tennis court in the Priory Crescent area, some 700m northwest of the study site. To the east of this, a polished Neolithic axehead along with an incomplete second example was found during excavation of a railway cutting in 1887. Two Bronze Age bronze palstaves were also found during the same works.

6.1.3 To the southeast of the study site, fragments of an Early Iron Age urn and a piece of contemporary grindstone were found in the Sutton Road area in 1923. A loomweight was found on the same site the following year. A less well provenance find is a Late Iron Age Belgic pedestal urn, now in Southend Museum, which was found in the general vicinity of the study site.

6.1.4 Traces of a semi-circular system of two or three lines of ridge and ditch based on Prittlewell Brook in the Prittlewell Park area, have been identified. Although much of the feature is obscured by tennis courts and bowling greens, there is one section about 70m long with 1.0m high ridges flanking a hollow about 3.0m wide. These have not been investigated archaeologically so have not been dated; they may be prehistoric in origin or just as likely of a later date.

6.2 Roman

6.2.1 The evidence for Roman activity in the vicinity of the study site is somewhat limited and no settlement sites are recorded within the search radius on the SoSHER, though a possible Roman road ran from Prittlewell to Wakering some distance to the north. A little less than 400m to the southeast of the site, a small Roman pot was found in the Sutton Road areas in about 1900. Other chance finds of Roman material recovered from within 750m of the site include a denarius of Hadrian found at Cromwell Road to the northeast in 1933 and two further coins, one of Tetricus, found in the vicinity of St. Mary's Church to the west.

6.2.2 Located a little less than 500m northwest of the study site an area located on a slope to the east of the Prittle Brook appears to have served as a Roman cemetery. The site yielded a few Roman burials, including one in a lead coffin but is more noted for a number of later interments.

6.3 Early Medieval

6.3.1 A settlement may have been established at Prittlewell as early as the 6th century, probably in the vicinity of the current St. Mary's Church to the west of the study site. Some reused Roman masonry is present within the church structure.

6.3.2 The cemetery site east of the Prittle Brook was initially exposed by road and railway construction in 1923 and 1930 and was found to occupy an area approximately 180m by 80m. In addition to the handful of Roman burials a number of Anglo-Saxon interments were also excavated, including those with weaponry and jewellery. More than 40 burials in total were recorded in the cemetery, the majority of 6th to 7th century date. More recently excavations in

the vicinity of the Saxon cemetery, though beyond the study area for this report, have unearthed a rich 6th century burial. Little further evidence of early medieval activity is evident within the study area though a ring of baked clay, probably a Saxon loomweight was found during shop excavations in the area west of the church in 1933.

6.4 Medieval

6.4.1 The settlement at Prittlewell probably developed gradually during the medieval period but the study site lay some distance to the west of the village in arable farmland that was probably part of grange lands belonging to Prittlewell Priory, historic maps showing Priory Farm a short distance east of the site. The Priory, which was located some distance northwest of the site and north of the village was established as a dependent of the Cluniac Priory of St. Pancras at Lewes in Sussex in 1121.

6.4.2 St. Mary's Church developed during the middle Ages and much of the current structure is of medieval date.

6.4.3 Elsewhere there is little evidence of medieval activity recorded on the SoSHER within 750m of the study site. For the duration of the medieval period Prittlewell was the dominant parish in the area.

6.5 Post-Medieval

6.5.1 As Prittlewell developed during the early post-medieval period, not becoming subsumed by Southend until relatively recently, the study site remained within arable land to the east of the village. The settlement at Prittlewell is shown on a number of early maps of Essex but the earliest image to provide any detail of the study site is the Prittlewell Tithe Map of 1841. This clearly shows that the site lay within open farmland, the only features being field boundaries. Much of the site lay within plot No. 84 on the map, with the southwest corner lying within Plot No. 82 and the southern boundary corresponding broadly with the boundary between plots 83 and 84. Reference to the associated appointment award indicates that all three plots were arable land, owned and farmed by one James Tabor.

6.5.2 Virtually no change is indicated to the site or indeed the surrounding landscape on the 1st Edition Ordnance Survey Map of 1874-5. However in the late 1880s a railway line was developed that linked Southend to the south with Shenfield in the north. Nearby stations on the line included Prittlewell, a short distance to the north and Southend Victoria to the south. The railway line cut through the agricultural land a short distance to the west of the study site, as is evident on the OS Map of 1898. The map also shows Priory Farm east of the site, and although the urban development of Southend had been quarried to provide clay for an adjacent brickworks.

6.6 Modern

6.6.1 Southend expanded rapidly and significantly during the 20th century and the Prittlewell area became subsumed by the urban expansion of the town. Although 3rd Edition OS mapping from 1922 was only available for the southern half of the study site, this clearly shows that a significant area was disturbed by a large quarry pit, with similar features to the south and east. The OS Map of 1938-9 shows how urban expansion of Southend had swallowed up Prittlewell and surrounded the study site. Construction of sidings to the east of the railway line had by this time extended as far as the site and onto its western edge. There had been no further structural development on the site but the scars of quarrying are still visible on the map.

6.6.2 Southend had been the target of some aerial bombing during World War One but was extensively bombed during World War Two, the town being hit by bombs dropped from aircraft returning from raids further inland, jettisoning their remaining loads before crossing the English Channel. Areas of Prittlewell were hit by bombing but it is unknown whether the study site was hit.

6.6.3 After the war the quarry pit in the southern half of the site remained a dominant feature and

this area was not further developed, as illustrated by the 1951 OS Map. However, a loading ramp had been built over the northern part of site by this time. Presumably for the loading of trains on the adjacent sidings from Kenway, immediately to the east. The smaller scale OS Map of 1961 also shows the ramp in place and the quarry pit still extant to the south, though the latter is absent from the 1967 map.

- 6.6.4 The 1:1,250 OS Map of 1969 no longer shows the loading platform of the quarry pit on the study site, the latter presumably having been filled in by this time. However, the map does show that further track had been added on the railway sidings, now covering approximately the western third of the site. The smaller scale OS Map of 1978 is less detailed but still appears to show railway lines on the western part of the site, as do the editions of 1986 and 1990.

7 METHODOLOGY

- 7.1 The watching brief was undertaken according to a Written Scheme of Investigation (Hawkins 2014). The aim of the work was to define and characterise any archaeological deposits and features.
- 7.2 The archaeological watching brief monitored the excavation of the piling mat.
- 7.3 All excavations were supervised by the author and proceeded in 100mm spits using a 360 degree tracked 13 ton excavator with a toothless bucket. Where modern concrete obstructions were encountered a mechanical breaker attached to the excavator was used to break the concrete.
- 7.4 The excavation was CAT scanned after each spit was removed in order to check for buried services which were not marked on the service plan.
- 7.5 The trenches were cleaned by hand, recorded and photographed as appropriate. Recording of the deposits was accomplished using the Single Context Recording Method on proforma context and planning sheets. Contexts were numbered and are shown in this report within squared brackets. Plans were drawn at a scale of 1:20 and 1:500, and sections at a scale of 1:10.
- 7.6 The proposal followed IFA guidelines, and the methodologies set out in English Heritage (GLAAS) Guidance Papers for standards and practices in archaeological fieldwork watching briefs.
- 7.7 Temporary Bench Marks (TBMs) were established on the site with reference to the 'Site Survey and Site Constraints Plan' drawn by ATP Architects.

8 ARCHAEOLOGICAL PHASE DISCUSSION

8.1 Five Phases of activity were noted during investigations:

- Phase 1 represented the natural geology
- Phase 2 represented a period of archaeological activity
- Phase 3 represented the brick making activity
- Phase 4 represented the railway sidings
- Phase 5 represented the modern builders merchants

Trench 1 (Sections 1 & 2, Figures 3 and 4)

8.2 Phase 1

8.2.1 The natural geological deposits consisted of natural sandy gravel [5] at 19.38m OD in the north of the site, sloping down to 19.24m OD in the south.

8.2.2 A layer of clean brickearth [4] capped the natural sands and gravels at 19.60m OD. This layer was c. 0.20m thick.

8.3 Phase 2

8.3.1 Two small possible post-hole features [11] and [13] were identified, cut into the brickearth by the southern boundary of site. These were at a level of 19.45m OD. The postholes both measured 0.20m in diameter and were 0.04m deep. No finds were recovered from the fills.

8.4 Phase 3

8.4.1 Throughout much of the southern part of the site, a very large pit [15] was seen. The pit measured 50.0m north-south and 20.0m east-west within the site. The pit depth carried on beyond the 1.2m depth required for the pile mat. The pit was filled by [14], which contained frequent brick fragments but no other dating material. The pit was interpreted as having been excavated during the later post-medieval period for brickearth quarrying, as a large brickworks is marked on the site on the 1898 Ordnance Survey map. A pit is marked on the map in a very similar position to that exposed during the watching brief

8.5 Phase 4

8.5.1 Two brick and concrete structures [6] and [7] were seen in the north of the site. Both aligned with the railway sidings seen on the Ordnance Survey Map of 1969. Two hollow concrete structures [8] and [9] were also uncovered and match with the structures seen on the Ordnance Survey Map of 1994. On the Ordnance Survey Maps of 1969 and 1994 there was a third shorter and more easterly railway siding marked, however no evidence for substructures to support this siding were discovered.

8.6 Phase 5

8.6.1 This phase consisted of demolition rubble [3], make-up layer [2] and concrete slab [1] which covered the site after it ceased to be a railway siding and became a builders merchants.

9 CONCLUSIONS

- 9.1 The archaeological watching brief encountered extensive truncation of the brickearth by the large brickearth quarrying pit in the central and southern areas of site. In the western and northern areas of site, the railway related structures have caused extensive truncation.
- 9.1.1 However, some brickearth was still in situ by the southern and eastern boundary of site and in pockets in between the railway structures in the northern portion of site.
- 9.1.2 By the southern boundary of site two small undated cut features were recorded.
- 9.1.3 No other archaeological remains were noted on the site.

10 BIBLIOGRAPHY

10.1 Printed Sources

Boyer, P, 2015, *Former Texsol Builders Merchants Ltd., Kenway, Southend-on-Sea, Essex, SS2 5DX: An Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment*, unpublished client report

Hawkins H, 2015, *Former Texsol Builders Merchants Ltd., Kenway, Southend-on-Sea, Essex, SS2 5DX: Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Watching Brief*, unpublished client report

10.2 Cartographic sources

Prittlewell Tithe Map 1840

OS map 1898

OS map 1922

OS map 1938-9

OS map 1951

OS map 1969

OS map 1978

OS map 1994

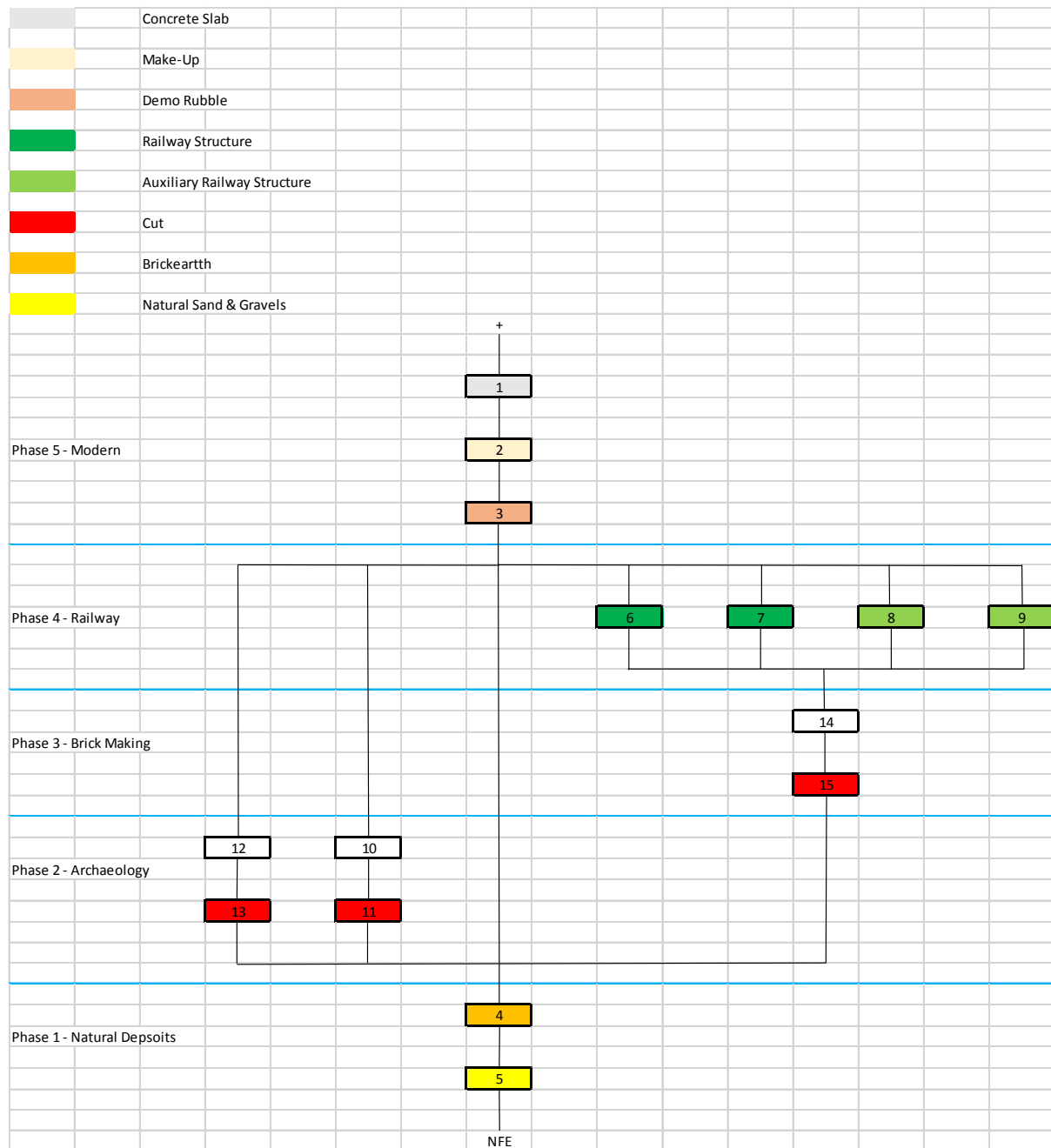
11 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- 11.1 Pre-Construct Archaeology would like to thank Jean-Michel Holloway of Hollybrook Homes for commissioning and funding this watching brief.
- 11.2 Special thanks are given to Chris Mayo for his project management and the editing of this report.

APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT REGISTER

| Context No. | Location | Plan | Section | Type | Description | Phase |
|-------------|------------|---------------|---------|---------|--------------------------------|-------|
| 1 | Piling Mat | Multi-Context | S.1 | Layer | Concrete Ground Surface | 5 |
| 2 | Piling Mat | Multi-Context | S.1 | Layer | Sandy Gravelly Make-Up | 5 |
| 3 | Piling Mat | N/A | S.1 | Layer | Demo Rubble | 5 |
| 4 | Piling Mat | Multi-Context | S.1 | Layer | Brickearth | 1 |
| 5 | Piling Mat | Multi-Context | S.1 | Layer | Natural Sand & Gravels | 1 |
| 6 | Piling Mat | Multi-Context | N/A | Masonry | Hard Stand for Railway | 4 |
| 7 | Piling Mat | Multi-Context | N/A | Masonry | Hard Stand for Railway | 4 |
| 8 | Piling Mat | Multi-Context | N/A | Masonry | Hollow Concrete Square | 4 |
| 9 | Piling Mat | Multi-Context | N/A | Masonry | Hollow Concrete Square | 4 |
| 10 | Piling Mat | N/A | N/A | Fill | Fill of [11] | 2 |
| 11 | Piling Mat | Multi-Context | N/A | Cut | Small Post-Hole? | 2 |
| 12 | Piling Mat | N/A | N/A | Fill | Fill of [13] | 2 |
| 13 | Piling Mat | Multi-Context | N/A | Cut | Small Post-Hole? | 2 |
| 14 | Piling Mat | Multi-Context | N/A | Fill | Modern Backfill of [15] | 3 |
| 15 | Piling Mat | Multi-Context | N/A | Cut | Large Brickearth Quarrying Pit | 3 |

APPENDIX 2: SITE MATRIX



APPENDIX 3: OASIS REPORT FORM

OASIS ID: preconst1-228108

Project details

Project name Former Texsol Builders Merchants Ltd., Kenway, Southend-On-Sea, Essex, SS2 5DX. An Archaeological Watching Brief

Short description of the project An archaeological watching brief was carried out on land at Former Texsol Builders Merchants Ltd., Kenway, Southend-on-Sea, Essex, SS2 5DX. The watching brief monitored the excavation of a piling mat . A large brickearth quarrying pit truncated most of the central area of site, associated with the brick factory to the east of site, marked on the 19th century maps. Some brickearth remained in situ around the eastern and southern boundary of site. Two small cut features were present in the brickearth by the southern boundary. Some structures related to the railway sidings were also identified.

Project dates Start: 05-10-2015 End: 19-10-2015

Previous/future work No / No

Any associated project reference codes EKEN 15 - Sitecode

Type of project Recording project

Current Land use Vacant Land 1 - Vacant land previously developed

Monument type PIT Post Medieval

Significant Finds NONE None

Investigation type "Watching Brief"

Prompt Planning condition

Project location

Country England

Site location ESSEX SOUTHEND ON SEA SOUTHEND ON SEA Kenway

Postcode SS2 5DX

Study area 1250 Square metres
Site coordinates TQ 88159 86644 51.546727163408 0.713998163048 51 32 48 N 000 42 50 E
Point
Height OD / Depth Min: 19.24m Max: 19.38m

Project creators

Name of Organisation Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd.

Project brief originator Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd

Project design originator Chris Mayo

Project director/manager Chris Mayo

Project supervisor Fergal O'Donoghue

Type of sponsor/funding body House builder

Name of sponsor/funding body Hollybrook Homes

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists? No

Digital Archive recipient Southend Museums Service

Digital Archive ID EKEN15

Digital Contents "none"

Digital Media available "Database","Images raster / digital photography","Spreadsheets","Text"

Paper Archive recipient Southend Museums Service

Paper Archive ID EKEN15
Paper Contents "none"
Paper Media "Context
available sheet", "Drawing", "Map", "Matrices", "Photograph", "Plan", "Report", "Section", "Survey", "Unpublished Text"

Project

bibliography

1

Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

Publication
type

Title Former Texsol Builders Merchants Ltd., Kenway, Southend-on-Sea, Essex, SS2
5DX: An Archaeological Watching Brief

Author(s)/Editor(s) O'Donoghue, F

Date 2015

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Place of issue or
publication London

APPENDIX 5: PLATES

Plate 1: Half-section of [11], Looking north



Plate 2: Half-section of [13], Looking north



Plate 3: Representative shot of west facing section, Looking east

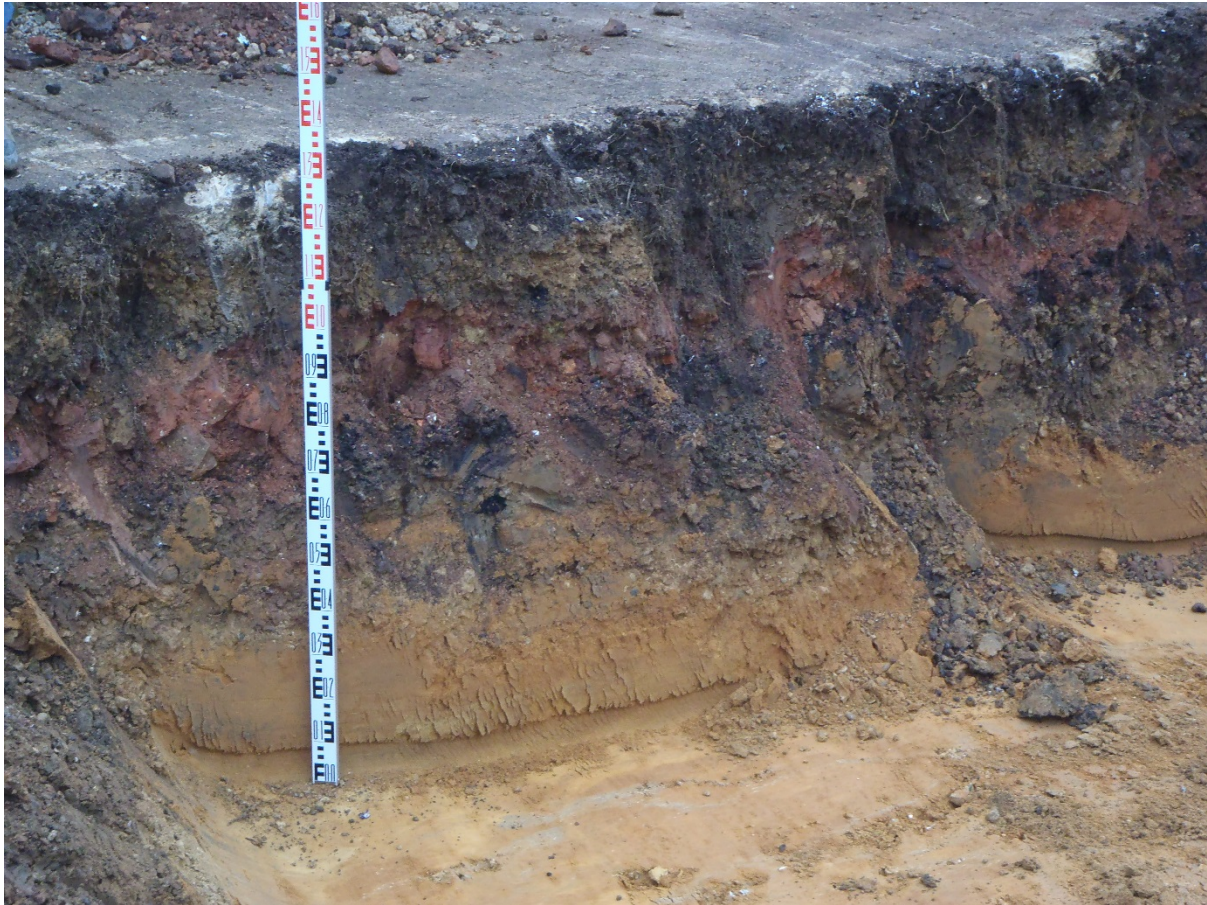
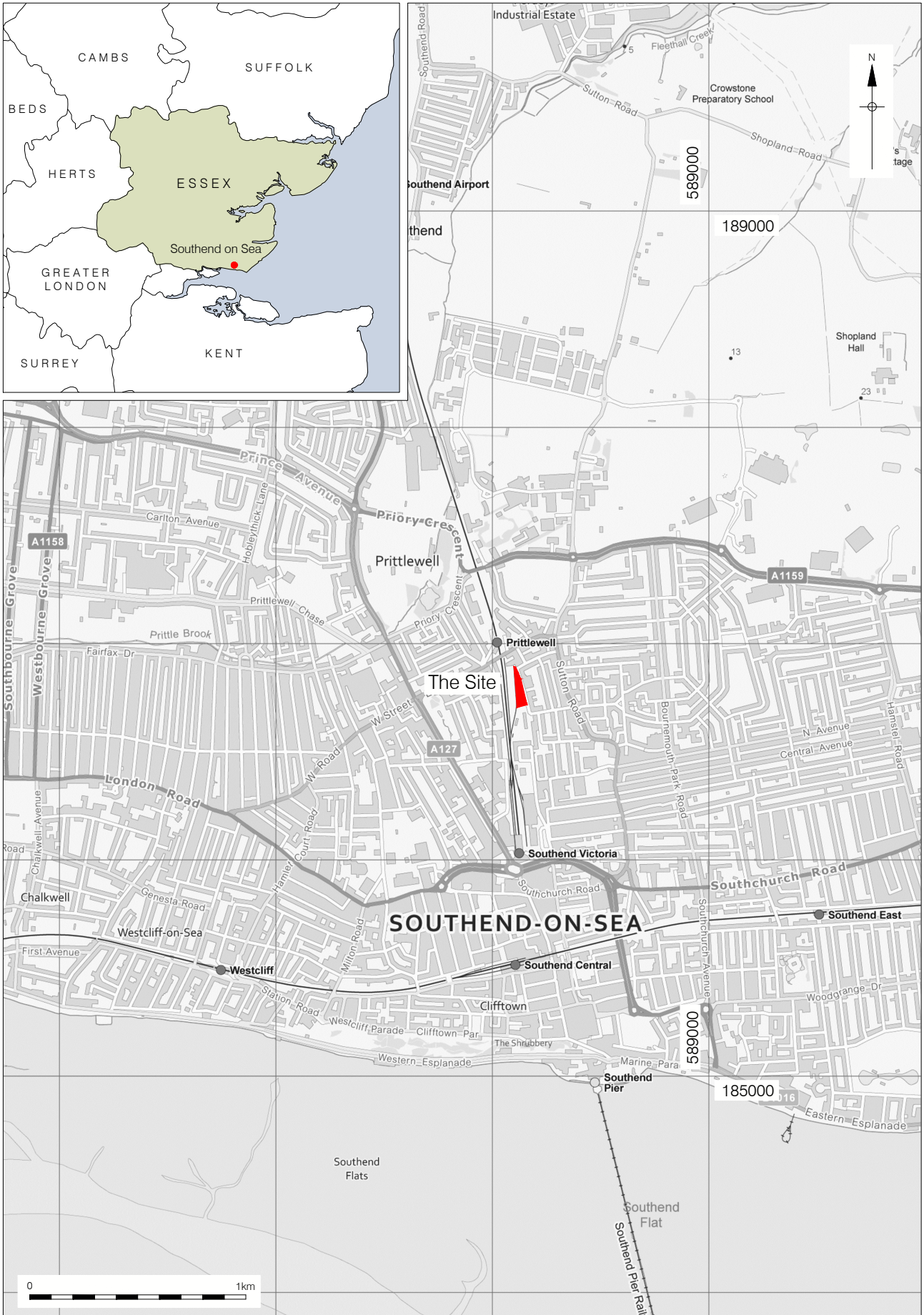


Plate 4: Railway siding [7] and natural [5] in foreground, Looking southwest



Plate 4: Backfill of brick quarrying pit [15], Looking north





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 19/11/15 JS

Figure 1
 Site Location
 1:2,000,000 & 1:25,000 at A4



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Figure 2
 Trench Location
 1:1,000 at A4

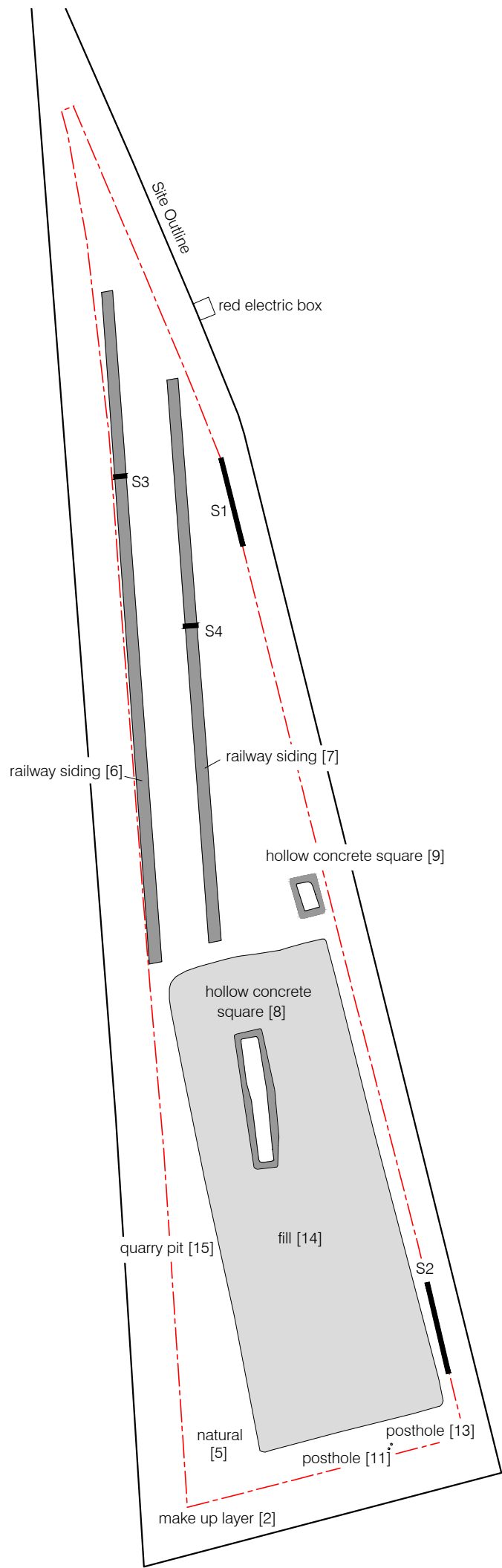
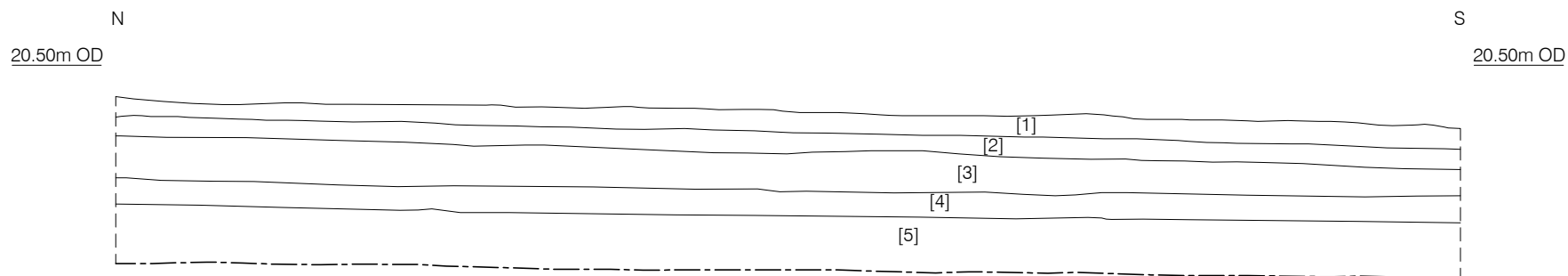
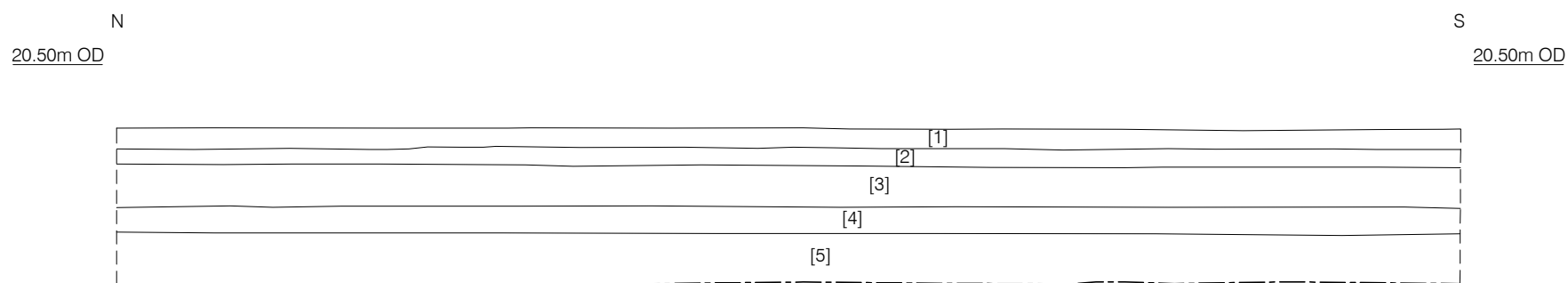


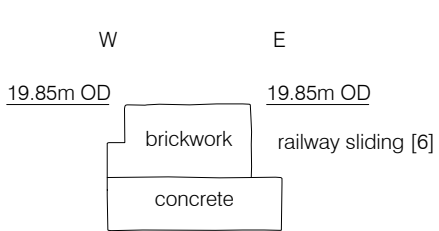
Figure 3
 Trench Plan
 1:625 at A4



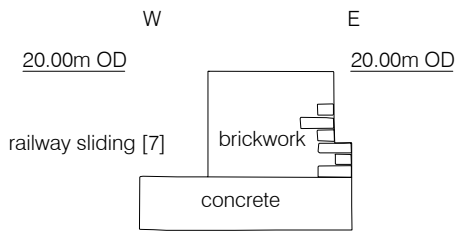
Section 1
West Facing



Section 2
West Facing



Section 3
South Facing



Section 4
South Facing

0 2m
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Figure 4
Sections 1 - 4
1:50 at A4

PCA

PCA SOUTH

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