

**AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
EVALUATION AND  
WATCHING BRIEF ON LAND  
AT PLASHET SECONDARY  
SCHOOL, PLASHET GROVE,  
EAST HAM, LONDON  
BOROUGH OF NEWHAM, E6  
1DG**

**SITE CODE: PSG15**

**REPORT NO: R12318**

**FEBRUARY 2016**



**PRE-CONSTRUCT  
ARCHAEOLOGY**

**An Archaeological Evaluation and Watching Brief on land at Plashet  
Secondary School, Plashet Grove, East Ham, London Borough of  
Newham, E6 1DG**

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**Site Code:** PSG15

**Central National Grid Reference:** TQ 42150 84291

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February 2016

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## DOCUMENT VERIFICATION



### Site Name

Plashet Secondary School, Plashet Grove, East Ham, London Borough of Newham, E6 1DG

### Type of project

Archaeological Evaluation

Quality Control

Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited Project Code			K4302
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Revision No.	Date	Checked	Approved
1	26.2.16	HH	TB

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## **1 ABSTRACT**

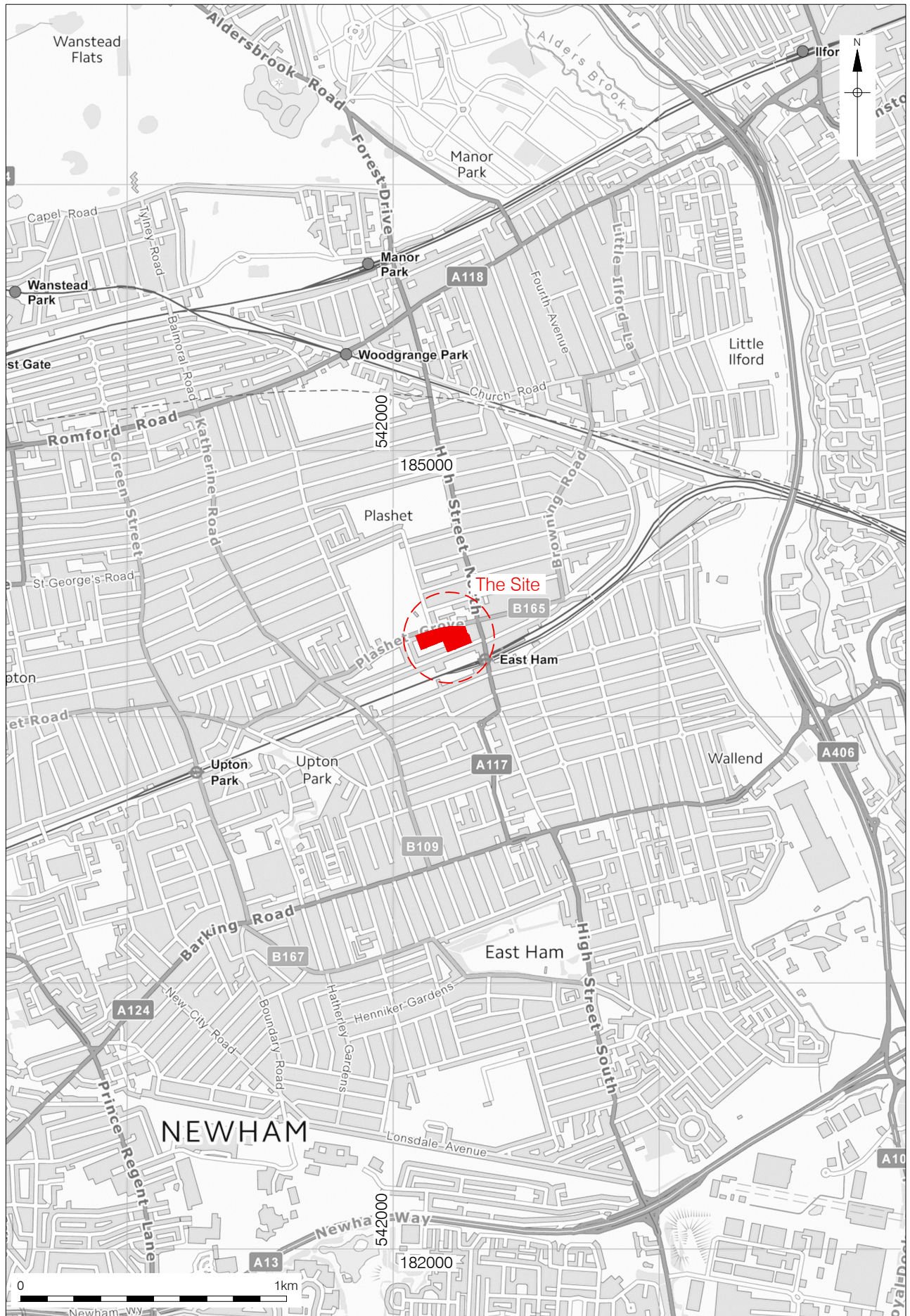
- 1.1 This report details the results and working methods of an archaeological evaluation and subsequent watching brief that was undertaken on land at Plashet Secondary School, Plashet Grove, East Ham, in the London Borough of Newham, E6 1DG (TQ 42150 84291).
- 1.2 The aims of the project were to determine the natural topography, the presence, absence, nature and extent of any archaeological structures and deposits within the confines of the site and to establish the extent of all post post-depositional impacts prior to the commencement of a residential redevelopment.
- 1.3 The evaluation and watching brief demonstrated that the underlying superficial geology consisted of Taplow Gravel Formation sand and gravel above London Clay bedrock. The gravel was encountered at 6.94m – 7.58m OD across the site. There was evidence of brickearth in three of the trenches, but only surviving as localised thin spreads and it did not cover the whole of site as represented by the trenches.
- 1.4 The 19<sup>th</sup> century buildings and the present school (built in the 1930s) had truncated the gravel underlying the site in Trenches 1, 2 and 3 and thus any associated archaeological deposits via foundations. In Trench 2, the remains of a possible air raid shelter was found which had heavily truncated the gravel.

## 2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 This report presents the findings of an archaeological evaluation on land at Plashet Secondary School, Plashet Grove, East Ham in the London Borough of Newham. The work was undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology prior to the commencement of the redevelopment and extension of the existing school.
- 2.2 The site was centred on National Grid Reference TQ 42150 84291. The school was split into two areas divided by a main road. The northern school site was excluded from the current proposals. The southern area (the 'Site') occupied an area of the south site measuring 12,476sqm.
- 2.3 The main building on the south site was a four-storey building with a basement. There were various other freestanding buildings on the site including a one-storey temporary classroom block, a one storey 1970s dining hall and kitchen, a two-storey gymnasium, a one-storey sport store, the two-storey Oak Centre, two one-storey toilet blocks on each side of the main building, and a temporary one-storey building that currently houses the sixth form centre.
- 2.4 An archaeological baseline assessment had previously been carried out for the site (RPS 2015). The assessment concluded that there was a general low-medium prehistoric and Romano-British potential associated with the brickearth mantled Thames terrace gravels, due to the light, easily tilled and well-drained soils. There was specific local precedent for Palaeolithic artefacts, although such activity is rarely *in-situ*, and firm evidence for early Iron Age settlement to the south-east. The Site location, adjacent to a probable medieval cross roads along with former post-medieval buildings at the Site, suggested moderate potential for medieval activity and high potential for post-medieval archaeology associated with the hamlet of North End.
- 2.5 Four trenches were excavated. Each trench was 10m in length and 1.8m in width and excavated to a depth of 1.2m.
- 2.6 After the completion of the evaluation, an archaeological watching brief was carried out on the site during the insertion of the pile mat. The information from the watching brief is included as Appendix 4 in this report.
- 2.7 As outlined in the Written Scheme of Investigation (Hawkins 2015), the primary objectives of the evaluation were:
- To determine the natural topography of the site, and the height at which it survives.
  - To establish the presence or absence of prehistoric activity, its nature and (if possible) date.
  - To establish the presence or absence of medieval activity.
  - To establish the presence or absence of post-medieval activity.
  - To establish the nature, date and survival of activity relating to any other period
  - To establish the extent of all past post-depositional impacts on the archaeological resource.
- 2.8 The evaluation was conducted between 7<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> December 2015. It was supervised by Jennifer Wilson. The watching brief was carried out from 29<sup>th</sup> January to 8<sup>th</sup> February by Phil Frickers. Both phases of work were project managed by Helen Hawkins. Adam Single of the Greater London Archaeological Advisory Service (GLAAS) monitored proceedings on behalf of the London Borough of Newham. The project was commissioned and funded by Neillcott Construction.

- 2.9 Following the completion of the project the site archive will be deposited in its entirety with the London Archaeological Archive and Research Centre (LAARC) under the unique code PSG15.





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Figure 1  
 Site Location  
 1:20,000 at A4



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Figure  
Trench Location  
1:800 at A

### 3 PLANNING BACKGROUND

- 3.1 A planning request for the redevelopment and extension to the existing Plashet School within the boundary of the site was submitted to the London Borough of Newham.
- 3.2 An archaeological condition was attached to the planning consent:

#### Archaeology

*a) No development other than demolition to existing ground level shall take place until the applicant (or their heirs and successors in title) has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological evaluation and possible mitigation in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation which has been submitted by the applicant and approved by the local planning authority in writing and a report on that evaluation has been submitted to and approved by the local planning authority in writing.*

*If heritage assets of archaeological interest are identified by the evaluation under Condition 19a), prior to development commencing (other than demolition to existing ground level), the applicant (or their heirs and successors in title) shall secure the implementation of a programme of archaeological investigation in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation which has been submitted to the Local Authority for approval in writing.*

*b) No development or demolition shall take place other than in accordance with the Written Scheme of Investigation approved pursuant to Condition 19b) above.*

*c) 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 approved under Condition 19b), 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 appropriate archaeological investigation, including the publication of results, in accordance with Section 12 of the NPPF. The site is located in an area of known archaeology. Archaeological work in the area has revealed archaeological remains dating from the prehistoric and medieval periods.*

- 3.3 The site does not contain any listed buildings or Scheduled Ancient Monuments. It is not in an Archaeological Priority Area as defined by the London Borough of Newham, however it is situated in an area of known archaeology. Consequently, in accordance with national, local and regional guidance, Adam Single of GLAAS requested that an archaeological trial trench evaluation take place prior to the site's redevelopment.

## **4 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY**

- 4.1 The geological and topographical background is taken from the baseline appraisal (RPS 2015) and summarised below.
- 4.1.1 The Site is located on Taplow Gravel Formation sand and gravel of the Devensian above London Clay bedrock. Brickearth is noted in the area located above the gravel.
- 4.1.2 The natural topography of the Site was generally flat with a slight fall to the southernmost areas. The north-east corner of the Site was at 8.73m OD falling to 8.24m OD in the south-eastern corner (on tarmac east of the main building). Tarmac between the school buildings was 8.48m OD. The lowest point was at 8.14m OD in the southernmost to the south-west of the Music Block. Levels to the grassed area west of the Main Building were at 8.65 to 8.74m OD with a slight rise at the netball/basketball courts at the western end of the Site at 8.82m OD.
- 4.1.3 A Phase 2 Site Investigation was undertaken in 2009 (RPS 2009). The site investigation comprised the excavation of seven shallow window sampler probe holes (up to 4.25m bgl) and six shell and auger boreholes (up to 18m bgl).
- 4.1.4 The results of the site investigation showed 0.8m of made ground over brickearth in the south-east corner (WS4), 1.3m over brickearth in the northeast corner (WS3), 2.3m and 1.2m of Made Ground over gravel and brickearth in the northern area of the site (BH3 and BH3B – illustrating a localised deeper intrusion), 1.0m of Made Ground to the north-west of the school buildings (WS6) and 1.3m of Made Ground over brickearth just to the west side of the main school building (within the proposed new building zone). Finally another deeper modern intrusion with 1.9m of Made Ground over gravel is identified to the south-west of the school buildings at the southern edge of the Site. Therefore the Site generally showed 0.8-1.3m of Made Ground with localised deeper intrusions.
- 4.1.5 During this Phase of investigation, the evaluation trenches found natural gravel at 6.94m – 7.58m OD.
- 4.1.6 Brickearth was encountered in trenches 1, 2 and 4 in the form of thin spreads that did not cover the entirety of the natural gravel. The brickearth was found at 7.44m OD in Trench 1, measuring 0.06m thick, 7.58m OD in Trench 2 measuring 0.15m thick and 7.73m OD in Trench 4 measuring 0.18m thick. No brickearth was encountered in Trench 3 as this trench was heavily truncated by modern concrete and rubble intrusions.
- 4.1.7 In all trenches, there were multiple layers of made ground overlying the brickearth and natural gravels. In Trench 1 there was 0.9m of Made Ground overlying the brickearth, In Trench 2 there was 0.65m of Made Ground overlying the brickearth. In Trench 3 there was 0.7m of Made Ground overlying the natural gravels. In Trench 4 there was 0.6m of Made Ground overlying the brickearth and natural gravels.



## **5 HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND**

- 5.1 The historical and archaeological background is taken from the baseline appraisal (RPS 2015) and summarised below.

### **Prehistoric**

- 5.1.1 Palaeolithic artefacts were recovered from the terrace gravels to the south of the site, whilst there is Neolithic and Bronze Age potential on the Thames gravel terraces as a whole, particularly where tributaries such as the Roding connect. Although a Bronze Age celt was found beyond the Study Area there is no reason to believe significant remains of these dates underlay this particular site. However, Iron Age activity in the area is demonstrable via trial trenching finds of an early Iron Age pit and late Bronze Age/early Iron Age features at two nearby locations at 137-141 and 149-153 High Street North respectively. It is possible this road follows a prehistoric route with attendant settlements along its course.

### **Palaeolithic**

- 5.1.2 The earliest archaeological finds in the region date to the Palaeolithic period but erosion during successive glacial and inter-glacial periods has removed most of the land-surfaces associated with early hunter-gatherers. Re-deposited artefacts are occasionally found within terrace gravels and a selection of Palaeolithic implements including handaxes and retouched pieces and waste flakes have been recovered from the Study Area to the south of East Ham Station (RPS 3). An axe of unspecified (500,000 BC to AD42) prehistoric date on the HER is listed for a location just to the north-east of the Site. Handaxes have also been recovered from several other locations in Newham including at High Street and Green Street.

### **Mesolithic**

- 5.1.3 Mesolithic hunter-foragers were operating within a largely forested inland environment and consequently their camps are usually found in coastal areas, and where within inland areas, by rivers and streams, which were used both for communication and resources. The major communications line of the River Thames and its tributaries, such as the River Roding, attracted Mesolithic activities for fishing and fowling. However, their camps have often left very little, if any archaeological traces (other than re-deposited scatters of worked flint).

### **Neolithic**

- 5.1.4 The brickearth and Thames Valley terrace gravels of the wider London area have generally proven to be attractive to Neolithic, Bronze Age and Iron Age farmers, although the features are often shallow and particularly vulnerable to removal via truncation within built up urban areas. Very few sites and finds are known in the vicinity, although a flint axe was recovered from the east side of the River Roding to the east. The only find of Neolithic date from the Study Area comprises a residual Neolithic scraper from a Roman ditch found during archaeological investigations at 149-153 High Street North. Undated but probable prehistoric pottery (Neolithic to Iron Age in date) was also recovered from investigations at East Ham Memorial Hospital to the west.

### **Bronze Age**

- 5.1.5 Within the Study Area one possible Bronze Age settlement area was indicated by a 10m square trial trench excavated at 149-153 High Street North to the south-east of the Site. Five possible late Bronze Age to early Iron Age pits and a possible eaves drip gully (for a roundhouse) were recorded cut into a Brickearth deposit (40-60cm thick) that capped the gravel. A bronze 'celt' or axe is also recorded from East Ham indicating some further activity in the area.

### **Iron Age**

- 5.1.6 . In addition to the possible early Iron Age date of the pits and eaves drip gully at 149-153 High Street, a possibly contemporary early Iron Age pit was found during trial trenching and watching brief ahead of and development at 137-141 High Street North. The pit was also cut into brickearth (capping the gravel) and produced 161 diagnostic pot sherds from at least 13

vessels, therefore suggesting a local occupation. The extent of Victorian development within the Study Area has so far precluded identification of associated settlement patterns and landscapes. As with the Bronze Age drove routes are likely to have connected higher ground settlements on the gravel terrace with the major flood plain to the south.

#### Roman

- 5.1.7 The area is likely to have been farmed in the Roman period and some indications of settlement are known within the Study Area and in the wider vicinity (including Roman artefacts from the parish church). The course of High Street North is also believed to follow the course of a Roman route linking the East Ham floodplain pasture levels to the south.
- 5.1.8 Although no definite Roman period settlements are known within the Study Area, the general area was undoubtedly settled and farmed, as confirmed by an L-shaped ditch from the 10x10m trench investigated at 149-153 High Street North. This may have formed part of a field boundary or enclosure (e.g. for stock or settlement).
- 5.1.9 The edge of the Thames' alluvial floodplain to the south of the Site and Study Area has produced occasional find spots including Roman pottery and building materials at East Ham churchyard, an inhumation cemetery at East Ham possibly associated with a Roman road (followed by High Street) and burials a farmstead at Regent Lane. The straight route of High Street North (which runs through the former hamlet of North End centred at the cross roads with Plashett Grove lane just west of the Site) may well indicate its former use as a track. It connected the higher ground with the nutrient rich Thames floodplain, well suited to fattening livestock in the warmer months. This is reflected by its inclusion as a LPA Archaeological priority Area, the western edge of which includes part of the Site.

#### Saxon and Medieval

- 5.1.10 The village, comprising a series of hamlets was present by the late Saxon period and there are 15<sup>th</sup> century references to High Street. Plashet is also mentioned in the medieval period and Plashet Grove (formerly Plashet Lane) was potentially in place by then. Cross roads attract settlement and it is possible that medieval and earlier post-medieval activity began near the Site. Given the former presence of a post-medieval farm at the Site, which might have earlier ancestry, the potential for Saxon/medieval activity at the site (prior to truncation) is Moderate

#### Saxon

- 5.1.11 East Ham and West Ham represent Saxon settlements with the Old English 'ham' and meaning 'a dry area of land between rivers or marshland'. This will reference its location on the gravel terrace bounded on three sides by the rivers Lea, Thames and Roding and their marshes. A Saxon charter of 958 records Ham for the first time. The only Saxon finds within the Study Area comprise pottery sherds from investigations at the East Ham Memorial Hospital to the west, although the 'East Ham' APA that includes the Site reflects some potential for Saxon origins for the village generally. It is not impossible that the cross roads with High Street North was in place by 1066.

#### Medieval

- 5.1.12 The 1086 Domesday Book records the village of East Ham as *Hame* within the hundred of Becontree. There were two manors with a combined population of 72.
- 5.1.13 East Ham was a linear parish extending from the Thames to the Wanstead Flats and hamlets at East Ham and North End probably reflect the medieval settlement pattern in the vicinity of the Site. Throughout the medieval period (and up until the 19th century) East Ham was primarily concerned with farming but little is known of the late medieval settlement.
- 5.1.14 The lane system including Plashet Grove (formerly Plashet Lane) and White Post Lane (now High Street North) which cross at the former hamlet of North End, fossilised medieval routes. The latter north-south drove route recorded as East Ham Street by 1443. Plashet was

mentioned in 1460-1. Although there are no medieval features or finds recorded within the Study Area much of this area, including the Site itself is within the East Ham Archaeological Priority Area which is intended to comprise the historic core of East Ham. Although part, or all, of the Site were probably within farmland, the subsequent post-medieval focus of farms and houses around the cross-roads of Plashet Grove with High Street North indicates some potential for an earlier farm and properties in this area.

#### Post-Medieval

- 5.1.15 There is some potential for survival of footings and/or cellars associated with the post-medieval farm buildings. In particular the eastern end of a long east-west range coincides with the footprint for the new build.
- 5.1.16 The map regression shows buildings within the south-west quadrant of the cross roads of High Street with Plashet Lane (now Plashet Grove) in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. The 19<sup>th</sup> century layout is shown in detail and it indicates the proposed new building would overlay the former western extent of a long narrow 19<sup>th</sup> century range of farm buildings (e.g. 1838 tithe map)
- 5.1.17 High Street (*East Ham Road* by 1443) is shown on 18<sup>th</sup> century maps running north from the marshes and past the medieval church. It was called White Post Lane in the 18<sup>th</sup> century from a post standing at the junction with Romford Road. There were 79 houses in the parish in 1670, increasing to 150 in 1796.
- 5.1.18 The parish continued to be rural and in the 1700s saw growth in potato farming on a commercial scale and in 1794–5 about 450 a. of East Ham were said to have been so cropped. In 1839 there were some 16 farms of more than 50 acres and in 1850 the parish was 2,498 acres. But it was the new building programme in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century that saw the population rise dramatically to 90,018 by 1901. The industrial developments began with the opening Beckton gas works of the Gas Light & Coke Co. In the 1870s with the docks providing another major industrial centre (The Royal Albert Dock was opened 1880 and the King George V Dock in 1921). Almost all businesses near the Site were removed by the rapid urban expansion of East Ham as a dormitory suburb of London between 1890 and 1910, a growth stimulated by the railway.
- 5.1.19 The 19<sup>th</sup> century buildings at the Site were replaced in 1932 by 'the East Ham Grammar School for Girls'. A second site was developed opposite on the north side of Plashet Grove in the 1950s, and Plashet County Secondary Modern School for Girls was opened. Plashet Unity Bridge was built to connect the two sites in 2000 (although the schools were merged by 1972).

There are no known post-medieval finds or features noted on the HER within the Site. A test pit ahead of development at 137-141 High Street North, to the south of the Site, produced redslipped pottery of 15<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> century date suggesting some occupation fronting the street. Archaeological trial trenching for that development also exposed a 19<sup>th</sup> century cellar. The evaluation/excavation at 149-153 High Street North also identified a series of small post-holes of post-medieval date, an 18<sup>th</sup> century brick cess pit and 19<sup>th</sup> century rubbish pits. A watching brief at the Site also identified a concrete WWII air raid shelter.

## 6 METHODOLOGY

- 6.1 Four archaeological trenches, termed Trenches 1 to 4 were excavated (Figure 2). In accordance with the Written Scheme of Investigation, the trenches were approximately 10m by 1.8m (Hawkins 2015). They were arranged as shown in Figure 2 so that they would avoid all known services.
- 6.2 The trenches were dug using a mechanical excavator fitted with a flat bladed ditching bucket. Machining continued in 100mm spits until the top of the archaeological sequence or natural geology was reached. Excavation of horizontal stratigraphy or cut archaeological features then continued by hand.
- 6.3 All archaeological interventions were thoroughly hand cleaned before being hand-planned at a scale of 1:20, with sections being drawn at 1:10. The deposits that they contained were recorded on *pro forma* context sheets and a full digital photographic record was compiled. Trenches were located with a hand held GPS and tied into the Ordnance Survey Grid. Finds, brick samples and environmental samples were collected according to standard retrieval methods as outlined in the Written Scheme of Investigation (Hawkins 2015).
- 6.4 Levels were obtained from two Temporary Bench Marks with values of 8.55m OD in the northern section of the site and 8.62m OD in the southern area. They were established by PCA's surveyor through the use of a hand held GPS. Levels on archaeologically relevant structures and strata were taken from these through the use of a dumpy level. The locations of the TBMs can be found in the site archive.
- 6.5 The completed site archive, comprising written and photographic records, will be deposited at the Museum of London's Archaeological Archive and Resource Centre (LAARC) under the site code PSG15.
- 6.6 As detailed in the Written Scheme of Investigation (Hawkins 2015), the evaluation was undertaken in accordance with guidelines issued by the Greater London Archaeology Advisory Service (GLAAS), English Heritage (EH) and the Institute for Archaeologists (GLAAS 2014; EH 2008, 2009; IFA 2014).



## **7 THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SEQUENCE**

### **7.1 Phase 1: Natural**

- 7.1.1 Natural gravel [10] / [12] / [21] / [25], was discovered at the base of the sequence in all four archaeological interventions (Figure 3). The top of the deposit was virtually flat, ranging in height from 6.94m OD in Trench 4 to 7.58m OD in Trench 2. Slots were excavated in a suitable location in each trench, to verify the natural gravel's existence and depth, with the slot being backfilled almost immediately after a spot height was taken for section purposes due to the safe depth of 1.2m being breached.
- 7.1.2 Brickearth [11] / [18] / [23], was found to overly the natural gravel in Trenches 1, 2 and 4. Like the gravel, the topography of the brickearth showed little variance, ranging in height from 7.44m OD in Trench 1 to 7.73m OD in Trench 4, however this uniformity could be due to later horizontal truncation.

### **7.2 Phase 2: 19<sup>th</sup> Century**

- 7.2.1 A linear construction Cut [22], truncated the brickearth [23] in Trench 1 (Figure 3). The construction cut was for a 19<sup>th</sup> Century Wall [9] and was 1.90m wide and 0.4m deep, continuing beyond the eastern and western limits of the excavation. It appeared to be part of the foundations for a building which was demolished in the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century during the redevelopment of the site for the 1930s Plashet School building. Running parallel to this was a drain/gully [8] of similar date, measuring 1.95m lengthways and 0.45m wide with a height of 7.56m OD. Also in Trench 1 there were layers of made ground, [5] / [6] / [7], measuring 0.2m – 0.3m thick with the uppermost layer, [7], having a height of 7.90m OD, laid down after the construction of the drain [8], as capping layers or ground levelling deposits. Made ground layer [4], measuring 0.4m thick with a height of 7.82m OD, appeared to be laid down at a similar time as made ground layers [5] / [6] / [7], as all of these layers were then later cut by construction cut [22] for wall [9].
- 7.2.2 In Trench 2 (Figure 4) two 19<sup>th</sup> Century brick built drains/gullies [2] / [3], ran into a manhole [1] which all cut the brickearth [11]. Drain [2] measured 2m long and 0.4m wide with a height of 7.53m OD. Drain [3] measured 1.4m long and 0.4m wide with a height of 7.58m OD. Both of these drains [3] / [4], ran into circular manhole [1] which measured 0.4m by 0.35m with a height of 7.58m OD. Overlying the 19<sup>th</sup> Century drains and manhole were two made ground layers [24] / [27] which consisted largely of crushed and broken CBM and building material, both measuring 0.3m thick.
- 7.2.3 The natural gravels [12], in Trench 3 (Figure 5) were overlain by two made ground layers, [19] / [26], with a thickness of 0.3m – 0.5m and the top of the uppermost layer having a height of 8.08m OD.
- 7.2.4 The natural gravel [25] and brickearth [18] in Trench 4 were heavily truncated by tree boles [14] / [15]. These features appeared to be linear in plan and aligned north-east south-west but upon excavation of a slot through both of them, it was proven that extensive tree rooting created these features. The tree boles were very similar in appearance, measuring 2m in plan across the width of the trench and 1.10-1.30m in width in section. They both appeared at a height of 7.50m OD. In the northern-most tree bole [14], one sherd of pottery was found which dated to 1580-1900. In the southern-most tree bole [15], three sherds of pottery dating to 1630-1900 and one stem of a clay tobacco pipe dated to 1730-1910 were found, with one sherd of pottery specifically datable to the latter part of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century.

### **7.3 Phase 3: 20<sup>th</sup> Century**

- 7.3.1 In Trench 1, layers of Made Ground, [28] / [29], measuring 0.3m each, were found to overly the 19<sup>th</sup> Century Made Ground layers, [4] / [5] / [6] / [7], Wall [9] and Drain [8]. These were possibly demolition layers formed during the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century demolition of the site before the construction of the existing Plashet School.
- 7.3.2 In Trench 2 there was a large modern concrete structural intrusion. This could possibly be an air raid shelter/bunker dating to WWII, as it was similar in nature and construction to air raid shelters seen elsewhere .. The intrusion measured 3.4m East-West and 2m North-South and

continued beyond the northern and southern extents of the trench. There was no further investigation or excavation of this feature on site due to the risk of asbestos being used to backfill the feature.

- 7.3.3 In Trench 4, overlying the previous made ground layers, was a layer of rubble measuring 0.4m thick which was most likely laid down during the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century demolition of previous buildings and construction of the existing school buildings.
- 7.3.4 Across all of the trenches, was a layer of subsoil with a depth ranging from 0.25m in Trench 4 and 0.3m in Trench 1, with a height range of 8.22m OD in Trench 3 to 8.63m OD in Trench 2. Above this was a layer of Topsoil with a uniform depth of around 0.1m and a height of 8.33m OD in Trench 4 to 8.73m OD in Trench 2.

Plate 1: Natural gravel in the base of Trench 4 (looking North)



Plate 2: Natural gravel in the base of Trench 3 (looking East)





Plate 3: Natural gravel, 19<sup>th</sup> Century drains and possible air raid shelter in Trench 2 (looking East)

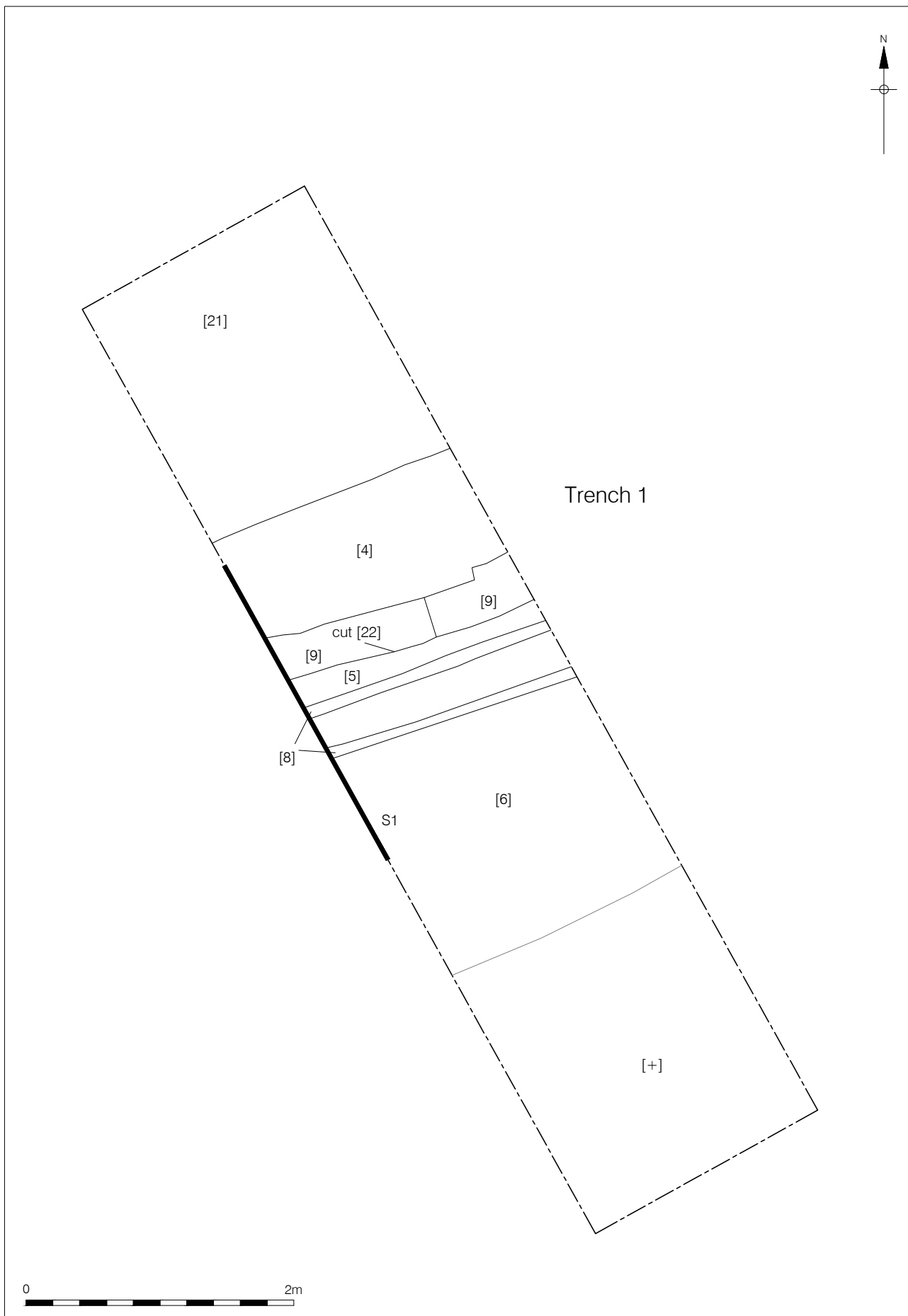


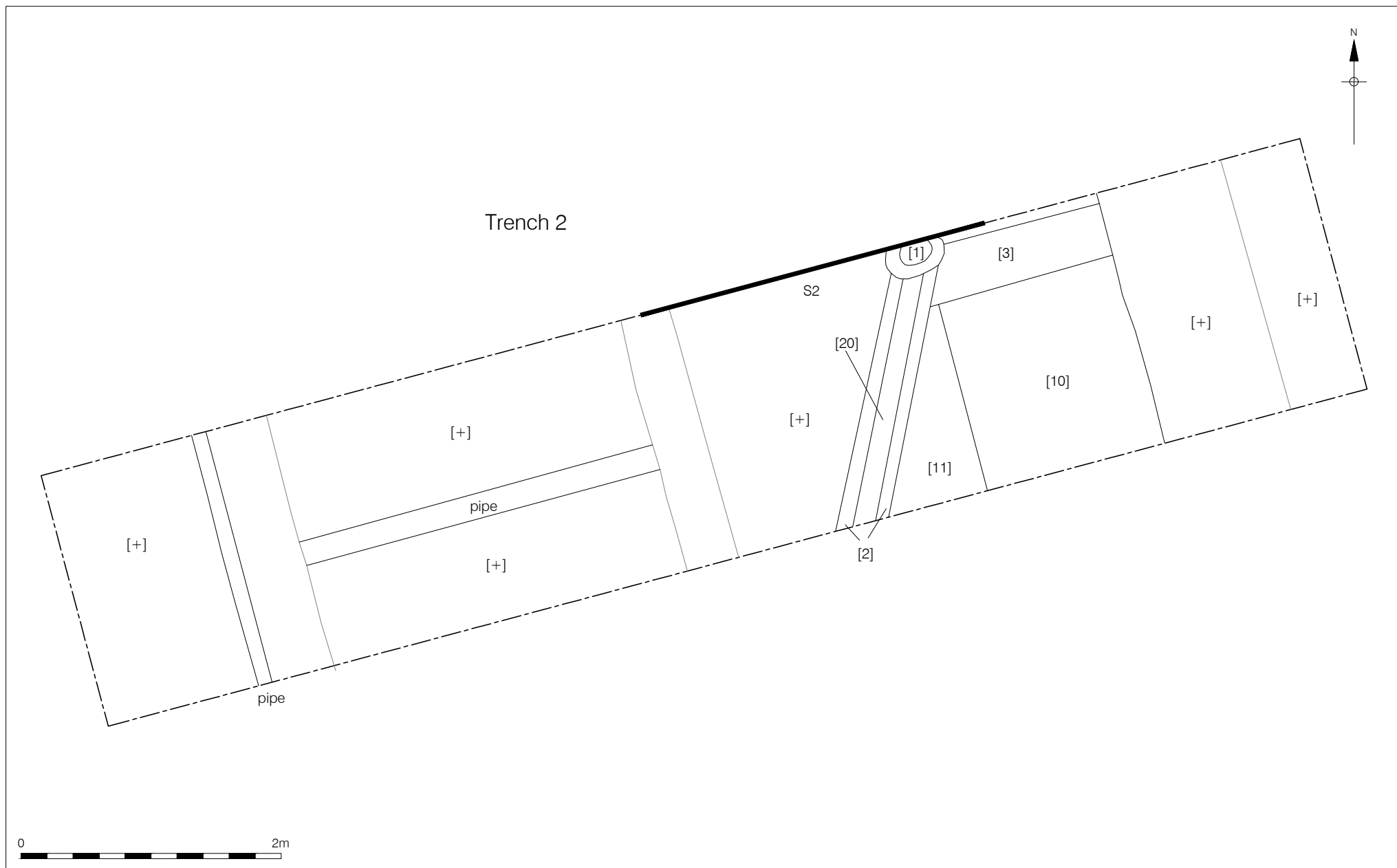
Plate 4: Natural gravel and 20<sup>th</sup> Century wall and drain in Trench 1 (looking North)

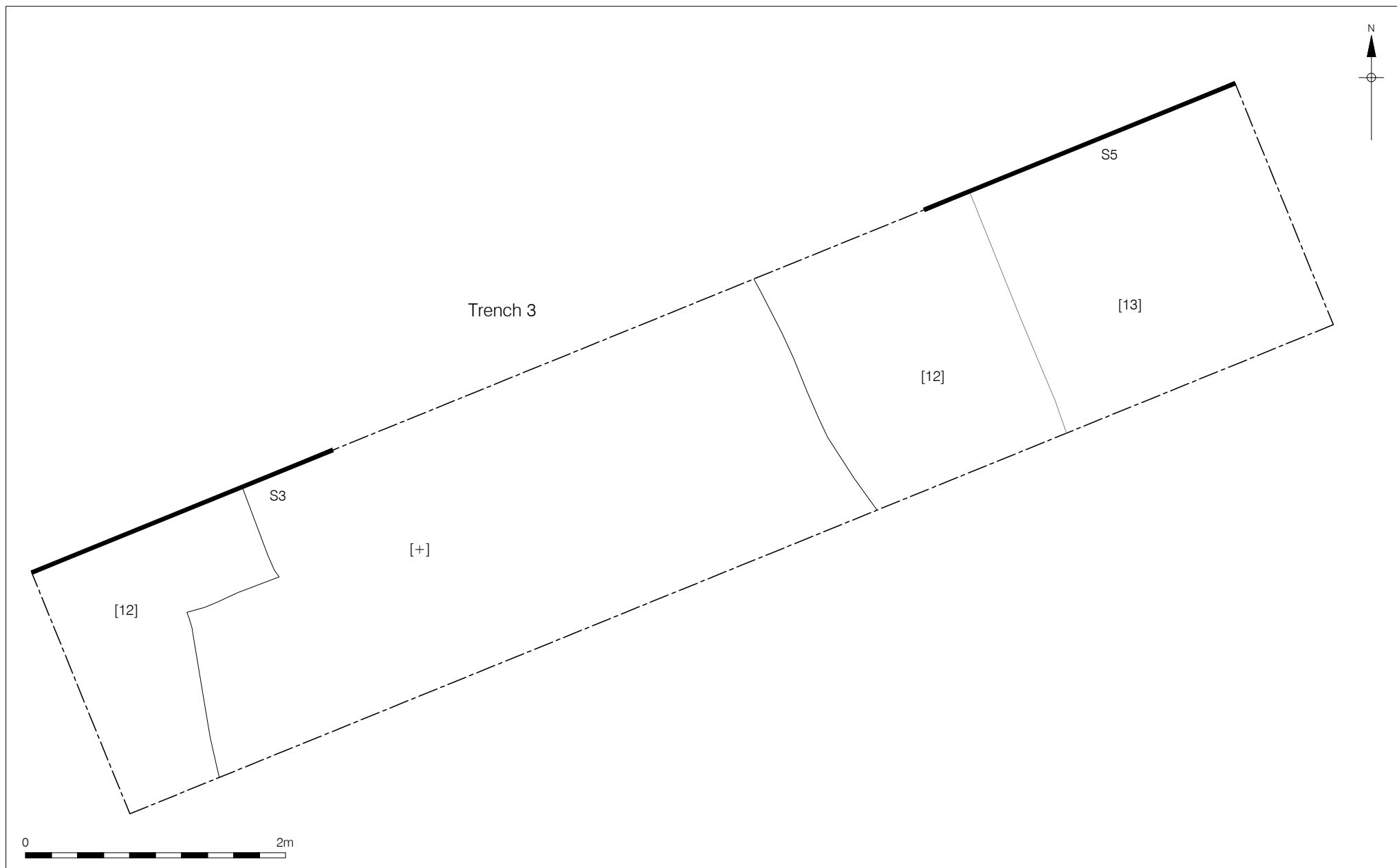


Plate 5: Close up of the possible air raid shelter in Trench 2 (looking East)

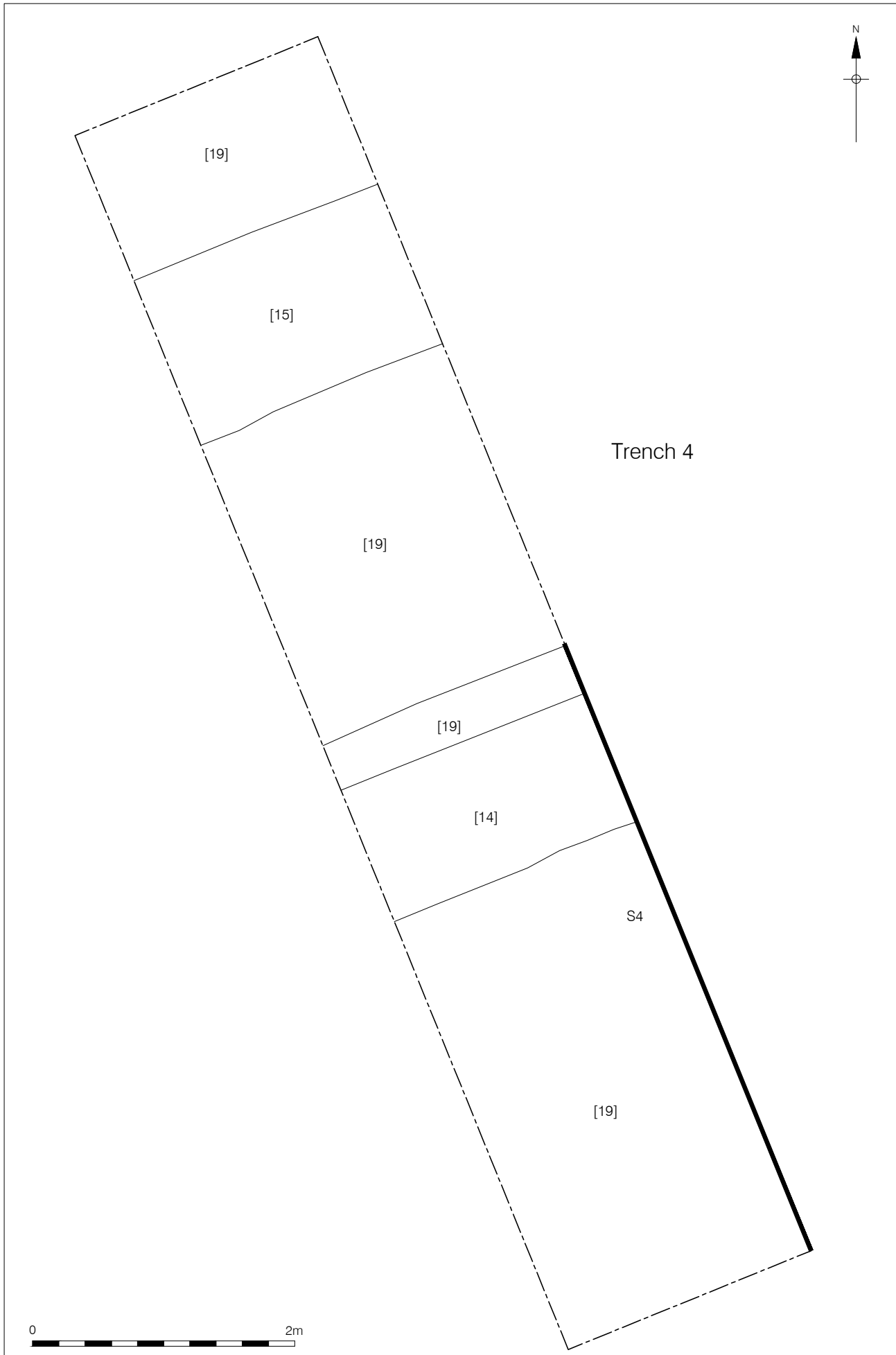


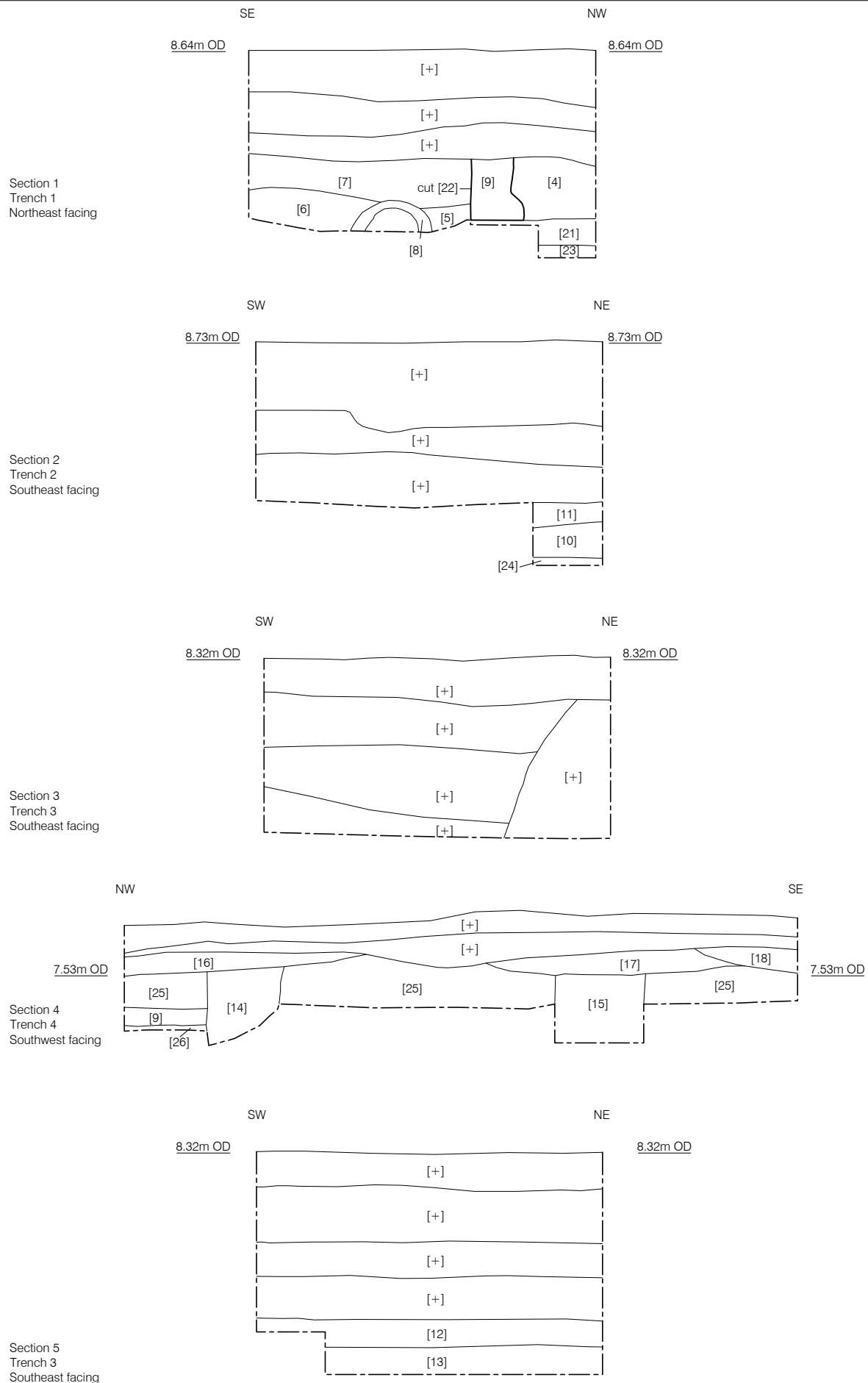












## **8 INTERPRETATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS**

8.1 The results of this evaluation have enabled the research questions that were set out in the Written Scheme of Investigation to be addressed:

- To determine the natural topography of the site, and the height at which it survives:

8.1.1 The evaluation confirmed that brickearth sealed earlier Taplow gravels across the entire site. The top of the brickearth and the gravel were virtually flat, the former located between 7.44m OD and 7.73m OD and the latter between 6.94m OD and 7.58m OD.

- To establish the presence or absence of prehistoric, medieval and post-medieval activity or any archaeological activity pertaining to any other period:

8.1.2 No archaeological remains pre-dating the 19<sup>th</sup> century were discovered.

8.1.3 The only archaeological phase of activity that was identified during the evaluation dated to the latter half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. This was probably related to the construction phase of the school which is still present on site. The possible air raid shelter is also of interest as it documents the impact of World War II on the school.

- To establish the extent of all past post-depositional impacts on the archaeological resource:

8.1.4 The upper reaches of the brickearth and gravel that was observed in all four trenches had most probably been truncated horizontally when the site was redeveloped in the early half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, however the lower reaches of the deposit remained largely undisturbed.

## **9 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

- 9.1 Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd. would like to thank Neilcott Construction for commissioning and funding the project and for all their help on site and Adam Single of Historic England for monitoring the work on behalf of the London Borough of Newham.
- 9.2 The author would like to thank Przemek Polakiewicz for his proficient assistance with the excavation and recording. Thanks also to Helen Hawkins of Pre-Construct Archaeology for her project management and editing and Rik Archer for the site survey.

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British Geological Survey of England and Wales (BGS) 2014. *Drift and Solid Geology Map Viewer* online at <http://www.bgs.ac.uk/data/mapViewers/home.html>

1746 John Rocque Map

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Greater London Authority 2011 *The London Plan*. Online at: <https://www.london.gov.uk/priorities/planning/london-plan>

The London Borough of Newham 2012: Core Strategy <http://www.newham.gov.uk/Planning/LocalDevelopmentFramework/CoreStrategy.htm>

The London Borough of Newham 2001: Saved policies EQ36 and EQ43 (saved February 2012) from the Unitary Development Plan of June 2001 <http://www.newham.gov.uk/Planning/UnitaryDevelopmentPlan/default.htm>

## Appendix 1: Context Index

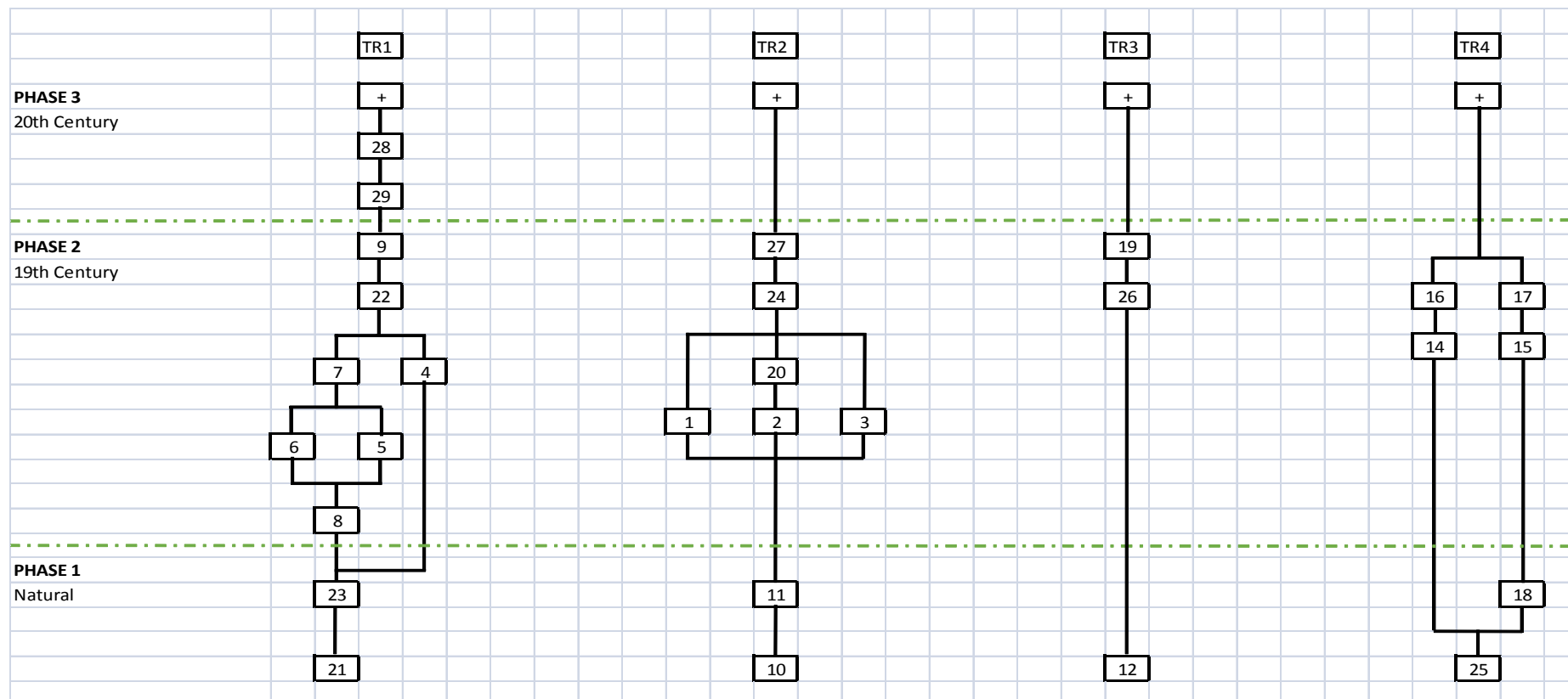
Context No	Type	Interpretation	Trench No.	Plan No.	Section No.	Levels (m OD)		Dimensions (as recorded within the confines of the trench)			Period	Phase
						Highest	Lowest	Max. Length	Max. Width	Max. Depth / Thickness		
1	Masonry	Drain	2	Tr. 2	2						19 <sup>th</sup> Century	2
2	Masonry	Drain	2	Tr. 2	2						19 <sup>th</sup> Century	2
3	Masonry	Drain	2	Tr. 2	2						19 <sup>th</sup> Century	2
4	Layer	Made ground	1	Tr. 1	1						19 <sup>th</sup> Century	2
5	Layer	Made ground	1	Tr. 1	1						19 <sup>th</sup> Century	2
6	Layer	Made ground	1	Tr. 1	1						19 <sup>th</sup> Century	2
7	Layer	Made ground	1	Tr. 1	1						19 <sup>th</sup> Century	2
8	Masonry	Drain	1	Tr. 1	1						19 <sup>th</sup> Century	2
9	Masonry	Wall	1	Tr. 1	1						19 <sup>th</sup> Century	2
10	Layer	Natural gravels	2	Tr. 2	2							1

Context No	Type	Interpretation	Trench No.	Plan No.	Section No.	Levels (m OD)		Dimensions (as recorded within the confines of the trench)			Period	Phase
11	Layer	Brickearth	2	Tr. 2	2							1
12	Layer	Natural gravel	3	Tr. 3	3							1
13	VOID	VOID	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
14	Layer	Tree bole	4	Tr. 4	4						19 <sup>th</sup> Century	2
15	Layer	Tree bole	4	Tr. 4	4						19 <sup>th</sup> Century	2
16	Layer	Made ground	4	Tr. 4	4						19 <sup>th</sup> Century	2
17	Layer	Made ground	4	Tr. 4	4						19 <sup>th</sup> Century	2
18	Layer	Brickearth	4	Tr. 4	4							1
19	Layer	Made ground	3	Tr. 3	3						19 <sup>th</sup> Century	2
20	Fill	Backfill of drain [9]	2	Tr. 2	2						19 <sup>th</sup> Century	2
21	Layer	Natural gravels	1	Tr. 1	1							1
22	Cut	Construction cut for [9]	1	Tr. 1	1						19 <sup>th</sup> Century	2
23	Layer	Natural brickearth	1	Tr. 1	1							1

Context No	Type	Interpretation	Trench No.	Plan No.	Section No.	Levels (m OD)		Dimensions (as recorded within the confines of the trench)			Period	Phase
24	Layer	Made ground	2	Tr. 2	2						19 <sup>th</sup> Century	2
25	Layer	Natural gravel	4	Tr. 4	4							1
26	Layer	Made ground	3	Tr. 3	3						19 <sup>th</sup> Century	2
27	Layer	Made ground	2	Tr. 2	2						19 <sup>th</sup> Century	2
28	Layer	Made ground	1	Tr. 1	1						20 <sup>th</sup> Century	3
29	Layer	Made ground	1	Tr. 1	1						20 <sup>th</sup> Century	3



## Appendix 2: Site Matrix



## **Appendix 3: Finds spot dating**

### **Pottery**

By: Chris Jarrett

A total of four sherds of post-medieval pottery (38g), representing individual vessels, were found in two contexts. Deposit [14] produced a single sherd (38g) of London-area post-medieval redware (PMR), dated 1580-1900 and this sherd had a vertical rod handle terminal and the exterior is sooted. This indicates that the vessel was used for cooking. Context [15] produced three sherds of pottery: tin-glazed ware with plain white glaze (TGW C), dated 1630–1846 (1g), a creamware (CREA) plate with a scalloped rim (2g), probably dating to the late 18th century and a transfer-printed refined whiteware (TPW), plate rim (3g) dated c. 1780–1900. The latter has a decorative border datable to the late 19th century.

The pottery has no significance and its only potential is to date the contexts it was found in. There are no recommendations for further work on the material and if no future archaeological work is to be undertaken on the study area, then the material can be discarded.

#### **Clay tobacco pipe**

A single fragment of a clay tobacco pipe stem was recorded in context [15]. The stem is thin with a fine diameter bore and therefore can be broadly dated c. 1730–1910. The item has no significance and its potential is only to provide dating evidence for the context it was found in. There are no recommendations for further work on the clay tobacco pipe stem and if no further archaeological work is planned for the site, then the stem can be thrown away.

## Appendix 3: OASIS Data Collection Form

OASIS ID: preconst1-234317

### Project details

Project name	Plashet Secondary School, East Ham
Short description of the project	This report details the results and working methods of an archaeological evaluation that was undertaken on land at Plashet Secondary School, Plashet School, East Ham, in the London Borough of Newham, E6 1DG (TQ 42150 84291). The aims of the project were to determine the natural topography, the presence, absence, nature and extent of any archaeological structures and deposits within the confines of the site and to establish the extent of all post post-depositional impacts prior to the commencement of a residential redevelopment. The evaluation demonstrated that the underlying superficial geology consisted of Taplow Gravel Formation sand and gravel of the Devensian above London Clay bedrock. Extensive horizontal truncation had taken place on the site. A number of 19th century drains were noted, as was a possible air raid shelter.
Project dates	Start: 07-12-2015 End: 10-12-2015
Previous/future work	No / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	PSG15 - Sitecode
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	Local Authority Designated Archaeological Area
Current Land use	Other 2 - In use as a building
Monument type	WALL Modern
Monument type	DRAIN Modern
Monument type	DRAIN Modern
Monument type	DRAIN Modern
Monument type	DRAIN Modern
Significant Finds	NONE None

Methods & techniques	"Targeted Trenches"
Development type	Public building (e.g. school, church, hospital, medical centre, law courts etc.)
Prompt	Planning condition
Position in the planning process	After full determination (eg. As a condition)

#### **Project location**

Country	England
Site location	GREATER LONDON NEWHAM EAST HAM Plashet Secondary School, East Ham, London Borough of Newham,E6 1DG
Postcode	E6 1DG
Study area	12476 Square metres
Site coordinates	TQ 42240 84286 51.53902764525 0.051241088827 51 32 20 N 000 03 04 E Point
Lat/Long Datum	Unknown
Height OD / Depth	Min: 6.8m Max: 7.24m

#### **Project creators**

Name of Organisation	Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited
Project brief originator	Greater London Archaeological Advisory Service
Project design originator	Helen Hawkins
Project director/manager	Helen Hawkins
Project supervisor	Jennifer Wilson
Type of sponsor/funding	Commercial Developer

body

Name of sponsor/funding body	Neilcott Construction
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### **Project archives**

Physical Archive Exists?	No
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Digital Archive recipient	LAARC
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Digital Archive ID	PSG15
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Digital Contents	"Ceramics"
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Digital Media available	"Database", "Images raster / digital photography", "Spreadsheets", "Text"
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Paper Archive recipient	LAARC
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Paper Archive ID	PSG15
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Paper Contents	"none"
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Paper Media available	"Context sheet", "Diary", "Matrices", "Plan", "Report", "Section", "Survey"
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### **Project bibliography 1**

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
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Title	Archaeological evaluation at Plashet Secondary School, Plashet Grove, London Borough of Newham, E6 1DG
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Author(s)/Editor(s)	Wilson, J
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Date	2015
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Issuer or publisher	Pre-Construct Archaeology
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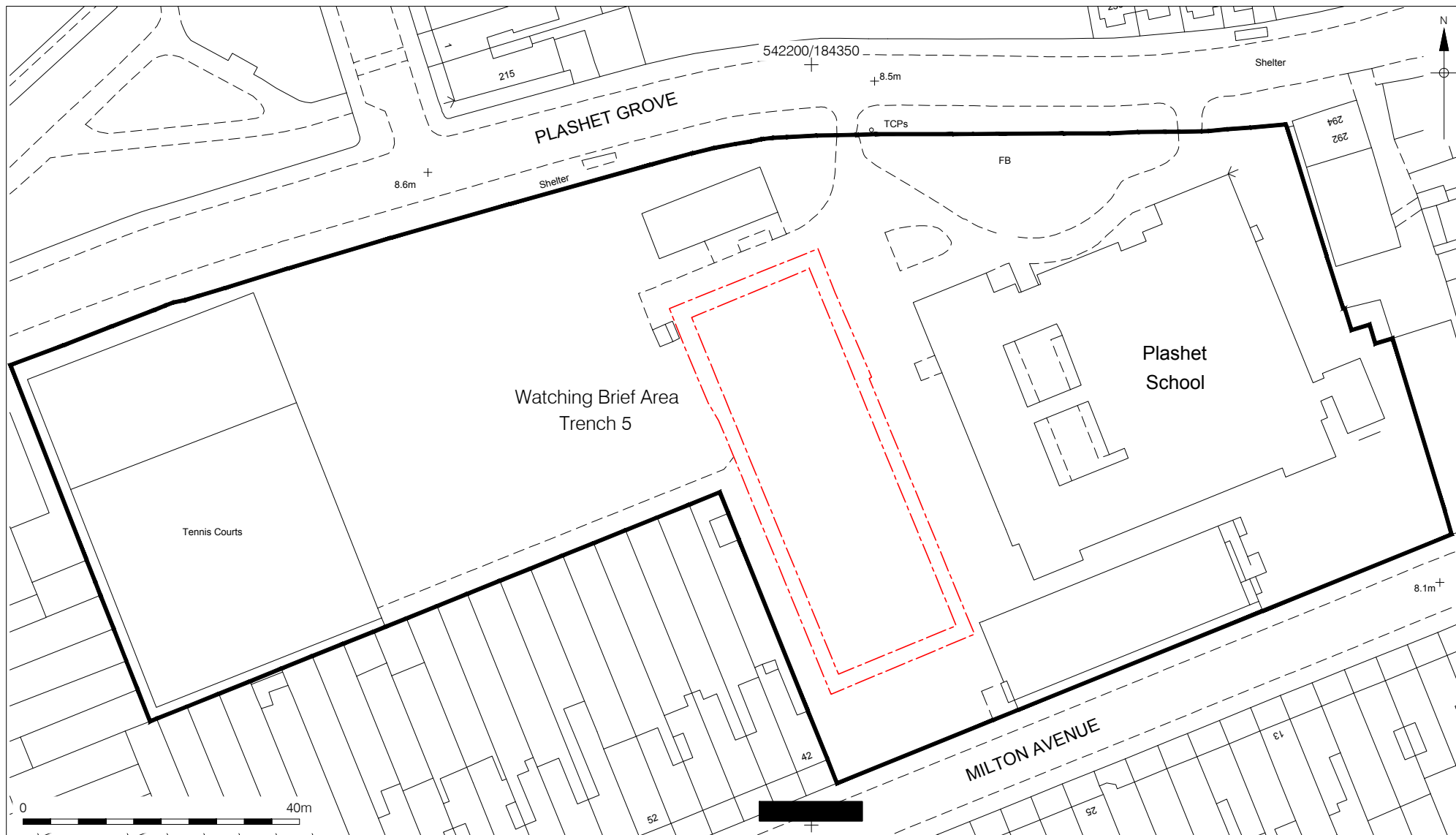
Place of issue or publication	London
Entered by	archive (archive@pre-construct.com)
Entered on	21 December 2015

## **Appendix 4: Archaeological Watching Brief**

- 10.1 Further work was conducted at Plashet School between 28<sup>th</sup> January and 8<sup>th</sup> February 2016 when a watching brief took place during the reduced dig for the piling mat for the new building to be built on this site.
- 10.2 The formation level for the piling mat was 7.82m OD. The removal of the ground above this level was monitored by an archaeologist.
- 10.3 The building will measure 55.90m north to south by 18.50m east to west. Around this, an additional margin, averaging 2.00m in width was added to allow machine room during construction. Therefore the size of site was 60.50m north-south by 23.00m east-west. This was designated as Trench 5 (Figure 8).
- 10.4 The trench was excavated by a 13 ton mechanical tracked excavator fitted with a flat bladed ditching bucket.
- 10.5 During this excavation a number of archaeological features were observed and quickly recorded before excavation recommenced. In total during this work eight contexts were raised.
- 10.6 The earliest layers seen were a patch of natural gravelly coarse sand [31], measuring 2.70m north-south by 4.90m east-west, in the northwest corner of the site. This was fairly disturbed at the formation level seen (7.82m OD). Similarly, in the southwest corner of the site there was an area of natural brickearth measuring 10.50m north-south by 4.80m east-west. This material was also rather patchy.
- 10.7 Centrally within the site was a context, [36], almost certainly typical of the material present prior to the urbanisation of the local area. This context was a dark grey brown sandy silt measuring 23.00m north-south by 10.60m east-west and may represent a subsoil to the agricultural soils present at that date.
- 10.8 Cut into this was a masonry wall [35] running east-west on a different alignment to the school buildings. This wall had a width of 0.35m and was quite poorly built of mostly half brick fragments. In total it was seen for a length of 7.00m, cut by two modern service trenches.
- 10.9 Two other masonry walls were seen during the watching brief. These were parallel to each other, on a similar alignment to wall [35], slightly to the west of that context. Wall [34] was the northern of the two and measured 0.25m in width and 3.40m in length, and was composed of yellow coloured frogged bricks. Located 4.50m to the south of wall [34] was wall [33]. This measured 0.36m in width and 6.15m in length, and was built of red unfrogged bricks.
- 10.10 All the three above walls were sampled. The results were broadly what was expected. Contexts [33] and [35] were of unfrogged red sandy brick, dated with their mortar to 1750-1900. Context [34] was of slightly later frogged London stock fabric, dated to 1770-1950, but with its mortar was shown to be contemporary with the other walls (pers. Com. Kevin Hayward, PCA).
- 10.11 Prior to urbanisation this area was known as North End. As far back as the John Rocque map of 1746 a collection of buildings is shown in this area. This is particularly well picked out on the Tithe Map of 1838 and the Ordnance Survey Map of 1896 which show a straggly range of buildings to the south of the lane, later Plashet Grove (Figure 10). These were identified on the Tithe Map as belonging to the farmer, Thomas Circuit (RPS 2015). The walls found overlaid well with those portrayed on the maps and should therefore be considered as part of the then North End Farm.
- 10.12 Covering all three walls and present over most of the pile mat area were a variety of made ground layers grouped together here as layer [30]. Typically the layer comprised a moderately a dark grey brown sandy silt with a large number of inclusions, particularly brick fragments.
- 10.13 Stratigraphically the latest of these, Layer [37], was material produced during the demolition of the old gymnasium in the northeast area of the site. This building was two storeys in height and sturdily built with deep foundations. These foundations had removed any archaeological

layers present down to natural deposits. Context [37] is the material put back to fill the void following the removal of these foundations by the demolition contractors.



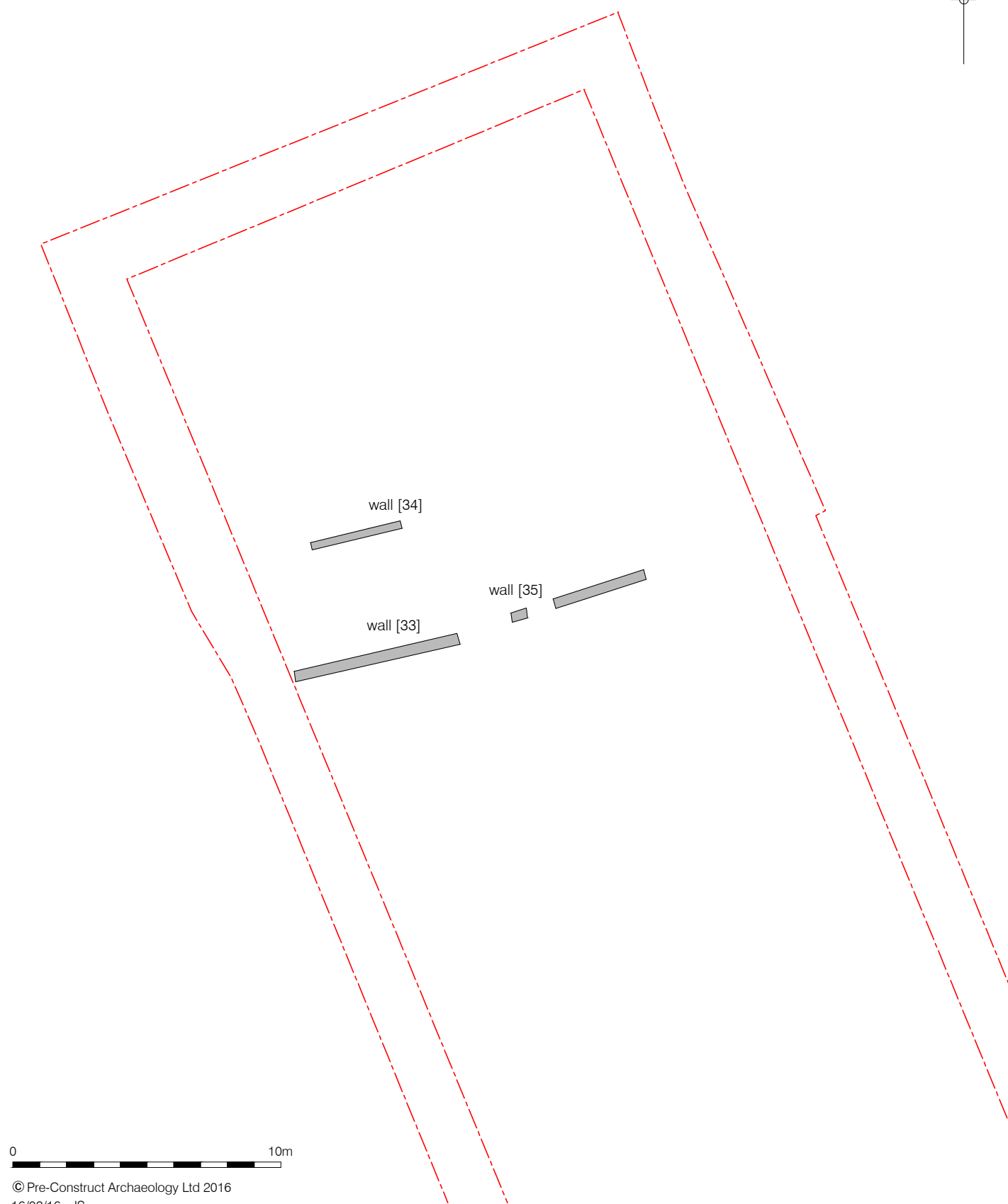


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16/02/16 JS

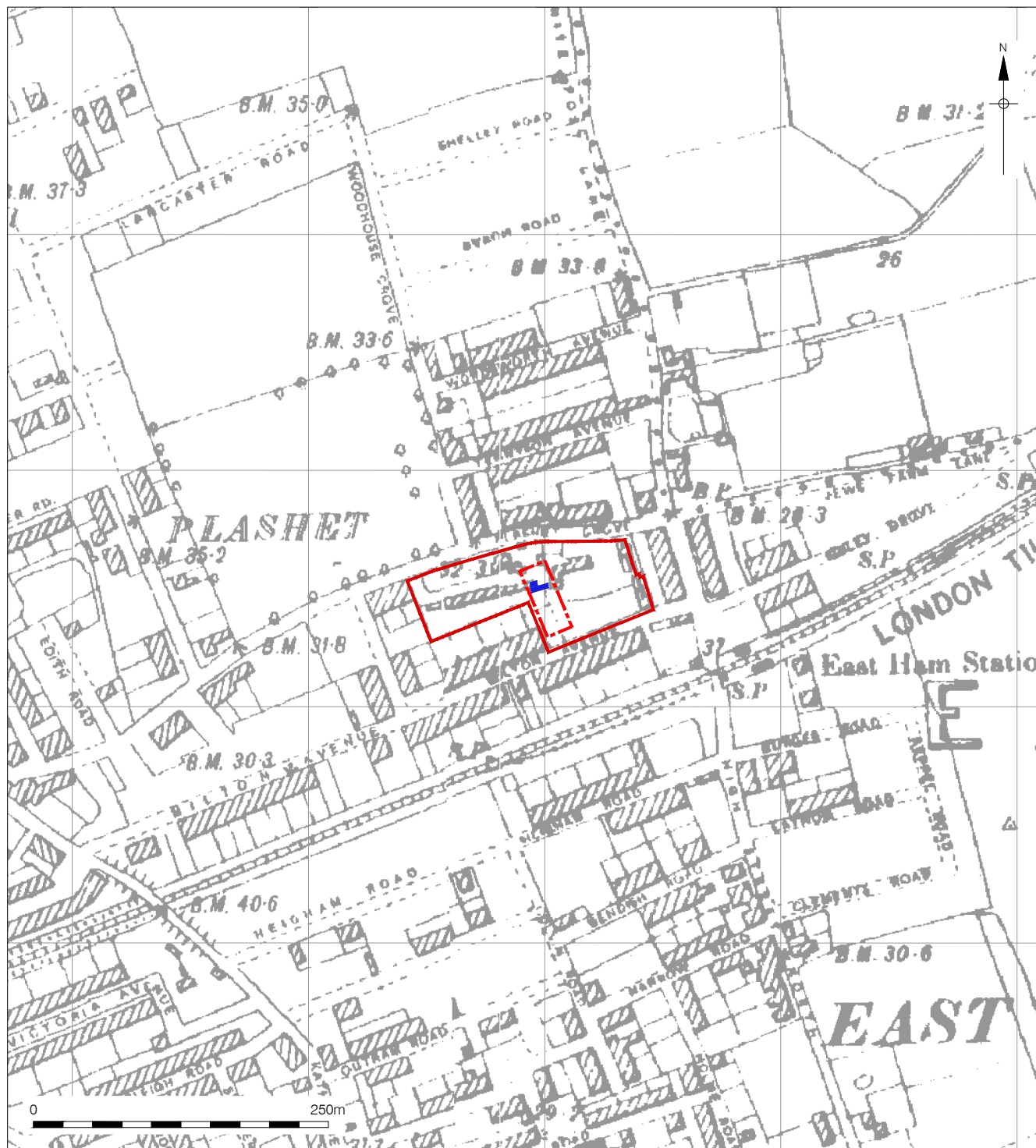
Figure 8  
Watching Brief Trench Location  
1:800 at A4



0 10m

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16/02/16 JS

Figure 9  
Walls within Trench 5  
1:200 at A4



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Figure 10  
Walls overlain onto the 1896 Ordnance Survey Map  
1:5,000 at A4

# PCA

---

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