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**An Archaeological Evaluation Of Land At 16 – 18 Perry Hill, London
Borough of Lewisham.**

Site Code: PRH 07

Central National Grid Reference: TQ 3673 7288

Written by Alistair Douglas

Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited, April 2007

Project Manager: Peter Moore

**Commissioning Client: MILLS WHIPP PROJECTS on behalf of
THE OAKWOOD GROUP**

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April 2007**

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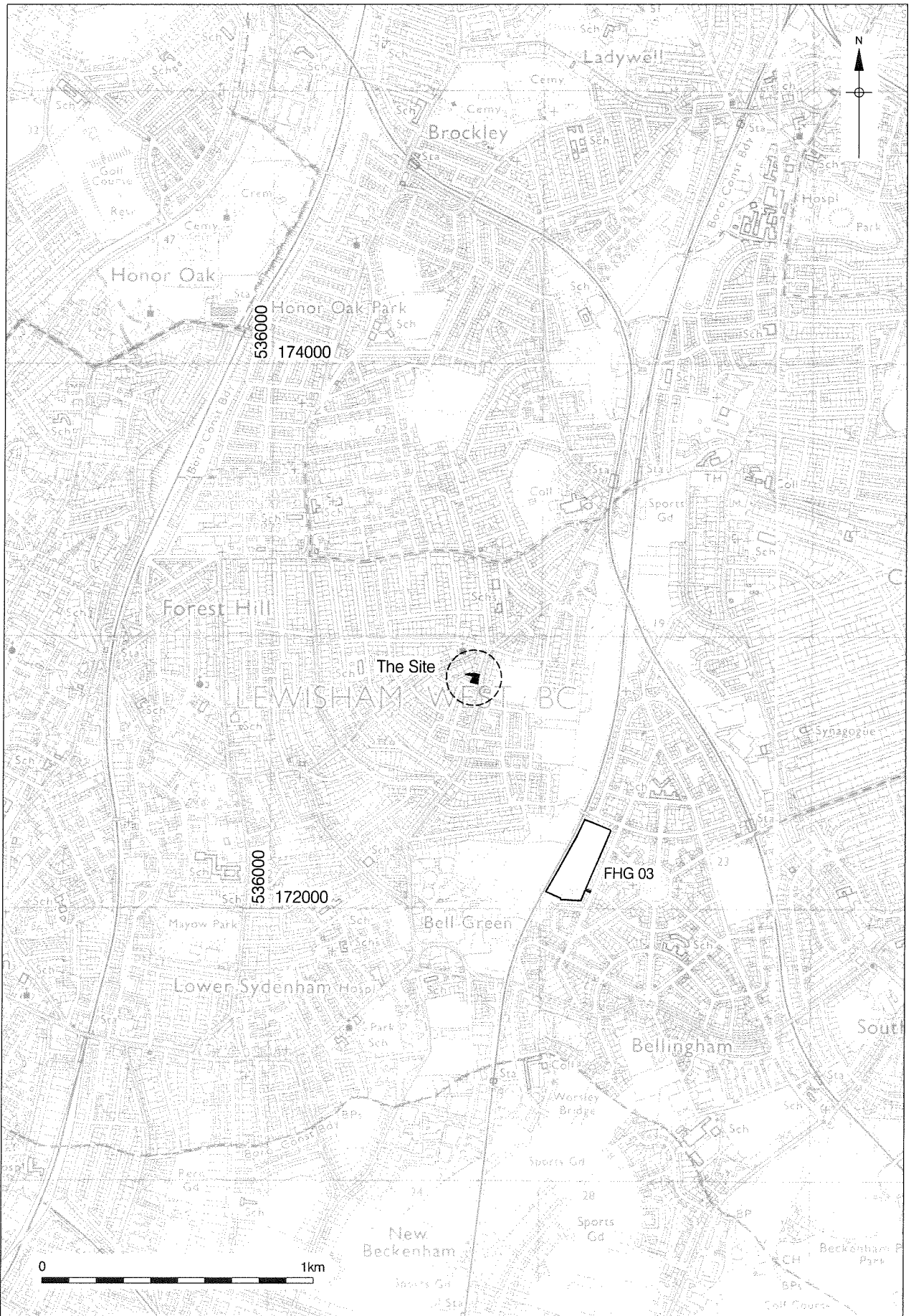
1 ABSTRACT

- 1.1 This report details the results of an archaeological evaluation undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited on land at 16 – 18 Perry Hill, London Borough of Lewisham.
- 1.2 Two trenches were excavated on the site in advance of a residential development. In both trenches modern deposits were seen and recorded directly overlying the natural drift geology of silty sandy clays.
- 1.3 No significant archaeological features or deposits were recorded in either of the two trenches
- 1.4 No further archaeological work is recommended.

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited at 16 – 18 Perry Hill, London Borough of Lewisham. The site consists of two properties, which were formerly retail/light industrial units (see Fig. 1).
- 2.2 The excavation was undertaken between the 19th March and 21st March 2007 and was commissioned by Mike Hutchinson, Mills Whipp Partnership on behalf of The Oakwood Group. The work was conducted following English Heritage guidelines.¹
- 2.3 The archaeological excavation was supervised by Alistair Douglas; project managed by Peter Moore, and was monitored on behalf of the client by Mike Hutchinson and on behalf of the local authority by Mark Stevenson of English Heritage.
- 2.4 The site central grid reference is TQ 3673 7288
- 2.5 The completed archive comprising written, drawn, and photographic records and artefacts will be deposited with the Museum of London.
- 2.6 The site was allocated the unique site code PRH 07.

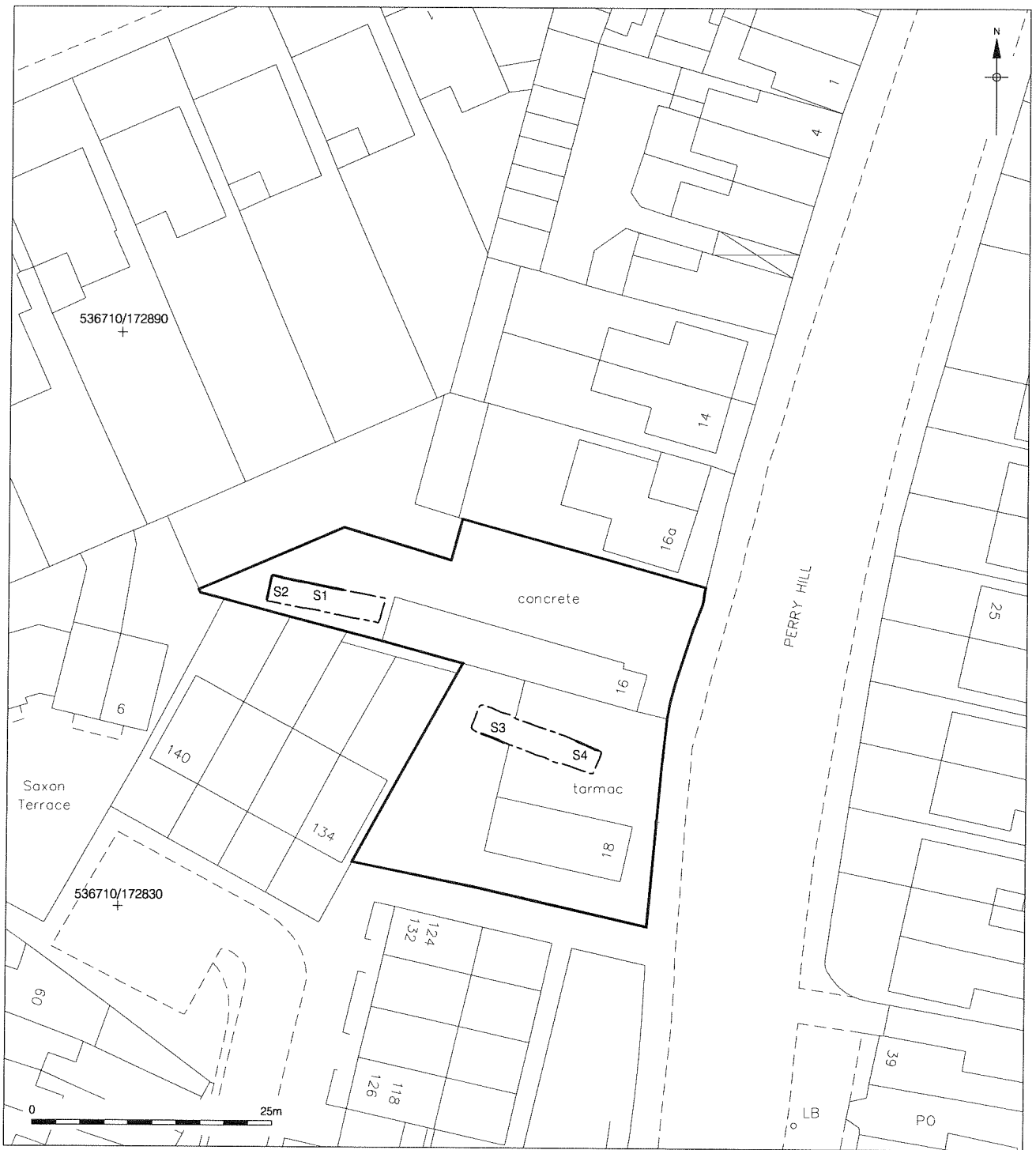
¹ English Heritage, Greater London Archaeological Advisory Service, "Archaeological Guidance Papers: 1 Written Scheme of Investigation; 2 Desk-Based Assessments; 3 Standards and Practices in Archaeological Fieldwork in London; Archaeological Reports; 5 Evaluations", Revised June 1998.



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Figure 1
 Site Location
 1:20,000 at A4



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Figure 2
Trench Location
1:625 at A4

3 PLANNING BACKGROUND

- 3.1 An archaeological condition has been imposed on the planning permission because of the potential to find archaeological remains. Mark Stevenson, English Heritage, Greater London Archaeological Advisory Service, set out the archaeological potential of the site in a letter to the London Borough of Lewisham: "To the east of the site is the projected line of a former Roman road as represented by an Archaeological Priority area in the Unitary Development Plan for the borough. Recent archaeological fieldwork has shown that Roman period occupation is in the area of Firhill Sports ground but no direct evidence for the former road. Additional trial trench work within the sports ground to the east of Perry Hill also failed to produce evidence for this road. It is therefore possible that the alignment is different to that previously considered. The conclusion is that there is potential for archaeology to occur within the site."

4 GEOGRAPHY AND TOPOGRAPHY

- 4.1 The site lies 435m to the west of the Ravensbourne River and is located on land that slopes from south to north with the current ground surface falling from c. 24.52m OD to c. 24.09m OD. This incline mirrors the underlying natural topography of the area.
- 4.2 According to the Geological Survey of Great Britain the underlying drift geology of the site is Quaternary period Head deposits². A stiff silty clay was encountered between 23.92m OD and 23.25m OD. In the southern part of the site this natural clay was capped by a natural “brickearth” type deposit encountered at between 24.31m OD and 24.27m OD. In the northern part of the site an alluvial layer about 0.30m thick overlay the clay. This deposit was probably laid down during the modern era.

² British Geological Survey Map (Solid and Drift Edition) South London Sheet 270, 1:50 000 series, 1981.

5 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

5.1 Prehistoric

- 5.1.1 A number of Mesolithic/Early Neolithic unabraded flint flakes and chunks of burnt flint were recovered during the excavation at the Firhill Road Sports Ground (site code FHG 03)³ some 750m to the southeast of the site (see Fig 1). These finds attest to human activity in the locality from an early period.

5.2 Roman

- 5.2.1 A prehistoric or Roman field boundary ditch together with another Roman ditch and a pit were also revealed during the archaeological investigation at Firhill Road. These features suggest that the land there was being cultivated during these periods⁴.
- 5.2.2 A Roman road connecting Watling Street in Peckham to the South Downs at Lewis in Sussex was thought to run through the site at Firhill Road. However no trace of this putative highway was found in the area of excavation. For this reason it was thought that the road alignment may lie to the west of the Ravensbourne River possibly in the vicinity of the site at Perry Hill.

³ E., Wragg, Assessment Of An Archaeological Excavation At Firhill Road Sports Ground, London Borough of Lewisham PCA unpublished report.

⁴ Ibid

6 METHODOLOGY

- 6.1 The evaluation was undertaken according to a method statement prepared by Peter Moore of Pre-Construct Archaeology⁵. The aim of the evaluation was to locate and define the character and extent of any archaeological remains and to evaluate how they will be affected by the proposed development.
- 6.2 The stated objectives were to:
- Define the natural deposits and the processes, which formed them.
 - To see whether archaeological activity of any period exists on the site and how this site relates to the known landscape in terms of settlement, agriculture, industry, burial and ritual.
 - To characterise the depositional sequence that led to formation of the site, and the environmental contexts in which this took place.
 - To define and locate the presence of a Roman road, and any evidence for related land usage, settlement or activity.
- 6.3 The evaluation comprised of two trenches located on two areas of open land to the front and rear of the site (see Fig 2). The trenches were aligned east/west and were staggered so as to give maximum coverage across the site. Trench 1 measured 13.70m long and 2.5m wide and Trench 2 was 12.90m long by c. 2.5m wide. Both trenches were excavated to a maximum depth of c. 1.15m.
- 6.4 A 360° mechanical excavator fitted with a breaker removed the hard standing and then with a toothless ditching bucket under archaeological supervision machined out, in spits of no more than 30mm, the modern overburden until natural was encountered.
- 6.5 The trenches were cleaned by hand, recorded and photographed. Recording of the deposits was accomplished using the Single Context Recording Method on pro forma 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 sections at a scale of 1:10.
- 6.6 Two Temporary Bench Marks were established on the site. The marks had been transferred from a benchmark at 139 Catford Hill, the value of which is 23.20m OD.

TBM 1 23.83m OD

TBM 2 24.11m OD

The completed archive will be deposited with the Museum of London. The archive consists of:

Context sheets	11		
Plans 1:20	2 (6 sheets)		
Sections 1:10	4 (7sheets)		
Black and white print film	1	Colour slide film	1

⁵ P. Moore, A Written Scheme of Investigation for An Archaeological Field Evaluation Of Land At Perry Hill, London Borough Of Lewisham. Unpublished PCA report. March 2007.

7 ARCHAEOLOGICAL SEQUENCE AND INTERPRETATION

7.1 Phase 1

7.1.1 Phase 1 represents the natural drift geology encountered on the site.

7.1.2 In Trench 1 a stiff yellow-brown sandy clay with very occasional medium sized flint nodules [9] was exposed at 23.92m OD. The clay was capped by a layer of firmly compacted silty sand and clay (brickearth type deposit) [8] up to 0.42m thick (see Fig 3, Sections 3 and 4). The brickearth type deposit was yellow-brown with grey mottling and contained occasional flecks of iron panning. The highest level on layer [8] was at 24.31m OD.

7.1.3 In Trench 2 red-yellow sandy clay [4] was encountered at 23.30m OD (see Fig 3, Sections 1 and 2).

7.2 Phase 2

7.2.1 Phase 2 represents an alluvial deposit seen and recorded only in Trench 2. This alluvium was soft light grey fading to a dark grey sandy clayey silt [3] with occasional fragments of organic matter (roots), and very occasional fragments of coal and small rounded pebbles. The deposit was about 0.35m thick and the highest level was at 23.62m OD (see Fig 3, Sections 1 and 2). The alluvium may be an indication for the location of a shallow pond or may be associated with a single catastrophic event such as a flood. A single sherd of transfer printed white ware (TPW) pottery was recovered from the silt. TPW ceramics date from 1780 – 1900 however the design indicates that the pottery probably dated to the mid-late 19th century.

7.3 Phase 3

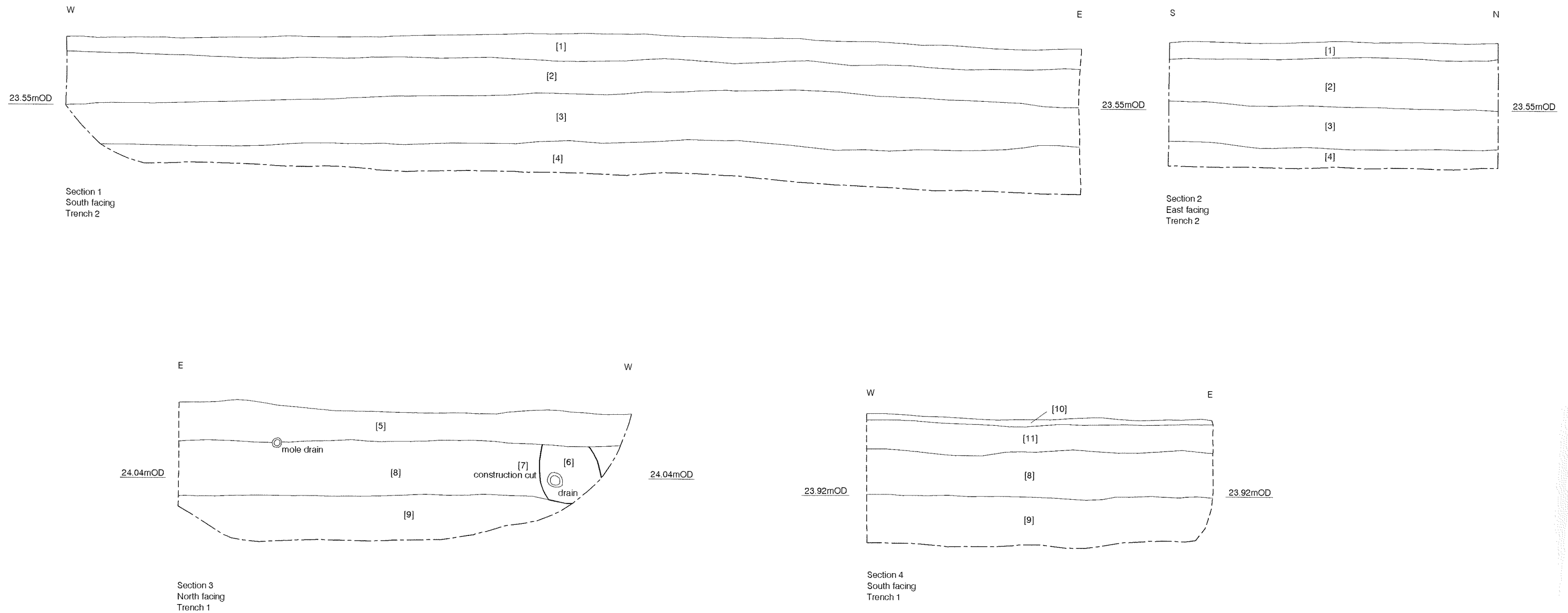
7.3.1 Phase 3 represents the modern over burden across the site.

7.3.2 At the east end of Trench 1 the current ground surface was tarmac [10] between 30mm and 50mm thick. The highest level on the tarmac was at 24.52m OD. The tarmac covered a makeup layer [11] of gravel and broken brick. The makeup layer had been laid directly onto the natural brickearth [8] (see Fig 3, Section 4).

7.3.3 At the west end of Trench 1 layer [8] was truncated by a modern but disused ceramic drain [6]. The drainpipe was encased in concrete and had been placed in a construction cut [7] 0.45m wide and 0.45m deep (see Fig 3, Section 3).

7.3.4 Overlying the drain was a dumped deposit of clay silt sand with frequent small sub-angular pebbles and occasional lumps of flint, large fragments of concrete and broken brick up to half bat size [5] (see Fig 3 Section 3). This deposit was about 0.25m thick and formed the ground surface on the west side of the trench. On the interface between the dumped deposit [5] and the brickearth type layer [8] were mole drains (one was recorded in Section 3). These ceramic drains were probably put into the ground in the 19th century to help with the drainage of the underlying heavy clay soils.

7.3.5 In Trench 2 the alluvial deposit of phase 2 was covered by the makeup layer [2] for a concrete surface [1] (see Fig 3, Sections 1 and 2). The makeup deposit was a red-brown salty sandy clay, crushed brick and coarse sand 0.40m thick. The concrete was c. 0.15m thick and the highest level on the concrete surface was at 24.09m OD.



8 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 The evaluation failed to reveal any significant archaeological deposits or features. In Trench 1 the modern made ground sat directly on natural clay deposits.
- 8.2 In Trench 2 the modern overburden covered an alluvial layer, which may have been deposited as a result of flooding or may indicate the location of a pond. If the alluvium represents a feature such as a pond then the ceramic evidence suggests that it was allowed to silt up during the mid to late 19th century. If on the other hand the soil represents a single event then that too probably occurred during this period. The alluvium in Trench 2 overlay natural clay.
- 8.3 No evidence was found for any human activity on the site prior to the 19th century as a result the archaeological potential of the site is considered to be very low.
- 8.4 It is recommended that **no** further archaeological work is undertaken.

9 BIBLIOGRAPHY

British Geological Survey Map (Solid and Drift Edition) South London Sheet 270, 1: 50 000 Series, 1981.

P., Moore, 2007, Written Scheme Of Investigation For An Archaeological Field Evaluation Of Land At 16 – 18 Perry Hill, London Borough Of Lewisham, PCA unpublished report.

E., Wragg, 2004, Assessment Of An Archaeological Excavation At Firhill Road Sports Ground, London borough Of Lewisham, PCA unpublished report.

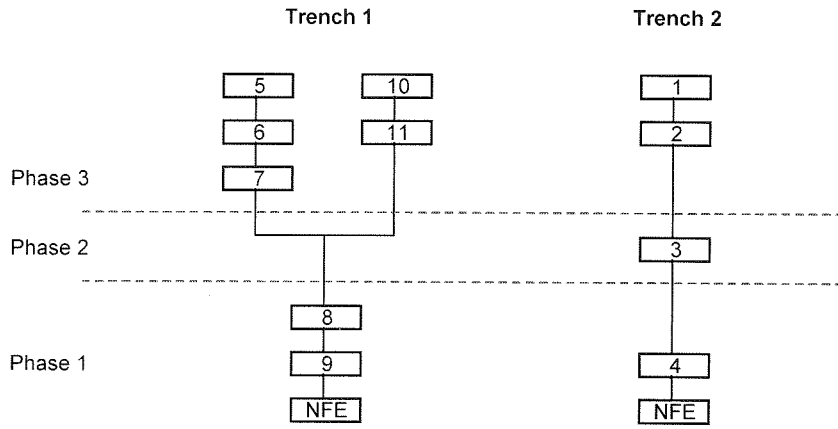
12 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Pre-Construct Archaeology would like to thank Mike Hutchinson of Mills Whipp Partnership for commissioning this investigation and The Oakwood Group for funding it and for their logistical support on site. The author would like to thank Tom O’Gorman for his work on site, Hailey Baxter for the illustrations, and Peter Moore for the project management and editing.

APPENDIX 1 CONTEXT INDEX

Context No	Trench	Phase	Plan	Section	Type	Description
1	2	3		1, 2	Layer	Concrete surface
2	2	3		1, 2	Layer	Made ground - makeup for concrete surface [1]
3	2	2		1, 2	Layer	Alluvial deposit
4	2	1	T2	1, 2	Layer	Natural clay
5	1	3		3	Layer	Made ground - current ground surface at the West end of Trench 1
6	1	3		3	Fill	Ceramic drain
7	1	3		3	Cut	Construction cut for ceramic drain [6]
8	1	1		3, 4	Layer	Natural brickearth type deposit
9	1	1	T1	3, 4	Layer	Natural clay
10	1	3		4	Layer	Tarmac surface
11	1	3		4	Layer	Makeup for Tarmac surface

APPENDIX 2 SITE MATRIX



APPENDIX 3 OASIS Report Form

OASIS ID: preconst1-25707

Project details

Project name Land at 16-18 Perry Hill, London, Borough of Lewisham

Short description of the project Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd undertook an archaeological evaluation in March 2007, on land at 16 - 18 Perry Hill, London, Borough of Lewisham. Two trenches were excavated on the site in advance of a residential development. In both trenches modern deposits were seen and recorded directly overlying the natural drift geology of silty sandy clays.

Project dates Start: 19-03-2007 End: 21-03-2007

Previous/future work No / Not known

Any associated project reference codes PRH07 - Sitecode

Type of project Field evaluation

Site status None

Current Land use Residential 1 - General Residential

Significant Finds POTTERY Post Medieval

Project location

Country England

Site location GREATER LONDON LEWISHAM CATFORD 16 - 18 Perry Hill, London, Borough of Lewisham

Postcode SE 6

Study area 1162.40 Square metres

Site coordinates TQ 3673 7288 51.4378847162 -0.03258557222830 51 26 16 N 000 01 57 W Point

Height OD Min: 23.30m Max: 24.31m

Project creators

Name of Organisation Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd

Project brief originator Mills Whipp

Project design originator Peter Moore

Project director/manager Peter Moore

Project supervisor Alistair Douglas

Name of sponsor/funding body The Oakwood Group

Project archives

Physical Archive recipient LAARC

Physical Contents 'Ceramics'

Digital Media available 'Spreadsheets','Survey','Text'

Paper Media available 'Context sheet','Matrices','Plan','Report','Section','Unpublished Text'

Project bibliography 1

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

Title An Archaeological Evaluation Of Land At 16 - 18 Perry Hill, London Borough of Lewisham

Author(s)/Editor(s) Alistair Douglas

Date 2007

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