

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING

BRIEF AT

10-12 THORNHILL ROAD,

LONDON BOROUGH OF CROYDON

OCTOBER 2007

DOCUMENT VERIFICATION

**10-12 THORNHILL ROAD,
LONDON BOROUGH OF CROYDON**

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

Quality Control

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**An Archaeological Watching Brief at 10-12 Thornhill Road, London
Borough of Croydon**

Site Code: TRL 07

Central National Grid Reference: TQ 3232 6672

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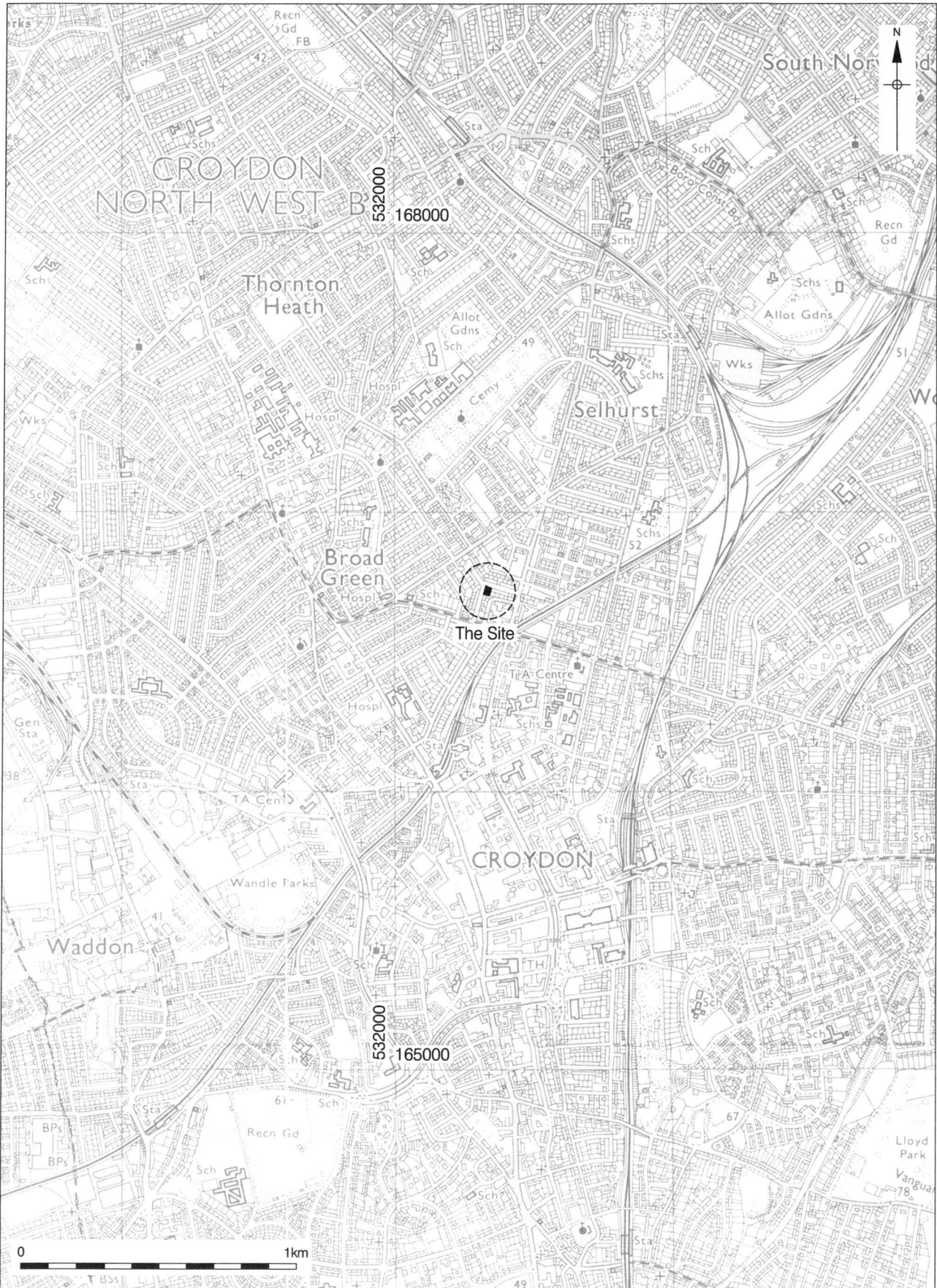
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1 ABSTRACT

- 1.1 This report details the results of an archaeological observation and recording project (hereafter referred to as a “watching brief”) undertaken on land at 10-12 Thornhill Road, London Borough of Croydon, CR0 2XZ.
- 1.2 Two archaeological trial trenches were excavated during the watching brief, one of which was extended during the removal of a clump of Japanese knotweed.
- 1.3 The watching brief identified a layer of modern topsoil, partially sealing the remains of a very modern brick surface in Trench 2, which probably represents a 20th century garden path or paved area. A layer of subsoil was observed underneath this, which presumably seals the entire site. Below the subsoil was a thick deposit of sandy silty clay, identified as natural “brickearth”.

2 INTRODUCTION

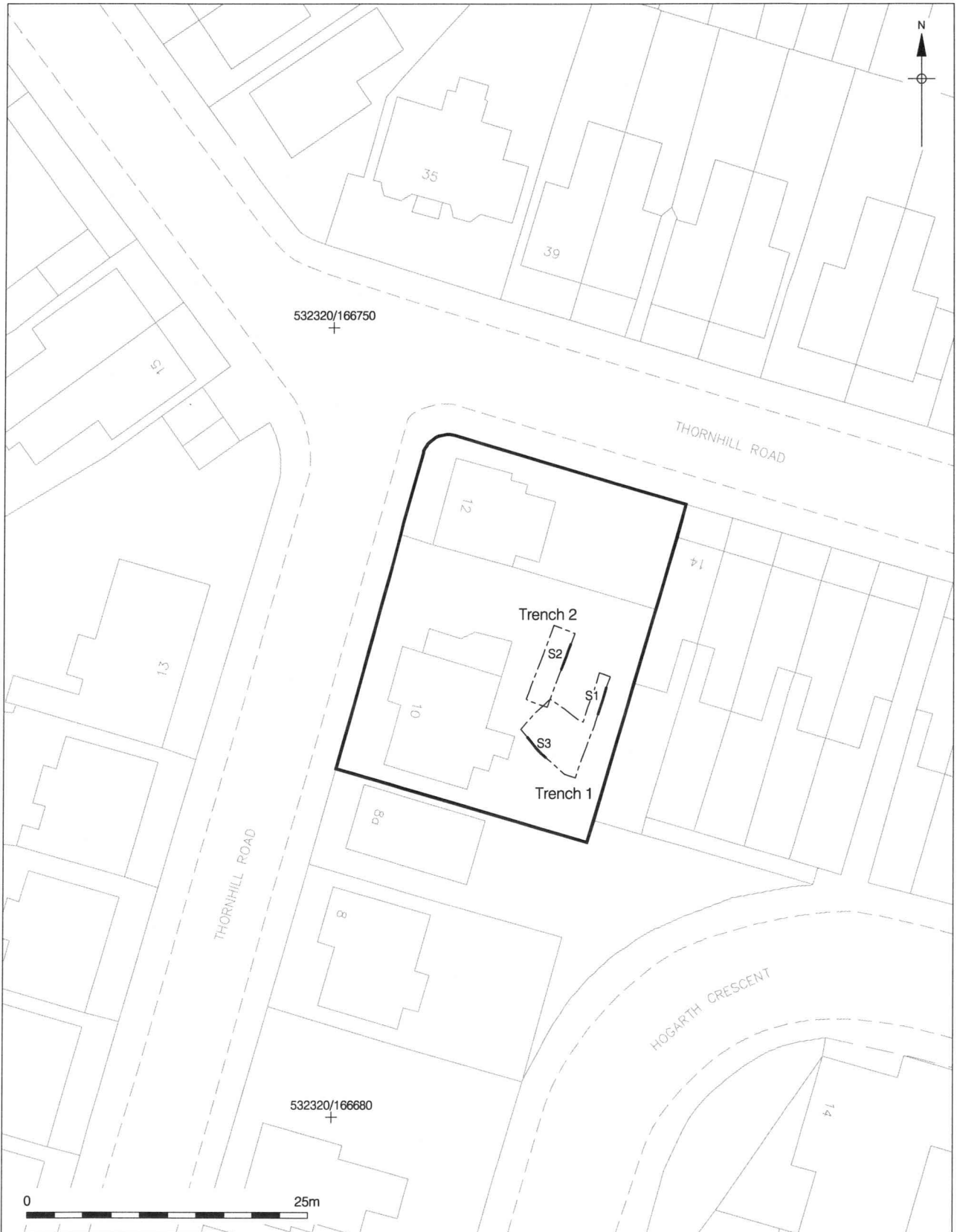
- 2.1 An archaeological watching brief was conducted by Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd. on land at 10-12 Thornhill Road, London Borough of Croydon, CR0 2XZ. The works were commissioned by R. M. P. Developments and undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd. between 2nd and 3rd October 2007. The works were supervised by the author and project managed by Chris Mayo, both of Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd.
- 2.2 The site is bounded to the northeast and northwest by Thornhill Road and bounded to the southeast and southwest by properties fronting Thornhill Road and Hogarth Crescent.
- 2.3 The National Grid Reference of the site is TQ 3232 6672.
- 2.4 The site was assigned the code TLR 07.



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Figure 1
 Site Location
 1:20,000 at A4



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Figure 2
Trench Location
1:500 at A4

3 PLANNING BACKGROUND

- 3.1 In November 1990 the Department of the Environment issued Planning Policy Guidance Note 16 (PPG16) "Archaeology and Planning", providing guidance for planning authorities, property owners, developers and others on the preservation and investigation of archaeological remains.
- 3.2 In considering any planning application, the local planning authority is bound by the policy framework set by the government guidance, in this instance PPG16, by the current Structure and Local Plan Policy and by other material.
- 3.3 The study aims to satisfy the objectives of the London Borough of Croydon, which fully recognises the importance of the buried heritage for which they are the custodians. The council's Replacement Unitary Development Plan, known as "The Croydon Plan", was adopted in July 2006 and contains policy statements in respect of protecting the buried archaeological resource. These statements are detailed below:

Development Proposals on Archaeological Sites

UC11 Development will only be permitted if all the following criteria are met:

(i) Proposals have been properly assessed and planned for archaeological implications, where development may affect the archaeological heritage of a site. This may involve preliminary archaeological site evaluations, commissioned by the applicants from a professionally qualified archaeological practice or archaeological consultant;

(ii) Early co-operation regarding the proposals between landowners, developers and archaeological practices, in accordance with the principles of the British Archaeologists and Developers Liaison Group Code of Practice, has been demonstrated.

(iii) The siting and design of the new development has regard to minimising the disturbance of archaeological remains, ensuring that those most important are permanently preserved in situ.

(iv) An appropriate level of archaeological investigation, excavation, recording, analysis and publication has been agreed with the Council, secured where appropriate by the use of planning conditions or agreements.

(v) The provision of access and facilities that interpret and explain archaeological sites to the public has been considered, secured where appropriate by the use of planning conditions or agreements.

5.39 The archaeology of the Borough can best be protected if as much information as possible is available at the planning application stage. The evaluation, which may involve fieldwork, is needed so that the Council can assess the archaeological implications of proposals. Where appropriate the evaluation may show how developments can be designed so that they do not harm a site. When assessing the requirement for a site evaluation report the significance of any ground disturbance will

be taken into account, and will depend on the factors such as the type, extent, quality and exact position of archaeological remains.

5.40 Archaeological Priority Zones where archaeological remains are most likely to be found are listed below and are shown on the Proposals Map and on Map 3 at the end of this chapter. The Sites and Monuments Record for Greater London identifies the location of archaeological remains. It is held by English Heritage and is updated continually.

5.41 Outside the Archaeological Priority Zones that reflect the present state of knowledge, there may be other areas of archaeological potential and the Council will seek advice from English Heritage on whether or not an evaluation is needed.

5.42 The Council will also seek the advice of English Heritage on the competency and expertise of the practices intending to undertake archaeological work.

5.43 Except for removable artefacts and other certain materials, the process of archaeological excavation destroys evidence. Archaeological techniques are continually improving and therefore more information is most likely to be extracted from sites in the future. For this reason, archaeological evidence should remain undisturbed where practicable.

5.44 Understanding Croydon's archaeological heritage is important, providing a sense of place for local residents and visitors. Both excavations and protected sites can be managed in a way that enhances their educational and recreational value. The Council will publish further information about archaeology in Croydon, including descriptions of the Archaeological Priority Zones.

Preserving Nationally Important Remains

UC12 There will be a presumption against development that would harm archaeological remains of national importance and their setting, whether scheduled or not.

5.45 The national importance of some remains may be such as to warrant their preservation in situ. Archaeological remains are often highly fragile and vulnerable to damage, and irreplaceable evidence may be lost as a result of development or even as a result of prior archaeological excavation. Preservation by record involves excavation of a site to record archaeological remains in advance of development.

Preserving Locally Important Remains

UC13 Decisions on development proposals affecting local remains will take account of the archaeological importance of those remains, the need for the development, the likely extent of any harm, and the prospects of the proposals successfully preserving by record the archaeological interest of the site.

5.46 Other archaeological sites contain information that is potentially vital to an understanding of Croydon's past. This can only be retrieved through proper excavation, analysis and recording. The information cannot be used as a local educational and cultural resource unless finds are looked after and results published. The Council will encourage landowners, archaeologists and developers to co-operate in accordance with the Code of Practice agreed by the British Archaeologists and Developers Liaison Group. In line with this code, and in place of a Museum and Galleries Commission approved local alternative, the appropriate museum for the donation or lodging of archaeological archives is currently the Museum of London. A copy of any resultant report will also need to be lodged with the appropriate local studies library.

Enabling Development

UC14 Enabling development will not be permitted unless the following criteria are met:

- (i) the development will not materially detract from the archaeological, architectural, historic, landscape or biodiversity interest of the heritage asset or materially harm its setting;**
- (ii) the development avoids detrimental fragmentation of management of the heritage asset;**
- (iii) the development will secure the long term future of the heritage asset and, where applicable, its continued use for a sympathetic purpose;**
- (iv) the problem that the development seeks to resolve arises from the inherent need of the heritage asset, rather than the circumstances of the present owner or the purchase price paid;**
- (v) sufficient financial assistance is not available from any other source;**
- (vi) the amount of development is the minimum necessary to secure the future of the heritage asset and its form minimises disbenefits;**
- (vii) the value or benefit to the survival or enhancement of the heritage asset outweighs the long-term costs to the community of providing the enabling development.**

5.47 Enabling development is development that is contrary to established planning policy - national or local - but which may exceptionally be justified in order to secure the future of heritage assets, such as listed buildings, scheduled monuments and historic landscapes. Its defining characteristic is that the gain from contravening planning policy subsidises a public benefit that could not otherwise be achieved. Thus, unlike most planning applications, financial issues will be central to determining this type of proposal.

5.48 There is increasing concern that such developments, put forward as a way of benefiting heritage assets, may often destroy more than they save. English Heritage therefore advises that there should be a clear presumption against enabling development and that permission should only be granted exceptionally where it can be satisfactorily demonstrated that the public benefits clearly outweigh the harm that would be caused. Such benefits must be securely and enforceably linked to the planning permission, normally through a planning agreement.

5.49 In the consideration of the criteria set out in the policy, careful regard will be had to the guidance set out in the English Heritage document, Enabling Development and the Conservation of Heritage Assets (2001).

<http://www.croydon.gov.uk/content/departments/570803/570946/Chapter 5 Urban conservatio1.pdf>

4 GEOLOGY & TOPOGRAPHY

4.1 Geology

- 4.1.1 The underlying geology consists of Lynch Hill Gravel (British Geological Survey of England and Wales Solid & Drift Edition, Sheet 270) sealed by silty clay “brickearth”.

4.2 Topography

- 4.2.1 The site is situated on relatively flat land at a height of 52.07m OD in the north and 52.00m OD in the south.

5 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

5.1 The following summary is drawn from previous work undertaken in the Croydon area (Mulligan & Lythe 2007).

5.2 Prehistoric

5.2.1 No finds of Palaeolithic, Mesolithic or Neolithic date have been identified in the vicinity of the site.

5.3 Roman

5.3.1 Evidence of Roman activity has been found in the Croydon area. It is possible that a Roman Road was once present in the approximate position of Coldharbour and Marsh Lanes. A second road may once have been situated in the location of London Road, whilst a third may be found on or near the Merebank, the boundary between Sutton and Croydon.

5.3.2 No Roman occupation is known in the immediate vicinity of the site, although some evidence suggestive of habitation has been found just under 1km to the southwest.

5.4 Saxon and Medieval

5.4.1 No finds of Saxon date have been identified in close proximity to the site, although it is possible that a medieval farm complex located to the northwest may have Saxon origins. Croydon expanded during medieval times, developing as a planned town. The Manor of Croydon remained the property of the Archbishops of Canterbury throughout the period.

5.4.2. The study site lies northeast of the medieval centre of Croydon, probably in an area of open land. It is situated close to a probable medieval farmstead, located to the immediate northwest (Mark Stevenson, *pers comm.*).

5.5 Post-Medieval

5.5.1 The site probably remained an area of open land until the construction of residential housing located along Thornhill Road. This occurred during the late 19th to 20th century.

6 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

- 6.1 Two archaeological trial trenches were excavated during the watching brief, termed Trenches 1 and 2. The former trench was roughly "L"-shaped, after being extended under archaeological supervision during the removal of a clump of Japanese knotweed. Its final dimensions were 9.5m north-south and 2m wide by 6.5m east-west and 4m wide. Trench 2 was orientated north-south, and was 7m long and 2m wide. The trial trenches were situated in the northeast corner of the site, in order to fully explore its archaeological potential prior to commencement of ground works. The northeast corner was not investigated, as it will be turned into a garden area. As a result, no intrusive ground works will be undertaken, preserving any underlying archaeology *in situ*. The southern area not explored, as the bulk had been truncated by two modern, basemented homes.
- 6.2 The attendant archaeologist monitored all ground-reduction so that any archaeological deposits could be excavated and recorded stratigraphically.
- 6.3 The above methodology was a variation from the approved method statement for the work (Mayo 2007), which had proposed a straightforward watching brief during groundworks associated with the new development. The variation was necessitated by the discovery of Japanese Knotweed that required ground clearance to eradicate it.
- 6.4 Individual descriptions of all archaeological strata and features excavated and / or exposed were entered onto pro-forma recording sheets. All plans and sections of archaeological deposits were recorded on polyester based drawing film, the plans being drawn at a scale of 1:20 or 1:50 and the sections being drawn at a scale of 1:10. A full colour photographic record was also kept.
- 6.5 The trenches were located via triangulation from the northwest and southwest corners of the adjacent building (14 Thornhill Road), using a 30m tape. Levels were calculated from spot heights obtained from a Burgess Mean Architects plan, prepared on behalf of R. M. P. Developments.

7 ARCHAEOLOGICAL SEQUENCE

7.1 PHASE 1- NATURAL

7.1.1 A deposit of firm, mid to light reddish yellow sandy silty clay, containing frequent lenses of loose, laminated, light yellowish grey sand was found at the base of the sequence in Trenches 1 and 2. The layer was termed context [2] in Trench 1 and [4] in Trench 2. It was found at a level of 51.37m OD in Trench 1 and 51.42m OD in Trench 2 and was over 1.50m thick. The deposit was interpreted as a layer of natural silty clay, sometimes referred to as “brickearth”. It is presumed to underlie the entire site.

7.2 PHASE 2- POST MEDIEVAL

7.2.1 A layer of mid greyish brown sandy silt sealed the “brickearth” in Trenches 1 and 2, termed contexts [1] and [3] respectively. The deposit was 0.40m to 0.25m thick, the top being at a level of 51.82m OD in Trench 1 and 51.42m OD in Trench 2. Whilst it did not contain any artefacts, fine flecks of red fabric brick and charcoal were observed within the matrix. The deposit was interpreted as a layer of subsoil, which is presumed to be post-medieval in date. It could potentially represent the remains of a ploughsoil associated with agricultural land.

7.3 MODERN

7.3 The remains of a 20th century brick surface were observed in Trench 2. It is presumed to represent a modern garden path or patio surface associated with the late 19th to 20th century houses, once situated in the south of the site. The structure was partially sealed to the north by a 0.30m thick layer of topsoil. This sealed the entire site, the only exceptions being the areas occupied by the two basemented houses.

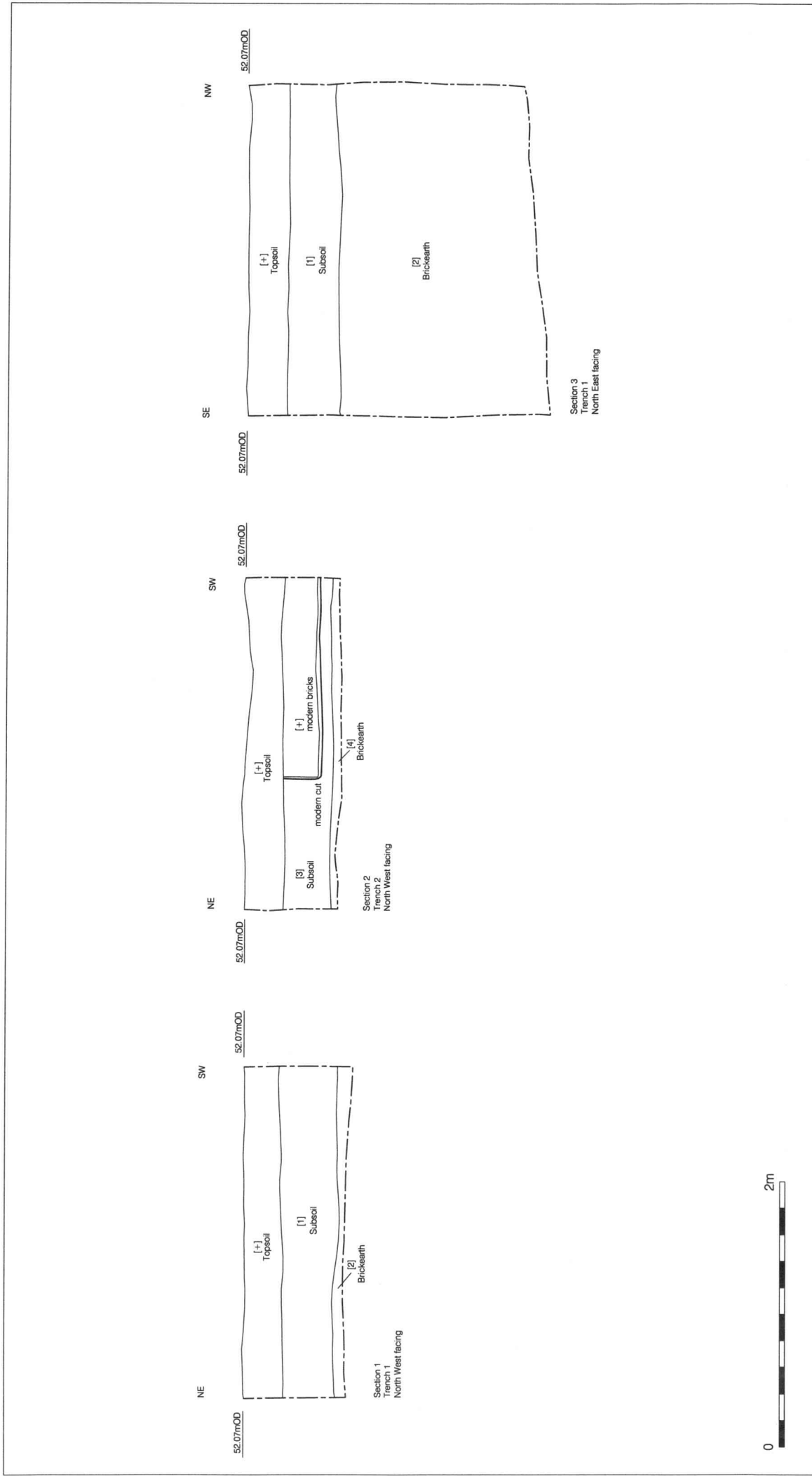


Figure 3
Sections 1-3
1:40 at A4

8 INTERPRETATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

- 8.1 The watching brief was undertaken in order to identify and record any archaeological deposits during intrusive works at 10-12 Thornhill Road. This aim was achieved and the results are summarised below:
- 8.2 A layer of natural brickearth underlay the entire site. A deposit of subsoil, which could represent the remains of a possible agricultural horizon, sealed this.
- 8.3 This was partially truncated by the remains of a 20th century patio or garden path, which was itself partially sealed by modern topsoil. The topsoil covered the entire site, with the exception of the areas once occupied by two late 19th to early 20th century houses.
- 8.4 No archaeologically significant deposits were encountered during the watching brief.

9 ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

- 9.1 Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd. would like to thank Chris Harvey of R.M.P. Developments Ltd. for commissioning the work and Mark Stevenson of English Heritage for monitoring the site on behalf of Croydon Borough Council.
- 9.2 The author would like to thank Hayley Baxter for the illustrations, Chris Mayo for his project management and Helen Clough for editing this report.

10 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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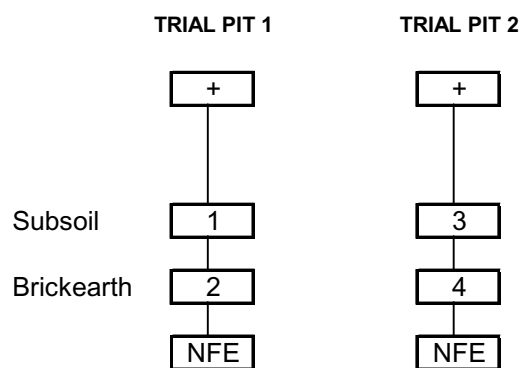
Mayo, C. 2007 *Method Statement for an Archaeological Watching Brief at 10-12 Thornhill Road, London Borough of Croydon* Pre-Construct Archaeology Unpublished Report

Mulligan, D. & Lythe, R.S., 2007 *An Archaeological Watching Brief at City House, London Road, London Borough of Croydon*. Pre-Construct Archaeology Unpublished Report

Appendix 1- Context Index

Site Code	Context No.	Plan	Section / Elevation	Type	Description	Date	Phase
TLR 07	1	Tr. 1	1, 3	Layer	Subsoil	Modern	2
TLR 07	2	Tr. 1	1, 3	Layer	Natural brickearth	Natural	1
TLR 07	3	Tr. 2	2	Layer	Subsoil	Modern	2
TLR 07	4	Tr. 2	2	Layer	Natural brickearth	Natural	1

Appendix 2- Site Matrix



APPENDIX 3- OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM

OASIS ID: preconst1-32161

Project details

Project name	10-12 Thornhill Road, London Borough of Croydon
Short description of the project	An archaeological watching brief undertaken in order to assess the presence or absence of archaeological remains during initial ground works at 10-12 Thornhill Road, London Borough of Croydon.
Project dates	Start: 02-10-2007 End: 03-10-2007
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	TLR 07 - Sitecode
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	Local Authority Designated Archaeological Area
Current Land use	Residential 1 - General Residential
Investigation type	'Watching Brief'
Prompt	Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPG16

Project location

Country	England
Site location	GREATER LONDON CROYDON CROYDON 10-12 Thornhill Road
Postcode	CR0 2XZ
Study area	739.40 Square metres
Site coordinates	TQ 3232 6672 51.38357034 -0.09830208752480 51 23 00 N 000 05 53 W Point
Height OD	Min: 51.37m Max: 51.42m

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd
Project brief originator	Local Authority Archaeologist and/or Planning Authority/advisory body
Project design originator	Chris Mayo
Project director/manager	Chris Mayo
Project supervisor	Rebecca Lythe
Type of sponsor/funding body	Developer
Name of sponsor/funding body	R. M. P. Developments

Project bibliography

1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	An Archaeological Watching Brief at 10-12 Thornhill Road, London Borough of Croydon
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