

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING

BRIEF AT ELTHAM COLLEGE, GROVE

PARK ROAD

LONDON BOROUGH OF BROMLEY

OCTOBER 2007

ECL 07

**AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF AT ELTHAM COLLEGE, GROVE PARK
ROAD, LONDON BOROUGH OF BROMLEY**

Site Code: ECL 07

Central National Grid Reference: TQ 4181 7301

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Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited, October 2007**

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CONTENTS

1	Abstract	3
2	Introduction	4
3	Historical and Geological Background	7
4	Archaeological Methodology	8
5	Archaeological Phase Discussion	9
6	Conclusion	13
7	Acknowledgements	14

Appendices

Appendix 1 - Context Index	15
Appendix 2 - Oasis Data Collection Form	17

Figures

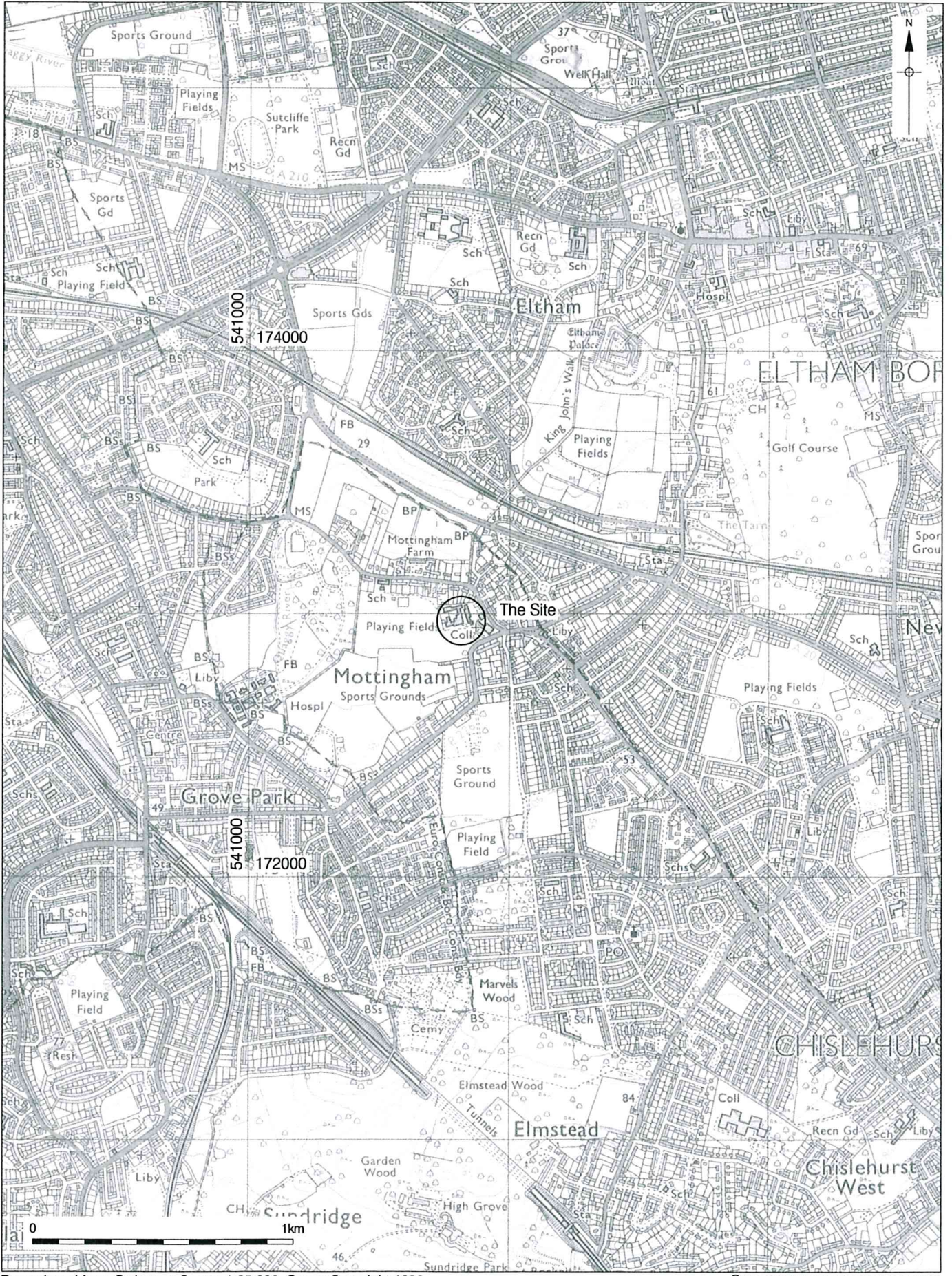
Figure 1 - Site Location	5
Figure 2 - Trench Location	6
Figure 3 - Trench Plan	11
Figure 4 - Sections 1-5, 7, 11 & 12	12

1 ABSTRACT

- 1.1 This report details the results and working methods of an archaeological watching brief undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited at Eltham College, Grove Park Road London Borough of Bromley. The watching brief was undertaken between 1st and 24th October 2007, and was commissioned by Thomas Ford & Partners on behalf of Eltham College.
- 1.2 The site is located within an Archaeological Priority Area as defined by the Unitary Development Plan for the borough and in addition the Greater London Sites and Monument Record indicates that the school is on the site of a medieval hall called Friary Hall. The watching brief consisted of the excavation of 22 underpinning trenches, the basement trench for the dining room extension and the service trench for the diversion of gas and water services. The excavation of these trenches produced a sequence of natural deposits sealed by an undated plough soil layer. The plough soil pre-dated the construction of the dining room building and that of the drainage system of brick drains observed across underpinning Trench 5 and the basement trench, and sealed the sequence of natural deposits of brickearth and clay. A sequence of late post-medieval and modern dumped deposits for the construction of the bank sloping from the eastern dining room wall downward to the edge of the road to the east was also recorded.

2 INTRODUCTION

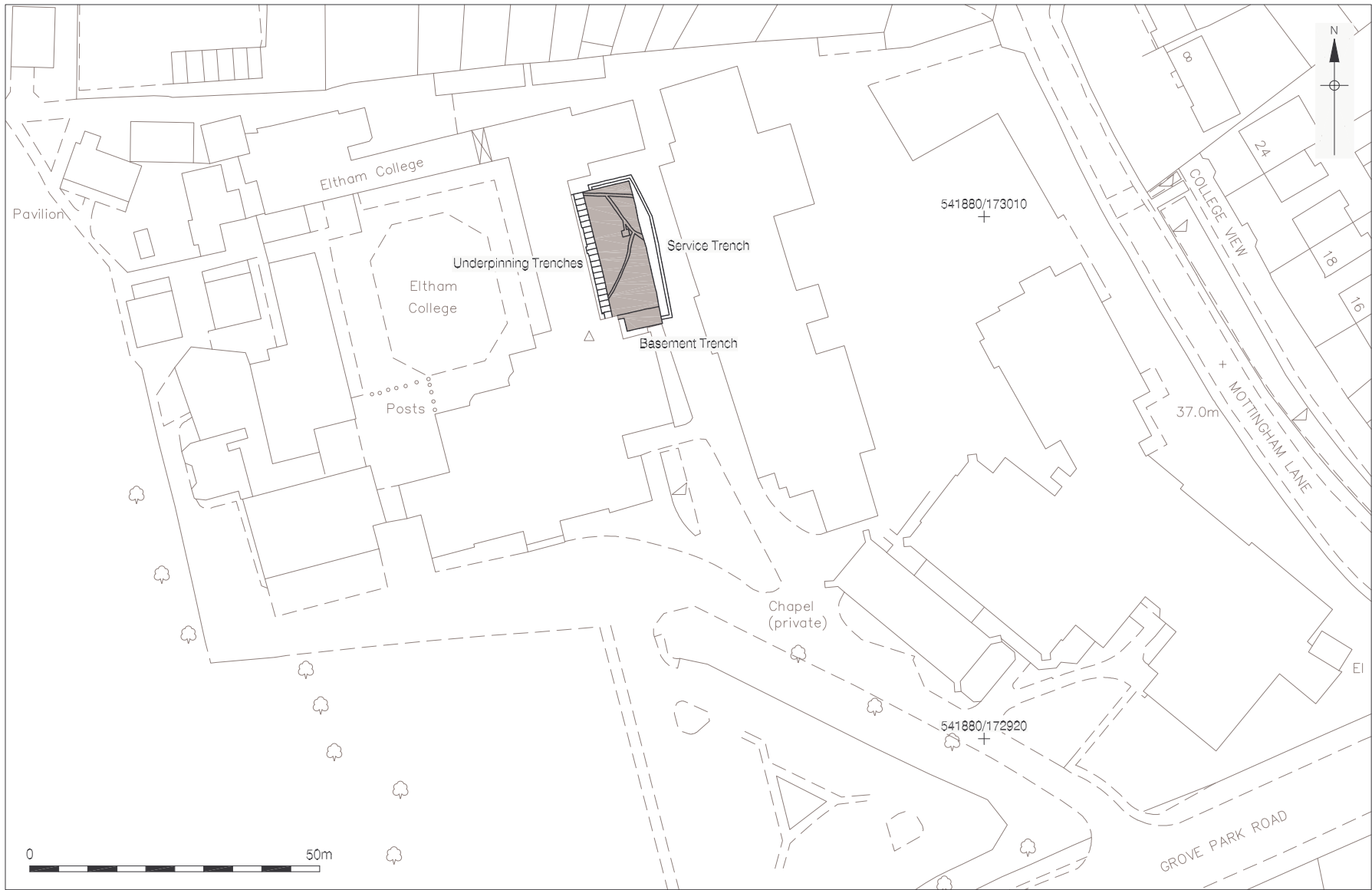
- 2.1 An archaeological watching brief was conducted on the groundworks associated with construction of a two-storey extension to the east of the existing dining room at Eltham College, Grove Park Lane, Mottingham, London Borough of Bromley. The site is located within an Archaeological Priority Area as defined by the Unitary Development Plan for the borough, and the Greater London Sites and Monument Record indicates that the school is on the site of a medieval hall called Friary Hall. The watching brief was conducted between the 1st and 24th of October 2007 and was commissioned by Thomas Ford & Partners on behalf of Eltham College.
- 2.2 The ground works initially consisted of the excavation of 22 trenches for the underpinning of the western wall of the existing dining room building and were followed by the excavation of a north south trench for the diversion of gas and water services. Finally the trench for the basement of the new dining room extension was excavated.
- 2.2 The site is located on the east of the existing college dining room, west of the science block building, south of the college boundary wall and north of the college library.
- 2.3 The site was given the code ECL 07
- 2.4 The watching brief was project managed for Pre-Construct Archaeology by Tim Bradley and was supervised by the author. The site was monitored by Mark Stevenson of English Heritage (GLAAS) on behalf of the London Borough of Bromley.



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Figure 1
 Site Location
 1:20,000 at A4



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Figure 2
Trench Location
1:1,000 at A4

3 HISTORICAL AND GEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The site is located within an Archaeological Priority Area as defined within the Unitary Development Plan for the borough. The Greater London Sites and Monuments Record indicate that the school is on the site of a medieval hall called Fairy Hall.

- 3.2 The British Geological Survey indicates that the site is situated an area of Lambeth Group (Woolwich and Reading beds), sand and clay, locally shelly, and flint pebble beds.

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

- 4.1 The 22 underpinning trenches and the basement trench were excavated by machine under archaeological supervision. In addition to this a new north-south (N-S) and east-west (E-W) trench was excavated, just east of the new proposed building extension, for the diversion of gas and water services previously located inside the footprint of the proposed building extension.
- 4.2 The underpinning Trenches 1 to 22 were excavated alongside the 22m long western wall of the existing dining room and underneath the shallow concrete foundation of the same wall. The size of these trenches was a standard 1m N-S by 2.35m E-W with varying depths of between 2.32m and 2.86m from original ground level.
- 4.3 The new trench for the diversion of the live gas and water mains was L-shaped and measured 25m long N-S, 7.25m on its E-W return to the west, 0.50m wide and 0.85m deep.
- 4.4 After the underpinning of the western wall of the existing dining room and the diversion of the gas and water pipes were completed, the excavation of the basement trench for the new building extension was resumed. This trench was machine excavated and extended 25m N-S, 10.25m E-W and was approximately 1.60m deep from the original ground level.
- 4.5 All the archaeological deposits and features were cleaned and excavated by hand, drawn either in plan at 1:50 or in section at 1:20 and recorded on *pro forma* context sheets. Artefacts were collected from discrete contexts. A full photographic record was also taken during the watching brief.

5 ARCHAEOLOGICAL DESCRIPTION

5.1 Underpinning Trenches 1 to 22

- 5.1.1 These trenches were located alongside the eastern wall of the existing Eltham College dining room. The earliest deposit, mid greyish bluish firm and compacted natural clay, was observed across all trenches. Its highest level was observed in Trench 1 at 38.05m OD where it was recorded as context [15] and its lowest level in Trench 7 at 37.31m OD where was recorded as context [27].
- 5.1.2 Mid orangey brown sandy silt clay sealed the natural clay. This layer had a highest level of 38.44m OD recorded in Trench 20 and a lowest level of 38.12m OD in Trench 9. This layer was interpreted as natural brickearth and was recorded as context [23] in Trench 20 and as context [5] in Trench 9 and was also observed across all the other underpinning trenches.
- 5.1.3 Overlying the natural brickearth was a mid brown sandy clayey silt of soft compaction also observed in all the underpinning trenches. Its highest level of 38.83m OD was recorded in Trench 17 (context [19]) and its lowest level of 38.43m OD in Trench 9 (context [4]). This layer had very occasional small CBM flakes and occasional animal bone inclusions and was interpreted as plough soil of possibly medieval or post-medieval origins. Recorded in Trench 5 as context [1], this layer was truncated at 38.67m OD by S-W/N-E construction cut [9] for a late 19th early 20th century brick drain [7]. Cut [9] measured 1.80m S-W/N-E by 0.80m wide and was 1.40 deep while drain [7] was 0.55m wide, 1.08 deep and 1.80 long. The brick drain [7] was recorded at 38.13m OD and was covered by compacted mid brown greyish sandy clayey silt [8] with occasional fragments and flecks of CBM. Finally, the N-S construction cut for the concrete foundation of the existing dining room, truncated [8] at 38.67m OD.

5.2 Basement Trench

- 5.2.1 The earliest deposit was observed in the north facing Section 3, located in the south of the trench. This was a 0.47m thick firm mid greyish bluish natural clay [36] with a highest level of 37.78m OD and a lowest level of 37.49m OD at the north of the trench. This natural deposit was in turn sealed by a 0.60m thick layer of mid orangey brown sandy silt clay brickearth, recorded as context [35] at a height of 38.33m OD in

Section 3, and as [38] at 37.66m OD in the south facing Section 11 at the northern limit of excavation. Deposits [35] and [38] were interpreted as the same natural brickearth already encountered during the excavation of the underpinning trenches.

5.2.2 Sealing the natural brickearth was a 0.40m thick layer of mid brown sandy clayey silt of soft compaction recorded as context [37] in Section 11 and as [14] in Section 3 and recorded at heights of 38.06m OD and 38.48m OD respectively. This layer had very occasional small CBM flecks and occasional animal bone inclusions and was interpreted as plough soil of possibly medieval or post-medieval origin. It was truncated by the S-W/N-E construction cut for a brick drain previously observed and recorded as [7] in Trench 5 during the underpinning groundworks. Brick drain [7] was connected to a S-E/N-W and an E-W drainage system that was visible across the full area of the trench.

5.2.3 In the south of the trench, deposit [14] was sealed at 38.51m OD by a 0.04m thick dump layer of charcoal and slag [13]. Overlying [13] was a 0.20m thick layer of compacted dark brown sandy silt [12] with occasional CBM fragments. This layer was found at 38.73m OD, recorded in Section 3 and interpreted as a late post-medieval make-up layer. Deposit [12] was sealed at 38.95m OD by a 0.25m thick sandy silt layer [11] which in turn was sealed at 39.51m OD by a 0.56m thick sandy clayey silt layer [10] with frequent CBM and mortar fragments. Layers [11] and [10] were interpreted as 20th century make-up layers associated with the construction of the bank sloping from the eastern dining room wall, downwards to the edge of the road to the east. A N-S gas service trench and the construction cut for the southern entrance to the existing building truncated [10] to the east and west respectively. Finally the topsoil and the grass of the original bank sealed the backfill of the construction cut to the west and the backfill of the modern service trench to the east.

5.3 Service Trench Diversion

5.3.1 The earliest deposit observed in this trench was a 0.12m thick layer of mid orangey brown sandy silt clay [34] recorded at 37.98m OD. This layer was interpreted as the same natural brickearth previously encountered during the excavation of the underpinning and basement trenches. Sealing [34] at 38.60m OD was a 0.60m thick modern deposit that was interpreted as a levelling layer for the 0.10m thick tarmac and concrete for the existing road east of Eltham College dining room.

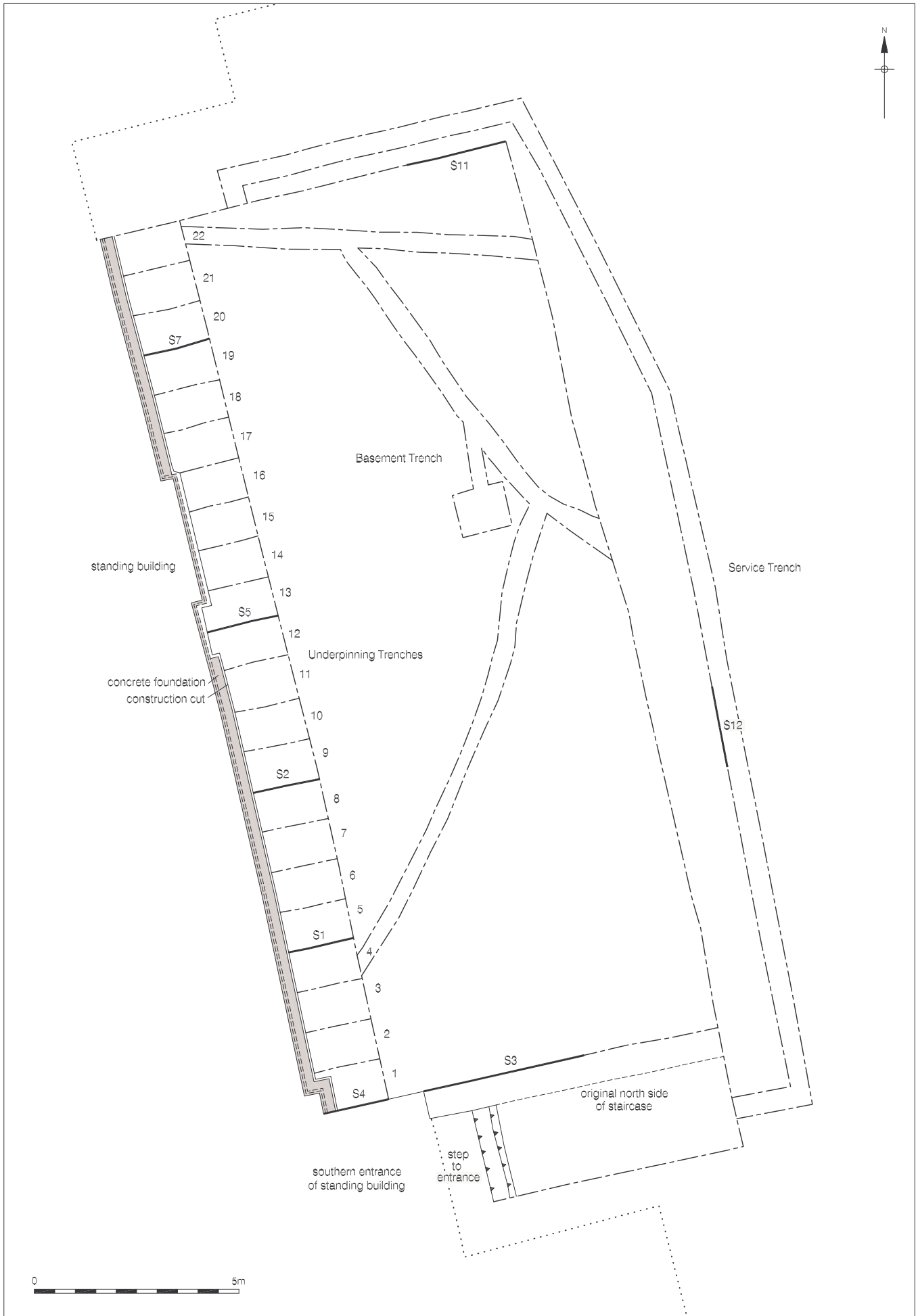
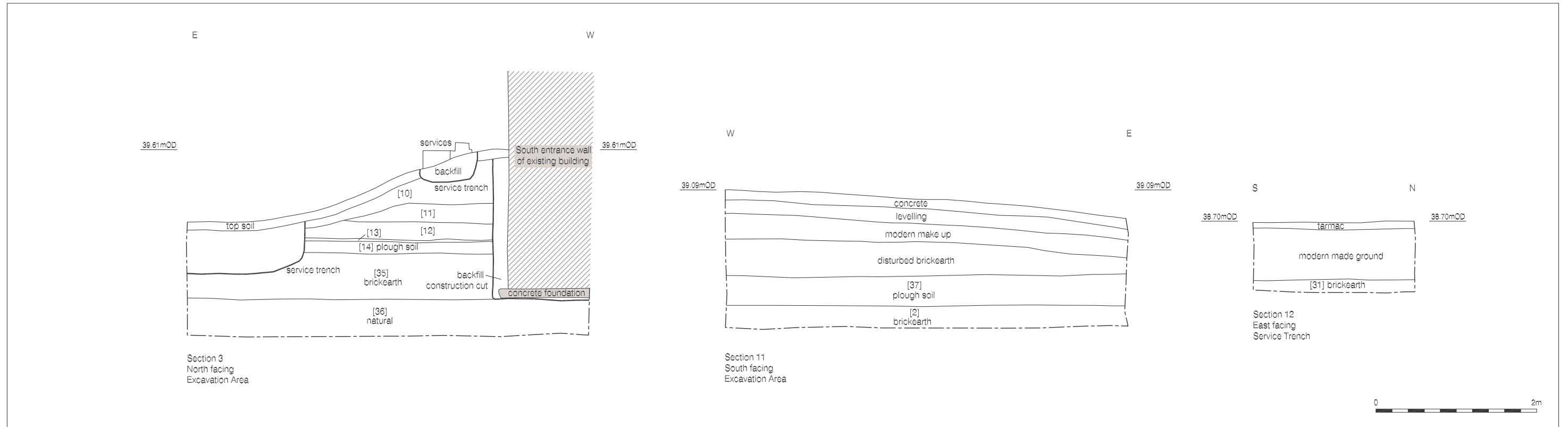
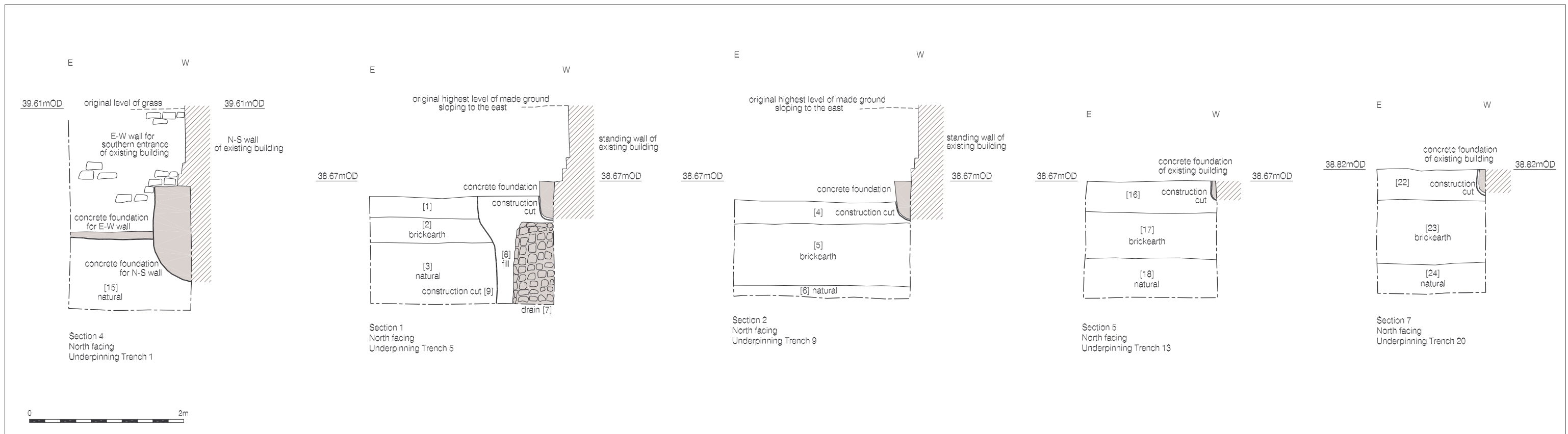


Figure 3
Trench Plan
1:125 at A4



Basement and Service Trench Sections



Underpinning Trench Sections

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Figure 4
Sections 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 11 & 12
1:50 at A3

6 CONCLUSION

- 6.1 The archaeological watching brief recorded natural brickearth across the area of the new development. Sealing this was a layer of plough soil which pre-dated the construction of the college, and although no dating evidence was recovered from this horizon, it is appears that this was associated with agricultural use of the land, possibly even associated with the medieval hall, Friary Hall, known to be located in the vicinity of the site.
- 6.2 With the exception of a late 19th/early 20th century drainage system recorded across the area of the proposed basement, no archaeological features were observed during the watching brief.

7 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- 7.1 Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited would like to thank Doug Evans of Thomas Ford & Partners for commissioning the fieldwork on behalf of Eltham College, Kevin Ryan for organising the site work and Mark Stevenson of English Heritage (GLAAS) for monitoring the work on behalf of the London Borough of Bromley.
- 7.2 The author would like to thank Tim Bradley for project managing the watching brief and editing the present report, Hayley Baxter for the illustrations and Jem Rogers for his help on site.

APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT INDEX

Context	Type	Description	Trench no.	Section no.
1	Layer	Mid brown sandy clayey silt (disturbed brickearth)	5	1
2	Layer	Mid orangey sandy silt clay (brickearth)	5	1
3	Layer	Natural sandy gravel clay	5	1
4	Layer	Same as (1)	9	2
5	Layer	Same as (2)	9	2
6	Layer	Same as (3)	9	2
7	Masonry	Brick drain (early 20 th c. late 19 th c.)	5	1
8	Fill	Backfill of construction cut for drain (7)	5	1
9	Cut	Construction cut for drain (7)	5	1
10	Layer	Made ground	Basement's trench	3
11	Layer	Mid to dark clean sandy silt	Basement's trench	3
12	Layer	Dark brown sandy silt	Basement's trench	3
13	Layer	Black layer of charcoal and slags	Basement's trench	3
14	Layer	Mid brown sandy silt gavel	Basement's trench	3
15	Layer	Same as (3)	1	4
16	Layer	Same as (1)	13	5
17	Layer	Same as (2)	13	5
18	Layer	Same as (3)	13	5
19	Layer	Same as (1)	17	6
20	Layer	Same as (2)	17	6
21	Layer	Same as (3)	17	6
22	Layer	Same as (1)	20	7
23	Layer	Same as (2)	20	7
24	Layer	Same as (3)	20	7
25	Layer	Same as (1)	7	9
26	Layer	Same as (2)	7	9
27	Layer	Same as (3)	7	9

28	Layer	Same as (1)	3	8
29	Layer	Same as (2)	3	8
30	Layer	Same as (3)	3	8
31	Layer	Same as (1)	11	10
32	Layer	Same as (2)	11	10
33	Layer	Same as (3)	11	10
34	Layer	Same as (2)	Service trench	12
35	Layer	Same as (2)	Basement's trench	3
36	Layer	Same as (3)	Basement's trench	3
37	Layer	Same as (1)	Basement's trench	11
38	Layer	Same as (2)	Basement's trench	11

APPENDIX 2

OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM

Project details

Project name	AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF AT ELTHAM COLLEGE, GROVE PARK ROAD, LONDON BOROUGH OF BROMLEY
Short description of the project	The site is located within an Archaeological Priority Area as defined by the Unitary Development Plan for the borough and in addition the Greater London Sites and Monument Record indicates that the school is on the site of a medieval hall called Friary Hall. The watching brief consisted of the excavation of 22 underpinning trenches, the basement trench for the dining room extension and the service trench for the diversion of gas and water services. The excavation of these trenches produced a sequence of natural deposits sealed by an undated plough soil. The plough soil pre-dates the construction of the dining room building and that of the drainage system observed across underpinning Trench 5 and the basement trench. A sequence of late post-medieval and modern dumped deposits for the construction of the bank sloping from the eastern dining room wall downwards to the edge of the road to the east was also recorded.
Project dates	Start: 01-10-2007 End: 24-10-2007
Previous/future work	No / No
Type of project	Recording project
Current Land use	Other 5 - Garden
Investigation type	'Watching Brief'
Prompt	Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPG16

Project location

Country	England
Site location	GREATER LONDON BROMLEY BROMLEY ELTHAM COLLEGE, GROVE PARK ROAD, LONDON BOROUGH OF BROMLEY
Study area	100.00 Square metres

Height OD Min: 38.12m Max: 38.44m

Project creators

Name of Organisation Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd

Project brief originator English Heritage

Project design originator Tim Bradley

Project director/manager Tim Bradley

Project supervisor Ireneo Grosso

Type of sponsor/funding body Eltham College

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists? No

Digital Archive recipient LAARC

Digital Contents 'Stratigraphic'

Digital Media available 'Survey'

Paper Archive recipient LAARC

Paper Media available 'Drawing','Photograph','Plan','Report','Section'

Project bibliography 1

Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

Publication type

Title AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF AT ELTHAM COLLEGE, GROVE PARK ROAD, LONDON BOROUGH OF BROMLEY

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