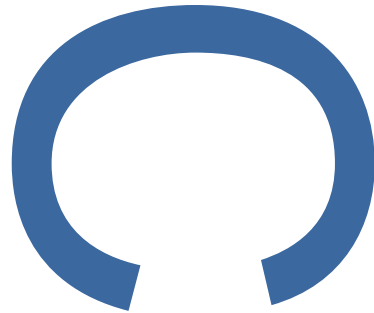
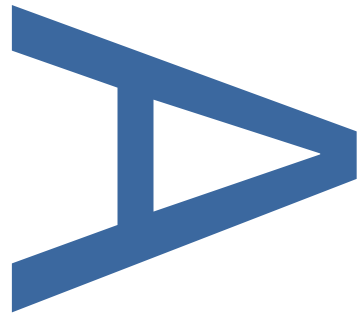


**Fern House School, Keswick Drive,
London Borough of Enfield**



Archaeological Evaluation



<i>Planning reference</i>	CLO22241		
<i>Local planning authority</i>	London Borough of Enfield		
<i>PCA report no.</i>	R13843	<i>Site Code</i>	KSK19
<i>PCA project no</i>	K6317	<i>Date</i>	September 19

PRE-CONSTRUCT ARCHAEOLOGY LIMITED

www.pre-construct.com

Project Information	
Site name	Fern House School, Keswick Drive, London Borough of Enfield
Project type	Archaeological Evaluation
Site address	Keswick Drive, Enfield EN3 6NY
NGR	TQ 3536 9907
Local planning authority	London Borough of Enfield
Planning reference	CLO22241
Commissioning client	London Borough of Enfield
Project dates	2019
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PCA Information			
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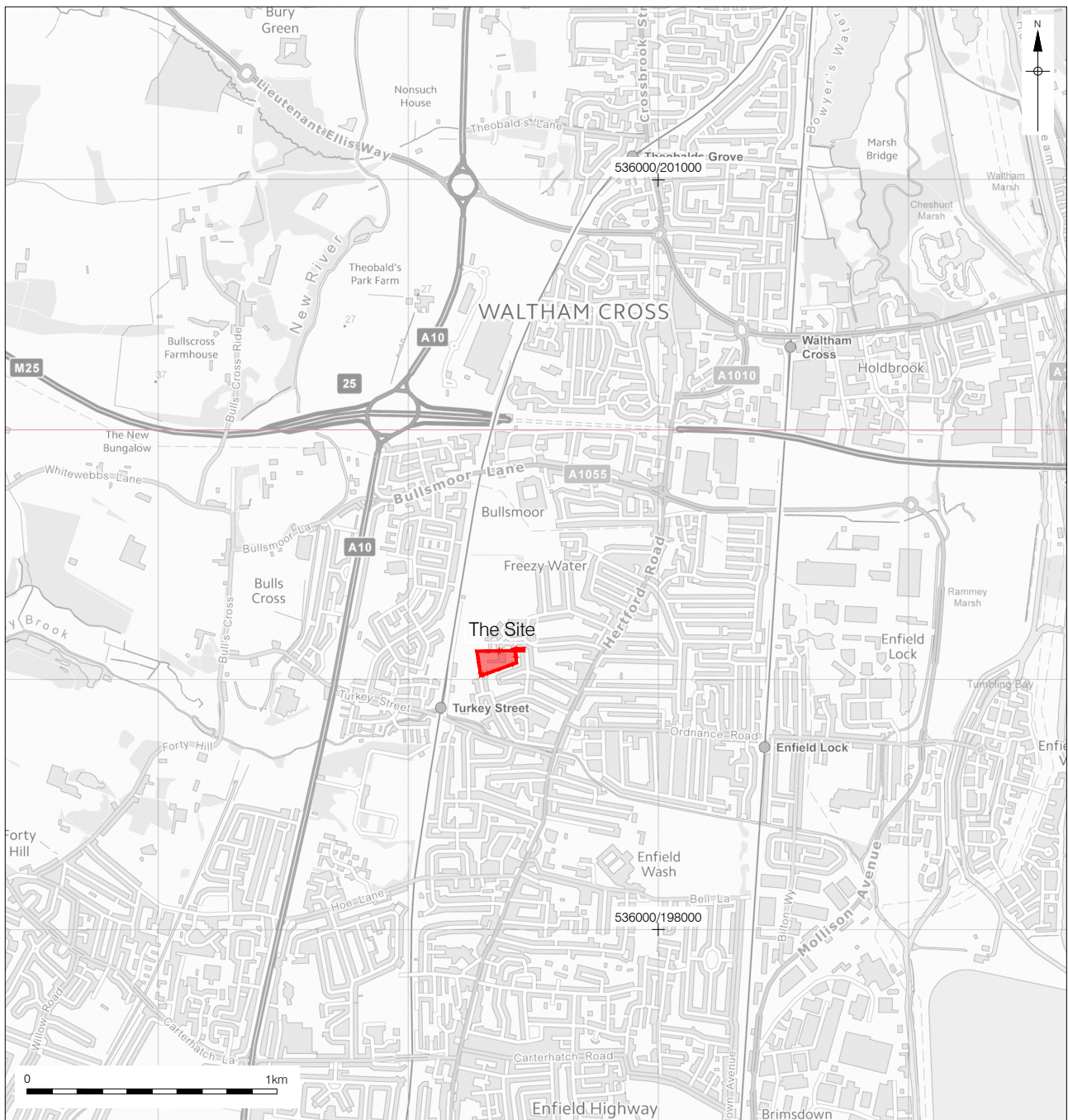
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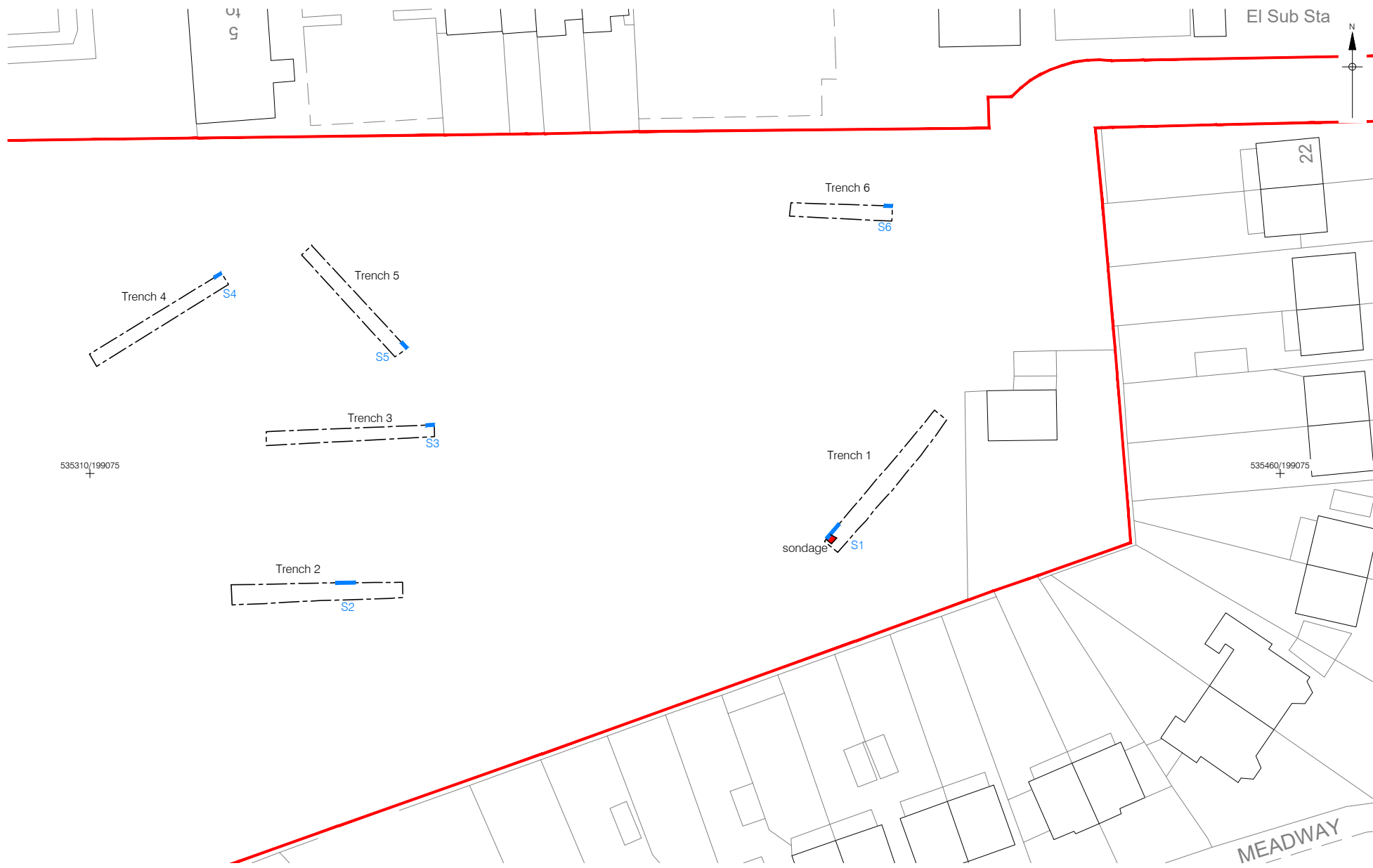
1 ABSTRACT

- 1.1 This report details the results of an archaeological evaluation undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd at Land at Fern House School, Keswick Drive, London Borough of Enfield EN3 6NY. The central grid reference for the site was TQ 3536 9907. The fieldwork was undertaken between 9th and 13th September 2019. The work was commissioned by Reetah Holland of BHP Architects on behalf of the London Borough of Enfield.
- 1.2 The archaeological evaluation recorded natural sandy gravel throughout all the evaluation trenches between 24.56m OD and 23.51m OD. This deposit represented the Taplow Gravel Member known to underlie the site.
- 1.3 Cutting the natural terrace gravels in evaluation Trench 1 was a series of four features; two of which were irregular and may have been of natural origin, although one contained a Neolithic flint blade, and two circular pits, possibly representing quarrying of the natural gravel. One of these pits contained a fragment of early Roman brick whilst the second larger pit contained an artefactual assemblage comprising animal bone, pottery dated to the prehistoric and Roman periods, lithics of a Mesolithic/Neolithic and late Bronze Age/early Iron Age date, a quantity of burnt flint and a fragment of early Roman quern all of which was residual. The presence of two sherds of Saxon pottery within the assemblage suggests a date of deposition between AD 400-650 AD, a date which is contemporary with Saxon settlement evidence at the nearby Aylands Allotment site. The residual artefactual assemblage is a strong indicator of activity on or in close proximity to the site from the Mesolithic/Neolithic, late Bronze Age/early Iron Age and Roman periods.
- 1.4 A single undated boundary ditch aligned north-south was recorded cutting the natural gravel in Trench 2. Although this feature contained no dating evidence based on the residual material found in Trench 1 this boundary ditch could conceivably date from some point between the Mesolithic/Neolithic through until the Roman period.
- 1.5 Evaluation Trenches 3, 4, 5 and 6 recorded no archaeological features or deposits despite represented an undisturbed land surface. Only evaluation Trench 6 saw truncation relating to landscaping undertaken during the construction of Aylands School (now Fern House) in the second half of the 20th century.

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 An archaeological evaluation was carried out on land at Fern House School, Keswick Drive, London Borough of Enfield EN3 6NY (Figure 1), formerly known as Aylands School, in advance of the redevelopment of the site. The fieldwork was undertaken between 9th and 13th September 2019.
- 2.2 The site was centred at TQ 3536 9907 and comprised a roughly triangular plot of land approximately 0.84 ha in size that narrows towards the east which is currently occupied by the redundant former Aylands School and associated external and playground areas. The site is bounded by residential plots to the north, east and south and by a park called Aylands Open Space to the west.
- 2.3 An archaeological desk-based assessment (DBA) was previously prepared for the site (Reade 2016, carried out under the site's previous name of Aylands School) which found that the site is located adjacent to the Aylands allotment site, where remains dating to the prehistoric, Roman and Saxon periods were found during an archaeological watching brief.
- 2.4 A planning application was submitted to the London Borough of Enfield for the demolition of the current school building and the erection of a new two storey school. The new building comprises classrooms, a kitchen, a hall, a music room, a secure reception, various storage facilities, etc. An archaeological condition was attached to the planning permission for the site.
- 2.5 The evaluation methodology was outlined in a site specific Written Scheme of Investigation (Hawkins 2019) which was prepared prior to the fieldwork and was approved by Sandy Kidd, Archaeological Advisor for the Greater London Archaeological Advisory Service (GLAAS) on behalf of the London Borough of Enfield.
- 2.6 The fieldwork consisted of six trenches designed to target the area of the new build and new car parking areas (Figure 2); these were intended to assess the presence or absence of archaeological features, structures or deposits within the development area.
- 2.7 The archaeological investigation was conducted by PCA under the supervision of the author, project managed by Helen Hawkins and was monitored on behalf of Sandy Kidd of Historic England on behalf of the London Borough of Enfield.
- 2.8 The fieldwork was issued the unique site code KSK19. The completed archive comprising written, drawn and photographic records will, upon completion of the project, be deposited with the appropriate local repository under that code.





3 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

- 3.1** The British Geological Survey identifies the underlying bedrock geology on the subject site to be the 'London Clay Formation'. This clay and silt deposit formed between 34 and 56 million years ago in deep seas during the Palaeogene Period.
- 3.2** The British Geological Survey suggests the site to lie predominantly on the Taplow Gravel Member, described as sand and gravel, with the Enfield Silt Member, described as clay and silt, in close proximity to the west, north and east. These deposits were formed up to 2 million years ago in the Quaternary Period.
- 3.3** Modern ground level at the site illustrated a general slope down from c. 25.28m OD in the west to c. 24.10m OD in the east.

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

- 4.1 The following is summarised from a detailed archaeological and historical background which was included within the archaeological desk-based assessment (Reade 2016).

Prehistory

- 4.2 An archaeological investigation conducted at the Aylands Allotments just north of the site recorded a number of shallow features dug into the natural gravels, three of which contained worked flint and tools dating to the late Mesolithic–early Neolithic period and a further three contained late Bronze Age to early Iron Age pottery and burnt flint.

- 4.3 A further prehistoric horizon was encountered during a watching brief at 735-757 Hertford Road, located less than 500m to the north-east of the site. This comprised an irregular alluvial silty deposit, thought to represent a waterlogged area or an area of flooding overlying the natural gravels, and which contained Bronze Age pottery.

Roman

- 4.4 It is thought that the Roman Road of Ermine Street ran through Enfield; leading from *Londinium* up north towards Lincoln and York. The location of Ermine Street in the area is thought to be roughly that of the current A10 (Great Cambridge Road), which lies approximately 600m to the west of the site.

- 4.5 Despite the presence of these Roman roads, there is little to suggest that the general area was being intensively settled. However, a small Roman settlement has been identified near to Bush Hill Park, approximately 5km southwest of the site. Further evidence for Roman activity closer to the site comprise a ditch and an alluvial layer containing Roman material recorded to the north-east of the site along Hertford Road and a pit with residual Roman tile and glass recorded just north of the current site during a watching brief at Aylands Allotments. These findings are highly suggestive of light occupation within the area of the site.

Saxon/Early Medieval

- 4.6 The only indicator of human activity from the Saxon period in the area comprises two early Saxon sunken-featured buildings (SFBs) and a significant amount of pottery dated to between AD 400–600 recorded during an evaluation at Aylands Allotments. These remain the only SFBs from North London recorded in the GLHER, with the nearest examples all located within the core settlement area by the Thames and their proximity to the site is notable. The pottery found at the site was all considered to be consistent with a domestic context and suggest that cooking and eating took place in one of the buildings, while the other was utilised for storage.

Medieval

4.7 The GLHER evidence within the search radius records no features or artefacts dating to the medieval period found through archaeological investigations.

Post-medieval

4.8 During the post-medieval period the site was located in the area of land known as Dungfield, which lay between Bullsmoor Lane and Turkey Street with tithes going to the Vicar of Enfield. In a 1572 Survey, Dungfield comprised fifty-four acres in forty-seven pieces which belonged to twenty-three tenants; six of which lived in Turkey Street, six at Horsepoolstones (Enfield Wash) and two in Bulls Cross Lane (Bullsmoor Lane).

4.9 The settlement around Turkey Street contained ten houses in 1572. By 1754, as indicated on Rocque's map of Middlesex, the cottages were not significantly more numerous and formed a group near the inn, a little to the east of the bridge over the New River. A loose line of structures can be seen fronting both the main north–south roads, though the majority of the area continues to be open space into the late 18th century.

4.10 Cartographic evidence illustrates that the area of the site lay as open fields from the mid 18th century until the construction of Aylands School in the second half of the 20th century.

5 METHODOLOGY

- 5.1 A detailed methodology for the archaeological evaluation is set out within the Written Scheme of Investigation (Hawkins 2019). The original methodology for the evaluation consisted of six evaluation trenches, five of which were proposed to measure 20m x 1.8m at base and one was to measure 10m x 1.8m.
- 5.2 With the exception of Trench 6 all the evaluation trenches were excavated to the dimensions specified in the WSI. As modern services were recorded centrally within Trench 6 it was extended to the east in an effort to compensate for the percentage lost by the aforementioned modern services which had to be avoided.
- 5.3 All evaluation trenches were set out and located with a GPS survey instrument. Prior to, and during, excavation of all evaluation trenches their locations were scanned using a cable avoidance tool (CAT). A JCB mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless bucket, under the supervision of an attendant archaeologist, removed the modern overburden and continued in spits until archaeological deposits or natural strata was encountered. In three locations the JCB fitted with a breaker was utilised to break tarmac under archaeological supervision prior to excavation.
- 5.4 Following machine excavation, relevant faces of the trench that require examination or recording will be cleaned using appropriate hand tools. The majority of the investigation of archaeological levels will be by hand, with cleaning, examination and recording both in plan and in section.
- 5.5 All recording systems adopted during the investigations were fully compatible with those most widely used elsewhere in London; that is those developed out of the Department of Urban Archaeology Site Manual, now published by Museum of London Archaeology (MoLAS 1994). Individual descriptions of all archaeological and geological strata and features excavated and 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 at scale of 1:20 and the sections at 1:10. The OD heights of all principle strata were calculated and indicated on the appropriate plans and sections. A full photographic record was taken in the digital format.
- 5.6 A GPS survey instrument was used to install two temporary benchmarks (TBM) with values of 24.67m OD and 24.75m OD.
- 5.7 In this report all context numbers (cuts, layers and fills) are written in squared brackets [], small finds are denoted by SF and environmental samples are bracketed with curly brackets { }.

6 PHASED ARCHAEOLOGICAL SEQUENCE

6.1 Phase 1: Natural

6.1.1 The earliest deposit recorded during the evaluation was a natural sandy-gravel deposit, encountered throughout all the evaluation trenches. This deposit is consistent with the known underlying geology as described by the British Geological Survey as the Taplow Gravel Member. The recorded Ordnance Datum heights for this natural horizon are tabulated by trench below,

Trench	Context No.	Height (m OD)
1	7	23.91
2	14	24.25
3	15	24.45
4	16	24.56
5	17	24.26
6	18	23.51

6.2 Phase 2: Possible natural features

6.2.1 Cutting the natural terrace gravel horizon [7] in Trench 1 were two irregularly shaped features, [6] and [9]. Feature [6], located at 23.52m OD, was irregular in shape with an inconsistent profile with dimensions of 1.6m by 1.06m by 0.2m deep and was filled by a homogenous and sterile deposit, [5], from which was recovered however a single struck flint most likely dated to the Neolithic period (Appendix 6). Feature [9], recorded in section at 23.91m OD, also appeared to be irregular by natural with recorded dimensions of 0.9m by 0.84m by 0.52m deep and was also filled by a single homogenous and sterile deposit [8] which contained no material culture. The irregular shape and sterile and homogenous deposits which fill these features suggest they are of natural original.

6.3 Phase 3: Undated feature

6.3.1 Cutting the natural terrace gravel deposit [14] in Trench 2 was a ditch, [13]. This ditch ran north-south through the trench with recorded dimensions of 2.02m in length, continuing both north and south beyond the trench limits, by 0.95m wide with a maximum depth of 0.38m. A single homogenous and sterile silt deposit, [12], filled the ditch which contained no dating evidence; however the fill did contain small fragments of CBM as an inclusion. Recorded at 24.25m OD this undated feature most likely represents a simple boundary ditch.

6.4 Phase 4: Saxon

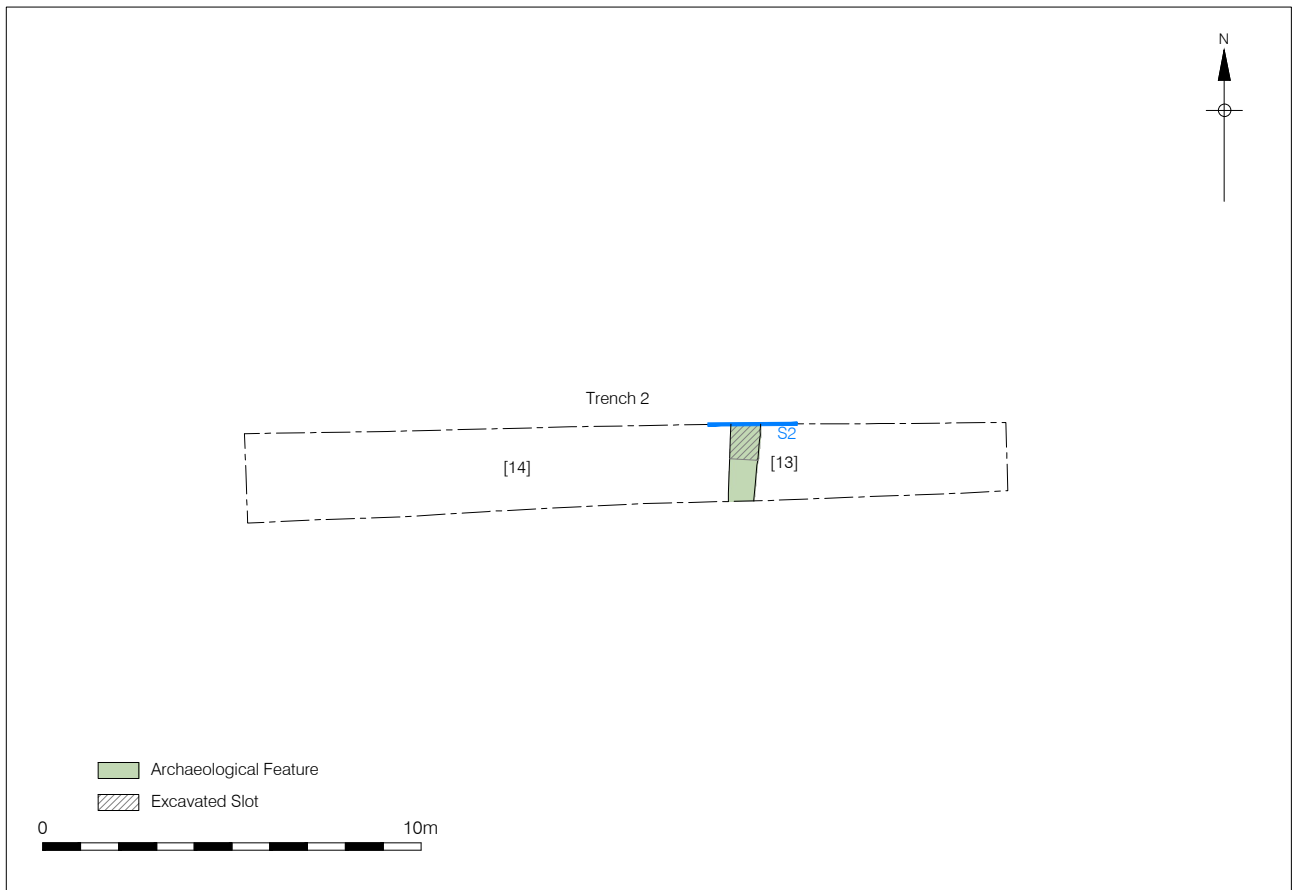
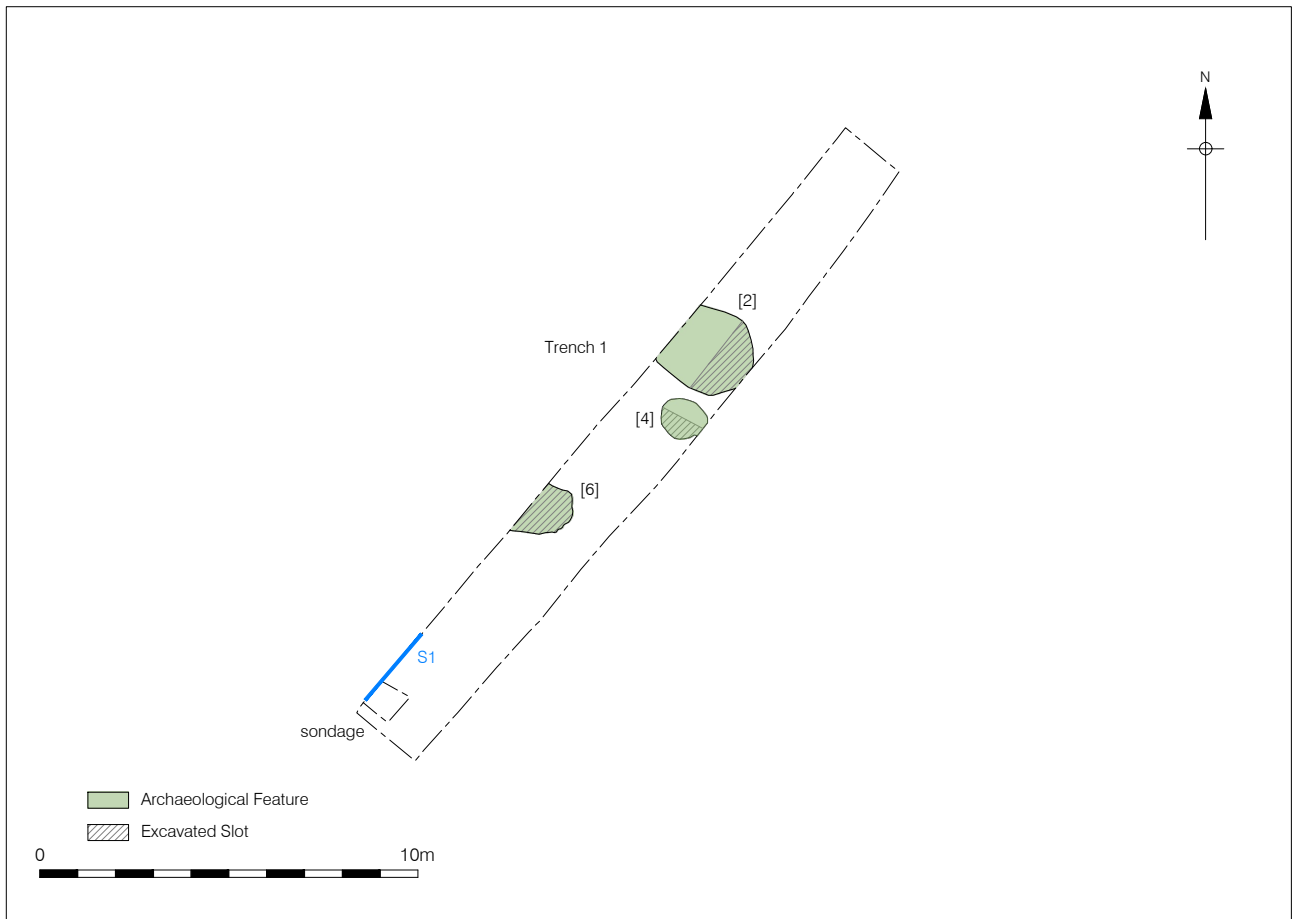
6.4.1 Cutting the natural terrace gravel horizon [7] in the northeastern end of Trench 1 were two possible quarry pits, [2] and [4], located in close proximity to one another. Pit [2], recorded at 23.48m OD, was sub-circular in shape with near vertical steep sides and was notably large, measuring 2.12m by 2.08m and at least 0.71m deep. This was not the fully depth of the pit as it continued deeper but the base could not be reached within the constraints of

the evaluation trench. A single deposit filled the pit, [1], from which was recovered a small assemblage of pottery, animal bone, building material and lithics. The ceramic assemblage included fragments of a prehistoric date represented by a reduced fine calcined flint-tempered ware, a thin walled fine fossil shell-tempered ware and a sherd of mixed grits ware (Appendix 3). A sherd of Roman fine sandy micaceous oxidised ware with a burnished exterior was also recovered but more pertinently two sherds of a sand-tempered ware jar with a wiped external surface dated to the early Saxon period c. AD 400-650 (ibid). A fragment of Hertfordshire Pudding stone quern was also recovered from the fill which is traditionally of early Roman date but in this instance is residual (Appendix 4). A small assemblage of residual lithics was also recovered and comprised flakes and flake fragments dated to the Mesolithic/Neolithic period and late Bronze Age/early Iron Age and a group of 24 pieces of burnt flint (Appendix 6). A small but poorly preserved animal bone assemblage recovered from fill [1] comprised a fragmentary cattle femur and mandibular second molar (Appendix 5). This pit is dated to the Saxon period based on the latest Saxon ceramic fabric amongst earlier residual material.

6.4.2 Pit [4] was located just to the southwest of pit [2] at the same height of 23.48m OD. This second pit was oval in shape with recorded dimensions of 1.04m by 1.2m by at least 0.33m deep, but the full depth of this pit was not reached. A single deposit, [3], filled the pit from which was recovered fragmentary and poorly preserved cattle sized tooth fragments (Appendix 5) and a fragment of Roman brick *bessalis* dated to AD 50-160+ (Appendix 4).

6.5 Phase 5: Modern

6.5.1 Completing the sequence in all evaluation trenches were modern deposits of made ground or topsoil. Trenches 1 and 2 recorded subsoil and topsoil at highest levels of 24.33m OD and 24.72m OD respectively, Trench 3 recorded topsoil and subsoil throughout the majority of the trench but the eastern end saw modern made ground sealed by tarmac at 24.98m OD. Trench 4 recorded subsoil and topsoil at 25.09m OD and Trench 5 recorded subsoil and topsoil throughout the majority of the trench and modern made ground overlain by tarmac located at the southeastern end, at 24.90m OD. Trench 6 notably saw modern disturbance represented by redeposited gravel, two modern services, overlain by tarmac between 24.41m and 24.23m OD. These highest Ordnance Datum heights represent the modern ground level.



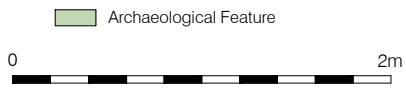
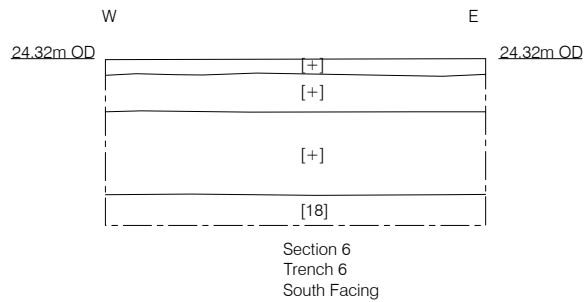
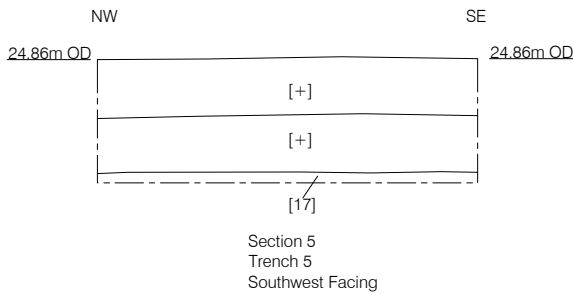
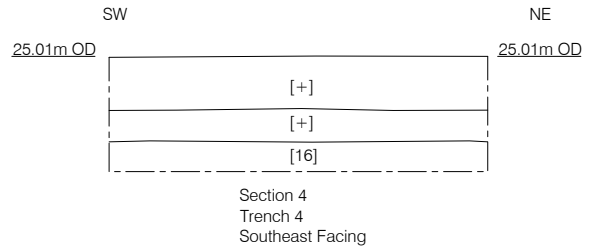
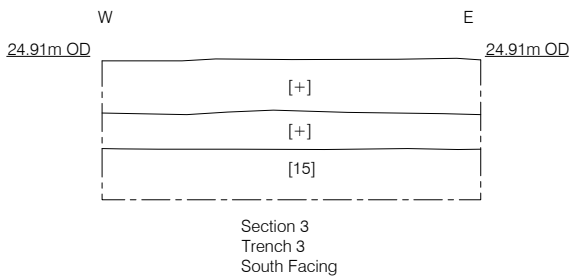
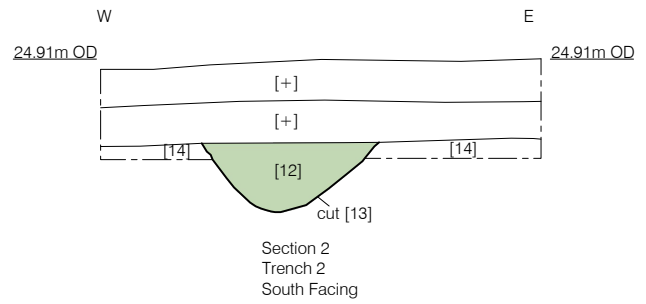
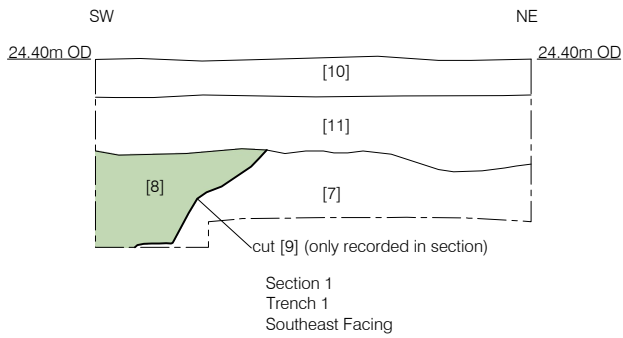




Plate 1: Pits [2] and [4] in Trench 1 facing northwest, 1m scale



Plate 2: Trench 2 facing west, 1m scale



Plate 3: Ditch [13] in Trench 2 facing north, 1m scale



Plate 4: Trench 3 facing west, 1m scale



Plate 5: Trench 4 facing northwest, 1m scale



Plate 6: Trench 5 facing southeast, 1m scale



Plate 7: Trench 6 facing east, 1m scale

7 CONCLUSIONS

- 7.1 Natural sandy-gravel deposits were recorded throughout all the evaluation trenches between a highest level of 24.56m OD to the northwest in Trench 4 sloping to 23.91m OD to the southeast in Trench 1. A lowest level of 23.51m OD was recorded on the natural surface within Trench 6 but this represented a truncated horizon. The heights on this natural horizon suggest a gentle slope from west to east across the site. The natural sandy gravels recorded throughout the evaluation trenches are consistent with the known underlying geology described by the British Geological Survey as the Taplow Gravel Member, described as sand and gravel, were formed up to 2 million years ago in the Quaternary Period.
- 7.2 Recorded in the southwestern half of Trench 1 were two probable natural features, [6] and [9]. Both these features were irregular in nature; in plan and also the edges and base and were filled with a sterile and homogenous deposit. The fill of feature [6], deposit [5] did yield a single flint blade most likely dating to the Neolithic period (Appendix 6) but otherwise contained no anthropogenic material including small and occasional inclusions. Provisionally these features are interpreted as natural due to their irregularity, however, the presence of a Neolithic flint blade should not be dismissed.
- 7.3 Also recorded in the opposite northeastern side of evaluation Trench 1 were two pits, [2] and [4]. These pits were located in close proximity alongside one another with [2] being notably large in size and may simply represent quarrying of the natural gravel. A small assemblage of pottery, building material, lithics, burnt flint and animal bone was recovered from both these pits (Appendices 3, 4, 5 & 6); the ceramic assemblage, all recovered from pit [2], including residual prehistoric and Roman fabrics but more pertinently including two fragments of an early Saxon date c. AD 400-650. The building material and lithics were also residual as represented by Hertfordshire pudding quern stone and Roman brick tesserae, the lithics being of a Mesolithic/Neolithic and Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age date. The animal bone assemblage provided minimal information as it was poorly preserved and predominantly represented cattle.
- 7.4 It should be noted here that only pit [2] contained Saxon dating evidence amongst earlier residual material. Pit [4] however only contained the single fragment of early Roman brick tesserae which may have represented its primary dating evidence as opposed to being residual. Currently pit [4] however, is phased with Saxon pit [2] out of convenience, proximity and similarity in composition of fill but it cannot be entirely discounted that it is indeed a feature of Roman date.
- 7.5 The Saxon date for activity is of some interest as two early Saxon sunken featured buildings (SFBs) were recorded to the northwest at the Aylands Allotments site along with a significant assemblage of pottery dated AD 400-600 (Cowie & Blackmore 2008, 16-19), a date comparable to pottery recovered during the evaluation from pit [2]. The pits recorded

during the evaluation in Trench 1 could therefore be seen as contemporary to the early Saxon occupation at the Aylands Allotment which appears to continue albeit intermittently across the area of the site. The lack of archaeological evidence within evaluation Trenches 3 to 5 should be noted here as the Aylands Allotment site was located north/northwest of the site and therefore closer to the aforementioned negative trenches.

- 7.6 The residual artefactual assemblages recovered from pit [2], and potentially pit [4], are small but of some significance. The material ranges from Mesolithic/Neolithic and Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age lithics, undated burnt flint, prehistoric and Roman pottery and Roman building material including a fragment of quern (Appendices 3, 4, 5 & 6). This assemblage therefore suggests activity in close proximity to or on the site during the Mesolithic/Neolithic, Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age and early Roman periods. Indeed this activity appears to represent evidence for settlement based on the domestic nature of the ceramics, a bessalis brick and quern stone. Late Mesolithic -early Neolithic lithics and late Bronze Age to early Iron Age pottery and burnt flint was also recovered from the Aylands Allotments site along with residual Roman tile and glass (Reade 2016) all of which corroborates the date of activity identified from the residual material recovered during the evaluation and fits a pattern of occupation in a relatively small location.
- 7.7 Further archaeological activity was recorded in evaluation Trench 2 by an undated ditch aligned north-south. The nature of the fill of this feature suggests it was not of a modern date and based on the evidence presented by the artefactual assemblage recovered from features in Trench 1 this ditch, most likely representing a simple boundary or possibly an enclosure, could date to the late Bronze Age/early Iron Age, Roman or early Saxon periods.
- 7.7.1 Outside of evaluation Trenches 1 and 2, the remaining four trenches, 3 to 6, encountered only natural strata and no further archaeological features or deposits.
- 7.8 Modern made ground, located in the eastern and south-eastern ends of Trenches 3 and 5, and throughout Trench 6, and topsoil completed the depositional sequence within the evaluation trenches. Trench 6 notably saw modern intrusion and truncation which relates to its position within the car park area of the school which has shown evidence of landscaping during the construction of the school.

8 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- 8.1 Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd would like to thank Reetah Holland of BHP Architects for commissioning the work on behalf of the London Borough of Enfield.
- 8.2 Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd would also like to thank Sandy Kidd of Historic England for monitoring the fieldwork on behalf of the London Borough of Enfield.
- 8.3 The author would like thank Helen Hawkins for her project management and editing of the report, Cecilia Galleano for the surveying and Ray Murphy for the CAD illustrations.
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- 8.5 The author would also like to thank Shane Maher for his invaluable assistance with the fieldwork.

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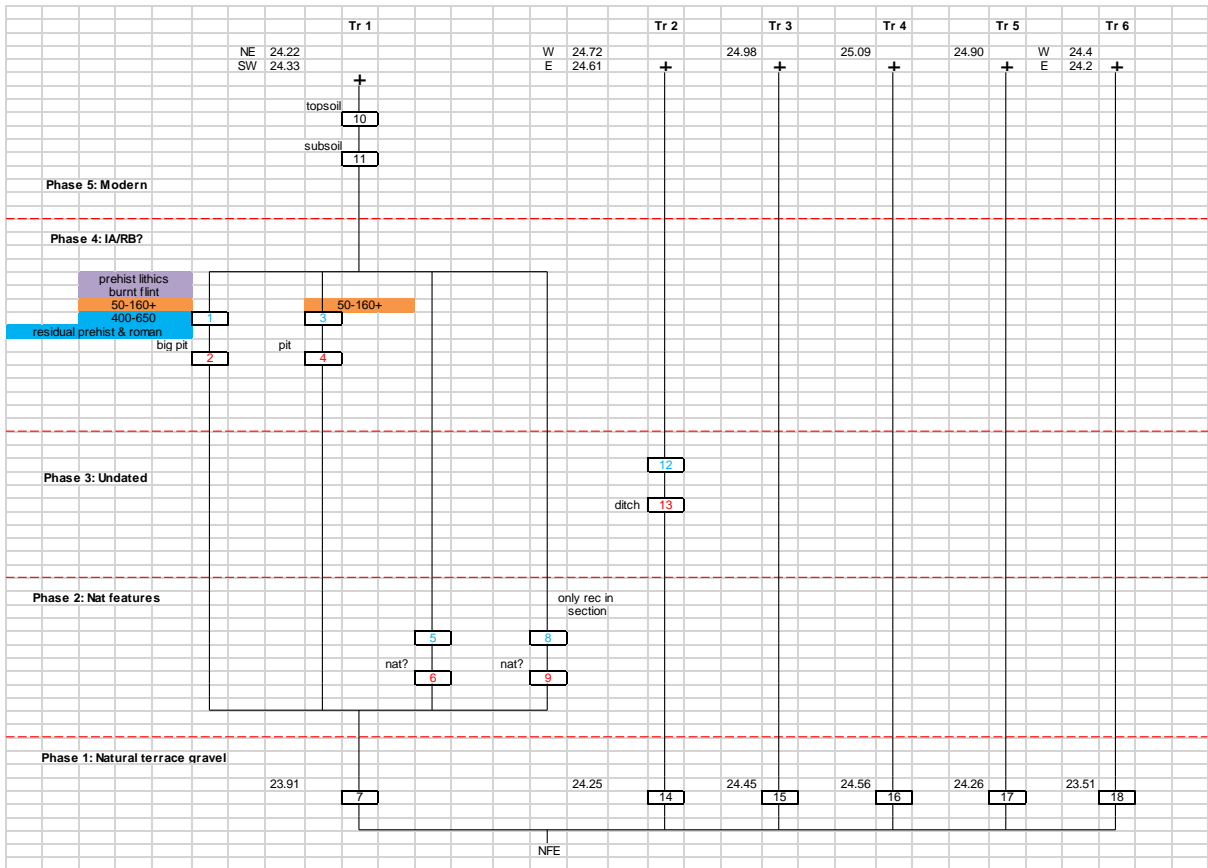
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APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT INDEX

Context	Type	Fill of	Trench	CTX Interpretation	Length	Width	Depth	Levels_high	Levels_low	Phase
1	Fill	2	1	Fill of pit [2]	2.12	2.08	0.71	23.48		4
2	Cut		1	Circular pit	2.12	2.08	0.71	23.48	22.77	4
3	Fill	4	1	Fill of pit [4]	1.01	1.2	0.33	23.48		4
4	Cut		1	Circular pit	1.04	1.2	0.33	23.48	23.15	4
5	Fill	6	1	Fill of poss natural feature [6]	1.6	1.06	0.2	23.52		2
6	Cut		1	Irregularly shaped poss natural feature	1.6	1.06	0.2	23.52	23.32	2
7	Layer		1	Natural sandy-gravel	20	2		23.91	23.79	1
8	Fill	9	1	Fill of poss natural feature [9]. Only recorded in section	0.9	0.84	0.52	23.92		2
9	Cut		1	Irregularly shaped poss natural feature, only recorded in section	0.9	0.84	0.52	23.92	23.39	2
10	Layer		1	Modern topsoil	20	2	0.2	24.22	24.22	5
11	Layer		1	Subsoil	20	2	0.4	24.19		5
12	Fill	13	2	Fill of ditch [13]	2.02	0.95	0.38	24.25		3
13	Cut		2	N-S aligned ditch	2.02	0.95	0.38	24.25	23.87	3
14	Layer		2	Natural sandy-gravel	20	2		24.25		1
15	Natural		3	Natural sandy-gravel	20	2		24.45		1
16	Layer		4	Natural sandy-gravel	20	2		24.56		1
17	Layer		5	Natural sandy-gravel	20	2		24.26		1
18	Layer		6	Natural sandy-gravel	20	2		23.51		1

APPENDIX 2: MATRIX



APPENDIX 3: POTTERY ASSESSMENT

Chris Jarrett

A total of seven sherds of pottery (44g) was recovered solely by hand from the archaeological work and this material was found in a single context: [1]. The pottery is of mixed dates. The flat base (10g) of a prehistoric vessel made in a reduced fine calcined flint-tempered ware is recorded. Other prehistoric sherds consist of a thin walled fragment (3g) of fine fossil shell-tempered ware from a closed form sand, besides a sherd (1g) of mixed grits ware (quartz, fine white flint and occasional ?cockle shell). A single sherd (1g) of a Roman fine sandy micaceous oxidised ware with a burnished exterior is noted. The latest pottery consists of two sherds (29g) of a sand-tempered ware vessel, probably a jar, with a wiped external surface is of an early Saxon date, c. AD 400-650.

The pottery has some significance for indicating possible prehistoric, Roman and early Saxon activity on or close to the site. The pottery has the potential to date the deposit it was found in. There are no recommendations for further work on the pottery at this stage, although its importance should be reviewed if further archaeological work is undertaken on the study area and new finds of pottery are made.

APPENDIX 4: BUILDING MATERIAL ASSESSMENT

Kevin Hayward

Introduction and Methods

This small ceramic building material and stone assemblage (five examples 887g) from the evaluation at Fern House Enfield (KSK19) was reviewed to determine its overall character, and to provide a list of spot dates.

The application of a 1kg masons hammer and sharp chisel to each example ensured that a small fresh fabric surface was exposed. The fabric was examined at x20 magnification using a long arm stereomicroscope or hand lens (Gowland x10).

Ceramic Building Material Fabrics and Forms

Roman

2452 (AD55-160) fine sandy fabric 4 examples 127g

Fragments of Roman flat tile and brick (small *bessalis* sized 30mm) all in the common sandy London fabric 2452 (AD55-160) were recovered from [1] and [3]. Their presence attests to late first to second century activity in the vicinity.

Stone

LIA/ERB

Roman

A 780g fragment of Hertfordshire Pudding stone quern (Palaeogene) was recovered from [1]. The stone, a classic flint conglomerate and silcrete (Green; 2011; 2017, 170-71) can be sourced to the Palaeogene beds of Hertfordshire including Baldock and St. Albans, some way to the north of Enfield. This stone is used in some quantity in LIA/ERB levels throughout Hertfordshire and much further afield along the Thames Estuary and even Silchester. As such it is a good chronological indicator for Early Roman activity. There is no form surviving but the element would have almost certainly been worked into the classic beehive shape.

Distribution

Context	Fabric	Form	Size	Date range of material		Latest dated material		Spot date	Spot date with mortar
1	3155; 2452	Hertfordshire Pudding Stone and early sandy Roman tile fragments	4	100 BC	160	50	160	50-160+	No mortar
3	2452	Roman brick bessalis	1	50	160	50	160	50-160+	No mortar

Review

Other than its ability to date the sequence the value of the small stone and ceramic building material assemblage at Fern House lies in its ability to attest to Roman activity in the immediate vicinity. The site lies close to Watling Street, which would account for the presence of Hertfordshire Pudding Stone, which outcrops at Baldock further up the road network. The presence of Hertfordshire Pudding stone quern would also suggest an earlier 1st to 2nd century date almost certainly associated with a Roman rural farmstead that is processing foodstuffs. The fragments of early Roman first and second century Roman ceramic building material including brick and tile merely reinforces the presence of an early set of building(s).

Bibliography

Green, C. (2011). 'Hertfordshire Puddingstone querns – working with a difficult rock'. In Williams and Peacock (2011): 123-30.

Green, C. (2017). 'Querns and Millstones in Late Iron Age and Roman London and South-East England'. In Bird (2017); 156-179.

APPENDIX 5: ANIMAL BONE ASSESSMENT

Karen Deighton

A small quantity of animal bone was recovered by hand during evaluation from the backfills of circular pits [2] and [4]. The results of analysis were as follows:

Context [1]

A fragmentary adult cattle femur and a cattle mandibular second molar.

Context [3]

Five small cattle sized tooth fragments.

Significance, potential and recommendations.

The potential and significance of the current assemblage are severely limited by poor preservation; therefore, no further work is recommended. Should more bone be recovered during any future work at the site, the situation could be reassessed.

APPENDIX 6: LITHIC ASSESSMENT

Ella Egberts

Introduction

Archaeological investigations at the Fern House site resulted in the recovery of quantities of struck flint and unworked burnt stone. The assemblage has been comprehensively catalogued by context and this includes further descriptive details of the material (Catalogue L01). This report summarises the data in the catalogue; it quantifies and describes the material and presents a preliminary assessment and outline of its significance. No statistically based technological, typological or metrical analyses have been conducted and a more detailed examination may alter or amend any of the interpretations offered here.

Quantification

	Decortication flake	Flake	Flake fragment	Blade	Burnt (no.)	Burnt (wt:g)
Total	1	3	1	1	24	261.6

Table L01: Quantification of the struck and burnt flint from Fern House.

A total of six struck flints and 24 (261.6g) unworked burnt stones were recovered from Fern House. The material was recovered from contexts [1] and [5]. From context [1] five struck flints and all the unworked burnt flint were recovered. Context [5] contained a single struck piece.

The assemblage

Raw material

Four struck flints are made from translucent, grey and two opaque are made from opaque light grey flint. Cortex is present on the translucent grey flint and is thin and of a weathered nodular character. The unworked burnt flint fragments also include pebbles and weathered nodular flint fragments. The raw material may have been obtained from the Pleistocene river terrace deposits present at the site and in the direct vicinity (Kempton Park Gravel Member, Taplow Gravel Member, Boyn Hill Gravel Member) (BGS 2019).

Condition

All of the struck flint is in chipped to very chipped condition, indicating it has moved to some extent after discard.

Description

The worked flint obtained from Fern House shows possibly two technological and typological components. The blade from context [5] is well knapped though relatively thick, and systematically produced with parallel negative blade scars on the dorsal face. This piece is most reminiscent of Mesolithic to Neolithic flintworking, the size and thickness of the blade possibly suggesting it can most likely be dated to the Neolithic period. Another possible earlier prehistoric component in the assemblage is the thin, opaque light grey flint flake from context [1]. It is well struck with a small striking platform and has multidirectional flake scars on the dorsal face. It resembles biface thinning flakes, which are most likely to have been produced during the Neolithic. Another flake from this context can probably also be dated to the Neolithic period as it shows a small striking platform with some minimal platform trimming and multidirectional flake scars on the dorsal face. The remaining struck flints, a decortication flake, a flake and a flake fragment, also from context [1], most likely represent later prehistoric flintworking. The most diagnostic example is a thick, wide flake with an obtuse striking platform. This flake is very chipped, obscuring some possible retouch along the left and right edges. The decortication flake is less diagnostic but would not be out of place within a later prehistoric struck flint assemblage. The flake fragment is thin and quite fine, but also irregular and can only be dated to the prehistoric period in general.

Significance

Although only a small assemblage, the technological and typological characteristics of the struck flint from Fern House indicate that people were present at the site during the Mesolithic/Neolithic and Late Bronze Age / Early Iron Age. The age of the burnt flint is unknown but the relatively high quantity could suggest intentional burning. The dating of the here described flint is in agreement with previously recovered archaeological material in the vicinity of the site (MLO11814:1; MLO22765:1; MLO98028:2) and confirms humans were active at the site during the Mesolithic/Early Neolithic and Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age.

Recommendations

The struck flint assemblage has been comprehensively catalogued, and no further analytical work is recommended. Nevertheless, it does demonstrate prehistoric activity at the site which further fieldwork could elucidate. From the point of view of the lithic material, any further fieldwork should focus on obtaining as large and closely contextually defined lithic assemblage as possible, in order to attempt to understand the nature, extent and chronology of any prehistoric lithic-based activities. Should further work be considered, the assemblage reported here should be re-documented in conjunction with any additional flintwork following the completion of the archaeological programmes. Should sufficient quantities of lithic artefacts be procured from any future work, full metrical, typological and technological analysis may be warranted.

Bibliography

BGS 2019. British Geological Survey Geology of Britain Viewer
<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html?> (accessed 18-09-2019)

APPENDIX 7: OASIS FORM

OASIS ID: preconst1-367551

Project details

Project name	An Archaeological Evaluation at Land at Fern House School, Keswick Drive, Enfield
Short description of the project	An Archaeological Evaluation at Land at Fern House School, Keswick Drive, Enfield EN3 6NY. Six evaluation trenches recorded the natural Taplow Gravel Member. Trench 1 encountered two possibly natural features, two pits dated to the Early Saxon period AD 400-650 based pottery recovered. An assemblage of residual prehistoric lithics and pottery and Roman pottery and building material was recovered from same pit. Trench 2 recorded an undated field boundary. The four remaining trenches recorded untruncated natural terrace gravels and no archaeological features or deposits.
Project dates	Start: 09-09-2019 End: 13-09-2019
Previous/future work	No / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	KSK19 - Sitecode
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	None
Current Land use	Vacant Land 1 - Vacant land previously developed
Monument type	PIT Early Medieval
Monument type	DITCH None
Significant Finds	POTTERY Late Prehistoric
Significant Finds	POTTERY Roman
Significant Finds	QUERN Roman
Significant Finds	LITHICS Neolithic
Methods & techniques	"Sample Trenches"
Development type	Public building (e.g. school, church, hospital, medical centre, law courts etc.)
Prompt	National Planning Policy Framework - NPPF
Position in the planning process	Not known / Not recorded

Project location

Country	England
Site location	GREATER LONDON ENFIELD ENFIELD Fern House School
Postcode	EN3 6NY
Study area	0.84 Hectares
Site coordinates	TQ 3536 9907 51.673588656063 -0.042203191056 51 40 24 N 000 02 31 W Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 23.51m Max: 24.56m

Project creators

Name of	Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd.
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Organisation	
Project brief originator	Sandy Kidd
Project design originator	Helen Hawkins
Project director/manager	Helen Hawkins
Project supervisor	Neil Hawkins
Type of sponsor/funding body	Local Authority
Name of sponsor/funding body	Enfield Council

Project archives

Physical Archive recipient	MLAA
Physical Contents	"Animal Bones","Ceramics","Worked stone/lithics"
Digital Archive recipient	MLAA
Digital Contents	"Animal Bones","Ceramics","Stratigraphic","Survey","Worked stone/lithics"
Digital Media available	"Database","Survey","Text"
Paper Archive recipient	MLAA
Paper Media available	"Context sheet","Plan","Section"

Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	An Archaeological Evaluation at Land at Fern House School, Keswick Drive, Enfield
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Hawkins, N.
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