

**An Archaeological Evaluation at the former National Hospital for  
Neurology and Neurosurgery, London N2, London Borough of Barnet**

**Site Code: BVN 05**

**Central National Grid Reference: TQ 2710 8910**

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January 2005**

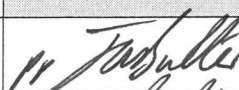
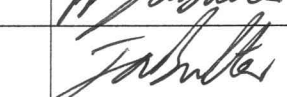
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## DOCUMENT VERIFICATION

The Former National Hospital for Neurology and Neurosurgery  
London N2,  
London Borough of Barnet

### Archaeological Evaluation

#### Quality Control

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## **1 ABSTRACT**

- 1.1 This report details the results of an archaeological evaluation undertaken on land at the former National Hospital for Neurology and Neurosurgery, London N2, London Borough of Barnet, undertaken for Octagon Developments Ltd between the 10<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> of January 2005.
- 1.2 Four trenches were arranged across the site. The site was a disused hospital at the time of the evaluation and was situated along the Great North Road (A 1000).
- 1.3 All four trenches revealed made ground overlying natural clay and gravels.
- 1.4 Other than two post-medieval pits recorded in Trenches 3 and 4 no archaeological remains were encountered, with no further evidence of any human activity prior to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

## **2 INTRODUCTION**

- 2.1 An archaeological evaluation was conducted by Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd. on land at the former National Hospital for Neurology and Neurosurgery, London Borough of Barnet, N2. The proposed redevelopment of the site which will include the construction of two residential apartment blocks and the Hampstead Garden Suburb Institute. The archaeological impact of this scheme is likely to be severe, with all types of foundations leading to a significant degradation of the archaeological resource in these areas. The evaluation was conducted between the 10<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> of January 2005 and was undertaken on behalf of Octagon Developments Ltd.
- 2.2 The site was located on land at the former National Hospital for Neurology and Neurosurgery, within the London Borough of Barnet. It was bounded to the north by Edmunds Walk, to the south by The Bishops Avenue, to the west by Deansway and to the east by the A1000 (Great North Road), railway buildings and tracks. At the time of the evaluation, the site was a disused hospital.
- 2.3 The National Grid Reference of the site is TQ 2710 8910.
- 2.4 The site was given the code BVN 05.
- 2.5 The project was monitored and for the local planning authority by Kim Stabler, GLAAS Archaeological Monitor for Barnet. The site was project managed by Jon Butler and supervised by the author, Alexis Haslam.



Reproduced from Ordnance Survey. Crown Copyright 1998.

Figure 1  
Site Location  
1:20,000

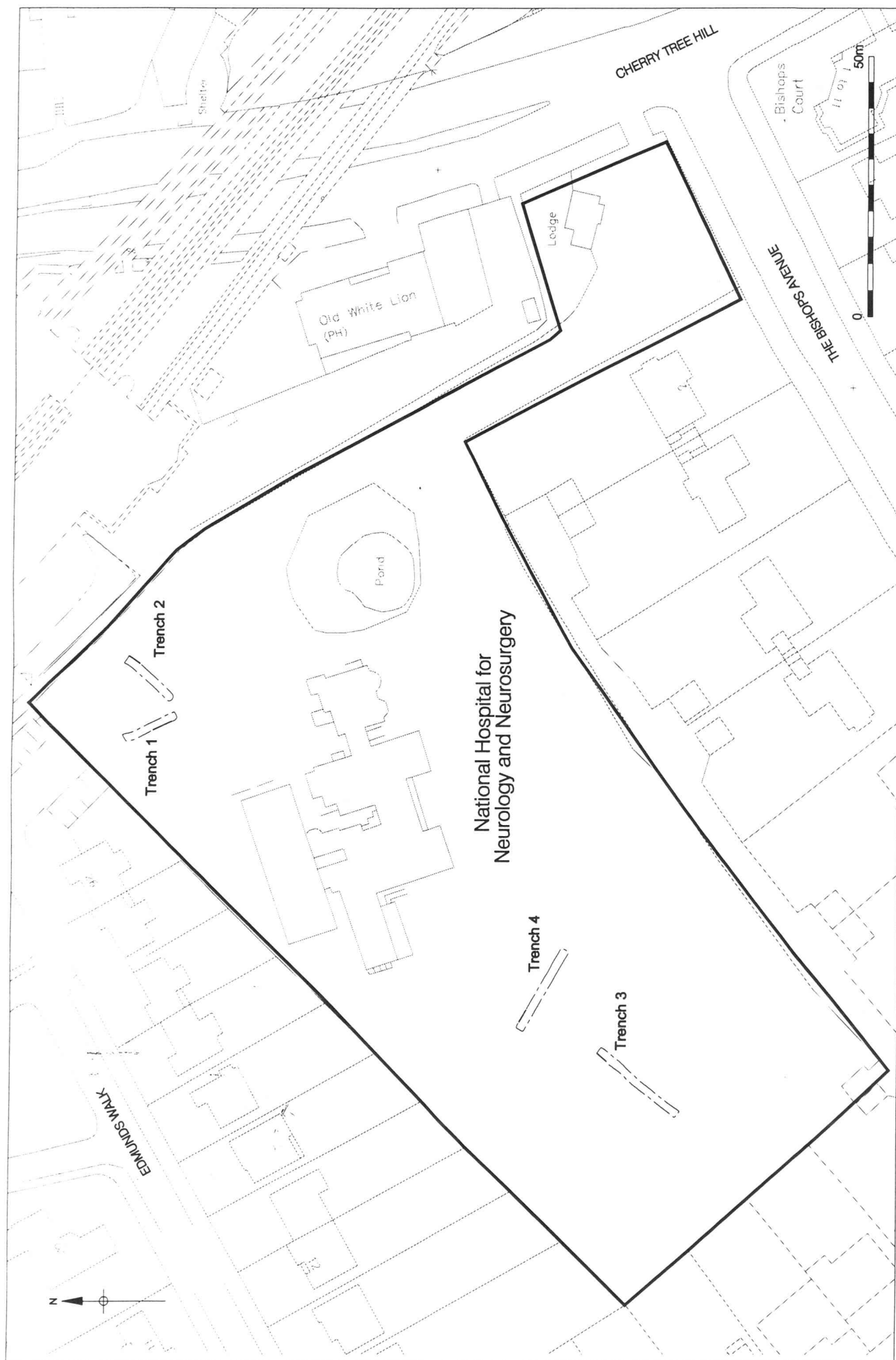


Figure 2  
Trench Location  
1:1000

### 3 PLANNING BACKGROUND

#### 3.1 ARCHAEOLOGY IN BARNET AND THE UNITARY DEVELOPMENT PLAN

3.1.1 The archaeological evaluation aims to satisfy the objectives of the London borough of Barnet, which fully recognises the importance of the buried heritage for which they are the custodians. The borough's deposited revised 'Unitary Development Plan' 2001 contains policy statements in respect of protecting the buried archaeological resource.

3.1.2 The proposed development of the site is subject to the Council's Archaeology Policy:

#### **Archaeology**

#### **POLICY H20**

**Where development proposals may affect archaeological remains, the council will expect applicants to have properly assessed and planned for the archaeological implications. The council will normally require preliminary archaeological site evaluation before proposals are considered.**

#### *Reason*

**4.3.68 The borough's archaeological heritage is a valuable education and community resource which is vulnerable to modern development and land use. Archaeological remains above and below ground level and ancient monuments are important surviving evidence of the borough's past, and once removed they are lost forever.**

3.1.3 The Barnet UDP mirrors advice contained in the Department of Environment document 'Planning Policy Guidance: Archaeology and Planning (PPG 16)'. This document identifies the need for early consultation in the planning process to determine the impact of the construction schemes upon buried archaeological strata. Once the results of the archaeological evaluation are known, an informed decision on the necessity or otherwise for further archaeological strategies may be taken. These strategies may be preservation *in situ*, excavation, or watching brief.



- 3.1.4 The site does not lie within an Archaeological Priority Area, and there are no scheduled ancient monuments on site.

## **4 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY**

### **4.1 GEOLOGY**

4.1.1 The 1:50, 000 scale British Geological Survey (sheet 256) indicates the area to be on the boundary of Till Deposits (mainly chalky sandy clay) to the north, and Dollis Hill terrace gravels to the south. These deposits are underlain by Eocene London Clay.

4.1.2 Eight boreholes were excavated across the area of the site which broadly confirmed the Geological Survey. Soft to firm orange-brown silty clay with pockets of sand and gravel was recorded across the site at a depth of approximately 0.25m below ground level.<sup>1</sup> This was underlain by London Clay.

### **4.2 TOPOGRAPHY**

4.2.1 The site is located to the west of the A1000 (Great North Road) on a gradual slope from north east to south west. The site itself slopes down from 84.13m OD in the north to 78.65m OD in the far south west. There is some evidence for localised small scale terracing towards the north east area of the site where the gardens and tarmac area associated with the hospital building have been cut into the natural slope of the hillside.

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<sup>1</sup> LBH Wembley, 2001

## 5 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

- 5.1 The Archaeological desk based assessment<sup>2</sup> indicated a low potential for the prehistoric, Roman, Saxon and post-medieval periods. The potential for the archaeological activity for the medieval period was considered moderate.
- 5.2 No prehistoric material has been encountered within a 1km radius of the study site. The dearth of spot finds implies that little prehistoric activity took place in the vicinity of the study area.
- 5.3 No Bronze Age or Iron Age material has been identified in the SMR records in the vicinity of the study area. It is likely that settlement was concentrated elsewhere at this time.
- 5.4 The main source of Roman material in the area derives from the excavations of pottery kilns situated immediately to the east of the study area in the north of Highgate Wood. Excavations conducted in the 1960s and 70s revealed extensive evidence for manufacture of Highgate Ware pottery. A total of five kilns were recorded alongside a number of large ditches, and the site was interpreted by the excavators as having been used by itinerant potters.<sup>3</sup> Within the study area Roman evidence is restricted to a single Roman pot sherd recovered to the east of the site at Woodside Avenue (SMR no. LO201).
- 5.5 No evidence for activity during the Saxon period has been identified within the vicinity of the study site.
- 5.6 Documentary evidence suggests the presence of a scattered hamlet situated towards the north of the study site (SMR no. LO73239) between East End and Parkgate. The site is first mentioned in 1365 and referred to again in 1375<sup>4</sup>.
- 5.7 The area of the development site itself is likely to have been situated on the northern boundary of Hornsey Park in the medieval period, which was emparked by the Bishop of London in the 13<sup>th</sup> century. Reference is made to a moat or ditch thought to form part

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<sup>2</sup> Bradley, T. ' An Archaeological Desktop Assessment of the former National Hospital for Neurology and Neurosurgery, London Borough of Barnet, N2' Pre-Construct Archaeology Unpublished Report July 2004.

<sup>3</sup> Brown and Sheldon, 1971, 1970, 1969.

of a moated hunting lodge associated with the park in 1757 (SMR no. LO10680). It is recorded as being situated at Lodge Hill on the boundary with Finchley (now the northern end of Highgate golf course). Earlier references to this complex are also known from 1441 and 1464, and it is further mentioned in 1576 when it is recorded as being overgrown and again in 1593 when it is still visible.<sup>5</sup>

- 5.8 The area of the site is likely to have been in use as a deer park until the post-medieval period. The earliest available cartographic evidence covering the area of the site is a map dated to 1770. The site appears to lie within open fields at this time with a stream or brook running across the northern portion of the site. The predicted northern limit of the hunting park respects the alignment of this watercourse as it runs through the site, suggesting that the site lay across the possible northern boundary of the medieval hunting park. The area of the site is marked as 'Hanson Bridge', suggesting a crossing of the watercourse in this vicinity.
- 5.9 Three buildings can be seen to the east of the site extending down the western side of the Great North Road. The southern-most of these may be the Flower de Lis Public House, which was established immediately to the east of the site in the 16<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>6</sup> It was soon renamed the Dirthouse, however, as it was frequented by farmers who had disposed of their cart-loads of hay or other produce in London and were returning with their carts laden with manure or soot.<sup>7</sup> Indeed, the 1770 map shows the small wood to the east of the site as being called Dirthouse Wood by this time. The Tithe map of 1841 shows the area of the site to be unchanged, and occupied by fields listed as pasture or meadow.
- 5.10 The Ordnance Survey map of 1894-6 shows by this time that major changes had taken place to the area surrounding the site. The most dramatic of these is the establishment of a railway line to the east of the site. This was opened by the Great Northern Railway in 1867, and extended to Mill Hill (later Mill Hill East) and Edgware with stations at East Finchley and Finchley (later Finchley Central). The railway greatly increased accessibility to and from London and is likely to have triggered the large scale development of the area, especially to the east of the site. Bishop's Avenue, a sweeping tree-lined route bounding the site to the south-east, had also been established by this time. The site itself lay within open fields, with the previously marked stream / brook now

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<sup>4</sup> VCH, 1989.

<sup>5</sup> Weinreb and Hibbert, 1983.

<sup>6</sup> VCH, 1980.

<sup>7</sup> Smith, 1975.

marked as a field boundary.

- 5.11 By 1912 a convalescent home had been established in the area of the site with gardens, including a large pond, being created to the east of the building and a Lodge House at the end of the drive. By 1933 a further road, Deansway, has been established to the south-west of the site and a number of semi-detached houses have been built along both Deansway and Bishops Avenue, bounding the site. In 1938 the Wenlock Brewery rebuilt the Dirthouse Public House (now renamed the Old White Lion), in order to accommodate the new station buildings which were constructed at this time.<sup>8</sup> By 1952 a further route, Edmunds Walk, had been established to the north west of the convalescent home, with further semi-detached and detached houses. The site itself remains relatively unchanged throughout the later 20<sup>th</sup> century, although its function changed to the National Hospital for Neurology and Neurosurgery, and a further wing was added to the north of the building.

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<sup>8</sup> Banks, 1960.

## 6 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

- 6.1 In accordance with the method statement<sup>9</sup>, the trenches were arranged to fully investigate the presence or absence of significant archaeological remains across the site.
- 6.2 Four trenches were dug, with Trenches 1 and 2 being located to the north of the site, and Trenches 3 and 4 located to the south west of the site. Trench 1 measured 11m in length and 1.6m in width. Trench 2 measured 11.5m in length and 1.6m in width. Trench 3 measured 19.2m in length and 1.6m in width. Trench 4 measured 17.3m in length and 1.6m in width. The presence of trees on site meant that some of the trenches had to be relocated.
- 6.3 The trenches were excavated using a 180 degree JCB type mechanical excavator, under archaeological supervision, with a ditching bucket. Excavation by machine in spits continued through the topsoil and made ground until the natural clay and gravels were reached.
- 6.4 A long section and the base of each trench were hand cleaned before recording.
- 6.5 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 the Museum of London Archaeology Service (MoLAS 1994). Individual descriptions of all archaeological 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 drawn at a scale of 1:50 and the sections at 1:10. The OD height of all principal strata were calculated and indicated on the appropriate plans and sections. A full photographic record of the investigations was also prepared, including both black and white prints and colour transparencies on 35mm film.
- 6.6 Levels on the trenches were taken off two Temporary Bench Marks (TBMs) established on the site with values of 83.87m OD and 81.57m OD. These TBMs was brought in from a Bench Mark on the railway bridge immediately opposite the entrance to the site

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<sup>9</sup> Bradley, T. 'Method Statement for an Archaeological Evaluation at the National Hospital for Neurology and Neurosurgery, London Borough of Barnet, N2', Pre-Construct Archaeology unpublished document, December 2004.

on the Great North Road (A 1000), with a value of 80.02m OD. The trenches were surveyed in by Total Station and tied into the Ordnance Survey grid.

## **7 ARCHAEOLOGICAL PHASE DISCUSSION**

### **7.1 GENERAL OVERVIEW**

Four trenches were excavated across the site, with Trenches 1 and 2 situated to the north of the site and Trenches 3 and 4 located to the south west of the site. The land forming the site sloped down from north to south from a height of 84.13m to 78.65m OD in the far south west. All four trenches revealed topsoil overlying natural clay and gravels. Tree hollows were observed in Trenches 2, 3 and 4, with late post-medieval pits being recorded in Trenches 3 and 4. Modern intrusions were observed in Trenches 1 and 2.

### **7.2 TRENCH 1**

#### **Phase 1 – Natural**

- 7.2.1 Trench 1 measured 1.6m in width and 11m in length. The earliest deposit encountered was [102], the natural clay gravel deposit at the bottom of the trench. This context existed as a firm to compact deposit of clay gravel matrix, mid orange to grey-brown in colour, at a highest level of 83.16m OD.

#### **Phase 3 - Topsoil**

- 7.2.2 Overlying the natural clay gravel deposit [102] was [101], a loose, dark brown black deposit of clay silt matrix containing occasional charcoal and a moderate amount of small, sub rounded pebbles. This deposit was up to 0.42m thick at 83.7m OD.

### **7.3 TRENCH 2**

#### **Phase 1 – Natural**

- 7.3.1 Trench 2 measured 1.6m in width and 1.5m in length. The earliest deposit encountered was [102], the natural clay gravel deposit found at the base of the trench, recorded at a highest level of 82.9m OD.

#### **Phase 2 – Post-Medieval**

- 7.3.2 Cut into [102] was tree hollow [121], which was located towards the south western end of the trench and measured 1.6m from north to south and 2m from east to west. The cut itself was up to 0.11m in depth at 82.88m OD and was sub oval in shape with shallow,



concave sides and an irregular base, and was truncated to the north west by a modern intrusion. Filling [121] was [120], a soft to compact deposit of sandy clay, light greenish grey in colour and containing frequent flecks of charcoal and occasional fragments of brick. In the centre of Trench 2, and cutting into [102] was tree hollow [123]. This cut was irregular in shape, with irregular sides and an irregular base, and measured 1.6m from north to south and 2.7m from east to west, was up to 0.31m in depth at a highest level of 82.9m OD and extended into both the northern and southern limits of excavation. Filling [123] was [122], a soft, dark brownish grey deposit of silt sand clay matrix, containing occasional charcoal flecks and fragments of brick and tile. One clay pipe bowl was recovered from this fill and was subsequently dated to between AD 1660-80. One sherd of pottery was also retrieved and dated to between AD 1760 - 1820. This clearly puts this feature in the late post-medieval period, with the clay pipe bowl most likely to be residual.

### **Phase 3 - Topsoil**

- 7.3.3 Sealing both fills [120] and [122] was topsoil deposit [101], which was up to 0.5m thick at 83.48m OD.

## **7.4 TRENCH 3**

### **Phase 1 – Natural**

- 7.4.1 Trench 3 measured 1.6m in width and 19.2m in length. The earliest deposit encountered at the base of this trench was [105], a compact, light orange yellow deposit of gravel, recorded at a highest level of 80.07m OD. Sealing [105] was [104], a stiff deposit of clay, light yellowish brown in colour and recorded at a highest level of 79.97m OD.

### **Phase 2 - Post-Medieval**

- 7.4.2 Cut into the natural clay [104] towards the south western end of the trench and extending into the northern limit of excavation was tree hollow [119]. This cut was sub-oval in shape, with sharp sloping sides and a concave base, and measured 1.08m from north to south, 1.46m from east to west and was up to 0.52m in depth at a highest level of 79.80m OD. Filling [119] was [118], a firm, mid grey brown deposit of clay silt matrix, containing flecks of charcoal and tile. The pottery recovered from the fill of this tree hollow was subsequently dated at between AD 1580 - 1800. At the centre of Trench 3, and again cut into the natural clay [104] was pit cut [117]. This cut extended into both the northern and southern limits of excavation of the trench, measuring 1.47m from

north to south, 2.1m from east to west and 0.28m in depth at a highest level of 79.98m OD. The cut itself was sub-rectangular in shape with sharp edges and a concave base and was filled by [116], a firm deposit of clay silt matrix, mid grey brown in colour and containing flecks of charcoal and tile. Pottery recovered from the fill was dated at between AD 1720 - 1780. At the north eastern end of Trench 3 a further tree hollow [115] was excavated and was discovered to be cutting into the natural gravel [105]. This cut was sub-rectangular in shape, with sharply sloping irregular sides and an irregular concave base. The cut measured 0.67m from north to south, 2.09m from east to west, was up to 0.48m in depth at a highest level of 80.07m OD, and extended into both the northern and eastern limits of excavation. Filling [115] was [114], a firm, mid grey brown deposit of silt clay matrix containing both flecks of charcoal and tile. The pottery recovered from this fill was subsequently dated as between AD 1740-80.

#### **Phase 4 – Topsoil**

- 7.4.3 Sealing fills [114], [116] and [118] was [103], a loose dark black brown topsoil deposit of silt clay loam matrix, containing occasional fragments of pottery and tile. This deposit was up to 0.4m in thickness at 80.29m OD.

### **7.5 TRENCH 4**

#### **Phase 1 – Natural**

- 7.5.1 Trench 4 measured 1.6m in width and 17.3m in length. The earliest deposit encountered at the base of this trench was the natural gravel [105], recorded at a highest level of 80.56m OD. Overlying [105] was the natural clay [104], recorded at a highest level of 80.69m OD.

#### **Phase 2 - Post-Medieval**

- 7.5.2 Cut into the natural clay [104] at the northwestern end of Trench 4 was pit cut [107]. This pit extended into the northern limit of excavation and measured 1m from north to south, 2.8m from east to west and was up to 0.21m in depth at a highest level of 80.69m OD. The cut was sub rectangular in shape, with sharp sides and a flat base and was filled by [106], a loose, mid greyish yellow deposit of silty sandy gravel, containing large fragments of charcoal and occasional fragments of brick and tile. No pottery was recovered from the fill, but the remains of a metal bucket were retrieved. Towards the centre of the trench and again cut into [104] was tree hollow [109]. This cut extended into the southern limit of excavation, was sub oval in shape and had irregular sides and an irregular base. The cut measured 0.8m from north to south, 2m

from east to west and was up to 0.35m in depth at 80.69m OD. Filling [109] was [108], a soft, dark brownish grey deposit of sandy silty clay, containing flecks of charcoal and occasional fragments of brick and tile. Pottery recovered from [108] has been dated to between AD 1760 - 1860. Immediately to the north east of [109], and again cut into [104] was root disturbance [111]. This cut was irregular in shape, had irregular sides and an irregular base and measured 0.25m from north to south, 0.6m from east to west and was up to 0.09m in depth at a highest level of 80.36m OD. Filling [111] was [110], a soft mid greyish brown deposit of silty sandy clay containing occasional flecks of charcoal and brick fragments. No finds were recovered from this fill. Cut into [104] at the southeastern end of the trench was root disturbance [113], which extended into the eastern limit of excavation. This cut was slightly linear in shape, with irregular sides and an irregular base, measuring 0.6m from north to south, 1.4m from east to west and up to 0.21m in depth at 80.21m OD. Filling [113] was deposit [112], a loose, mid greyish brown deposit of silty sandy clay containing occasional flecks of charcoal and brick fragments. Some pottery was retrieved from [112] and dated at between AD 1760 - 1860.

### **Phase 3 - Topsoil**

- 7.5.3 Sealing fills [106], [108], [110] and [112] was topsoil deposit [103], which was up to 0.32m thick at 81.02m OD.



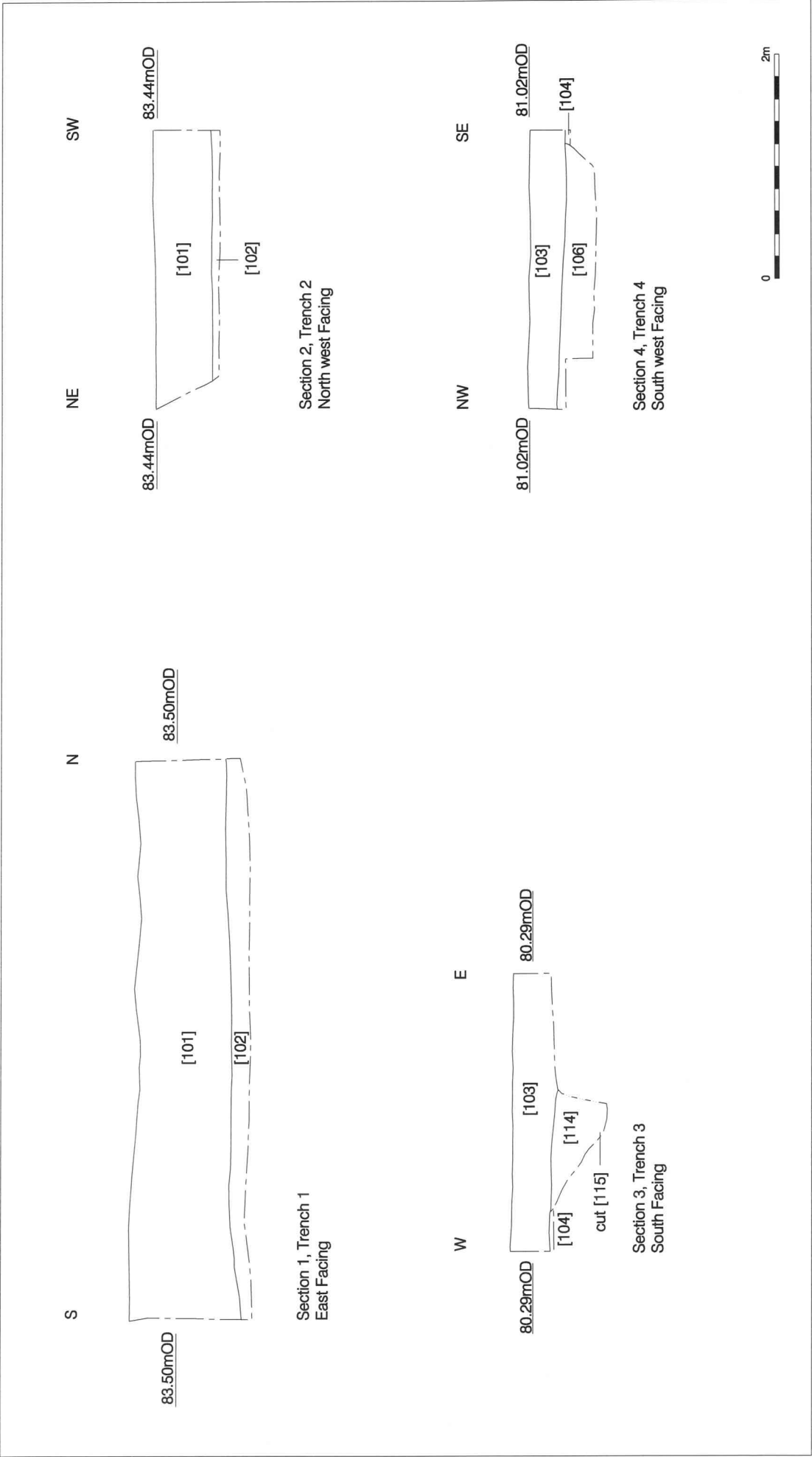


Figure 4  
Sections  
1:50

## **8 INTERPRETATION AND CONCLUSIONS**

- 8.1 One of the principal objectives of the archaeological evaluation was to determine the presence or absence of archaeological activity of any period. Of particular interest was the potential discovery of a medieval hunting park boundary towards the north of the site. This boundary was not observed during the evaluation. Two post-medieval tree hollows were recorded in Trench 2, two post-medieval tree hollows and one post medieval pit were observed in Trench 3 and one post-medieval tree hollow, one post medieval pit and two root disturbances were recorded in Trench 4.
- 8.2 The earliest evidence of human activity at the site dates to the late post-medieval period.
- 8.3 The evaluation has confirmed that, other than the late post-medieval pits and tree hollows observed, there are no archaeological deposits and features predating the early 20<sup>th</sup> century on the site. Natural clay and gravels were observed at the bases of all four trenches.

## **9 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

- 9.1 Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited would like to thank Kim Stabler, English Heritage GLAAS Archaeological Monitor for the London Borough of Barnet for monitoring the site.
- 9.2 The author would also like to thank Hayley Baxter for the illustrations and Jon Butler for his project management and editing. Thanks also to Tim Bradley for his further assistance in the terms of project management. Thanks to Fiona Keith-Lucas for the surveying. Thanks also to James Langthorne for all of his hard work and assistance with the fieldwork, and Lisa Lonsdale for technical and logistical support. Special thanks to Chris Jarrett for dating the pottery.

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## APPENDIX 1 - CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

Context	Type	Trench	Comments
101	Layer	1, 2	Topsoil
102	Layer	1, 2	Natural Clayey Gravel
103	Layer	3, 4	Topsoil
104	Layer	3, 4	Natural Clay
105	Layer	3, 4	Natural Gravel
106	Fill	4	Fill of [107]
107	Cut	4	Pit Cut
108	Fill	4	Fill of [109]
109	Cut	4	Tree Hollow
110	Fill	4	Fill of [111]
111	Cut	4	Root Disturbance
112	Fill	4	Fill of [113]
113	Cut	4	Root Disturbance
114	Fill	3	Fill of [115]
115	Cut	3	Tree Hollow
116	Fill	3	Fill of [117]
117	Cut	3	Pit Cut
118	Fill	3	Fill of [119]
119	Cut	3	Tree Hollow
120	Fill	2	Fill of [121]
121	Cut	2	Tree Hollow
122	Fill	2	Fill of [123]
123	Cut	2	Tree Hollow

## APPENDIX 2 - OASIS FORM

### Project details

Project name The former national hospital for Neurology and Nerosurgery, London Borough of Barnet, N2

Short description of the project An archaeological evaluation was conducted by Pre-Construct Archaeology between the 10th and 14th of January 2005 at the former National Hospital for Neurology and Neurosurgery in the London Borough of Barnet, N2. Four trenches were excavated across the site and all revealed natural deposits of clay and gravel. Two tree bowls were observed in Trench 1, two tree bowls and one post medieval pit were recorded in Trench 3 and one post medieval pit, one tree bowl and two root disturbances were recorded in Trench 4. All features were sealed by topsoil.

Project dates Start: 10-01-2005 End: 14-01-2005

Previous/future work No / No

Any associated project reference codes BVN 05 - Sitecode

Type of project Field evaluation

Site status None

Current Land use Vacant Land 1 - Vacant land previously developed

Monument type FEATURES Post Medieval

Significant Finds POTTERY Post Medieval

### Project location

Country England

Site location GREATER LONDON BARNET FINCHLEY The Former National Hospital For Neurology and Neurosurgery, London Borough of Barnet, N2

Postcode N2

Study area 12000 Square metres

National grid reference TQ 2710 8910 Point

Height OD Min: 79.77m Max: 83.15m

### Project creators

Name of Organisation Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd

Project brief  
originator Contractor (design and execute)

Project design  
originator Tim Bradley

Project  
director/manager Jon Butler

Project  
supervisor Alexis Haslam

Sponsor or  
funding body Developer

Project archives  
Physical Archive  
recipient LAARC

Physical  
Contents 'Ceramics', 'Metal'

Physical Archive  
Exists? Yes

Digital Archive  
recipient LAARC

Digital Contents 'Ceramics', 'Metal'

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

Digital Archive  
Exists? Yes

Paper Archive  
Exists? Yes

Project  
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