

An Archaeological Watching Brief at Land at the Former United Reformed Church & Church Hall, Little Green & Quadrant Road, Richmond-upon-Thames

Central National Grid Reference TQ 1794 7509

Site Code: QLG 05

**Written and researched by Stuart Watson
Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited, February 2005**

Commissioning Client:

CgMs Consulting on behalf of St. George West London Limited

Contractor:

**Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd
Unit 54, Brockley Cross Business Centre
96, Endwell Road
Brockley
London
SE4 2PD**

**Tel: 0207 732 3925
Fax: 0207 732 7896**

Email: jbutler@pre-construct.com

Website: www.pre-construct.com

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1 ABSTRACT

- 1.1 This report details the results and working methods of an archaeological Watching Brief undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd at the site of the former United Reformed Church and Church Hall at Little Green and Quadrant Road, Richmond-upon-Thames. The site central National Grid Reference is TQ 1794 7509. The watching brief was undertaken between 25th January and 10th February 2005. The commissioning client was CgMs Consulting on behalf of St. George West London Limited.
- 1.2 The site is roughly level and fronts onto Little Green (adjacent to Richmond Green) and lies just to the east of the town centre.
- 1.3 Observations made during the ground works revealed natural sands and gravels (Kempton Park gravels) through which a possible palaeochannel cut. No brickearth deposits were observed suggesting widespread truncation of the area. The gravels were overlain by deposits of late post-medieval made ground. Two late post-medieval pits and a 19th century brick wall were observed.

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 An archaeological Watching Brief was undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd between 25th January and 10th February 2005. The site address is 4, Little Green, Richmond-upon-Thames. The site is bounded by Parkshot to the north, Quadrant Road to the east, Richmond Library to the south and Little Green to the west (Fig.1).
- 2.2 The work, completed in advance of the construction of a four-storey apartment building with underground car parking and a new Church, was commissioned by CgMs Consulting on behalf of St. George West London Limited and was undertaken following English Heritage guidelines.¹
- 2.3 The site had previously been the subject of an archaeological Desk Based Assessment², which revealed a low potential for the prehistoric, Roman, medieval and post-medieval periods.
- 2.4 The watching brief was conducted during the start of the ground works associated with the construction of this building. The groundworks were conducted by Laing O' Rourke London and South East Limited.
- 2.5 Stuart Watson undertook the watching brief and the project manager was Jon Butler.
- 2.6 The National Grid Reference of the site is TQ 1794 7509 and the site was given the code QLG 05.

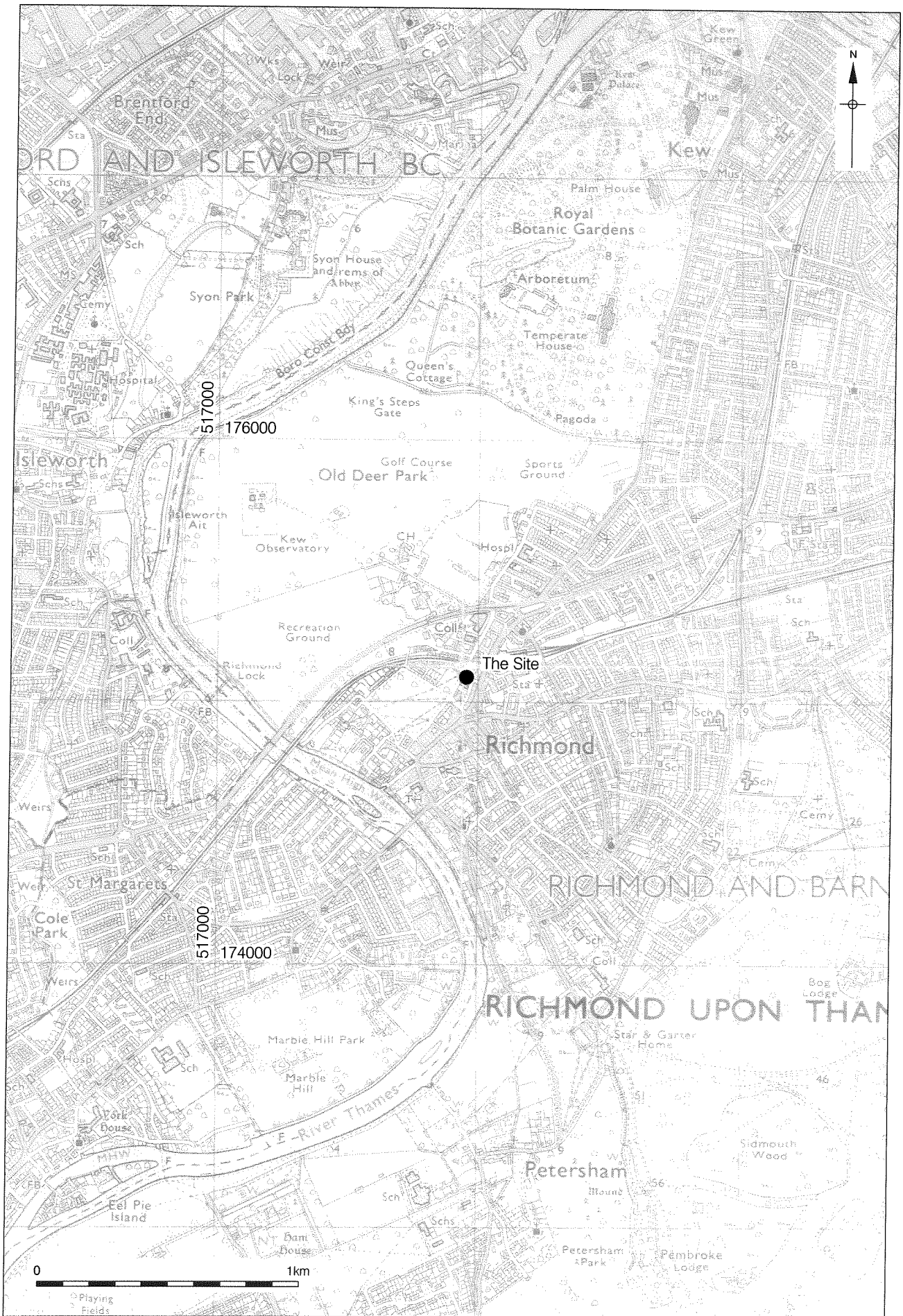
¹ English Heritage, Greater London Advisory Service, "Archaeological Guidance Papers: 3 Standards and Practices in Archaeological Fieldwork in London; 4 Archaeological Watching Briefs (1992).

² Hawkins, D. 2004: Archaeological Desk Based Assessment of Land at the former United Reformed Church & Church Hall, Little Green & Quadrant Road, Richmond-upon-Thames, CgMs Consulting unpublished report

3 PLANNING BACKGROUND

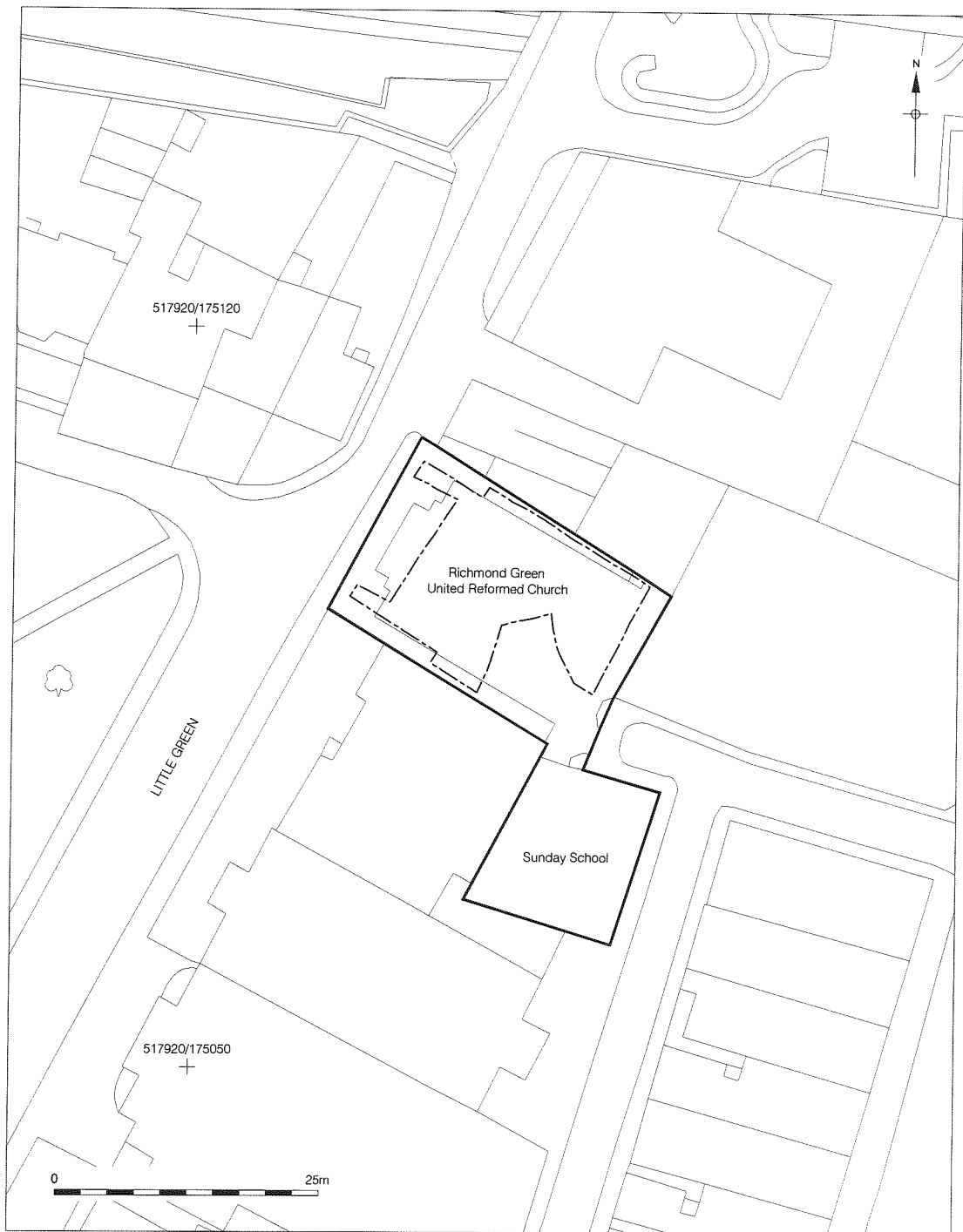
- 3.1 The study site lies within an area of archaeological potential as defined by the local planning authority.

- 3.2 The study site has the benefit of planning consent for redevelopment subject to a PPG 16 style archaeological planning condition.



Reproduced from Ordnance Survey 1:25,000. Crown Copyright 1990.

Figure 1
Site Location
1:20,000



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Figure 2
Watching Brief Area Location
1:625

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

- 4.1 The following is only intended as brief summary of the archaeological and historical background. A fuller explanation is contained in the archaeological Desk Based Assessment for this site³. Richmond-upon-Thames, as the name implies, is situated on the south bank of the River Thames, approximately 12 kilometres downstream from London. Records indicate the Saxon settlement of *Sceon* established by the mid 10th century. The Parish Church of St. Mary Magdalene dates to 1211. Between 1358 and 1370 Edward III established a royal palace at Sheen (as Richmond was then known). The palace was extensively rebuilt by Henry V in 1414 and again by Henry VII in 1497. It is at this time that Sheen was renamed as Richmond by Henry VII.
- 4.2 In 1740s the site itself appears to occupied by a single house, and the area of the former church located in its garden.
- 4.3 By 1865 the site was again occupied by a garden, a small house and part of a warehouse.
- 4.4 The Church hall was opened in 1879 and in 1884 work started on the construction of the Presbyterian Church which was opened in May 1885
- 4.5 In 2004 the church was partially demolished and the Church hall completely demolished, prior to the construction of new apartments on the site of the former Church, and a new Church on the site of the Church Hall.

³ Hawkins, D. 2004: Archaeological Desk Based Assessment of Land at the former United Reformed Church & Church Hall, Little Green & Quadrant Road, Richmond-upon-Thames, CgMs unpublished report

5 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

- 5.1 The area of the groundworks (Fig.2) associated with the construction of the apartment block was situated immediately to the east of the retained façade of the church, which is to be incorporated into the new building. Extensive underpinning work was required on all four sides of the site, as well as temporary support structures for the Church façade. A large pit was excavated to a depth of 3.09m in the northeast corner of the site for the base of a tower crane. In the centre of the site the ground was reduced by approximately 2.00 m, while the ground immediately around the retained façade of the Church was reduced by approximately 1.00m. The excavations extended over an area of approximately 280 square metres.
- 5.2 The excavations were monitored by an archaeologist. A 360°, 13 tonne tracked excavator was employed which was fitted with a toothless ditching bucket. The resultant spoil was used to form a temporary ramp, or was transported away by lorry.
- 5.3 Recording on site was undertaken using the single context recording system as specified in the Museum of London Site Manual⁴. Plans were drawn at a scale of 1:20, and representative sections at a scale of 1:10 and 1:20. Site plans were drawn at a scale of 1:100. Contexts were numbered sequentially and recorded on *pro-forma* context sheets, and 35 mm colour transparency photographs were taken.
- 5.4 Levels were provided on site by Laing O'Rourke's site engineer.
- 5.5 The site was given the Museum of London code: QLG 05.

⁴ Museum of London, 1994. Archaeological Site Manual.

6 ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESULTS

- 6.1 Natural gravel [7] was observed at a level of 6.50m OD in the north-east corner (section 1) of the site, 6.44m OD to the south (section 2) and at 6.97m OD to the west (section 3) (Fig. 4). In the north-east corner it was sealed by a 0.24m thick deposit of natural sand [6].
- 6.2 In the north-eastern part of the area a cut [22] was observed in section measuring 1.90m wide by 0.80m deep. The cut was filled with a dark orange brown clay silt with frequent medium sub-angular pebbles [21] and was possibly a palaeochannel.
- 6.3 A series of post-medieval features was observed across the rest of the site. A late post-medieval pit [10] was observed to the east of the watching brief area cut into the natural gravel. It was backfilled with two deposits, the primary [9] being dark black grey mostly soot, with frequent coal, oyster shell, soot, brick tile, glass and occasional metal. This deposit had a top height of 5.94m OD and a maximum thickness of 0.30m. The secondary fill [8] was light yellowish brown silty sand with frequent fragments of ceramic building material. This deposit had top height of 6.44m OD and a maximum thickness of 0.52m. It is probable from the content of the fills, that this pit served some form of industrial usage.
- 6.4 To the west of the previous feature was a post-medieval pit [15] also cut through the natural gravel. The fill of which was dark blackish grey silty sand [14], with occasional flecks of charcoal and frequent pottery. The top was recorded at a level of 7.12m OD and was found to have a maximum thickness of 0.70m. The finds would indicate a date of the mid 19th century, and appears to be a refuse dump.
- 6.5 Across the central part of the site a wall [12], orientated north-south, measuring at least 4.25m in length by 0.60m in width was observed (Fig. 3) The wall was conjectured to run across the site. Samples of the brick reveal a 19th century date, although 16th century bricks had been reused in its construction, presumably from a Tudor building in the vicinity. It is interpreted to be a boundary wall, and its top height was recorded at 6.52m OD.
- 6.6 To the south-west of the wall a layer of demolition dumped material dating to the 18th century was observed. In the north-east corner of the site a series of late post-medieval made ground deposits was revealed consisting of silty sands [4] & [5] also dating to the 18th century, brick rubble [3] and mortar [2]. The majority of the site was then covered by a further deposit of made ground having a maximum thickness of 1.05m with a top height of 8.22m OD and consisting of dark grey brown clay silt [1]

with frequent fragments of brick and occasional small to medium sub-angular pebbles.

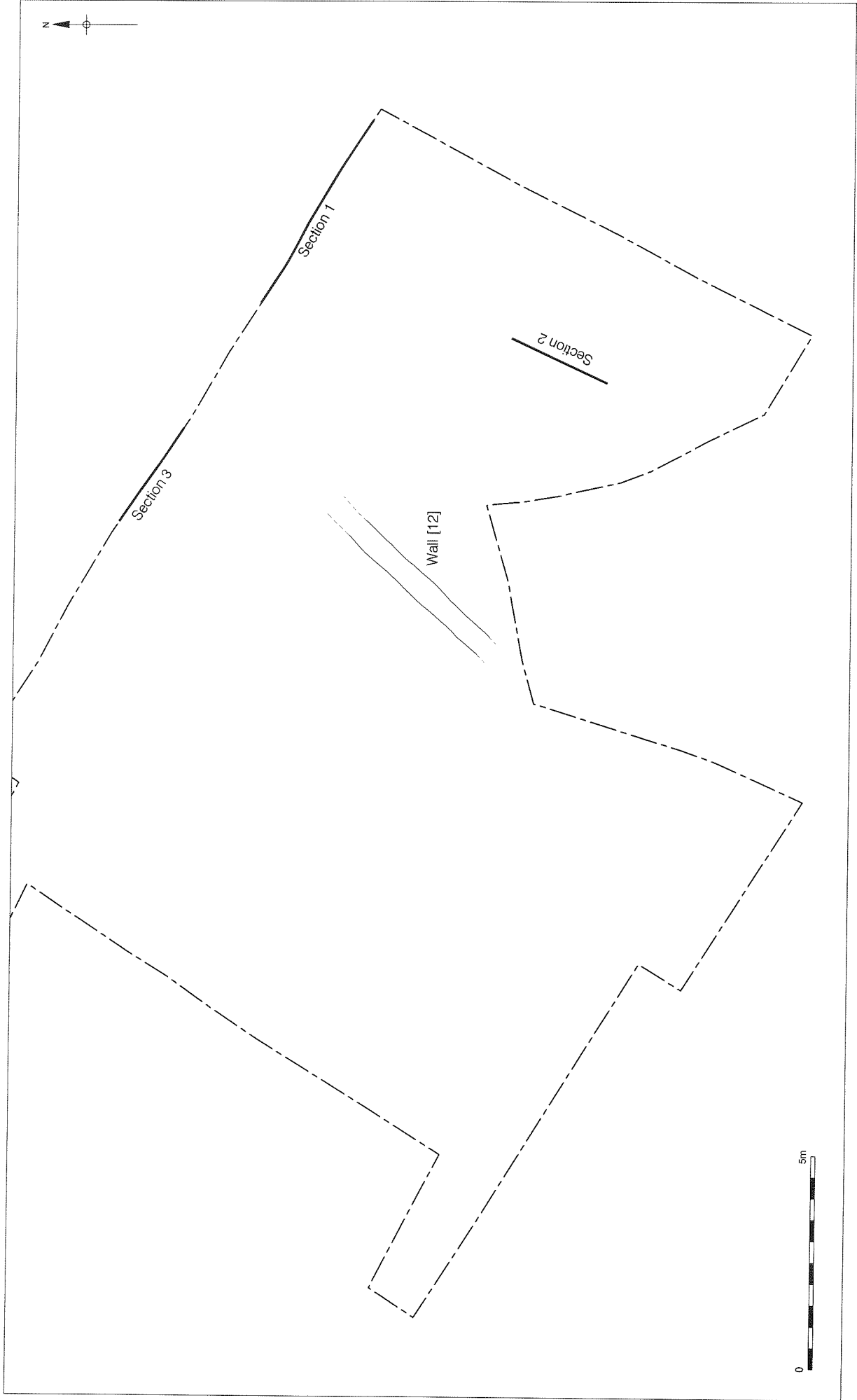


Figure 3
Plan of mid 19th Century Wall [12]
1:125

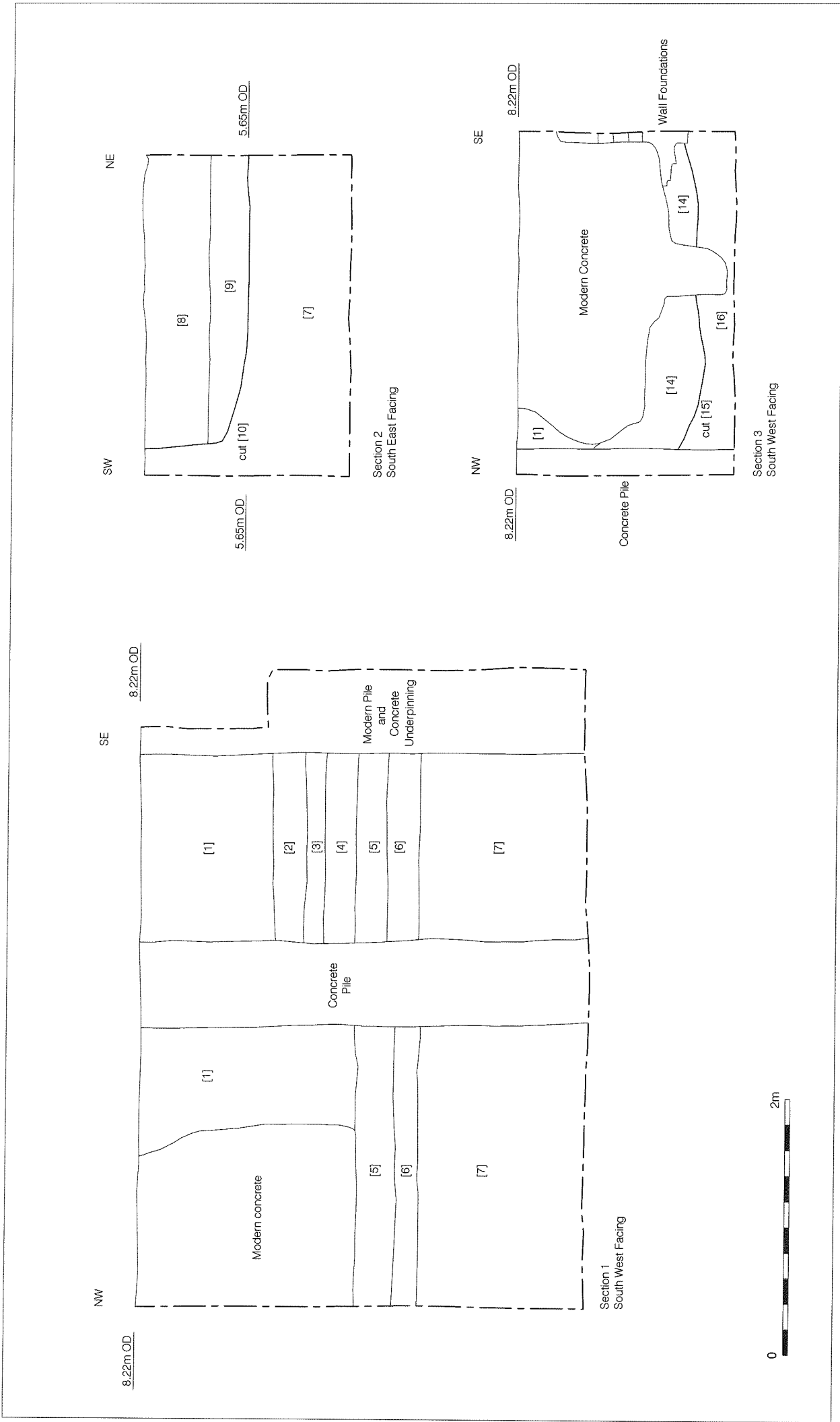


Figure 4
Sections 1, 2 & 3
1:40

7 CONCLUSIONS

- 7.1 Natural gravel was observed on the site at a depth of c.2m below ground level. With the exception of a possible palaeochannel revealed in section toward the north-east corner of the site all the deposits and features on site were late post-medieval.
- 7.2 The absence of brickearth on the site suggests that the area has been subject to widespread truncation.
- 7.3 Up to 2m of late post-medieval made ground, covered the site, suggesting significant truncation and levelling of the land for the construction of the church and the hall. The limited post-medieval pitting that was observed was probably 18th/19th century in date.
- 7.4 The mid 19th century wall running north-south across the site is likely to be either a boundary wall from the time that the site occupied was occupied by a garden in the 1860s.

8 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- 8.1 Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited would like to thank Duncan Hawkins of CgMs who commissioned the work on behalf of St. George West London Limited who generously funded this project.

- 8.2 The author would like to thank Steve King from Laing O' Rourke London and South Limited for invaluable assistance on site, Hailey Baxter for the illustrations, and Jon Butler for his project management and editing.

APPENDIX 1**CONTEXT INDEX**

Context	Type	Description	Interpretation
1	Layer	Dark grey brown clay silt	Made ground
2	Layer	Light grey yellow mortar	Mortar layer
3	Layer	Brick rubble	Demolition dump
4	Layer	Blue grey silt clay sand	Made ground
5	Layer	Dark yellow brown silty sand	Made ground
6	Layer	Light grey yellow sand	Natural sand
7	Layer	Mid yellow grey gravel	Natural gravel
8	Fill	Light yellow brown silty sand with brick	Fill of cut [10]
9	Fill	Dark grey black soot and coal	Burnt fill of cut [10]
10	Cut	Large cut at least 2.3m wide	Post-medieval pit filled with [8] & [9]
11	Layer	Light yellow grey sandy silt with mortar & cbm	Demolition dump
12	Masonry	North-south aligned brick wall	Possible boundary wall
13	Cut	North-south aligned linear cut	Construction cut for wall [12]
14	Fill	Dark black grey silty sand	Fill of cut [15]
15	Cut	Cut observed in section	Pit filled with [14]
16	Layer	Mid yellow brown sand	Natural sand
17	Fill	Dark grey brown silty clay with brick rubble	Modern backfill
18	Cut	Cut observed in section	Modern cut filled with [17]
19	Fill	Mid yellow brown sandy gravel	Fill of cut [20]
20	Cut	Cut observed in section	Possible modern cut filled with [19]
21	Fill	Dark orange brown clay silt	Fill of cut [22]
22	Cut	Cut observed in section	Possible palaeochannel
23	Layer	Mid reddish brown sandy gravel	Natural sandy gravel

Appendix 2 Pottery & Glass Spot Dates

Pottery Dating by Chris Jarrett

Context	Spot date	Comments
[4]	1745-1800	
[11]	1580-1700	Border ware may be residual and the flowerpot could be dated c.1700-1900.
[12]	1800-1900	
[17]	1840-1900	

Glass Dating by Peter Moore

Context	Spot date	Comments
[11]	18 th century	Probable late 18 th century in date

APPENDIX 3 OASIS FORM

OASIS ID: preconst1-6695

Project details

Project name	United Reformed Church and Church Hall, Quadrant Road
Short description of the project	Observations made during the ground works associated with the construction of a single building of nine apartments revealed natural sands and gravels (Kempton Park gravels) through which a possible palaeochannel cut. No brickearth deposits were observed suggesting widespread truncation of the area. The gravels were overlain by deposits of late post-medieval made ground. Two late post-medieval pits and a 19th century brick wall were observed.
Project dates	Start: 25-01-2005 End: 10-02-2005
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	QLG 05 - Sitecode
Type of project	Recording project
Current Land use	Vacant Land 1 - Vacant land previously developed
Investigation type	'Watching Brief'
Prompt	Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPG16

Project location

Country England
Site location GREATER LONDON RICHMOND UPON THAMES RICHMOND
UPON THAMES United Reformed Church and Church Hall,
Quadrant Road

Study area 250 Square metres

National grid reference TQ 1794 7509 Point

Height OD Min: 6.97m Max: 6.44m

Project creators

Name of Organisation Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd

Project brief originator CgMs Consultants Ltd

Project design originator Duncan Hawkins

Project director/manager Jon Butler

Project supervisor Stuart Watson

Sponsor or funding body Developer

Project archives

Physical Archive LAARC

recipient

Physical Contents 'Ceramics','Glass'

Physical Archive
Exists? Yes

Digital Archive
recipient LAARC

Digital Archive
Exists? Yes

Paper Archive
recipient LAARC

Paper Archive
Exists? Yes

**Project
bibliography 1**

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

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