

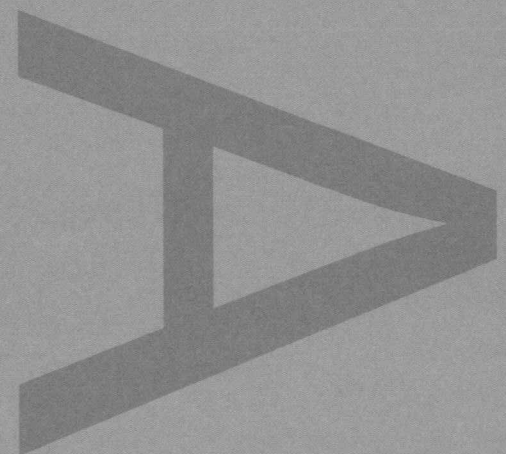
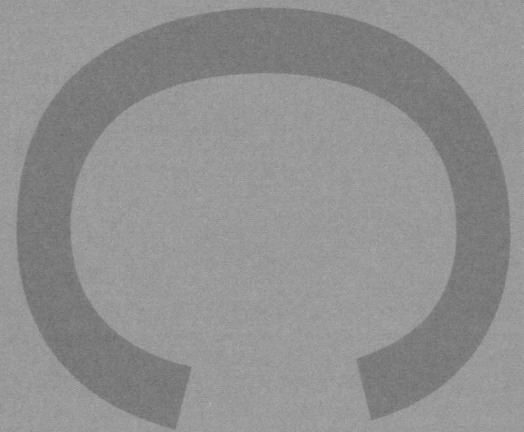
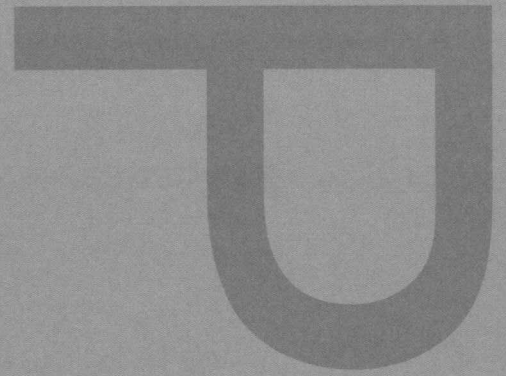
ELECTRON HOUSE

CRAY AVENUE

ST MARY CRAY

LONDON BOROUGH OF BROMLEY

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION



EHC 05

MAY 2005

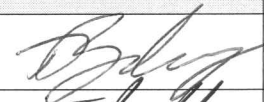

PRE-CONSTRUCT ARCHAEOLOGY

DOCUMENT VERIFICATION

ELECTRON HOUSE, CRAY AVENUE
ST MARY CRAY
LONDON BOROUGH OF BROMLEY

EVALUATION

Quality Control

Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited			K907
	Name & Title	Signature	Date
Text Prepared by:	Stuart Holden		May 2005
Graphics Prepared by:	Hayley Baxter		May 2005
Graphics Checked by:	Josephine Brown		May 2005
Project Manager Sign-off:	Jon Butler		May 2005

Revision No.	Date	Checked	Approved

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

**An Archaeological Evaluation of Land at Electron House, Cray Avenue,
St Mary Cray, London Borough of Bromley**

Site Code: EHC 05

Central National Grid Reference: TQ 4696 6827

**Written and Researched by Stuart Holden
Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited, May 2005**

Project Manager: Jon Butler

Commissioning Client: Denvale Trading Centres (Electron) Ltd

**Contractor:
Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited
Unit 54
Brockley Cross Business Centre
96 Endwell Road
Brockley
London
SE4 2PD**

Tel: 020 7732 3925

Fax: 020 7732 7896

**E-mail: jbutler@pre-construct.com
info@pre-construct.com**

Website: www.pre-construct.com

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May 2005**

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CONTENTS

1	ABSTRACT	3
2	INTRODUCTION.....	4
3	PLANNING BACKGROUND	7
4	ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND	9
5	METHODOLOGY	10
6	GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY.....	12
7	ARCHAEOLOGICAL SEQUENCE	13
8	CONCLUSIONS AND RECCOMENDATIONS	15
9	ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	16
10	BIBLIOGRAPHY	17

ILLUSTRATIONS

FIGURE 1: SITE LOCATION	5
FIGURE 2: TRENCH LOCATION	6
FIGURE 3: SECTIONS.....	14

APPENDIX 1: SITE MATRIX	18
APPENDIX 2: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS	19
APPENDIX 3: OASIS FORM	20

ABSTRACT

- 1.1 This report details the results of an archaeological evaluation undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited of land at Electron House, Cray Avenue, St Mary Cray in advance of a proposed redevelopment of the site by Denvale Trading Centres (Electron) Ltd.

- 1.2 No archaeologically significant deposits were identified, although a flint blade and fragment of a possible flake likely to date to the Mesolithic period were recovered from a later context.

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited of land at Electron House, Cray Avenue (Figure 1) in advance of possible redevelopment.
- 2.2 The evaluation was conducted between the 19th and 20th May 2005 and was commissioned by Denvale Trade Centres (Electron) Ltd.
- 2.3 The evaluation consisted of two trenches measuring 10m in length, positioned across the eastern part of the site (Figure 2).
- 2.4 The National Grid Reference of the centre of the site is TQ 4696 6827
- 2.5 The site was assigned the unique code EHC 05.
- 2.6 The evaluation was supervised by Stuart Holden and assisted by Tony Baxter. The project was managed by Jon Butler for Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited.



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Figure 1
Site Location
1:20,000

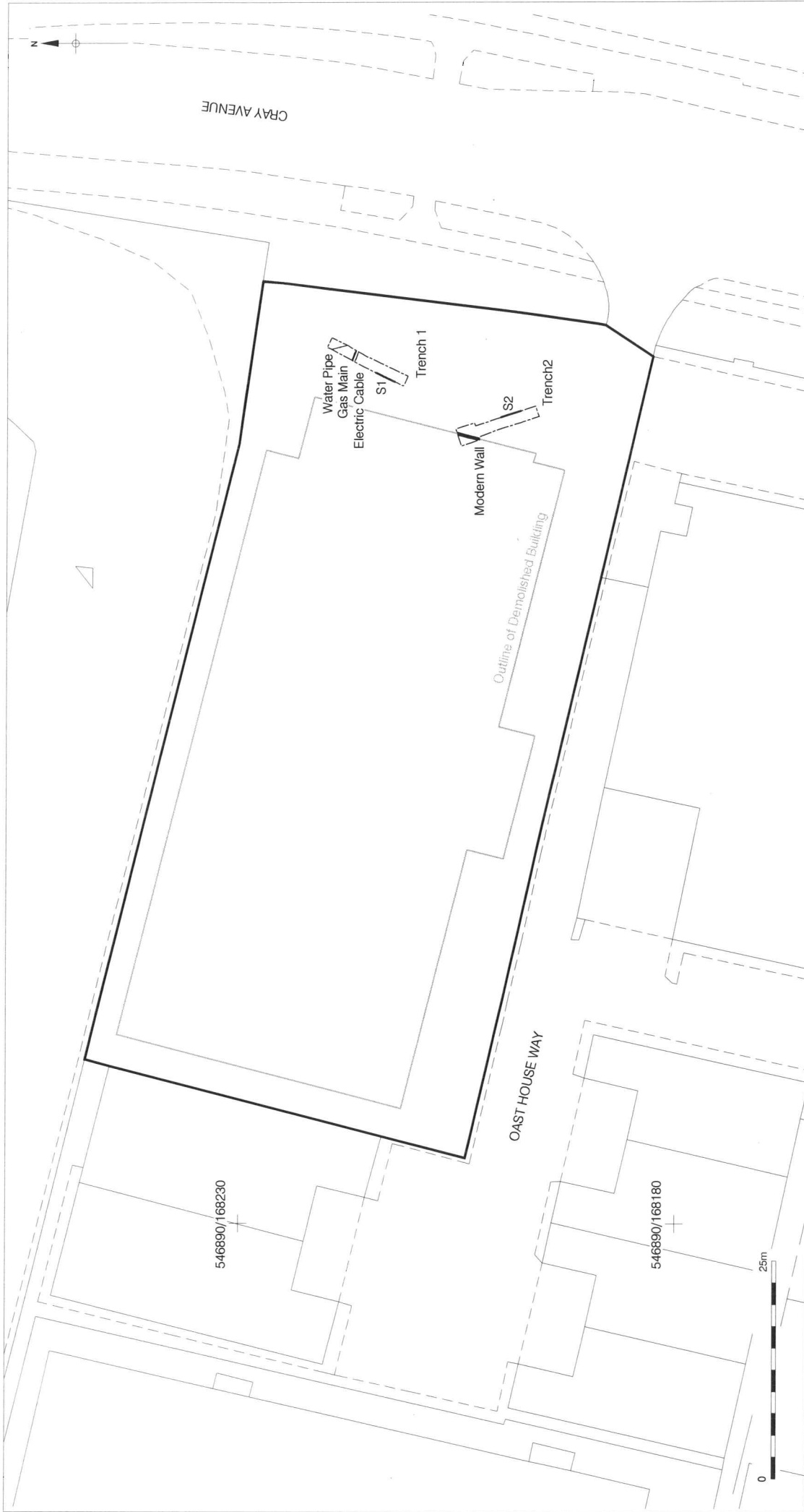


Figure 2
 Trench Location
 1:625

3 PLANNING BACKGROUND

3.1 Planning background

3.1.1 The evaluation aimed to satisfy the objectives of the London Borough of Bromley, which fully recognises the importance of the buried heritage for which they are the custodians. The Borough's deposited draft 'Unitary Development Plan' 2002 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:

POLICY BE12

(i) within Areas of Archaeological Significance, as defined on the proposals Map... a written statement of the likely impact is submitted in the form of an archaeological statement (which can be desk based); where necessary information cannot be obtained by other means, an archaeological field evaluation should be carried out prior to determination;

(ii) at sites of potential archaeological importance..., where the permanent preservation in situ is not justified, provision shall be made for an appropriate level of investigation and recording to be undertaken by a recognised archaeological organisation before any development commences.

Reason

Ancient monuments and archaeological remains constitute the principal surviving evidence of the Borough's past. However they are vulnerable to modern development and changes in land use and are easily lost or damaged. The council considers that preservation of archaeological sites and ancient monuments is a legitimate objective against which the demands of development must be balanced and fully assessed. The destruction of such remains should be avoided and should never take place without prior archaeological excavation and record.

3.1.3 The Bromley 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.

3.1.4 Planning permission was granted for the development of the site, conditional on the recommendation of Mark Stevenson, English Heritage, GLAAS to Bromley Council, that provision be made for a series of appropriate archaeological works as outlined above.

3.1.5 There are no Scheduled Ancient Monuments on site. However, c.700m to the south the Roman bathhouse and Saxon cemetery lie between Poverest and Bellefield Roads.

3.2 **Research Objectives**

3.2.1 The method statement highlights possible research topics:

- Is there any evidence of prehistoric activity on the site?

- Is there any evidence of Roman settlement on the site, which can be associated with the Roman bathhouse and road to the south at Poverest Road?

- Is there any evidence of Saxon settlement on the site associated with the cemetery at Poverest Road?

- Is there any evidence of medieval deposits or structures associated with the medieval settlement known in the area from the Domesday Survey of 1086?

- Are there any post-medieval remains on the site?

- Is there any evidence of deneholes on the site?

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

4.1 Compass Archaeology prepared an archaeological Desk-Based Assessment for a site on Cray Avenue to the south of Electron House (Compass Archaeology, 2003). The results of this document together with additional material are summarised below.

4.2 Prehistoric

4.2.1 Nineteen SMR records were found within 750m of the site, with two Mesolithic struck flint tools being found within 100m. Seven pieces of struck flint were recovered from CYM 03 to the south of the site (Holden, 2003)

4.3 Roman

4.3.1 Thirty-seven SMR records were found within 750m of the site. Of highest significance, is the bathhouse to the south of the site, which is a part of the Poverest Road Scheduled Ancient Monument. It is believed that the bathhouse may have been associated with either a villa or mansio. It is likely that the bathhouse was occupied into the fourth century AD.

4.3.2 Further archaeological investigations have suggested that the complex surrounding the bathhouse is confined to the south of Poverest Road. Some finds of Roman date were recovered from the limited archaeological investigations during the development of the Ravensquay Business Centre.

4.3.3 Three Roman cremation burials were found at 34 May Avenue, to the south of the site.

4.4 Saxon

4.4.1 To the east and north of the Roman bathhouse, an early Saxon inhumation and cremation cemetery has been excavated. This dates to the fifth and sixth centuries AD and the arrangement of the burials suggests the bathhouse was still standing at the time. The burials were of men, women and children on a variety of alignments and with a range of grave goods including; iron knives, spear heads, shield bosses, a sword, bronze brooches, pierced Roman coins, tweezers and other finds.

4.4.2 To the southeast of the site, on the eastern side of the River Cray, a grubenhaus (sunken featured building) was excavated. This was found to cut a Roman ditch and contained within its fill; bone/antler comb fragments, bone pins, a copper pin or brooch, seven coins.

4.4.3 The Domesday Survey of 1086 records two settlements at St Mary Cray, although neither has been located by archaeological excavation. 'Sentlinge' is thought to be to the south-east of the site, and 'Sudcrai' to the north-east near the latter parish church.

4.5 **Medieval**

4.5.1 The parish church dates from the early thirteenth century and the medieval settlement is thought to have been concentrated along the High Street. The development site itself is likely to have been open farmland during this period.

4.6 **Post-medieval**

4.6.1 The village of St Mary Cray appears on small-scale maps from the late 16th century onwards and the site itself is shown as open land from 1769. The 1841 Tithing Map shows the site as two fields with the easternmost being used as a meadow, where topographically the site is lower and more susceptible to flooding, and the westernmost in arable use.

5 METHODOLOGY

- 5.1 The fieldwork was designed to assess the presence or absence of significant archaeological remains, which may require further investigation. The excavation of two trenches was agreed with Mark Stevenson GLAAS monitor on behalf of Bromley Borough Council.
- 5.2 All works were undertaken in accordance with the guidelines set out by English Heritage and the Institute of Field Archaeology.
- 5.3 The presence of underground services was taken into consideration and the area scanned using a Cable Avoiding Tool prior to excavation.
- 5.4 Under archaeological supervision, a mechanical excavator fitted with a flat ditching bucket was used to remove unproductive soils down to the highest archaeological horizon. The features identified within the trenches were then cleaned and investigated by hand. Investigation was limited to identifying the extent and nature of the deposits and to recover dating evidence.
- 5.5 All archaeological features (stratigraphical layers, cuts, fills, structures) were recorded in plan and where necessary in section using standard recording methods. A photographic record was also made as appropriate.
- 5.6 A temporary benchmark (value 44.92m OD) was traversed onto the site from the Ordnance Survey Benchmark, located on the internal face of the railway bridge pier, located to the north of the site (value 44.80m OD).

6 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

- 6.1 The site lies along the western side of the River Cray valley, approximately 200m from the river, which flows north into the River Darent, a tributary of the River Thames.
- 6.2 According to the British Geological Survey (1998) the site lies on a River Terrace Deposit of Taplow Gravel, close to the western edge of alluvium within the Cray Valley.
- 6.3 Natural gravels were present on the site at levels between 42.60m and 42.68mOD.

7 ARCHAEOLOGICAL SEQUENCE

7.1 Summary

7.1.1 The same sequence was seen in both trenches of natural gravel overlain by ploughsoil, made ground and capped with concrete. This was virtually identical to that seen in Trench 4 at the former AEI Re-Diffusion site (Site Code: CYM 03) to the south of the site (Holden, 2003).

7.2 Trench 1

7.2.1 This trench measured 9.8m in length and was orientated north-south. At the northern end, water, gas and electric service runs were present and full excavation could not be undertaken in the first 4.60m.

7.2.2 The lowest deposit exposed was a mid orangey brown sand and gravel with occasional patches of sand [01]. This was interpreted as natural and present at a level between 42.60m and 42.64mOD. Above this, a 0.60m thick layer of mid greyish brown sandy silt ploughsoil with frequent charcoal flecks, moderate gravel and very occasional post-medieval roof tile fragments was recorded. This was interpreted as a ploughsoil. Made ground up to 0.50m thick and 0.20m of concrete completed the sequence.

7.3 Trench 2

7.3.1 This trench measured 9.50m in length and was orientated northwest-southeast. At the northwestern end, a north-south orientated brick wall foundation relating to the recently demolished Electron House was encountered.

7.3.2 The lowest deposit exposed was a mid orangey brown sand and gravel with occasional patches of sand [04]. This was interpreted as natural and present at a level between 42.61m and 42.68mOD. Above this, a 0.37m thick layer of mid greyish brown sandy silt ploughsoil with frequent charcoal flecks, moderate gravel and very occasional 19th century potsherds was recorded and interpreted as a ploughsoil. From this deposit a struck flint blade and a possible blade fragment were recovered. The blade is of light grey flint in good condition and measures 33mm by 12mm with a diffuse bulb of percussion and dorsal flake scars. The possible flake fragment is of translucent flint with some cortex remaining and measures 17mm by 11mm.

7.3.3 Made ground up to 0.50m thick and 0.20m of concrete completed the sequence.

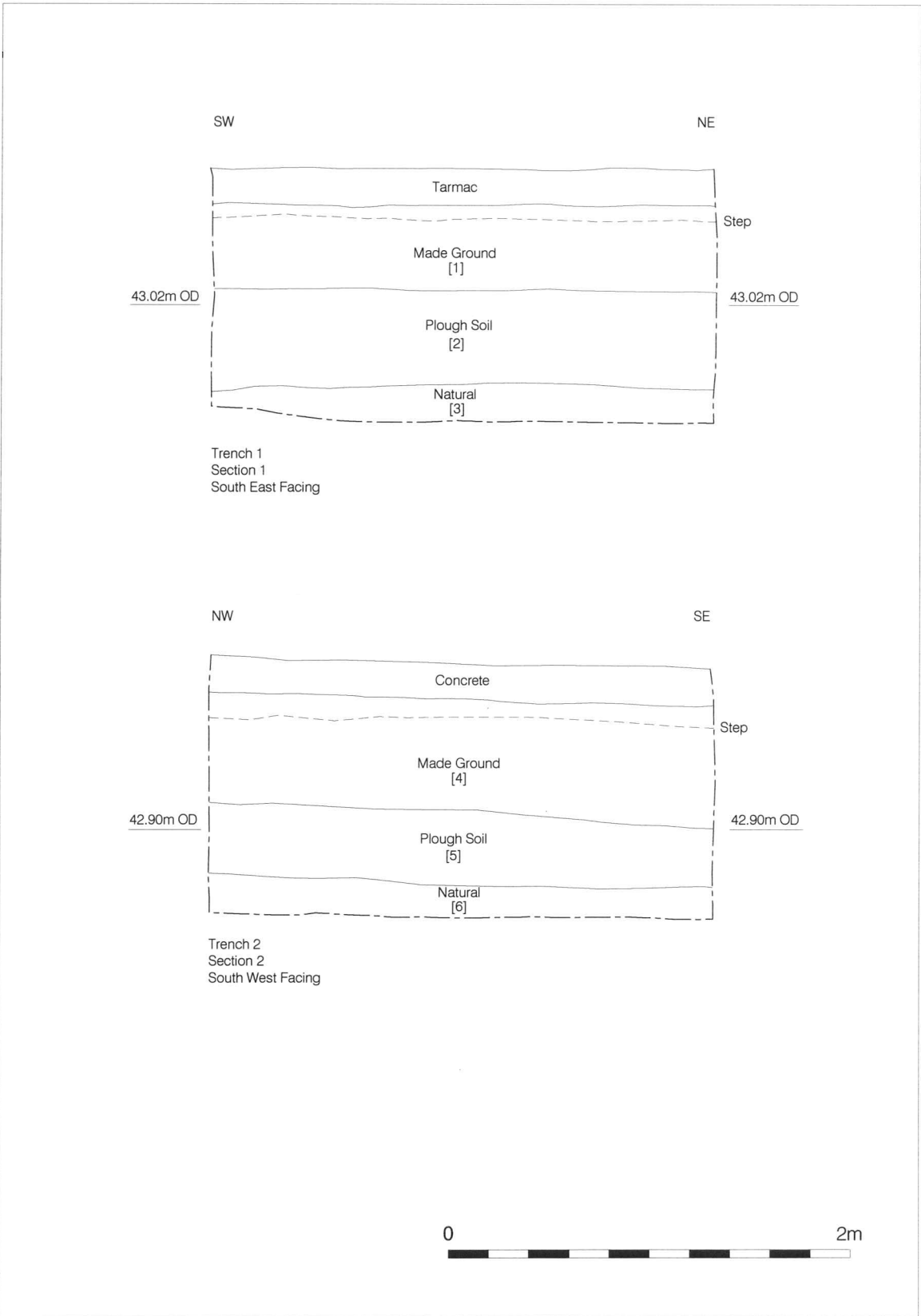


Figure 3
Sections 1 & 2
1:30

8 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 The presence of the residual Mesolithic flint blade is in keeping with other material of similar date found in the area during earlier archaeological interventions and finds. Their discovery is evidence of the exploitation of the land along the flanks of the River Cray during prehistoric times.
- 8.2 It is anticipated that this phase of archaeological work will be all that is necessary to satisfy the archaeological planning condition.

9 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- 9.1 Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited would like to thank Denvale Trade Centres (Electron) Ltd for commissioning the work. The author would like to thank the following: Tony Baxter for his hard work on site, the staff of Syd Bishop Demolition and Jon Butler for his project management and editing of the present report.

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Compass Archaeology 2002 *An Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment of the Former AEI Diffusion Site, Cray Avenue, St Mary Cray, in the London Borough of Bromley* Compass Archaeology unpublished Report.

Holden, S 2003 *An Archaeological Evaluation of Land at Former AEI Re-Diffusion Site, Cray Avenue, St Mary's Cray, London Borough of Bromley* Pre-Construct Archaeology unpublished report

APPENDIX 1: SITE MATRIX

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NFE

APPENDIX 2: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

Context	Type	Trench	Description	Findings
1	Layer	1	Made ground	None retained
2	Layer	1	Ploughsoil	CBM
3	Natural	1	Sand and gravel	None
4	Layer	2	Made ground	None retained
5	Layer	2	Ploughsoil	Pot, struck flint
6	Natural	2	Sand and gravel	None

APPENDIX 3: OASIS FORM

OASIS ID: preconst1-8323

Project details

Project name	Electron House, Cray Avenue, St Mary Cray
Short description of the project	An archaeological evaluation at Electron House, Cray Avenue, St Mary Cray No archaeological features were found. A residual struck flint was recovered.
Project dates	Start: 19-05-2005 End: 20-05-2005
Previous/future work	No / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	EHC 05 - Sitecode
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	Local Authority Designated Archaeological Area
Current Land use	Other 15 - Other
Significant Finds	FLINT BLADE Mesolithic
Methods & techniques	'Targeted Trenches'
Development type	Urban commercial (e.g. offices, shops, banks, etc.)
Prompt	Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPG16

Position in the planning process Not known / Not recorded

Project location

Country England

Site location GREATER LONDON BROMLEY ORPINGTON Electron House, Cray Avenue, St Mary Cray

Postcode BR5

Study area 3000.00 Square metres

National grid reference TQ 4696 6827 Point

Height OD Min: 42.60m Max: 42.68m

Project creators

Name of Organisation Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd

Project brief originator Greater London Archaeological Advisory Service

Project design originator Jon Butler

Project director/manager Jon Butler

Project supervisor Stuart Holden

Project archives

Physical Archive LAARC

recipient

Physical Contents 'Ceramics','Worked stone/lithics'

Physical Archive Exists? No

Digital Archive recipient LAARC

Digital Media available 'Text'

Digital Archive Exists? No

Paper Archive recipient LAARC

Paper Media available 'Context sheet','Plan','Section'

Paper Archive Exists? No

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PCA

PRE - CONSTRUCT ARCHAEOLOGY LIMITED

UNIT 54

BROCKLEY CROSS BUSINESS CENTRE

96 ENDWELL ROAD

BROCKLEY

LONDON SE4 2PD

TEL: 0207 732 3925 0207 639 9091

FAX: 0207 639 9588

EMAIL: info@pre-construct.com

PRE-CONSTRUCT ARCHAEOLOGY LIMITED (NORTHERN OFFICE)

UNIT 19A

TURSDALE BUSINESS PARK

DURHAM DH6 5PG

TEL: 0191 377 1111

FAX: 0191 377 0101

EMAIL: info.north@pre-construct.com

