



270-272 SHOOTERS HILL ROAD
WATCHING BRIEF

Quality Control

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**An Archaeological Watching Brief at the Rear Of 270-272 Shooters Hill
Road, London Borough of Greenwich, SE18**

Site Code: SHX 05

Central National Grid Reference: TQ 4168 7694

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CONTENTS

1	Abstract	3
2	Introduction	4
3	Planning Background	7
4	Archaeological and Historical Background	9
5	Archaeological Methodology	10
6	Archaeological Sequence	11
7	Conclusions	13
8	Bibliography	14
9	Acknowledgements	15

APPENDICES

1	OASIS Report Form	16
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LIST OF FIGURES

Fig. 1	Site Location	5
Fig. 2	Section Location	6
Fig. 3	Sections 1 – 6	12

1 ABSTRACT

- 1.1 This report details the results and working methods of an archaeological watching brief undertaken during groundworks associated with the redevelopment of land at the Rear of 270-272 Shooters Hill Road, London Borough of Greenwich. The site is centred at National Grid Reference TQ 4168 7694 (fig.1).
- 1.2 The watching brief monitored the mechanical excavation of foundation trenches associated with the construction of a single 4-bedroom house and garage (fig. 2).
- 1.3 The watching brief encountered natural London Clay deposits sealed by subsoil and 20th century made ground (fig. 3).

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 An archaeological watching brief was undertaken at the Rear of 270-272 Shooters Hill Road, London Borough of Greenwich, by Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd on the 6th April 2005 (fig.1).
- 2.2 The commissioning client was M.E. Matin and the watching brief was undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd under the supervision of Neil Hawkins and the project management of Tim Bradley.
- 2.3 The site is bounded to the south, west and north by private gardens and to the east by Farjeon Road (fig.1).
- 2.4 The completed archive comprising written and drawn records will be deposited at the Museum of London under the site code SHX 05.

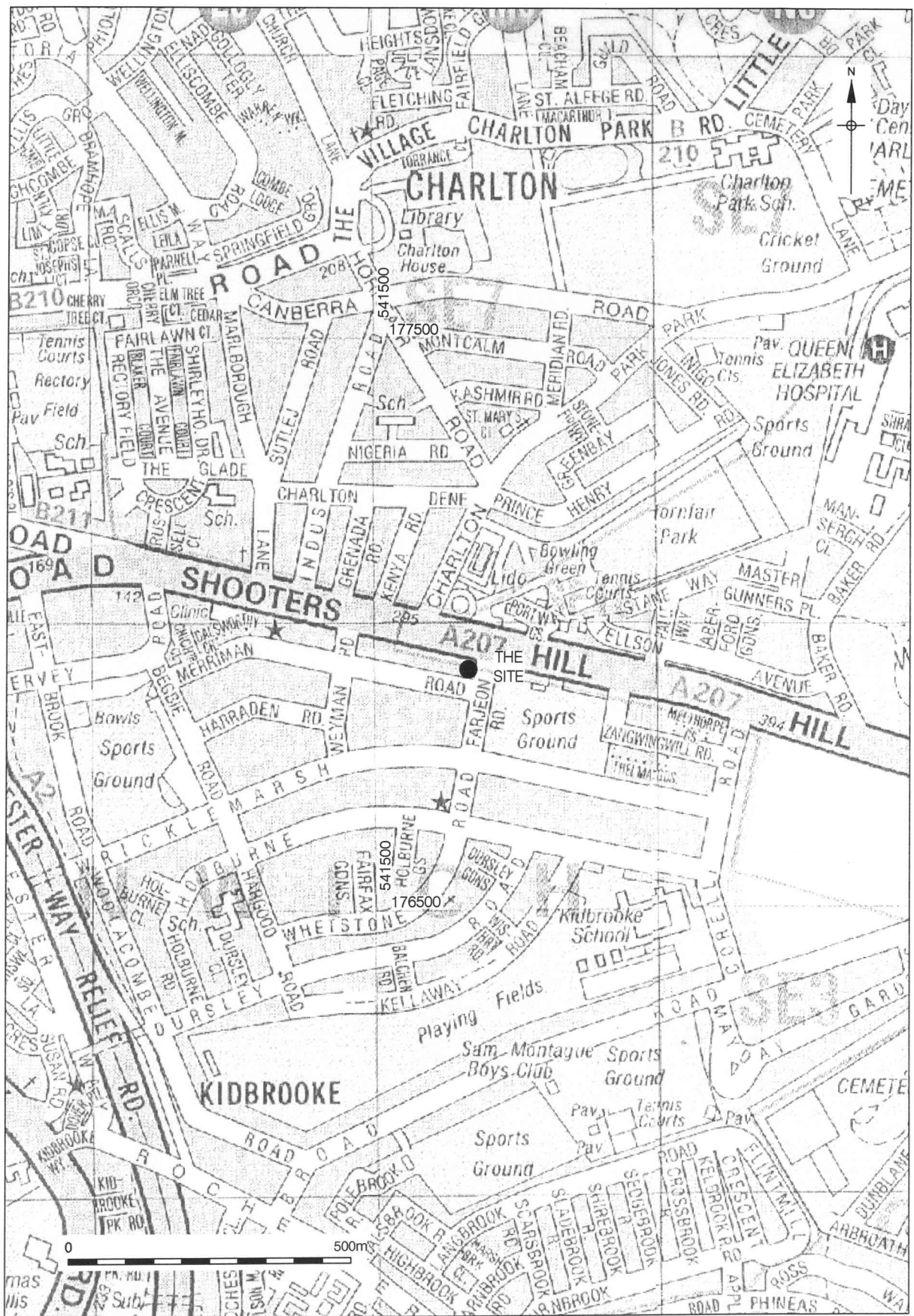
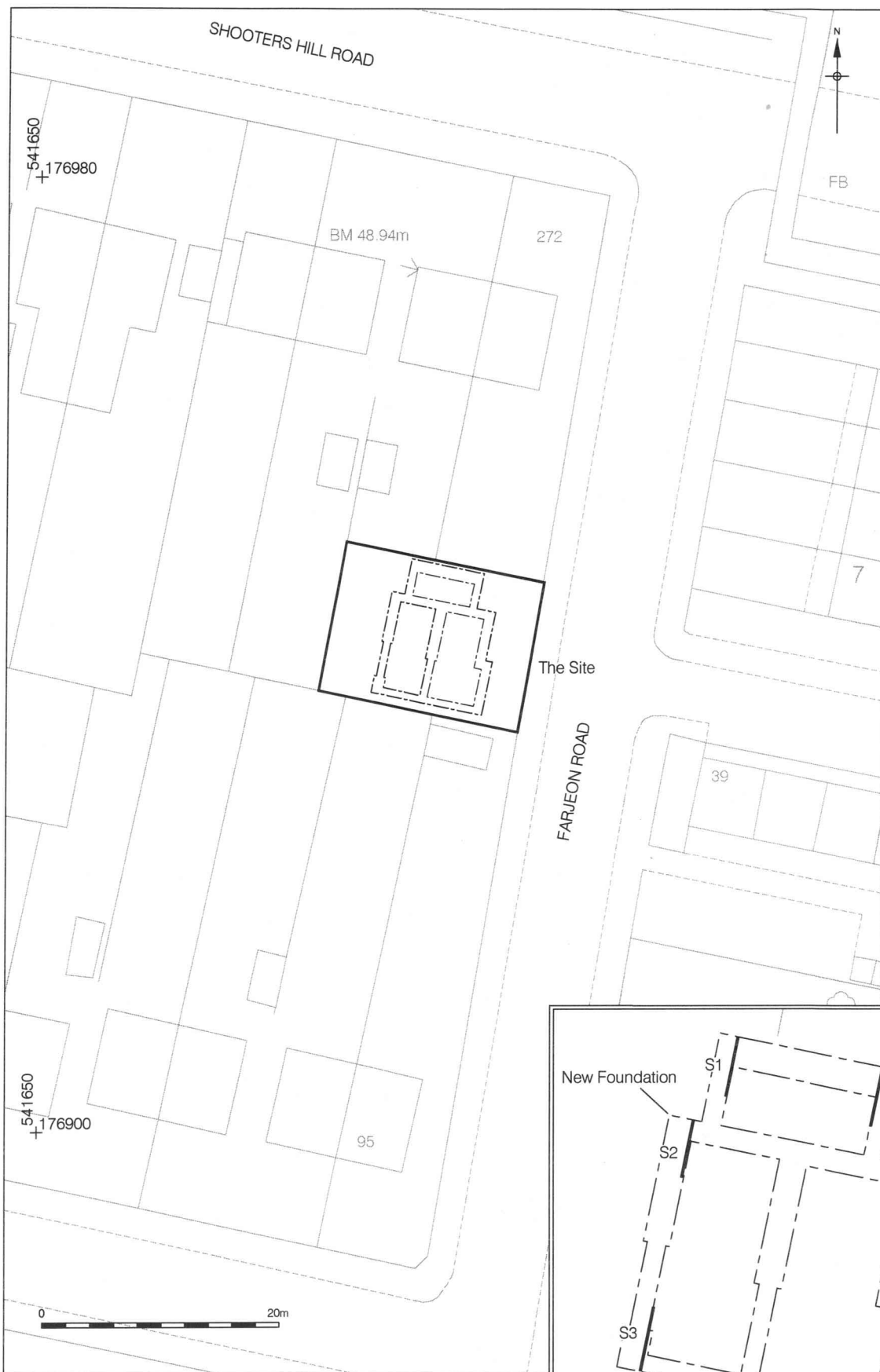


Figure 1
 Site Location
 1:10,000



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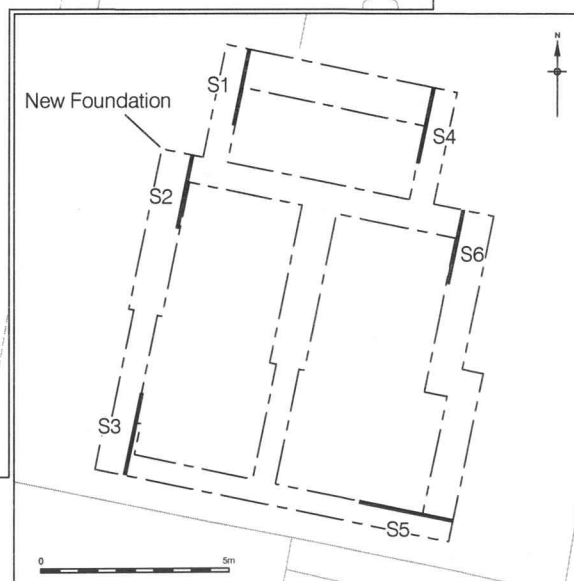


Figure 2
Section Location
1:500/ inset 1:200

3 PLANNING BACKGROUND

3.1 Archaeology in Greenwich and the UDP

3.1.1 The study aims to satisfy the objectives of the London Borough of Greenwich, 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 will be subject to the Council's Archaeology Policy:

Archaeology

6.48 D29A

At identified sites of known archaeological remains of national importance, including scheduled monuments, there will be a presumption in favour of the physical preservation of the remains in situ and to allow for public access and display. For sites of lesser importance the Council will seek to preserve the remains in situ, but where this is not feasible the remains should be either be investigated, excavated and removed from the site, or investigated, excavated and recorded before destruction. Appropriate conditions/legal agreements may be used to ensure this is satisfied.

D29B

The Council will expect applicants to properly assess and plan for the impact of proposed developments on archaeological remains where they fall within 'Areas of Archaeological Potential' as defined on the constraints Map 10. In certain instances preliminary archaeological site investigations may be required before proposals are considered. The Council will seek to secure the co-operation of developers in the excavation, recording and publication of archaeological finds before development takes place by use of planning conditions/legal agreements as appropriate.

Reason

6.49 PPG16 gives guidance on how archaeological remains should be preserved or recorded. It recommends that UDPs should include policies for the protection, enhancement and preservation of sites of archaeological interest and of their settings,

as well as a map defining where these policies apply. The Borough's archaeological heritage represents a local community asset, which is desirable to preserve and utilise both as an educational and recreational resource. The objectives of new development can often conflict with the need to preserve, or to remove and record such remains. Potential developers should be alerted early on in the planning process of likely remains so as to secure their preservation. The support of local archaeological groups is essential to this process. The potential for discovery of significant remains in large areas of the Borough is high, whilst the opportunity to record and preserve such finite resources is usually restricted to none occasion.

6.50 The Council will also:

- i. Pursue land use policies which are sensitive to the potential threat development can pose to archaeological remains and adopt a flexible approach to the design of new development in areas where the preservation of archaeological remains is paramount.
- ii. Encourage co-operation amongst landowners, developers and archaeological groups by promoting the principles laid down in the British Archaeologists and Developers Liaison Group Code of Practice.
- iii. Encourage developers to allow an appropriate level of archaeological investigation where significant remains are unexpectedly discovered during construction, and if applicable make provision for the preservation or recording of such finds by a recognised archaeological organisation.

3.1.3 The Greenwich 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 Desktop Assessment are known, and where follow-up trial work is known to be necessary or otherwise, 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 proposed development lies within an Area of Archaeological Potential as defined by the London Borough of Greenwich's UDP.

3.1.5 There are no Scheduled Ancient Monuments within the development site.

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

4.1 Roman

4.1.1 Less than 100m north of the area of the site lies the major Roman Road known as Watling Street. The road was established by AD 50 by Aulus Plautius and his legions, extending from the invasion port of Richborough through to Canterbury, Rochester and on to London. Hasted, writing sometime in the mid eighteenth century states that the road was clearly visible on Bexley Heath and on into Welling¹.

4.2 Medieval

4.2.1 Until the 15th century, the area of Kidbrooke was a small but flourishing village. In the early 12th century Chitebroc possessed a small chapel, a subordinate to Charlton Church, and later a parish church. By 1427-8 this church living was vacant with no new appointment forthcoming and by 1494 as no priest was present the church became derelict. The village essentially died and it wasn't until a new church was built in 1867 and subsequently the building of the A2 Rochester Way in the 1930's did settlement once again take place in Kidbrooke².

4.2.2 It is suggested that the name of 'Shooters Hill' was derived from the archers who gathered there and practised their craft. The target in the time of Henry VIII was a hazel rod set up at a space of four hundred yards³.

4.3 Post-medieval

4.3.1 Shooters Hill was a well-wooded suburb, and despite the main road to Dover, was a place to be avoided by travellers due to its remoteness. Highwayman and footpads lay in wait along the route and for this reason bodies were displayed on the gibbet by the crossroads at the bottom of the hill. The last execution took place on the gallows there in 1805. The height of the hill has always played a major communications role, a beacon stood there in the 16th century, a shutter telegraph in the 18th and VHF radio transmitters exist there now⁴.

¹ Brown (2002) pg.298

² Weinreb & Hibbert (1995) pg.443

³ Vincent (1914)

⁴ Weinreb & Hibbert (1995) pg.806-7

5 METHODOLOGY

- 5.1 The watching brief monitored the mechanical excavation of foundation trenches associated with the new development of the site (fig.2).
- 5.2 Six sample sections within the excavated foundation trenches were recorded to encompass an adequate representative sample of the area (fig.2 & 3).
- 5.3 Deposits within the trenches were removed by a mechanical excavator until either significant archaeological deposits were encountered or the appropriate project level was attained.
- 5.4 Following fill clearance representative sections throughout the trenches were drawn.
- 5.5 Recording on site was undertaken using the single context recording system as specified in the Museum of London Site Manual. Plans were drawn at a scale of 1:20, and full or representative sections at a scale of 1:10. Contexts were numbered sequentially and recorded on *pro-forma* context sheets.
- 5.6 The site was given the unique site code SHX 05.

6 THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SEQUENCE

6.1 Phase 1 – Natural London Clay

6.1.1 The earliest deposit recorded within the foundation trenches was the natural London Clay, [3]. This deposit was recorded in Section 1 at a depth of approximately 47.25m OD and continued to the base of the foundation trench recorded in Section 1 at 1.15m deep. In Section 2 it was encountered at a depth of 47.30m OD and continued to the base at 1.20m deep. In Section 3 it was encountered at a depth of 47.45m OD and continued to the base at 1.10m deep. In Section 4 it was encountered at a depth of 47.35m OD and continued to the base at 1.10m deep. In Section 6 it was encountered at a depth of 47.35m OD and continued to the base at 1.20m deep.

6.2 Phase 2 - Subsoil

6.2.1 Sealing the natural London Clay was a layer of sandy-clay subsoil, [2]. This layer was recorded in Section 1 at a depth of 47.55m OD and was 0.30m thick. In Section 2 it was encountered at a depth of 47.60m OD and was 0.30m thick. In Section 3 it was encountered at a depth of 47.60m OD and was 0.15m thick. In Section 4 it was encountered at a depth of 47.90m OD and was 0.55m thick. In Section 6 it was encountered at the current ground level of 48.00m OD and was 0.65m thick.

6.3 Phase 3 - Modern

6.3.1 Sealing the subsoil was a layer of 20th century made ground, [1], encountered at the current ground level, approximately 48m OD. In Section 1 this layer had a thickness of 0.45m, in Section 2, 0.40m, in Section 3, 0.40m and in Section 4, 0.10m.

6.3.2 In the south western corner of the foundation trenches a concrete base was encountered at 47.45m OD, recorded in Section 5, which was unable to be broken out with the machinery on-site. Sealing this was a layer of modern backfill/rubbish, which was encountered at the current ground level, approximately 48.00m OD, and was 0.55m thick.

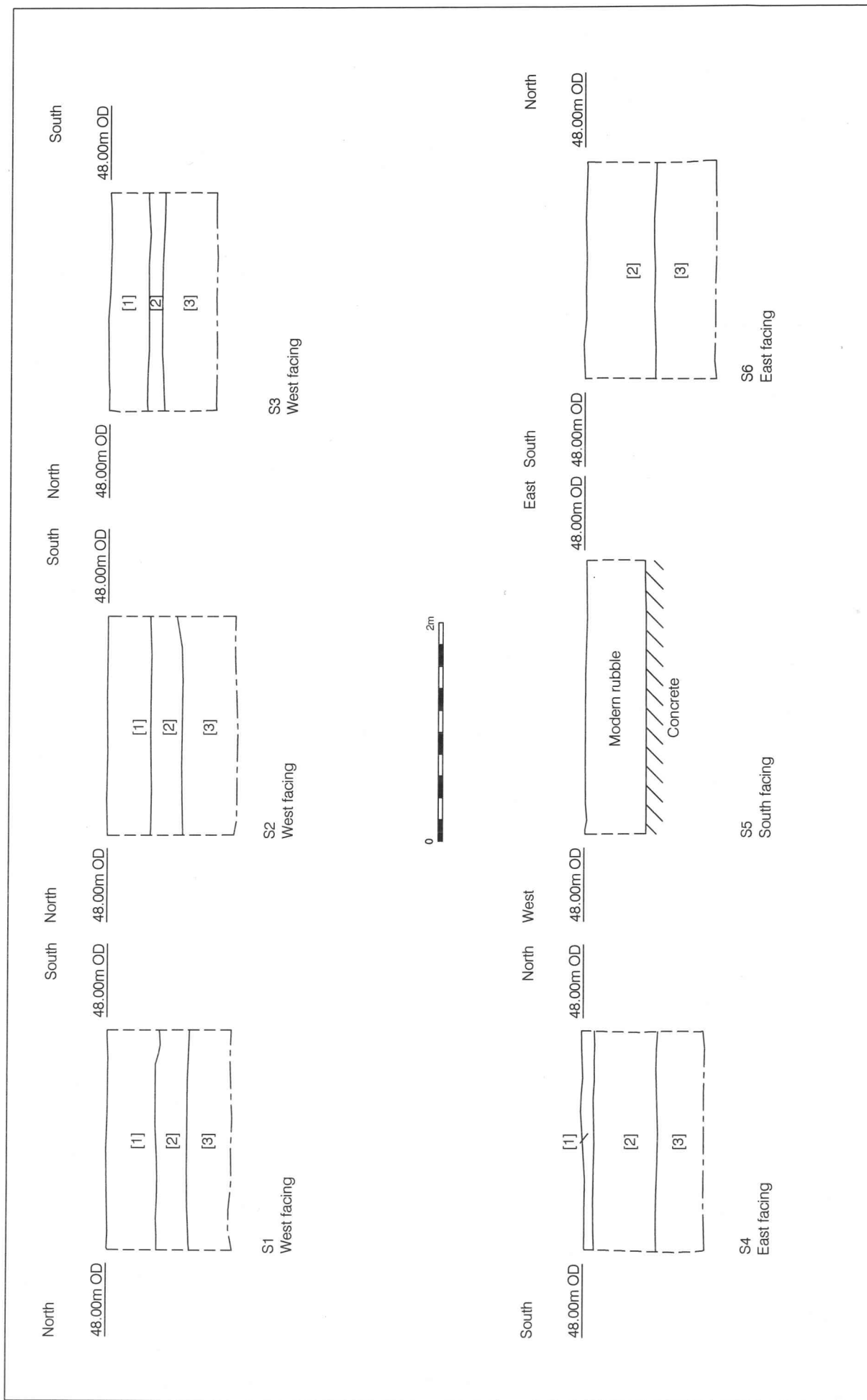


Figure 3
Sections
1:50

7 CONCLUSIONS

- 7.1 The watching brief found evidence for the underlying geology, London Clay, which was encountered throughout the site. Sealing the natural deposits were a layer of subsoil, which was overlain by 20th century made ground (fig. 3). A concrete base was encountered towards the south-west of the site that was filled with modern demolition/rubbish deposits. Although the concrete base was not broken out it can be assumed that any deposits below would have been truncated in the process of the concrete being installed.
- 7.2 Despite the lack of truncation across the majority of the Test Pits no archaeological features or deposits predating the 20th century were encountered during the watching brief.

8 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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9 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- 9.1 Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited would like to thank Mr M.E. Matin for commissioning the work and Mark Stevenson (English heritage) for monitoring the site.
- 9.2 The author would like to thank Adrian Nash for the illustrations and Tim Bradley for his project management and editing.

Appendix 1: OASIS FORM

1.1 OASIS ID: preconst1-8658

Project details

Project name	270-272 Shooters Hill Road
Short description of the project	Archaeological Watching Brief at the Rear Of 270-272 Shooters Hill Road, Kidbrooke, London Borough of Greenwich. Natural London Clay over lain by subsoil and modern deposits were observed.
Project dates	Start: 06-06-2005 End: 06-06-2005
Previous/future work	No / No
Any project codes associated reference	SHX 05 - Sitecode
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	Local Authority Designated Archaeological Area
Current Land use	Other 5 - Garden
Methods techniques	& 'Visual Inspection'
Development type	Urban residential (e.g. flats, houses, 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 GREENWICH ELTHAM 270-272 Shooters Hill Road
Postcode	SE18
Study area	240.00 Square metres
National reference	grid TQ 4168 7694 Point
Height OD	Min: 47.90m Max: 47.80m

Project creators

Name of Organisation Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd

Project brief originator Pre-Construct Archaeology

Project design originator Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd

Project director/manager Tim Bradley

Project supervisor Neil Hawkins

Project archives

Physical recipient Archive LAARC

Physical Exists? Archive No

Digital recipient Archive LAARC

Digital available Media 'Text'

Digital Exists? Archive Yes

Paper recipient Archive LAARC

Paper available Media 'Plan', 'Report', 'Section', 'Unpublished Text'

Paper Archive Exists? Yes

Project bibliography

1

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

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