

DOCUMENT VERIFICATION

BUILDINGS 3 & 4, MEMORIAL HOSPITAL
EVALUATION

Quality Control

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Revision No.	Date	Checked	Approved

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An Archaeological Evaluation at Buildings 3 & 4, Woolwich Memorial Hospital, Shooters Hill, London Borough of Greenwich.

Site Code: MHI 05

Central National Grid Reference: TQ 4348 7636

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July 2005**

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1 ABSTRACT

- 1.1 This report details the results of an archaeological evaluation undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited at Woolwich and District War Memorial Hospital, London Borough of Greenwich.
- 1.2 Five new ward buildings are planned for the site. This evaluation was confined to the works associated with proposed Buildings 3 and 4. A 10m evaluation trench was excavated within the proposed footprint of each building. These are referred to as Trenches 2 and 3, in continuation of the work previously undertaken on site in the footprint of proposed Building 2 (WMM03).
- 1.3 No archaeologically significant deposits were found during the evaluation. Trench 2 demonstrated shallow horizontal truncation to natural deposits, but preserving two 19th Century drains. The complete soil profile remained intact in Trench 3, where a large natural feature and possible prehistoric tree throw were found.

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited at Woolwich and District War Memorial Hospital, London Borough of Greenwich, in advance of proposed redevelopment (Figure 1). A desk-based assessment had been prepared by Pre-Construct Archaeology prior to the commencement of the fieldwork (Crothers, M. E. 2003).
- 2.2 This work, commissioned by Oxleas NHS Trust, was the second phase of an evaluation covering 5 proposed buildings. Trench 1 was excavated in 2003 (WMM 03) and uncovered no archaeologically sensitive deposits.
- 2.3 This second phase of the evaluation consisted of two 10m trenches, Trenches 2 and 3, located within the proposed footprint of Buildings 3 and 4 respectively (Figure 2).
- 2.4 This work was centred on National Grid Reference TQ 4348 7636.
- 2.5 The site was assigned the unique code MHI 05.
- 2.6 The evaluation was supervised by Fiona Keith-Lucas and assisted by Richard Archer. The project was managed by Tim Bradley for Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited. The work monitored by Mark Stevenson, English Heritage, on behalf of the London Borough of Greenwich.

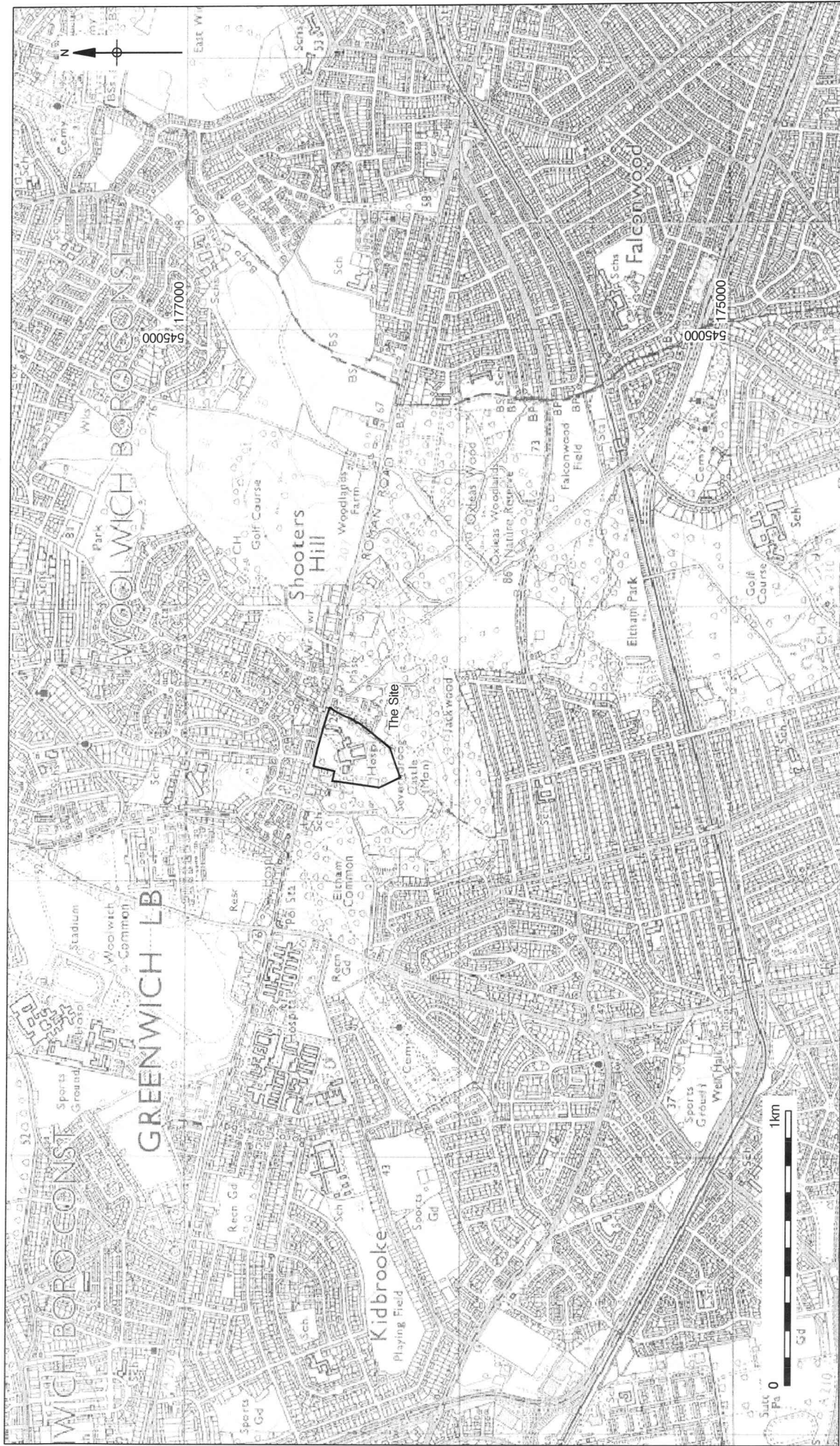


Figure 1
 Site Location
 1:20,000



Figure 2
Trench Location
1:625/ 1:5000

3 PLANNING BACKGROUND

3.1 The London Borough of Greenwich fully recognises the importance of the buried heritage for which they are the custodians. The Borough's deposited draft, 'Unitary Development Plan' 1994 contains policy statements in respect of protecting the buried archaeological resource:

3.2 The proposed development of the site is subject to the Borough's Archaeology Policy:

Archaeology:

3.3 D27A: 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 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 excavated and removed from the site, or excavated and removed before destruction. Appropriate conditions/legal arrangements may be used to ensure this is satisfied.

3.4 D27B: 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:

3.5 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

3.6 The Council will also:

- a) Pursue land 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.
- b) 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.
- c) 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.

- 3.7 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 and, where necessary or otherwise for follow-up trial work is 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.
- 3.8 The site of the proposed development lies just outside the Archaeological Priority area as defined in the Borough UDP.
- 3.9 There are no Scheduled Ancient Monuments within or adjacent to the development site.

4 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

- 4.1 The site lies on an imposing hill of Stanmore Gravels and sand sealing Eocene Claygate beds and London clay.
- 4.2 Landscaping and construction works associated with the hospital have truncated some areas and left others with a thick layer of dumped material. The original architectural drawing of 1923 highlights this particularly well, with areas of dumped spoil and terracing marked (see Crothers, 2003).
- 4.3 The ground in the area of Building 3 (Trench 2) was found to have been levelled to 128.58mOD, below the surface of the natural. The ground level had subsequently been raised to 128.77mOD with a layer of crushed material. Further west, Trench 3 revealed a full soil profile, with ground level falling from 128.71mOD to 128.37mOD North to South. The surface of the natural deposits was seen between 128.03 – 127.83mOD.

5 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

5.1 An Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment was previously prepared using information from the Greater London Sites and Monuments Record, cartographic evidence and other documented sources. The following provides a summary of that document.

5.2 Prehistoric

Topographically the site holds a uniquely commanding high point; pertinent in the consideration of prehistoric, and otherwise, archaeology. *In situ* prehistoric remains have been found in intercutting pits immediately to the south of the existing hospital buildings.

5.3 Roman

Shooters Hill Road forms part of the Roman Road Watling Street, which ran from Dover to London (as such, the Unitary Development Plan for Greenwich labels this site as within an Area of Archaeological Potential). Various spot finds in the vicinity include a piece of mortarium found to the south east of the site. Otherwise, activity has been concentrated along the line of the Roman road, which has itself been excavated revealing compacted gravels and a road-side ditch.

5.4 Saxon

No Saxon archaeology has been excavated in the vicinity, however a number of barrows, probably of Saxon origin, have been recorded to the north of Shooters Hill.

5.5 Medieval

The area under investigation stood as woodland throughout the medieval period, although Shooters Hill Road was still the main route to Eastern Kent and the coast.

5.6 Post-medieval

A beacon was located atop Shooters Hill during the 16th century, and an 18th Century folly, Severndroog Castle stands to the south of the site. Other than this, the surrounding area remained largely undeveloped, until the last 150 years witnessed rather piecemeal ribbon development along Shooters Hill Road. The Memorial Hospital was opened in 1927 with the Nurses' Home now occupying the site of The Catherine Wheel; a former staging post on the road to London.

6 METHODOLOGY

- 6.1 The location of the trenches was agreed with Mark Stevenson of Greater London Archaeological Advisory Service on behalf of the London Borough of Greenwich (Figure 2). Trench 3 was altered slightly with a 90 degree 'dog-leg' in order to maintain access to an ancillary hospital building. However, the overall length of the trench remained 10m. The fieldwork was designed to assess the presence or absence of significant archaeological remains, which may require further investigation.
- 6.2 All works were undertaken in accordance with the GLAAS Archaeological Guidance Paper 3 Standards and Practices in Archaeological Fieldwork in London; Archaeological Guidance Paper 5 Evaluation (GLAAS, 1998) and Management of Archaeological Projects (English Heritage, 1990).
- 6.3 The presence of underground services was taken into consideration and the area scanned using a Cable Avoidance Tool prior to excavation.
- 6.4 Under archaeological supervision, a mechanical excavator fitted with a flat ditching bucket was used to remove all undifferentiated topsoil and modern overburden in successive spits until significant archaeological deposits or natural were reached.
- 6.5 Each trench was then cleaned and investigated by hand to identify the extent and nature of the deposits and to recover dating evidence if appropriate.
- 6.6 The deposits were recorded in plan or in section using standard recording methods. A photographic record was also made in black and white print and colour slide format.
- 6.7 Two temporary benchmarks (value 129.06mOD and 128.96mOD) were transferred from the benchmark located on the southwest corner of The Bull public house on Shooters Hill Road (value 128.40mOD). The trenches were located by PCA's surveyor, Nathalie Barrett.

7 ARCHAEOLOGICAL SEQUENCE

7.1 The archaeological sequence for each trench is considered separately below, although the phasing will be consistent across both trenches.

7.2 Trench 2:

7.2.1 Phase 1 – Natural

This area of the site had previously been levelled to below the surface of the natural sand and gravel. Three variations in the natural were seen. To the east, a compact mid reddish yellow sand-rich clay was identified. The undulating surface of this deposit was recorded at between 128.30-128.35mOD. This was covered by well-sorted and rounded flint gravel [18]. The sand component of this gravel became higher to the west, where a loose reddish brown coarse sand [20] was found. The gravel and sand had been truncated to 128.58mOD.

7.2.2 Phase 3 – Post-medieval

Cutting through the natural layers were two 19th century drains [15] and [17]. The drains themselves were of pale unglazed ceramic (0.10m in diameter) that lay only 0.25m below the truncated level of the natural. These drains are likely to have been dug from a higher level before the area was horizontally truncated. Both contained large fragments of slag and blue glazed pottery in their backfills.

7.2.3 Phase 4 – Modern

The previously mentioned horizontal truncation is likely to have taken place during the construction of the hospital, or possibly later. The ground level had since been raised with a layer of dumped crushed material 0.18m thick. Towards the east of the trench, topsoil had also been dumped, up to 0.25m thick.

7.3 Trench 3:

7.3.1 Phase 1 – Natural

Natural gravel [11] was seen from 128.03mOD at the north of the trench down to 127.83mOD at the south. The gravel was well-sorted and rounded and was in a loose mid-dark reddish sand matrix. Features cutting into this material showed it to have a higher clay component with depth. A large irregular feature [10] cut through this sandy gravel, but is thought to also have been of natural formation. No cultural material was recovered from the fills, and the cut (especially the base) was quite irregular in places. Two fills were identified; the primary fill [7] = [9] was a loose pale greyish sandy gravel that appeared to be redeposited natural. The secondary fill [6] = [8] was greyish brown but without any sand. It was 90% very well-sorted gravel in a silt matrix. It was more gravel-rich than the natural and appeared to be water lain,

which in this situation suggests it to be pre-Holocene. It is possible that this feature represents part of a palaeochannel.

7.3.2 **Phase 2 – Prehistoric**

A single feature [5] was also recorded towards the south of the trench. This feature, approximately 0.80m across, had very irregular sides and base, but did contain a single piece of burnt flint, weighing 6g. This feature is likely to represent a tree throw, and the presence of burnt flint within the fill may suggest a prehistoric date.

7.3.3 **Phase 3 – Post medieval**

A sequence of two layers of subsoil [3] and [2] was identified sealing these features, neither of which produced any datable material. These probably formed gradually over a long period of time but have been ascribed to Phase 3 on the lack of evidence from any intervening Phase. The topsoil [1] seen in the section was a 0.30m thick layer of rich organic clayey sandy silt. It contained several fragments of blue glazed pottery and glass from the earlier part of the 20th Century. This almost certainly formed a garden soil in the early days of the hospital. No modern intervention was evident in this area.

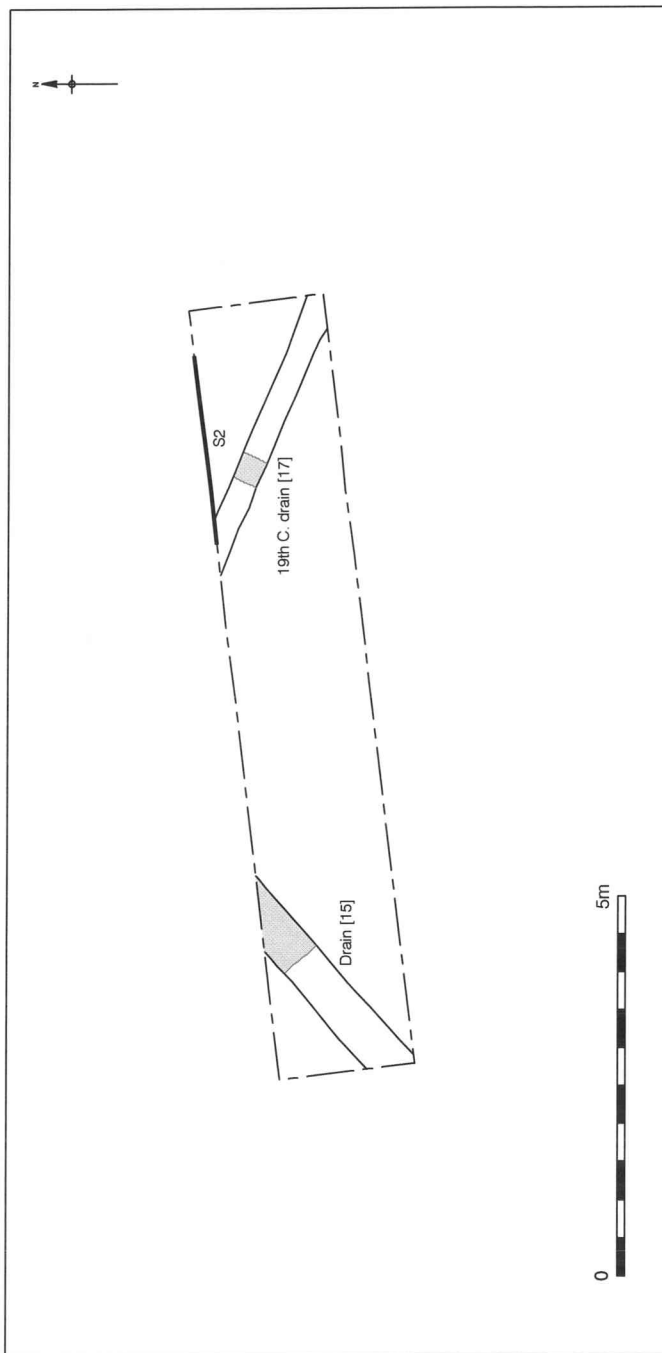
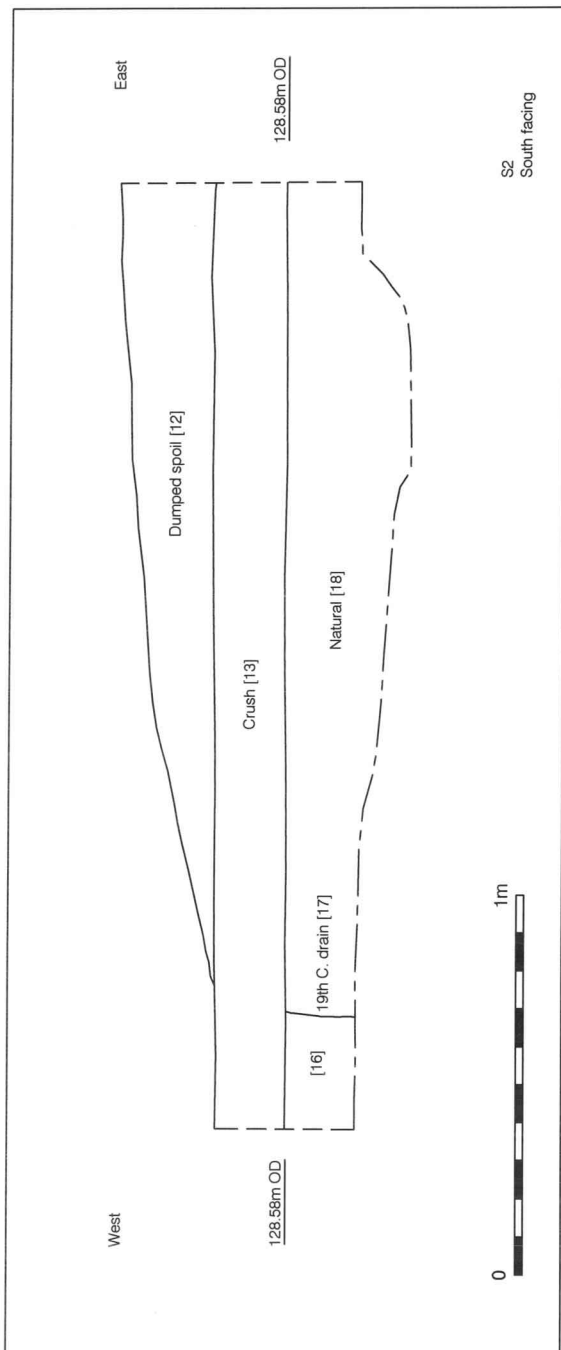


Figure 3
Trench 2: Section and Plan
1:20/ 1:100

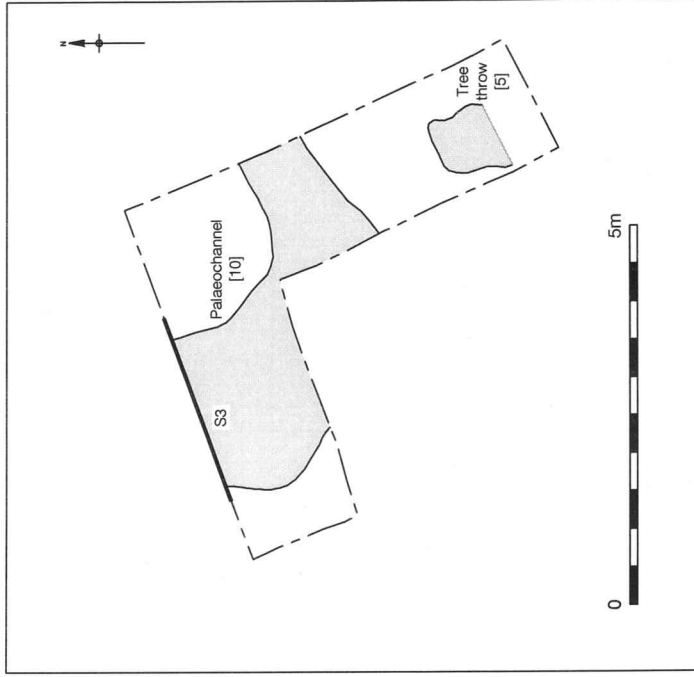
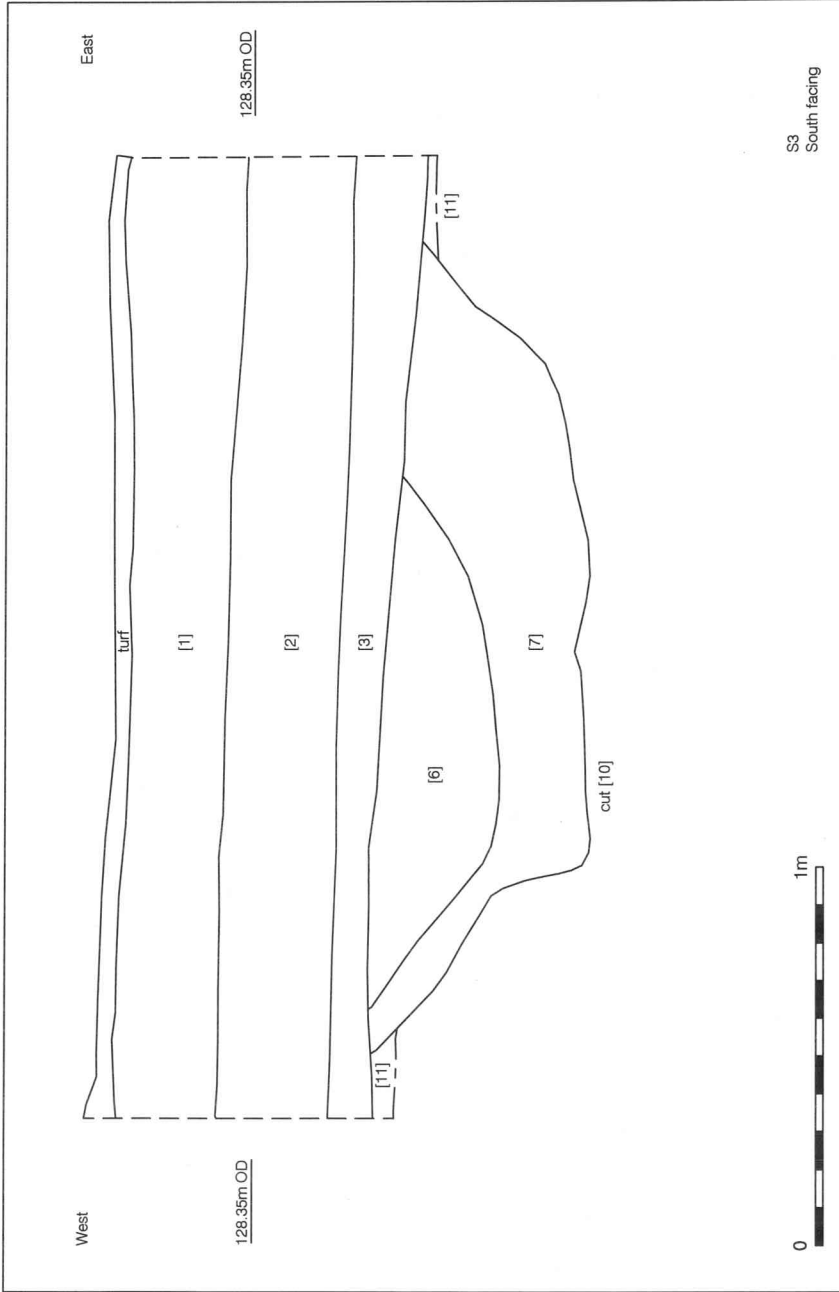


Figure 4
Trench 3: Section and Plan
1:20/ 1:100

8 CONCLUSIONS

- 8.1 The archaeological evaluation confirmed previous evidence that there had been large-scale ground reduction to the west of the development area (Trench 2). It is likely that any shallow archaeological features would have been lost, and there was no evidence for significant cut features in this area. The development of Building 3 is therefore unlikely to impact upon any features of archaeological significance.
- 8.2 In addition to a possible natural channel, Trench 3 did uncover a probable tree throw and a single fragment of burnt flint recovered from the fill suggests a possible prehistoric date for this feature. Whilst no significant archaeological features were recorded within this area of the site, evaluation Trench 3 has revealed that this area of the Memorial Hospital has not been subject to previous truncation/stripping identified further to the west.

9 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

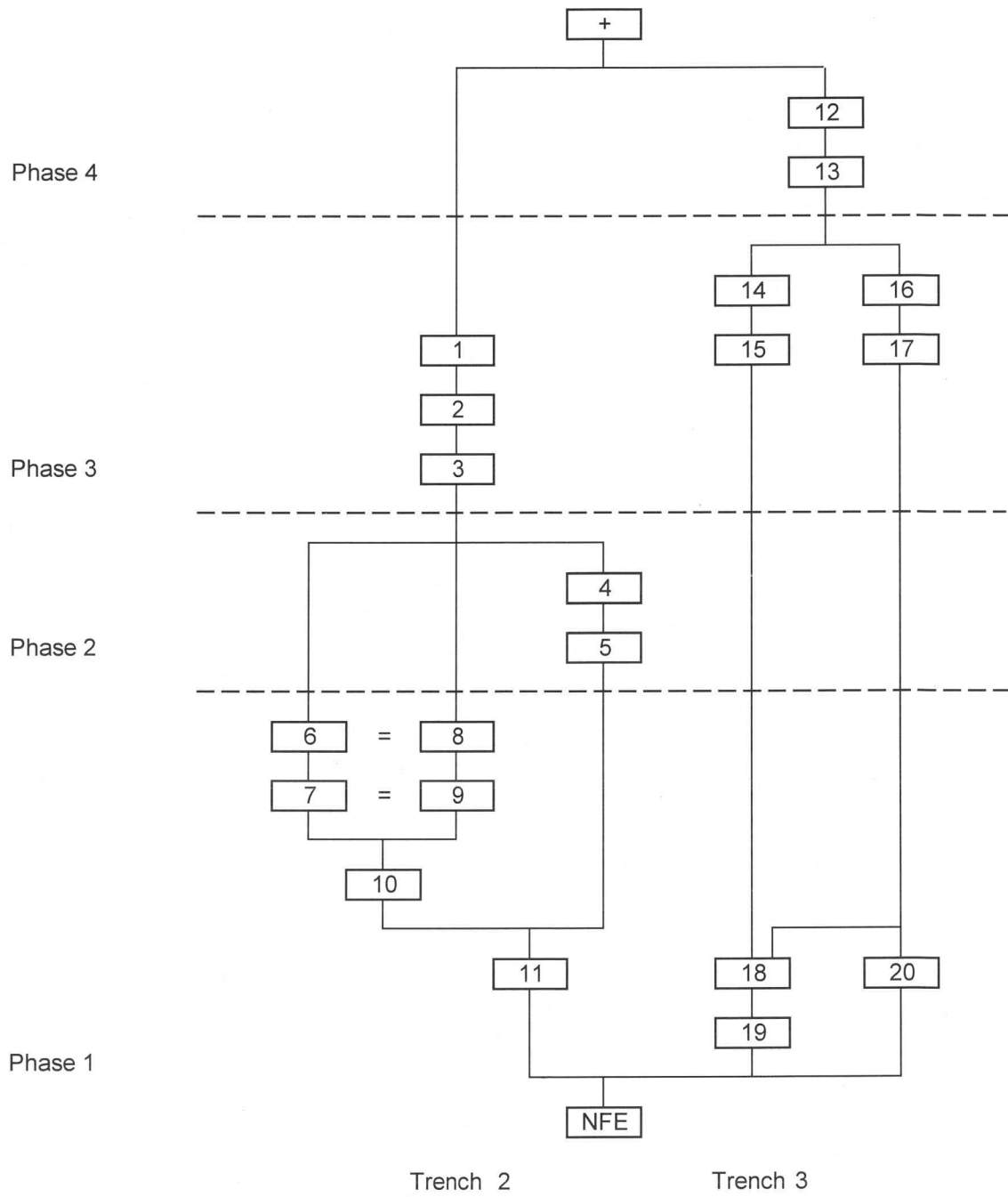
- 9.1 Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited would like to thank Oxleas NHS Trust for generously funding this project and Mark Stevenson, English Heritage, for monitoring the work. The author would also like to thank Richard Archer and Nathalie Barrett for their work on site, Adrian Nash for the illustrations and Tim Bradley for his project management and editing.

10 BIBLIOGRAPHY

Crothers, M. E. 2003. An Archaeological Desktop Assessment for new wards at the Memorial Hospital, Shooters Hill, London Borough of Greenwich. Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd. Unpublished report.

English Heritage, Greater London Archaeology Advisory Service *Archaeological Guidance Papers: 1 Written Schemes of Investigation; 2 Desk-Based Assessments; 3 Standards and Practices in Archaeological Fieldwork in London; Archaeological Reports; 5 Evaluations*. Revised June 1998.

APPENDIX 1: SITE MATRIX



APPENDIX 2: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

Context	Trench	Type	Phase	Description	Same as
1	2	layer	3	Topsoil	*
2	2	layer	3	Subsoil	*
3	2	layer	3	Subsoil	*
4	2	fill	2	Fill of [5]	*
5	2	cut	2	Tree throw	*
6	2	fill	1	Upper fill of [10]	8
7	2	fill	1	Primary fill of [10]	9
8	2	fill	1	Upper fill of [10]	6
9	2	fill	1	Primary fill of [10]	7
10	2	cut	1	Palaeochannel	*
11	3	natural	1	Gravel natural	*
12	3	layer	4	Dumped topsoil	*
13	3	layer	4	Crush	*
14	3	fill	3	Fill of [15]	*
15	3	cut	3	C19th drain cut	*
16	3	fill	3	Fill of [17]	*
17	3	cut	3	C19th drain cut	*
18	3	natural	1	Gravel natural	11
19	3	natural	1	Sandy clay	*
20	3	natural	1	Gravelly sand	*

APPENDIX 3: OASIS FORM

OASIS ID: preconst1-9060

Project details

Project name	Woolwich Memorial Hospital
Short description of the project	Two evaluation trenches were opened as part ongoing work on this site (previously WMM03). The first trench demonstrated horizontal truncation to below the surface of the natural gravel. The second revealed a full soil profile preserving a palaeochannel and tree throw (containing burnt flint).
Project dates	Start: 27-06-2005 End: 30-06-2005
Previous/future work	Yes / Yes
Any associated project reference codes	MHI 05 - Sitecode
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	Area of Archaeological Importance (AAI)
Current Land use	Residential 2 - Institutional and communal accommodation
Monument type	WATERCOURSE Palaeolithic
Monument type	HOLLOW Late Prehistoric
Significant Finds	BURNT FLINT Late Prehistoric
Methods & techniques	'Sample Trenches'
Development type	Large/ medium scale extensions to existing structures (e.g. church, school, hospitals, law courts, etc.)
Prompt	Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPG16
Position in the planning process	After full determination (eg. As a condition)

Project location

Country	England
Site location	GREATER LONDON GREENWICH WOOLWICH Woolwich Memorial Hospital
Postcode	SE18 3RG
Study area	130.00 Square metres
National grid reference	TQ 4348 7636 Point
Height OD	Min: 127.83m Max: 128.03m

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd
Project brief originator	Greater London Archaeological Advisory Service
Project design originator	Tim Bradley
Project director/manager	Tim Bradley
Project supervisor	Fiona Keith-Lucas
Sponsor or funding body	Oxleas NHS Trust

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	LAARC
Digital Archive ID	MHI 05
Digital Media available	'Survey','Text'
Digital Archive Exists?	No

Paper Archive recipient LAARC

Paper Archive ID MHI05

Paper Media available 'Context sheet', 'Correspondence', 'Diary', 'Matrices', 'Photograph', 'Plan', 'Report', 'Section', 'Survey', 'Unpublished Text'

Paper Archive Exists? No

Project bibliography 1

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

Title An Archaeological Evaluation at Buildings 3 and 4, Woolwich Memorial Hospital, Shooters Hill, London Borough of Greenwich.

Author(s)/Editor(s) Keith-Lucas, F.

Date 2005

Issuer or publisher Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd.

Place of issue or publication London

Description A4 ring-bound document

Entered by Fiona Keith-Lucas (fkeith-lucas@pre-construct.com)

Entered on 5 July 2005