

# Mallards, Southside Common, Wimbledon, London Borough of Merton: An Archaeological Watching Brief Report

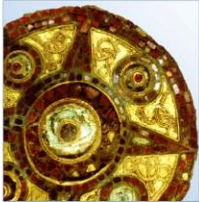
Planning Reference: 13/P1291

National Grid Reference Number: TQ 2361 7086

AOC Project No: 32515

Site Code: SOS13

Date: January 2014



**AOC**  
Archaeology  
Group

ARCHAEOLOGY

HERITAGE

CONSERVATION



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## Non-Technical Summary

*Between the 16<sup>th</sup> October and 13<sup>th</sup> December 2013 AOC Archaeology Group undertook an archaeology watching brief at Mallards, a property on Southside Common, Wimbledon, LB Merton (TQ 2361 7086), on behalf of CgMs Consulting. The work comprised the monitoring of underpinning and ground reduction.*

*This report comprises the results of the archaeological watching brief. The geological horizon was recorded across the whole site as sandy/clay gravels. Cutting into the natural was a possible garden feature along with the truncated structural remains of Lauriston House which had previously occupied the site. The remains included brick foundations and brick and tile box drains. The site was overlain with made ground associated with the construction of the Mallards.*

*Publication of the watching brief findings will be carried out through a short summary of the fieldwork submitted to the local fieldwork roundup. An OASIS form has also been completed and an electronic copy of the watching brief report will be deposited with the Archaeological Data Service (ADS). The site archive will be prepared in accordance with local and national guidance and will be deposited with the LAARC.*

## 1 Introduction

- 1.1 This report documents the results of the archaeological watching brief at the property known as Mallards, Southside Common, Wimbledon, LB of Merton. The site is centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) TQ 2361 7086 (Figure 1).
- 1.2 The site is located to the west of Wimbledon town centre and is located directly south of the common. The property, Mallards, is surrounded by residential properties to the northeast, southwest and southeast. The proposed development encompasses a rectangular plot of land measuring 783sqm. The effected area covered by the watching brief measured 15.00m by 12.00m.
- 1.3 The site is currently occupied by a single property known as Mallards. The proposed development involves the excavation of a basement, erection of single storey and two storey front and rear extensions, conversion of garage to habitable space, associated roof extension and landscaping to the front and rear of the property.

## 2 Planning Background

- 2.1 The local planning authority is the London Borough of Merton. Archaeological advice to the council is provided by Gillian King of the English Heritage Greater London Archaeology Advisory Service (GLAAS).
- 2.2 The site is located within the Wimbledon West Conservation Area, one of the largest within the borough covering 103 hectares. Southside Common, Sub Area 7 of the conservation area is a narrow stretch along the southern side of the common, composed of properties whose gardens adjoin onto later developments to the south. There are about seventeen properties in the Sub Area, of which one is listed Grade II, with eleven locally listed. The listed property, Lauriston Cottage, is located at No 6 and 6A Southside.
- 2.3 No desk based assessment was produced for this investigation.
- 2.4 A formal planning application (13/P2361 7086) was submitted and approved by the LB of Merton, subject to an archaeological condition which stated:
  - A) *No development shall commence until the applicant has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted by the applicant and approved by the local planning authority.*
  - B) *No development shall take place other than in accordance with the written scheme of investigation approved under Part A.*

*Reason – Heritage assets of archaeology interest survive on the site. The planning authority wished to secure the provision of archaeological investigations followed by the subsequent recording of significant remains prior to development given by the borough and in PPS 5/NPPF.*
- 2.5 A Written Scheme of Investigation (CgMs 2013) was prepared as a method statement for the archaeological watching brief, which was approved by the monitor, Gillian King, Archaeological Advisor to the LB of Merton.
- 2.6 This report summarises the results of the archaeological watching brief.

### **3 Geology and Topography**

- 3.1 The geology of the study site is shown by the British Geological Survey (BGS 2014) to consist of a solid geology of Claygate Member, overlain by a drift geology of Black Park Gravel member.
- 3.2 The site lies on generally level ground at a height of 54m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD).

### **4 Archaeological and Historical Background**

The archaeological background is drawn from the Written Scheme of Investigation (CgMs 2013).

#### **4.1 The Prehistoric Periods**

- 4.1.1 Caesar's Camp Hillfort lies c. 1.2km to the west which attests to later prehistoric activity in the surrounding area.
- 4.1.2 An evaluation that took place at the Royal Wimbledon Golf Club, c. 1km west of the site, found only a few struck flints (MLO60896).
- 4.1.3 A very small quantity of residual material which was possibly prehistoric was recovered c. 500m northeast of the study site at 28 Church Rd (MLO100498) and two linear features of prehistoric date were recorded c. 500m southwest of the site (MLO59540).
- 4.1.4 An evaluation comprising the excavation of five trenches was undertaken at 52 Parkside, c. 1km to the north of the site in 1995. A small drainage ditch or gully was examined and interpreted as a possible prehistoric feature although no artefacts were recovered (EL03875). It was considered likely that the possible prehistoric gully was similar to that previously observed at 54 Parkside; however there is no further detail about the latter investigation (ML065973).

#### **4.2 The Iron Age (c. 700 BC - AD 43) and the Roman Period (AD 43 – AD 410)**

- 4.2.1 There is limited evidence for Roman activity within 1km of the site. Some residual Roman brick was found in the course of a watching brief at Shutters, West Side Common, c. 300m west of the site.
- 4.2.2 A watching brief at 50 Somerset Road c. 1km north of the site produced a significant quantity of Roman pottery and building material. This was taken to suggest that a large Roman building, possibly a villa, once stood in the vicinity (EL011261).

#### **4.3 The Early Medieval (AD 410 – AD 1066) and Medieval Periods (AD 1066 – AD 1538)**

- 4.3.1 Wimbledon Village may have had Saxon origins; 10<sup>th</sup> century documents refer to a place name of *Wimbedounyng* or *Wunemannedun*.
- 4.3.2 An archaeological evaluation carried out in 1991 at the corner of Marryat Road and High Street, c. 350m northeast of the site, found evidence of medieval cultivation as well as slag suggesting possible industrial activity (MLO64537 & ELO4075).
- 4.3.3 About 400m northeast of the site, at 44 High Street, a pit of unknown function was found cut into a soil horizon dated to the 10<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> century (ELO9981).
- 4.3.4 Residual medieval pottery sherds were found within a post-medieval context at Chester House, West Side Common, c. 300m to the west (ELO5248).

#### **4.4 The Post-Medieval (AD 1538 – AD 1900) and Modern Period (AD 1900 to present)**

- 4.4.1 Evidence dating to the post-medieval and modern periods recorded in the course of archaeological work often relates to garden and landscaping activity. For example, an evaluation at 10 Parkside Avenue, c. 200m north of the site revealed post-medieval garden deposits overlying the natural (ELO8735 and ML099455).
- 4.4.2 An evaluation at 49 Parkside c. 1km to the north of the site revealed a buried soil horizon which pre-dated the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century (MLO74403). A spread of clean sandy gravel was also recorded, interpreted as the remains of the former carriage driveway identified on plans from 1860 (ML074404).
- 4.4.3 An evaluation was undertaken at 53 Parkside c. 1km to the north of the site comprising the excavation of two trenches revealing evidence for mid/late 20<sup>th</sup> century levelling and construction post-dating the 1980's (ELO913 and ML076385).
- 4.4.4 A post-medieval gravel pit, Bluegate Pit, now a pond is located along Parkside to the northwest of the site (ML0504), first identified on the 1865 Map.
- 4.4.5 A second 19<sup>th</sup> century gravel pit is recorded c. 800m to the west of the site recorded on GLC mapping of Old Mineral Workings (ML012085).
- 4.4.6 A review of the Ordnance Survey mapping indicates that in 1865 the villa property of Lauriston House, with associated extensive gardens, occupied the area of the development site. The majority of the proposed watching brief area would have occupied the villa driveway, with part of the northwest elevation of the villa encroaching into the southeast of the area to be investigated. By 1966 Lauriston House had been demolished and its grounds sold for development. It was at this time that the former Mallards property was built.

### **5 Aims of the Investigation**

- 5.1 The aims of the archaeological watching brief were defined as being:
- To establish the presence/absence of archaeological remains within the site.
  - To determine the extent, condition, nature, character, quality and date of any archaeological remains encountered.
  - To record and sample excavate any archaeological remains encountered.
  - To assess the ecofactual and environmental potential of any archaeological features and deposits.
  - To determine the extent of previous truncations of the archaeological deposits.
  - To enable the archaeology advisor to make an informed decision on the status of the condition, and any possible requirement for further work in order to satisfy that condition.
  - To make available to interested parties the results of the investigation.
- 5.2 The specific aims of the archaeological watching brief were defined as being:
- To determine the presence of any remains associated with Lauriston House.
  - Establish the likely impact of past land use and development.
- 5.3 The final aim was to make public the results of the investigation, subject to any confidentiality restrictions.

## 6 Methodology

- 6.1 A Written Scheme of Investigation prepared by CgMs Consulting (CgMs 2013) defined the site procedures for the archaeological watching brief. This document detailed how the investigation, comprising excavation of the area of the new basement, would be undertaken (Figure 2). All work was carried out in accordance with local and national guidelines (IfA 2008 & 2010, EH 2009). Provision was made for a report as defined in the Written Scheme of Investigation.
- 6.2 A unique site code for the project (**SOS 13**) was issued by the London Archaeological Archive Research Centre (LAARC), and was used as the site identifier.
- 6.3 The watching brief was conducted by John Winfer, Tara Fidler and Michal Kempinski under the overall management of Catherine Edwards, AOC Project Manager and Chris Clarke, Consultant at CgMs. The site was monitored by Gillian King of GLAAS on behalf of Merton Borough Council.

## 7 Results (Figures 3 and 4)

### 7.1 Underpinning and Ground Reduction

**Table of the stratigraphic sequence**

Context No	Thickness	Description/Interpretation
8	0.40m	Modern concrete surface.
9	1.20m	Loose dark grey and brown loose sandy silt clay. Made ground.
20	0.30m	Mid grey brown sandy silt clay. Buried soil.
12	0.05m	Yellow orange brown silty clay, sand and gravel. Natural.

- 7.1.1 The lowest deposit recorded on site was (12), a natural horizon of yellow orange and brown silty clay, sand and gravel. This was observed at an upper height of 54.20mOD. The thickness of the varying bands of mid orange gravel, dark orange gravel and orange brown clay sand is illustrated in Figure 4, Section 1. The upper levels were disturbed by later activity with inclusions of later silt, concrete fragments and stone observed. This suggests that significant horizontal truncation of the natural had taken place on site which would have occurred during both known developments on the land. Within an underpinning pit located to the north of the property and to the west of the entrance, was a layer of possible topsoil or clean made ground (20) observed above the natural horizon (Plate 1). The layer maybe the disturbed remains of the original surface horizon, if terracing was in practice, or more likely the deposit is the remains of an earlier made ground horizon. This is the only location on site where this deposit was observed.
- 7.1.2 At the same height as (20), approximately 54.21mOD, was a possible cut feature recorded as [10] (Plate 1 and Figure 3). The feature, which was only observed within the base and section of a small underpinning pit, appeared to be curved, measuring 1.20m x 0.60m x 0.50m deep. The cut was filled by (11), a mid grey brown silty clay with inclusions of small stones. It is unclear what the feature is, although a tree bowl or garden feature could be possible functions.





**Plate 1 – Cut feature [10]**

7.1.3 During both stages of underpinning pits and ground reduction, a number of brick walls and drains were recorded (Figure 3). Wall [1], recorded at a height of 54.21mOD, was located to the northwest of the current property lying directly on the natural clay and gravel (Plate 2). The wall, measuring 1.30m x 0.45m high, was composed of red and yellow brick, measuring 220mm x 80mm; width unknown. The bricks were bonded by lime mortar. The southeastern edge of the wall extends below the current building and was recorded in section within another underpinning pit and recorded as wall [2] (Plate 3).



**Plate 2 & 3 – Wall [1] (upper plate) and Wall [2] (lower plate) facing southwest**

7.1.4 Wall [2] was composed of the same brick as wall [1]. However, above the highest course of brickwork, within the exposed section, was a slab of cut stone overlying an opening within the wall.

Initial observations on site suggest that the opening maybe for a drain. The wall measured 1.20m x 0.35m x 0.60m high at a height of 54.65mOD.

- 7.1.5 Wall [3] was an L-shaped wall that ran northeast-southwest to northwest-southeast to the southeast of the current property. The wall measured 2.50m east-west and 2.0m north-south. The same bricks were used in this wall as in walls [1] and [2] with at least six courses present. The northern end of the exposed wall ran under the current building whilst the western end was truncated.
- 7.1.6 Walls [4] and [5] were located within the former kitchen area towards the south-eastern corner of the site at an upper height of 54.79mOD. Wall [5] ran northwest-southeast whilst wall [4] ran north-south and then northeast-southwest. Wall [4] measured 3.50m x 0.95m x 0.44m high and was composed of red and purple red bricks measuring 220mm x 80mm x 65mm (Plate 4). The bricks were bonded with lime mortar with no apparent coursing design. At least 10 courses were recorded *in situ* suggesting the remains are the foundations of the previous structure on site.



**Plate 4 – Wall [4] facing north**

- 7.1.7 Wall [5] abutted wall [4] and measured 0.95m x 0.45m x 0.95m high (Plate 5). The same bricks were used in this wall as within wall [4], however yellow bricks and a concrete top layer were also observed within wall [5]. The wall was also recorded in section during the main ground reduction on site as [17], (Plate 6 and Figure 4, Section 2). From the section it was clear that for the construction of the wall a layer of 0.11m thick redeposited natural (25) had been laid, overlain with a deposit of fine yellow sand (26). Cutting into these was [24] the foundation cut for wall [17] / [5]. The foundation cut which measured 0.30m x 0.38m deep, was backfilled with (23) a dark to mid brown gravely silty clay. Adjacent to the wall and above (26) was a layer of cut stone slabs (27) which are likely the remains of the original surface. Wall [17] was recorded at an upper height of 54.19mOD.



**Plate 5 & 6 – Wall [5] facing north (upper plate) and Wall [17] and drain [16] facing southeast (lower plate)**

- 7.1.8 On the adjacent side to the stone slabs was the remains of a brick box drain [16], composed of red brick walls and tiled base (Plate 6 and Figure 4, Section 2). The interior of the structure was observed as a black silt. The cut for the drain was recorded as [22] whilst the light brown orange sandy clay backfill was recorded as (21). The drain measured 0.45m wide x 0.24m deep.
- 7.1.9 Another brick drain similar in construction to [16] was recorded as [18] and was observed in section within the northwest corner of the former breakfast room (Plate 7 and Figure 4, Section 3 & 4). The exposed section, recorded at a height of 54.30mOD, measured 0.90m x 0.30m x 0.25m deep and was formed of red half bricks measuring 100mm x 100mm x 70mm and red tiles measuring 300mm x 250mm x 40mm.



**Plate 7 – Drain [18] facing southwest**

- 7.1.10 Wall [6], located within the southern central area forms the corner of the previous building or room within the building. The wall forms a 90° angle, measuring 1.20m x 0.48m and 1.0m x 0.45m and 0.35m thick, at an upper height of 54.60mOD. Both red and yellow bricks were used within the wall, measuring 220mm x 80mm x 65mm. Over four courses were present bonded by lime mortar. An extension of wall [6] was recorded slightly further east under the line of the current build, [7]. The wall measured 1.20m x 0.45m x 0.55m deep and consisted of up to five courses. No further brickwork was recorded on its northeastern side due to truncation; however it is possible that the wall would have joined up with the southern end of wall [5].
- 7.1.11 Two walls forming a T-shape, [13] and [14] were recorded within the previous lounge area. The walls were composed of both red and yellow bricks measuring 220mm x 100mm x 70mm and bonded with lime mortar. The walls measured 2.60m x 0.40m, [13] and 1.70m x 0.40m, [14]. Both walls, recorded at an upper height of 54.70mOD are likely part of the earlier footings.
- 7.1.12 Wall [15] was a stand alone structural wall within the area of the previous garage. The wall is aligned northwest-southeast measuring 4.20m x 0.35m x 0.22m deep at an upper height of 54.76mOD. The wall was composed of red and purple red bricks measuring 220mm x 100mm x 70mm, bonded by lime mortar. The wall has been truncated at either end by the construction of the garage.
- 7.1.13 The final wall recorded on site was observed during ground reduction within the former breakfast room. Wall [19] measured 0.56m wide and 1.04m deep and was surrounded on both sides by made ground and modern rubble (Plate 8 and Figure 4, Section 5). The wall, recorded at an upper height of 54.80mOD, was composed of red and yellow brick measuring 220mm x 100mm x 70mm and bonded by lime mortar. The foundation cut for the wall was observed on its southeastern side and recorded as [29]. The backfill of dark grey sandy silty clay was recorded as (28). Overlying the cut was (30) a 0.06m thick layer of concrete which in turn was overlaid by a sandstone slab recorded as (31). These layers may represent another surface to the original structure.



**Plate 8 – Wall [19] facing southwest**

- 7.1.14 Overlying the structural remains and the site in general was a 0.80-1.20m thick layer of made ground recorded as (9), formed of varying deposits of dark brown to light grey sandy silty clays with inclusions of stone, fragments of brick, tile and concrete. This in turn was overlaid by concrete recorded as (8).

## 8 Finds

- 8.1 No finds were recovered during the watching brief.

## 9 Conclusions

- 9.1 During the course of the watching brief on site the nature and extent of the archaeological potential was observed. A full sequence of natural deposits was observed on site and recorded as varying layers of yellow and orange sand, gravel and clay which varied according to the depth. A possible soil horizon was observed within one underpinning pit located at the northwest of the property, however, this was not observed elsewhere on site.
- 9.2 A possible cut feature was observed within the same pit which may be the remains of an earlier tree bowl or garden feature related to Lauriston House and a formal garden layout. The fill of the pit was similar in composition as the soil horizon described above; as such it is likely that they are contemporary.
- 9.3 Structural remains were recorded on site in the form of brick walls and brick built drains. Both sets of remains were cut into the natural following ground preparation works in the form of bedding layers. Red, purple and yellow bricks were observed on site along with red ceramic tiles used within the drains. The walls appeared to be the foundation remains of Lauriston House which is known to have occupied the site previously. In places, previous surfaces were also preserved and recorded in the form of stone and sand stone slabs. It is unclear whether this represents internal floors or perhaps exterior paving. Their exact location within the structure of Lauriston House cannot be ascertained due to the lack of detail on the 19<sup>th</sup> century OS Maps. The walls located within the southeast corner of the current site may indicate a structural bay which could tie in with the northwest corner of Lauriston House.
- 9.4 It is clear from the site investigation that the construction of the current Mallards property has affected the structural remains on site, as many had been truncated appearing only in segments whilst others were only observed in section.

## 10 Publication and Archive Deposition

- 10.1 Due to the nature of the investigation it is proposed that publication is limited to a summary in the London Archaeology Round-up and publication via the Archaeological Data Service (ADS) (Appendix B).
- 10.2 On completion of the project, the archive, consisting of paper records, drawings and digital photographs will be deposited with the LAARC.

## 11 Bibliography

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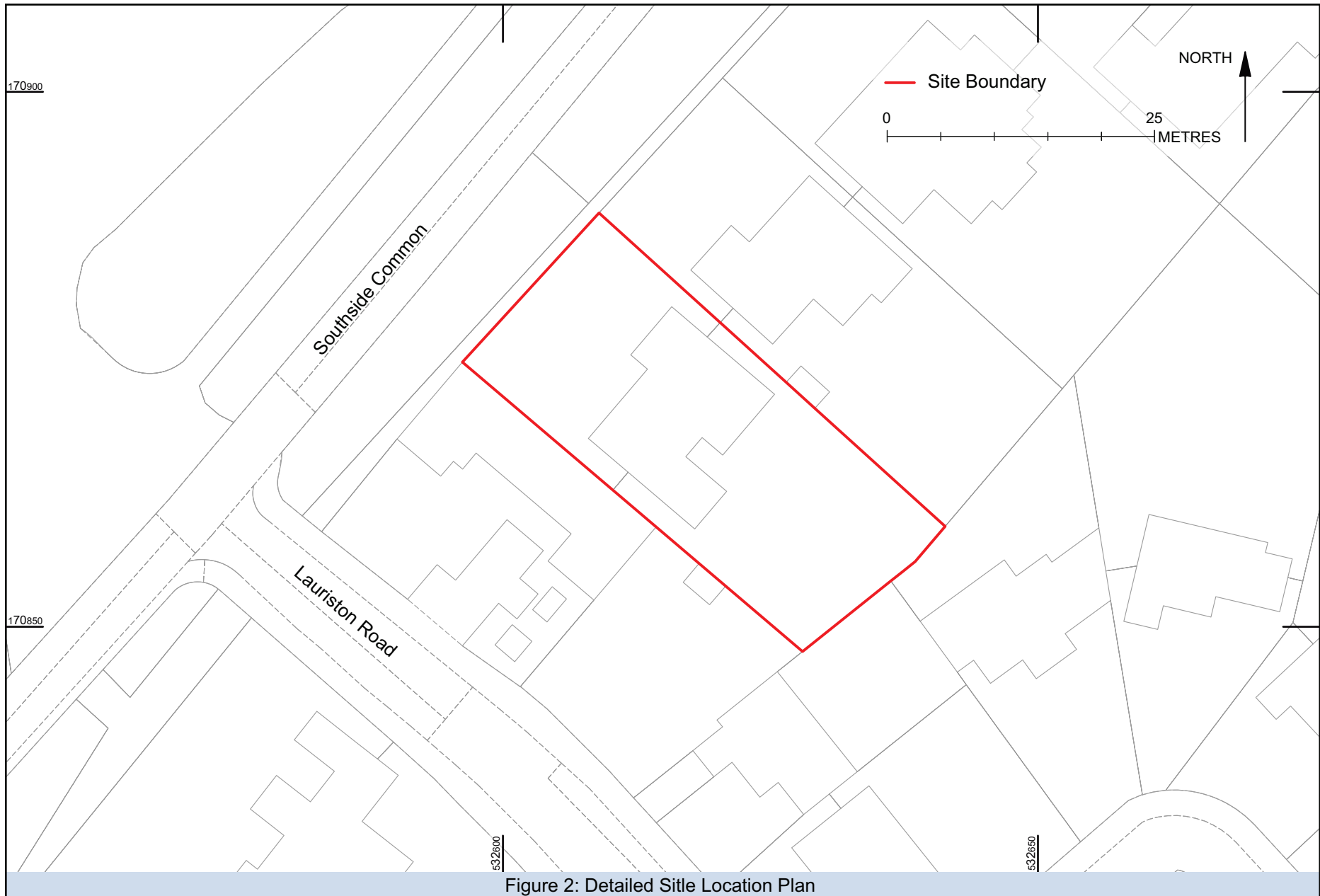


Figure 2: Detailed Site Location Plan



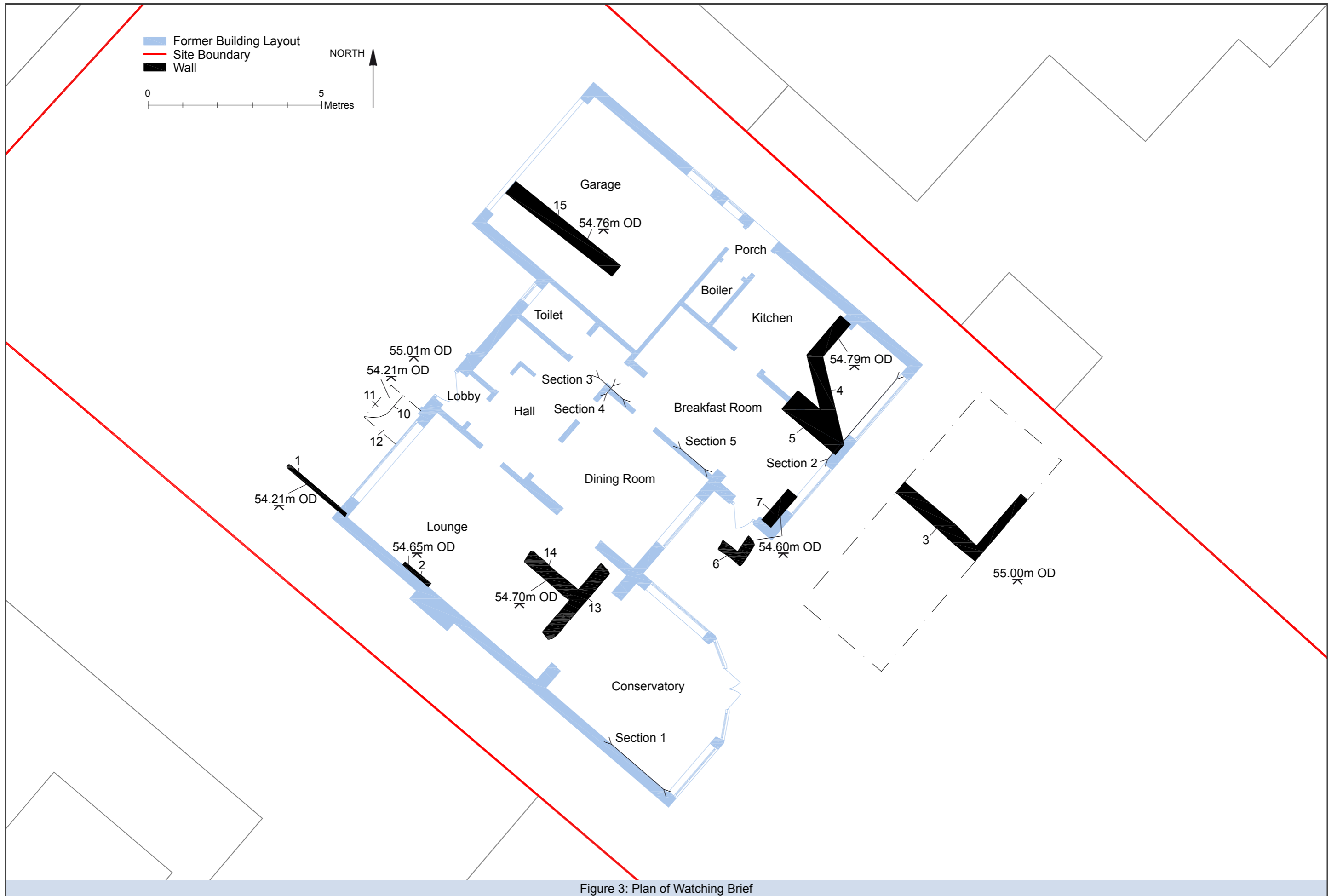


Figure 3: Plan of Watching Brief

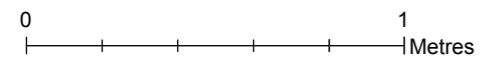
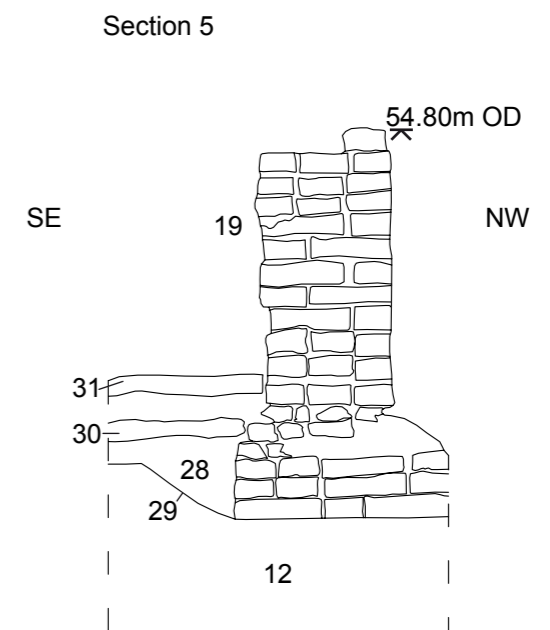
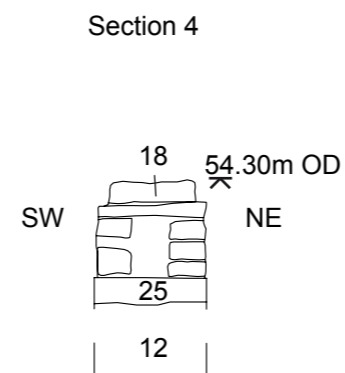
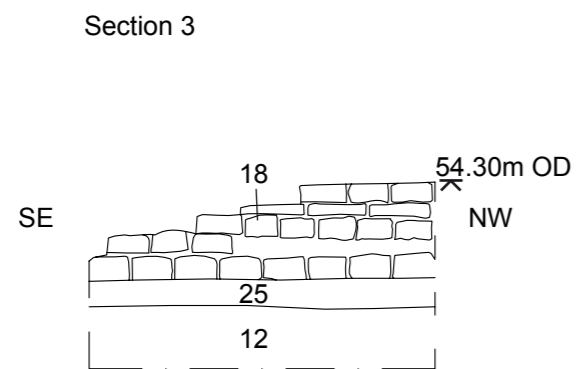
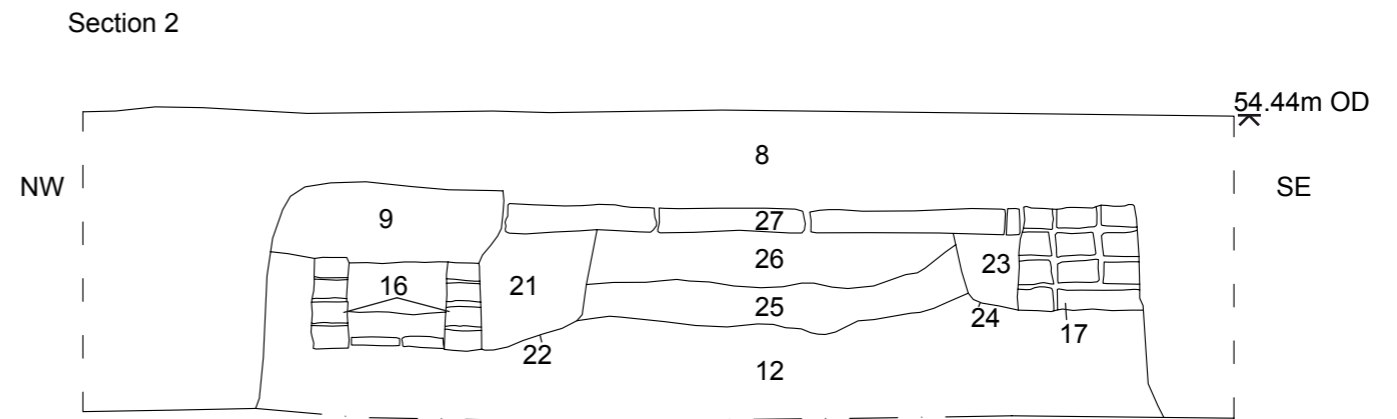
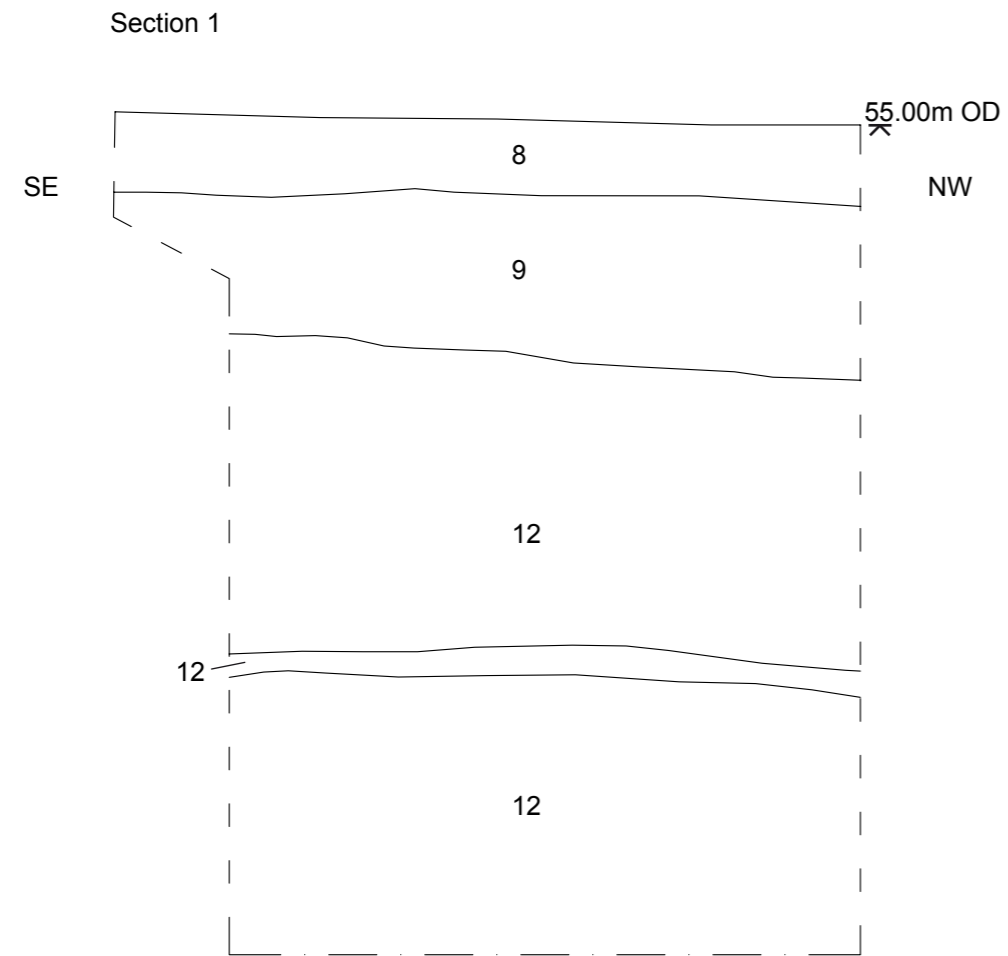


Figure 4: Sections

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## Appendices

## Appendix A – Context Register

Context No.	Context Description/Index code	Length	Width	Depth
1	Brick Wall	1.30m		0.45m
2	Brick Drain	1.20m	0.35m	0.60m
3	Brick Wall	2.50m/2.0m		
4	Brick Wall	3.50m	0.95m	0.44m
5	Brick Wall		0.45m	0.95m
6	Brick Wall	1.20m	1.0m	0.35m
7	Brick Wall	1.20m	0.45m	0.55m
8	Concrete Surface	Site	Site	0.40
9	Made ground	Site	Site	0.80-1.20m
10	Feature cut	1.20m	0.60m	0.50m
11	Feature fill	1.20m	0.60m	0.50m
12	Natural			
13	Brick Wall	2.60m	0.40m	
14	Brick Wall	1.70m	0.40m	
15	Brick Wall	4.20m	0.35m	
16	Brick Drain		0.45m	0.22m
17	Brick Wall		0.34m	0.28m
18	Brick Drain	0.90m	0.30m	0.25m
19	Brick Wall		0.56m	1.04m
20	Buried soil	1.20m	1.00m	0.30m
21	Foundation cut backfill		0.45m	0.24m
22	Foundation cut		0.45m	0.24m
23	Foundation cut backfill		0.30m	0.38m
24	Foundation cut		0.30m	0.38m
25	Redeposited natural			0.11m
25	Redeposited natural		1.0m	0.11m
26	Bedding sand		0.95m	0.14m
27	Stone slabs		1.33m	0.07m
28	Foundation cut backfill		>0.35m	0.22m
29	Foundation cut		0.56m	0.30m
30	Concrete		>0.40m	0.06m
31	Stone slab		>0.40m	0.12m

## Appendix B – Oasis Form

# OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM: England

**OASIS ID: aocarcha1-168889**

### Project details

Project name                      Mallards, Wimbledon

Short description of the project      Watching brief observing structural remains pre-dating the Mallards property.  
Natural geology recorded truncated by development.

Project dates                      Start: 16-10-2013 End: 13-12-2013

Previous/future work      No / Not known

Any associated project reference codes      32515 - Contracting Unit No.

Any associated project reference codes      SOS13 - Sitecode

Type of project                      Recording project

Site status                          Conservation Area

Current Land use                      Residential 1 - General Residential

Monument type                      WALLS Post Medieval

Monument type                      DRAINS Post Medieval

Significant Finds                      NONE None

Investigation type                      "Watching Brief"

Prompt                                  Planning condition

### Project location

Country England  
Site location GREATER LONDON MERTON WIMBLEDON AND MERTON Mallards,  
Southside Common  
  
Postcode SW19 4TG  
  
Study area 783.00 Square metres  
  
Site coordinates TQ 2361 7086 51.4227498043 -0.22197213533 51 25 21 N 000 13 19 W Point

### Project creators

Name of Organisation AOC Archaeology

Project brief originator CgMs

Project design originator CgMs

Project director/manager Catherine Edwards

Project supervisor Michal Kempski

Project supervisor John Winfer

Project supervisor Tara Fidler

Type of Developer  
sponsor/funding body

### Project archives

Digital Archive recipient LAARC

Digital Archive ID	SOS13
Digital Contents	"Stratigraphic"
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography","Images vector","Spreadsheets","Text"
Paper recipient	Archive LAARC
Paper Archive ID	SOS13
Paper Contents	"Stratigraphic"
Paper Media available	"Context sheet","Diary","Microfilm","Photograph","Plan","Report","Section"

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### Project bibliography

1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Watching Brief
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Clarke, C.
Date	2013
Issuer or publisher	CgMs
Place of issue or publication	London
Description	A4 text and figures

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### Project bibliography

2

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
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Title Mallards, Southside Common, Wimbledon, London Borough of Merton: An  
Archaeological Watching Brief Report

Author(s)/Editor(s) Edwards, C.

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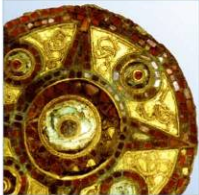
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