

Former Castlewood Hospital, Shooters Hill, SE18, London Borough of Greenwich

Archaeological Evaluation Report



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FORMER CASTLEWOOD HOSPITAL SHOOTERS HILL SE18

LONDON BOROUGH OF GREENWICH

Archaeological Evaluation Report

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Figure 1

Figure 2

Figure 3

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Archaeological Evaluation Report

Summary

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by CgMs Consulting (the Client) to undertake an archaeological evaluation in advance of the development at the former Castlewood Hospital, Shooters Hill, SE18, in the London Borough of Greenwich (hereafter 'the Site', see **Figure 1**), centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) 54307 176658.

The Site lies on the west facing slope of Shooters Hill, adjacent to the line of a major Roman road (Watling Street) which ran along the line of present day Shooters Hill Road.

Given the archaeological potential, planning consent was granted by Greenwich Borough Council on condition that a programme of archaeological work was undertaken.

Two trenches (measuring 15 x 1.8m and 27.2 x 1.8m) were excavated under archaeological conditions, to a depth of between 0.7m and 1.2m below the present ground level. A silted up, 2.6m wide, post-medieval pit (206) was uncovered midway along Trench 2 and contained sherds of 16th to17th century pottery, fragments of post-medieval roofing tile and oyster shell, but only limited charcoal and animal bone. Aside from a single modern feature, no other archaeological deposits or remains were uncovered.

Drift geological deposits consisting of fine sandy silty clay and coarse well-rounded gravels were exposed in both trenches at a depth of between 0.5m and 0.6m below present ground level. These natural geological deposits were sealed by a subsoil that underlay 0.3m thick topsoil.

The archaeological evaluation took place on the 9th and 10th June 2008.



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Acknowledgements

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by CgMs Consulting (the Client) to undertake the archaeological evaluation. The co-operation and help given by Richard Meager of CgMs is gratefully acknowledged. Thanks are also due to the English Heritage Archaeological Advisor to the London Borough of Greenwich, Mark Stevenson, for monitoring the works.

The project was managed on behalf of Wessex Archaeology by Nick Truckle. The fieldwork was undertaken by Gary Evans with the assistance of Steve George. The report was compiled by Gary Evans with illustrations prepared by Kitty Brandon.

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Archaeological Evaluation Report

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Background

- 1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by CgMs Consulting (the Client) to undertake an archaeological evaluation, at the site of the former Castlewood Hospital, Shooters Hill, SE 18 4LG, in the London Borough of Greenwich (the Site), centred on NGR 543075 176658 (**Figure 1**).
- 1.1.2 This report details the results of the trial trench evaluation that took place from the 9th -10th June 2008.

1.2 Planning Background

- 1.2.1 A planning application has been granted by Greenwich Borough Council for the redevelopment of the Site, comprising the restoration of the original 19th century hospital building, and the removal of the twentieth century extensions and the construction of an L-shaped building on the northern part of the Site. Planning consent was granted on condition that a programme of archaeological work was undertaken.
- 1.2.2 The fieldwork programme, which comprised the machine excavation of two archaeological trial trenches, was carried out as part of the works requested by the English Heritage Archaeological Advisor to the London Borough of Greenwich. These works sought to assess the archaeological potential of the Site and facilitate the development of an appropriate mitigation strategy.
- 1.2.3 The Site lies within an Archaeological Priority Area as defined in the London Borough of Greenwich Unitary Development Plan (Adopted 2006) and is adjacent to Roman Watling Street (Present day Shooters Hill Road).

2 THE SITE

2.1 Location, Topography and Geology

- 2.1.1 The Site, which is roughly rectangular in plan, fronts Shooters Hill Road (A207) to the south and Academy Place to the north, with adjoining houses and associated gardens to the east and west (**Figure 1**).
- 2.1.2 The former Castlewood Therapy Centre Facility, comprising a brick building originally dating to 1889 -1890, with later additions currently occupies the Site. The central part of the building comprises two storeys, with single storey wings attached. The area to the rear of the Site was covered in grass and the remains of two large poplar trees.
- 2.1.3 The Site lies on the west facing slope of Shooters Hill that rises from west to east to a height of *c*. 132m above Ordnance Datum (aOD). Spot heights in the centre of the



- Shooters Hill Road along the southern boundary of the Site rise up from 82.4m aOD to the southwest of the Site to 88.5m aOD to the southeast of the Site (**Figure 1**).
- 2.1.4 The Site itself is level at *c*. 86.4m aOD, indicating that the eastern side of the Site has been at least partly terraced.
- 2.1.5 British Geological Survey Sheet 271 (South London: 1998) shows the underlying drift geology of the Site to be London Clay.
- 2.1.6 The crest of Shooters Hill, southeast of the Site, comprises Stanmore Gravel (defined as 'well rounded flint gravel, sandy and clayey in part') overlying the Claygate Beds (defined as 'sand, fine grained silt and clay') above London Clay.
- 2.1.7 No topographical or geological anomalies are known from the vicinity of the Site.

3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

- 3.1.1 The Site is defined within the London Borough of Greenwich Unitary Development Plan (Adopted 2006) as being within an Area of Archaeological Priority.
- 3.1.2 No previous archaeological fieldwork has been undertaken on the Site and it is not part of a Scheduled Monument.
- 3.1.3 CgMs Consulting carried out a Desk-based Assessment (DBA) of the area surrounding the Site in order to determine the potential for the survival of archaeological remains on and around the Site (CgMs, 2006). The DBA drew on sources including The Greater London Sites and Monuments Record (GLSMR), legislative and planning documents, and other documentary and cartographic sources. A brief summary of the results follows.
- 3.1.4 The DBA concluded that the Site had low to moderate archaeological potential. This potential mainly related to activity associated with Roman Watling Street.

Prehistoric (500,000 BC-AD 43)

- 3.1.5 Only limited finds of Palaeolithic date have been recorded within a 750m radius of the Site, these include a palaeochannel and a tree throw containing burnt flint. These were revealed during work at the Woolwich Memorial Hospital to the southeast of the Site (CgMs, 2006).
- 3.1.6 No finds or features of Mesolithic or Neolithic date have been identified in the vicinity.
- 3.1.7 A series of Bronze Age burial mounds are recorded from the area of Shrewsbury Park / Ashridge Crescent, to the northeast of the Site (Museum of London, 2000, 96). Most were destroyed during the layout of a housing estate during the 1930s, but one has been preserved in Brinklow Crescent (Weinreb & Hibbert 1995: 807).

Romano-British (AD 43-410)

- 3.1.8 The Site is situated alongside Shooters Hill Road, which is thought to follow the route of Watling Street, the Roman road that ran from the *Londinium* (London) to Dover, Canterbury and Richborough (Weinreb & Hibbert 1995: 674).
- 3.1.9 It was common for settlement and associated activity, such as quarrying, to be located along the line of Roman roads.
- 3.1.10 Limited Romano-British material has been recovered from the area, comprising a *mortarium* found on Eltham Common to the southeast of the Site (CgMs, 2006) and



two large pits containing Romano British pottery and animal bones at the Woolwich Memorial Hospital (MoL, 2000, 166).

Saxon (AD 410-1066)

3.1.11 A jews harp, dated as Saxon, was found at the site of the Woolwich Memorial Hospital (CgMs, 2006, 8).

Post-medieval to Modern (1500-present)

- 3.1.12 Early maps of the area (1745 John Rocque. 1769 Andrews & Drury. 1797 Edward Hasted and the 1810 Ordnance Survey none illustrated) show that the Site lay within the southeast corner of Woolwich Common, to the west of a small roadside settlement situated at the crest of Shooters Hill.
- 3.1.13 The 1847 Woolwich Tithe Map (not illustrated) and the associated Award show the Site as an area of plantation covered with trees. The 1869 edition Ordnance Survey (not illustrated) shows no change within the Site, although Red Lion Lane is in place and the settlement to the east has expanded right up to the Site's eastern boundary.
- 3.1.14 Castlewood Hospital was planned in 1887 to serve an increasing local population and was opened in 1890. The 1896 edition of the Ordnance Survey (not illustrated) shows woodland clearance and the construction of a T-shaped building. A detached building to the northwest is also shown and labelled as the 'Woolwich & Plumstead Cottage Hospital'. The northern part of the Site appears to have been undeveloped at this time.
- 3.1.15 The 1916 edition of Ordnance Survey (not illustrated) shows a northwards extension attached to the eastern end of the hospital, a detached building on the eastern boundary, whilst the northern edge of the Site is shown planted with trees.
- 3.1.16 The 1958 Ordnance Survey (not illustrated) shows further extensions to the hospital buildings, to the north and west, and the formation of the Site boundary as it currently exists.
- 3.1.17 The 1980 Ordnance Survey (not illustrated) shows more northwards extensions to the hospital, and the 1991 Ordnance Survey (not illustrated) shows no further changes. The construction of the original hospital building, with later additions, is likely to have had a cumulative destructive archaeological impact, due to the cutting of foundations and services, and more importantly to the terracing which took place prior to construction, certainly across the eastern part of the Site.
- 3.1.18 Prior to the construction of the hospital the Site lay in woodland. The action of tree roots and their subsequent grubbing out is likely to have had a severe and widespread negative impact on any underlying archaeological deposits.
- 3.1.19 Sherds of post-medieval pottery were identified in the northeast corner of the Woolwich Memorial Hospital, during excavations on the site of the former Catherine Wheel Inn (CgMs, 2006,10).
- 3.1.20 Evaluations at the former Brook Hospital, southwest of the Site, revealed post-medieval field drains or boundary ditches and pits, together with evidence of terracing (CgMs, 2006, 10).



4 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 4.1.1 The aims of the archaeological works were to: identify the location, date, character, significance, condition and depth of any surviving archaeological remains in the area to be effected by the proposed development.
- 4.1.2 More specifically it sought to clarify the nature and extent of existing disturbance and intrusions and hence the assess the degree of archaeological survival of buried deposits and structures.
- 4.1.3 Within these parameters it sought to address the following objectives:
- 4.1.4 To establish the presence or otherwise of any archaeological remains.
- 4.1.5 To define the date and nature of such activity and to establish the environmental context of any such remains.
- 4.1.6 Evaluate the likely impact of past land use and development.
- 4.1.7 Provide sufficient information to construct an archaeological mitigation strategy.

5 METHODOLOGY

5.1 Methodological Standards

- 5.1.1 A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) was prepared by CgMs Consulting (CgMs, 2008)setting out the methodologies and standards to be employed by Wessex Archaeology when undertaking the evaluation This was approved by the English Heritage Archaeological Advisor to the London Borough of Greenwich prior to commencement of the fieldwork.
- 5.1.2 All archaeological works were undertaken in compliance with the standards outlined in the Institute of Field Archaeologists': Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation (2001) and the Greater London Archaeology Advisory Service (GLAAS) Guidance Paper 5 (revised 1998).

5.2 Health and Safety

- 5.2.1 Health and Safety considerations were of paramount importance in conducting all fieldwork. Safe working practices overrode archaeological considerations at all times.
- 5.2.2 The work was undertaken in accordance with the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety Regulations 1992, and all other relevant Health and Safety legislations, regulations and codes of practice which are in force.
- 5.2.3 A Risk Assessment was produced by Wessex Archaeology prior to the commencement of work. This was reviewed as the project progressed.
- 5.2.4 As part of the project briefing, all staff were made aware of their responsibilities and site-specific hazards identified under the Risk Assessment.

5.3 Fieldwork

5.3.1 The fieldwork strategy is described in detail in the WSI (CgMs, 2008) but in summary it comprised the supervised excavation, using a mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless bucket, of two evaluation trenches measuring 15m x 1.8m



- (Trench 1) and 27.2mx 1.8m (Trench 2). The archaeological trenches were distributed across the Site as illustrated (**Figure 1**) to provide as much information on the extent, depth and preservation of any archaeological remains across as broad an area as possible.
- 5.3.2 Due to site constraints including the presence of a number large tree trunks and stumps, it was also decided, in consultation with the English Heritage Archaeological Advisor to the London Borough of Greenwich, to reposition Trench 1.
- 5.3.3 The evaluation trenches were located by digital survey using a GPS system and tied in to the Ordnance Survey.
- 5.3.4 Where safety restraints allowed, all archaeological features and deposits were excavated and were recorded using Wessex Archaeology's *pro forma* recording system.
- 5.3.5 All spoil was visually scanned for finds.
- 5.3.6 A complete drawn record of all the archaeological trenches was compiled. This included both plans and sections, drawn to appropriate scales (1:20 for plans and 1:10 for sections).
- 5.3.7 Heights are expressed in meters aOD, except where otherwise stated.
- 5.3.8 A photographic record was also compiled using colour slides, black and white and digital images.
- 5.3.9 The work was monitored by the English Heritage Archaeological Advisor to the London Borough of Greenwich. Upon completion of archaeological work, all the trenches were backfilled with their agreement. Excavated material was backfilled and levelled in the approximate order in which it was excavated. No other reinstatement or surface treatment was undertaken using the excavated material.

5.4 Finds Collection and Retention

- 5.4.1 All Finds were treated in accordance with the relevant guidance given in the Institute of Field Archaeologists' *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (2001), the UK Institute of Conservators' Guidelines *Conservation Guideline No 2* and the Museums and Galleries Commission's *Standards in the Museum Care of Archaeological Collections* (1991), excepting where they are superseded by statements made below.
- 5.4.2 Where features or deposits were clearly modern, finds were examined noted and discarded.

5.5 Environmental Sampling

5.5.1 A strategy for sampling archaeological and environmental deposits was set out in the WSI (CgMs, 2008).

5.6 The Archive

- 5.6.1 The project archive is currently held at the offices of Wessex Archaeology in London under the Wessex Archaeology project code WA 69600.
- 5.6.2 The project archive will be prepared in accordance with the guidelines outlined in Appendix 3 of *Management of Archaeological Projects* (English Heritage, 1991) and



- in accordance with the Guidelines for the preparation of excavation archives for long-term storage (UKIC 1990).
- 5.6.3 The resulting archive will be put onto microfiche to the standards accepted by the National Monuments Record (NMR).
- 5.6.4 Following the conclusion of the project and with the permission of the landowner the archive will be prepared for deposition with the Museum of London under MOL Site Code CWV 08.

6 RESULTS

- 6.1.1 The following section presents a brief summary of the results and an outline of the depositional sequence recorded on Site.
- 6.1.2 Detailed summaries of the evaluation trenches are presented in **Appendix 1** and full details are available in the project archive. In the following sections context numbers are given in bold.
- 6.1.3 Trench 1 was aligned north east to south west on the eastern edge of the Site and was excavated to a depth of 1m below the present ground level. A small 1m x 0.9m sondage was excavated at the south western end of Trench 1 to a depth of 1.2m below the present ground level (**Figure 1**).
- 6.1.4 Trench 2 located on the northern edge of the Site was aligned east to west and excavated to a depth of 1.2m (**Figure 1**).

Geology

6.1.5 The earliest deposits exposed in both trenches comprised a layer of stiff fine sandy clay and coarse well-rounded gravel (103, 203 and 204) representing the upper facies of the drift geology underlying the Site. The upper surface of the geology was observed at a height of between 0.5m and 0.6m below the present ground level (85.5m-85.6m aOD).

B-Horizon

6.1.6 In both trenches, a 0.3m thick, light-mid yellowish brown silty clay B-Horizon (102/202) sealed the drift deposits. In Trench 2, the B-Horizon was cut by a circular post-medieval pit (206) and a large modern pit or soak away (208).

Post-medieval Pit

6.1.7 Circular pit **206** was 1.1m deep and at least 2.6m wide with uneven sides which sloped down at a 45° angle to a concave base. The only fill (**205**) produced moderate amounts of post-medieval roof tile, sherds of post-medieval pottery and fragments of oyster shell, but only limited charcoal and animal bone. Pit **206** clearly extended beyond the edge of the trench to the south (**Figures 2** and **3**).

Modern Pit

6.1.8 At the western end of Trench 2 (**Figure 2**) a large feature, in excess of 0.85m wide and 0.9m deep, was excavated. The only fill (**207**) produced moderate amounts of modern frogged red bricks, white and blue transfer printed "China" and occasional fragments of roofing slate. The function of this feature remains to be determined although it may relate to a modern soak away associated with the hospital.

Topsoil

6.1.9 The topsoil in both trenches (**101/201**) consisted of a homogeneous layer of mid grey brown, clay silt containing frequent roots, and occasional brick fragments.

6.2 Finds

- 6.2.1 Finds were recovered from one context (205), comprising three fragments of post-medieval ceramic roof (peg) tile, and 49 sherds of pottery. The latter includes one sherd of German stoneware, alongside sherds of late medieval London-type ware (LLON) and early post-medieval redwares (PMR). Amongst the redwares there are joining sherds from the rim and body from a handled jar, probably a cauldron.
- 6.2.2 A date range of late 16th or 17th century is likely.

6.3 Environmental Evidence

6.3.1 Due to the absence of suitable deposits, no samples were taken for environmental analysis.

7 DISCUSSION

- 7.1.1 Despite the close proximity of the Site to Roman Watling Street, all of the deposits observed during the evaluation contained exclusively post-medieval or later material and no structural remains were uncovered dating from these periods.
- 7.1.2 Drift geology deposits, predominantly fine sandy clays (**103** and **204**) but including a coarse well rounded gravel (**203**), were observed in both trenches at a depth of 0.5m to 0.6m below the present ground level.
- 7.1.3 A silted up post-medieval pit (**206**) was uncovered on the eastern edge of Trench 1. The only fill of this feature contained sherds of 16th-17th century pottery, fragments of post-medieval roofing tile and oyster shell, but few of the animal bones and flecks of charcoal normally indicative of a nearby settlement. Unlikely to be a rubbish pit, the original purpose of this feature remains to be defined.
- 7.1.4 A large modern feature (208) was uncovered at the western end of Trench 2 and was in excess of 8.5m wide; the only fill from this feature (207) contained modern red bricks, white and blue pottery and fragments of roofing slate. The function of this feature unclear, although it has tentatively been suggested it was a modern soak away associated with the hospital.
- 7.1.5 No other archaeological deposits or remains were uncovered in the trenches.



8 REFERENCES

- CgMs, (2006). Former Castlewood Hospital, Shooters Hill, London Borough of Greenwich SE18: Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment. (Unpublished Report)
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9 APPENDIX 1- TRENCH SUMMARY TABLES

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION TRENCH 1

15m x 1.8m

(+) = base of feature or deposit not reached

Context	Description	Interpretive	Height aOD
no.		keywords	
101	Mid greyish brown, clay silt. Occasional well rounded pebbles and red brick throughout	Topsoil. Cultivation	86.55m
102	Light – mid yellowish brown with 20% dark orange brown mottling, silty clay. Occasional small to medium sub – rounded to well rounded pebbles throughout	B-Horizon "Sub soil"	86.30m
103	Dark yellowish brown with occasional orange mottles, stiff fine sandy clay. Frequent small patches of all to medium well rounded pebbles	Natural Geology	85.60m (+)



ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION TRENCH 2

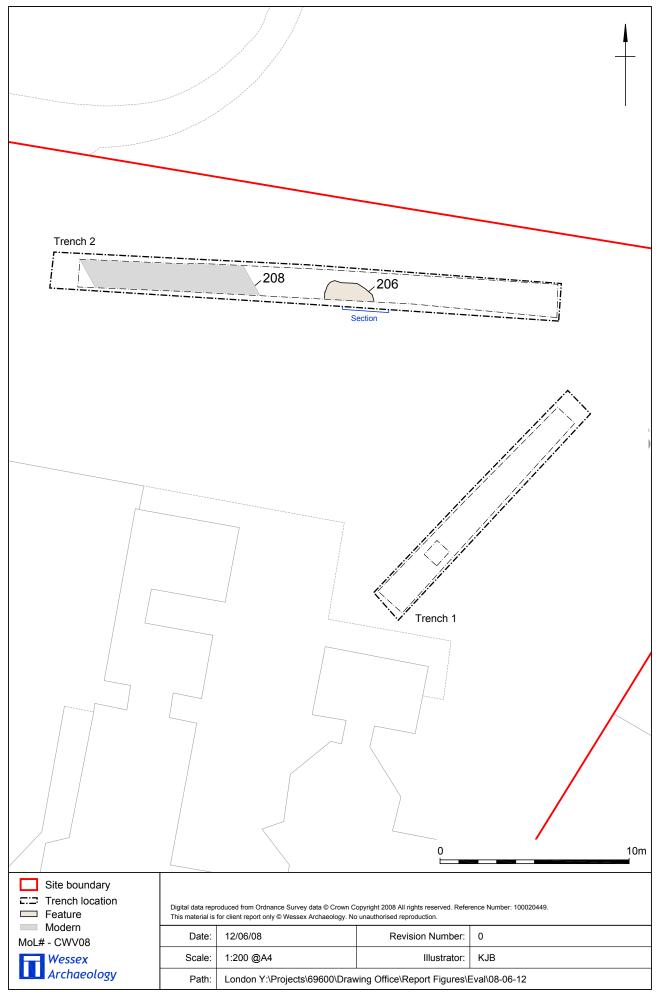
27.2m x 1.8m

(+) = base of feature or deposit not reached

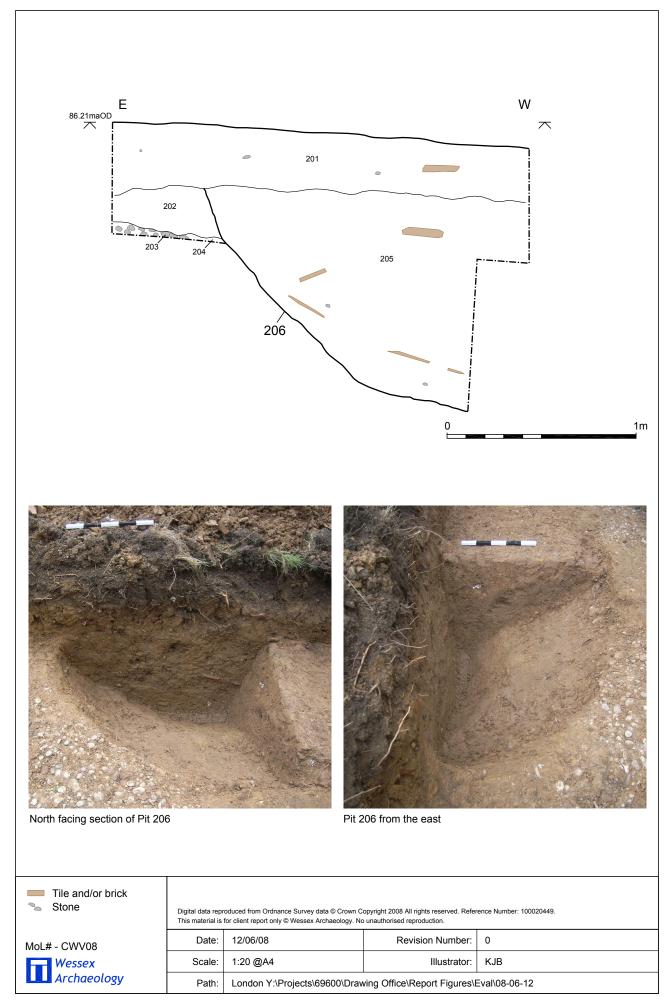
Context no.	Description	Interpretive keywords	Height aOD
201	Mid greyish brown, loose clay silt. Occasional brick fragments and small to medium sub – rounded to well rounded pebbles throughout	Topsoil. Cultivation	86.07m
202	Light – mid yellowish brown with 20% dark orange brown mottling, silty clay. Occasional small to medium sub – rounded to well rounded pebbles throughout	B-Horizon, "Sub soil"	85.77m
203	Mid orange yellow, compact coarse sandy clay gravel. Gravel – small to medium well rounded pebbles	Natural Geology	85.50m (+)
204	Dark yellowish brown, stiff clay with occasional patches of (203)	Natural Geology	85.50m (+)
205	Fill of (206). Mid orangey grey brown, moderately compact sandy silty clay. Occasional small to medium sub — rounded to well rounded pebbles throughout Occasional large fragments of red roof tile, large sherds of pottery, fragments of oyster shell, very occasional small fragments of animal bone and charcoal flecks	Backfill Use/disuse	85.77m
206	Circular cut. Sides: uneven / 45° slope. Base: concave / uneven. Filled with backfill (205). Cuts Bhorizon (202)	Pit	Top=85.77m Base=84.57m
207	Fill of (208). Dark yellowish brown, clay very rare small rounded pebbles, frequent red frogged brick fragments, roof tile, blue and white "China", occasional roofing slates	Backfill Use/disuse	85.20m (+)
208	Circular cut. Sides: (only western side seen) uneven / 45° slope. Base: not reached. Filled with backfill (207). Cuts (202).	Pit. Possible Drainage modern soak away	Top=85.20m Base=84.26m (+)



Site and trench location Figure 1



Trench plan Figure 2



Section of Pit 206 Figure 3



