

**THE CONVENT OF THE DAUGHTERS OF MARY AND  
JOSEPH, LAYHAMS ROAD, WEST WICKHAM, BR4  
9QJ**

**LONDON BOROUGH OF BROMLEY**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION**



December 2012

**COMPASS**



**ARCHAEOLOGY**

THE CONVENT OF THE DAUGHTERS OF MARY AND JOSEPH, LAYHAMS  
ROAD, WEST WICKHAM, BR4 9QJ

LONDON BOROUGH OF BROMLEY

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

SITE CODE: DMJ12

SITE CENTRE NGR: TQ 3898 6464

PLANNING REF: 11/03995/FULL1

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December 2012

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## ***Abstract***

*An archaeological evaluation, consisting of two 10m-long trenches and two 5m-long trenches, was undertaken on land at 'The Convent of the Daughters of Mary and Joseph', Layhams Road, West Wickham, London Borough of Bromley, before the demolition of the existing chapel and convent buildings, and the construction of a new chapel and sisters home. It was believed that the evaluation could uncover remains of prehistoric, Roman, or medieval date, as other investigations in the area had uncovered such remains, particularly in relation to the Roman road to the west of the site.*

*A simple sequence of deposits, relating to the construction of the current buildings in the 1960s, was generally uncovered. This took the form of the modern topsoil (or tarmac), overlying a thin yellow sandy make-up layer, over a brown-grey gravelly deposit with modern building material in. They directly overlay the natural deposits (a yellow sandy deposit, with lenses of clay), observed at an uppermost level of c.0.35m beneath the present ground-surface (94.6mOD). This suggests that any earlier soil horizons or made-ground deposits which once existed have been cut away, when the buildings were constructed in the 1960s.*

*A linear ditch, running approximately northwest – southeast across the site, c.1m in width, and at least 0.6m in depth (although possibly deeper if the upper levels have been truncated by modern development), was observed in two trenches. It is unclear precisely what this feature was, or its date, because of the lack of dating material recovered from it, however its size and shape makes it seem likely that it formed a land division or agricultural ditch of some kind, possibly prehistoric or, more probably, Roman in date.*

*This evaluation therefore uncovered possible evidence for prehistoric or Roman activity in the area – possibly agricultural in nature. The site has, however, been truncated by the 1960s construction, such that earlier soil horizons, etc, have been removed, and only deeper features cut into the natural deposits survive.*

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*Fig.1: Reproduced from the Ordnance Survey 1:2500 map with permission of the HMSO. © Crown Copyright. All rights reserved. Compass Archaeology Ltd, London SE1 1RQ; licence no. AL 100031317.*

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1** This report presents a summary of archaeological trenching carried out at ‘The Convent of the Daughters of Mary and Joseph’, on Layhams Road, West Wickham, in the London Borough of Bromley (approximately centred at NGR TQ 3898 6464). The archaeological trenching was carried out as a condition of planning consent, prior to the demolition of the existing chapel and convent buildings, and construction of a new chapel and 19-bedroom sisters home, with associated accommodation including offices, kitchens, and dining areas (Planning Ref: 11/03995/FULL1).

Compass Archaeology undertook the fieldwork on the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> December 2012.

- 1.2** Previous archaeological investigations and find-spots in the area suggest that there was some activity and occupation in this area during prehistory, although there is little evidence for prehistoric settlement. The presence of the London to Lewes Roman road to the west, and numerous finds around the road, indicate relatively substantial Roman activity, and possible occupation, in this area. The place-name ‘Wickham’ suggests an Anglo-Saxon origin, and it is mentioned in the Domesday Book, however little archaeological evidence for Saxon settlement has been found in this area. Similarly, although it is known that there was a medieval settlement nearby (probably around the church to the north-west of the site), little archaeological evidence for this has been found. In the 15<sup>th</sup> century, ‘Wickham Court’ (to the north of this site) was constructed, and was gradually expanded throughout the post-medieval period. The site itself, however, remained as open fields until the 20<sup>th</sup> century when buildings were constructed.
- 1.3** Further to the condition of planning consent, English Heritage advised that an archaeological evaluation should be undertaken on the site.

A subsequent Written Scheme of Investigation detailing the trenching, including the location of the trial trenches within the redevelopment footprint, was produced (Compass Archaeology, December 2012). This envisaged three 10m-long trenches, however the third was subsequently divided into two due to the presence of modern services.

## **2. Acknowledgements**

The archaeological evaluation was commissioned by Mr Richard Heath, RHA Architects Ltd.

## **3. Background**

### **3.1 Location and topography**

The site is centred at NGR TQ 3898 6464, positioned on West Wickham Common, to the south of West Wickham, with Addington Road to the north and Layhams Road to the east. It is bounded by open fields to the south and west, Wickham Court School to the north-east, St John Rigby College to the north, and Coloma Court to the east. The site is currently occupied by the chapel and convent, plus areas of

grass, shrubs, and tarmac, etc, and covers an area of approximately 65m by 40m (figs.1-3).

The site lies on high ground, overlooking lower ground on all sides. The ground-level across the site is relatively consistent, at approximately 95mOD.

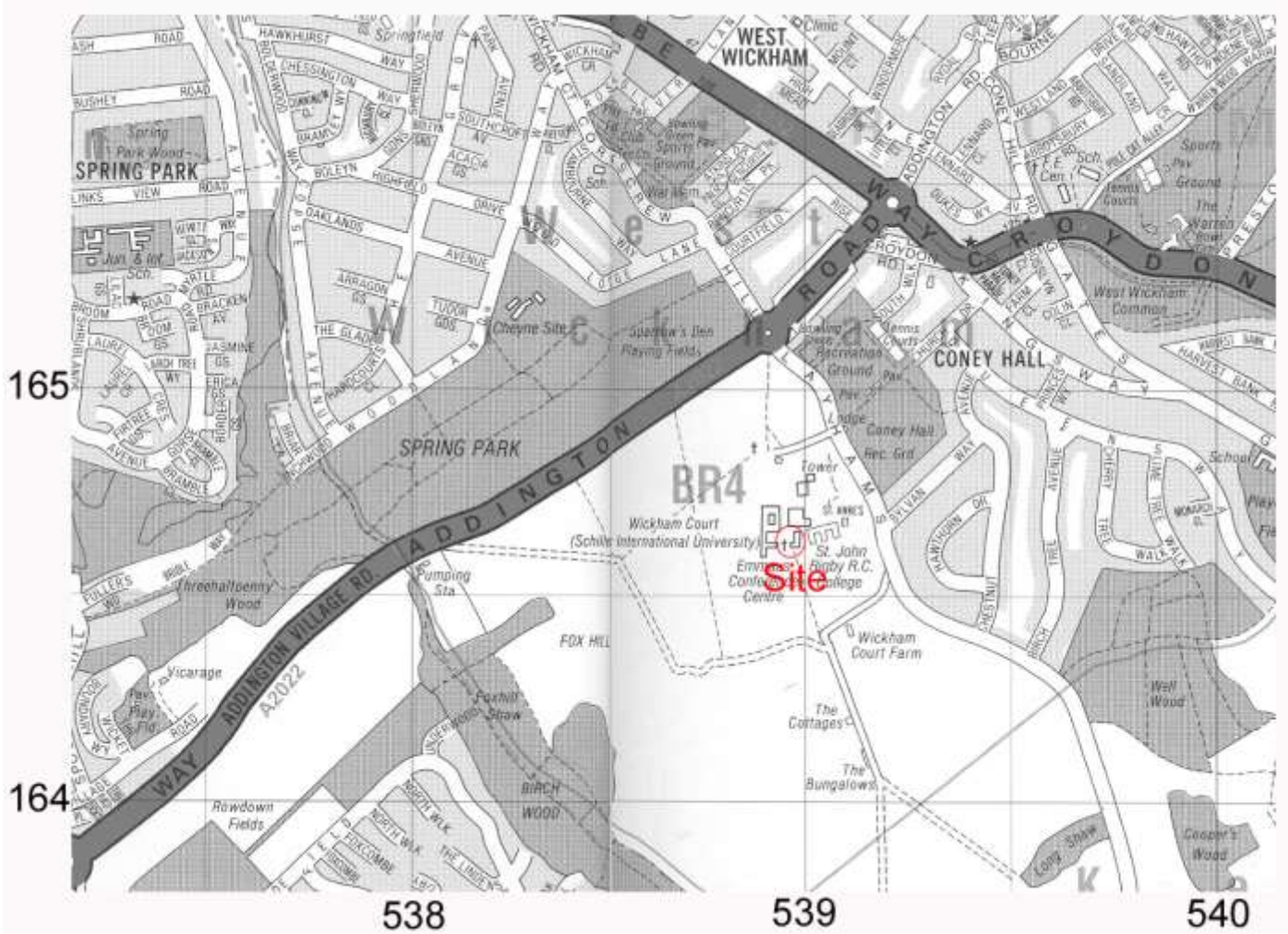


Fig. 1: A-Z Map, with site marked



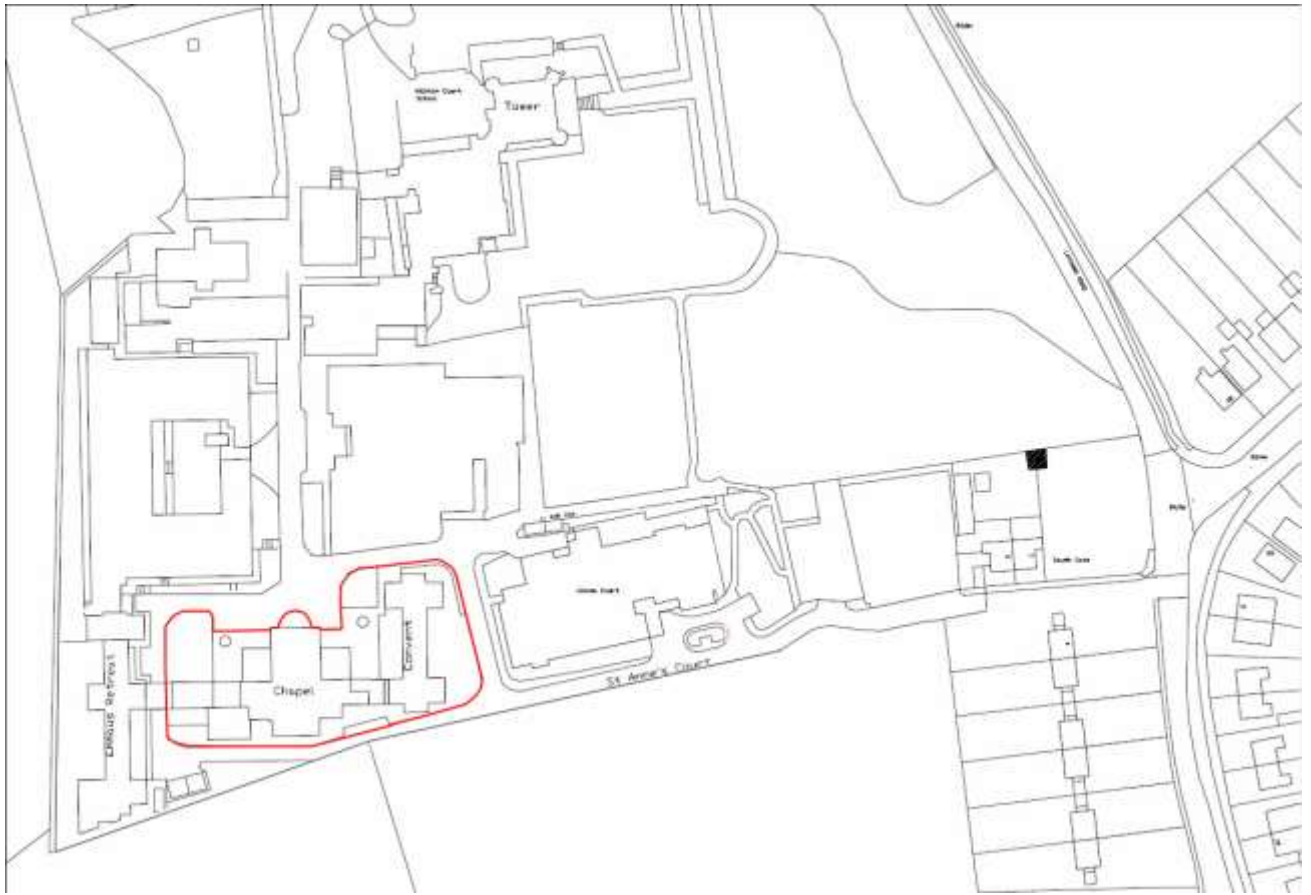


Fig. 2: Site location plan

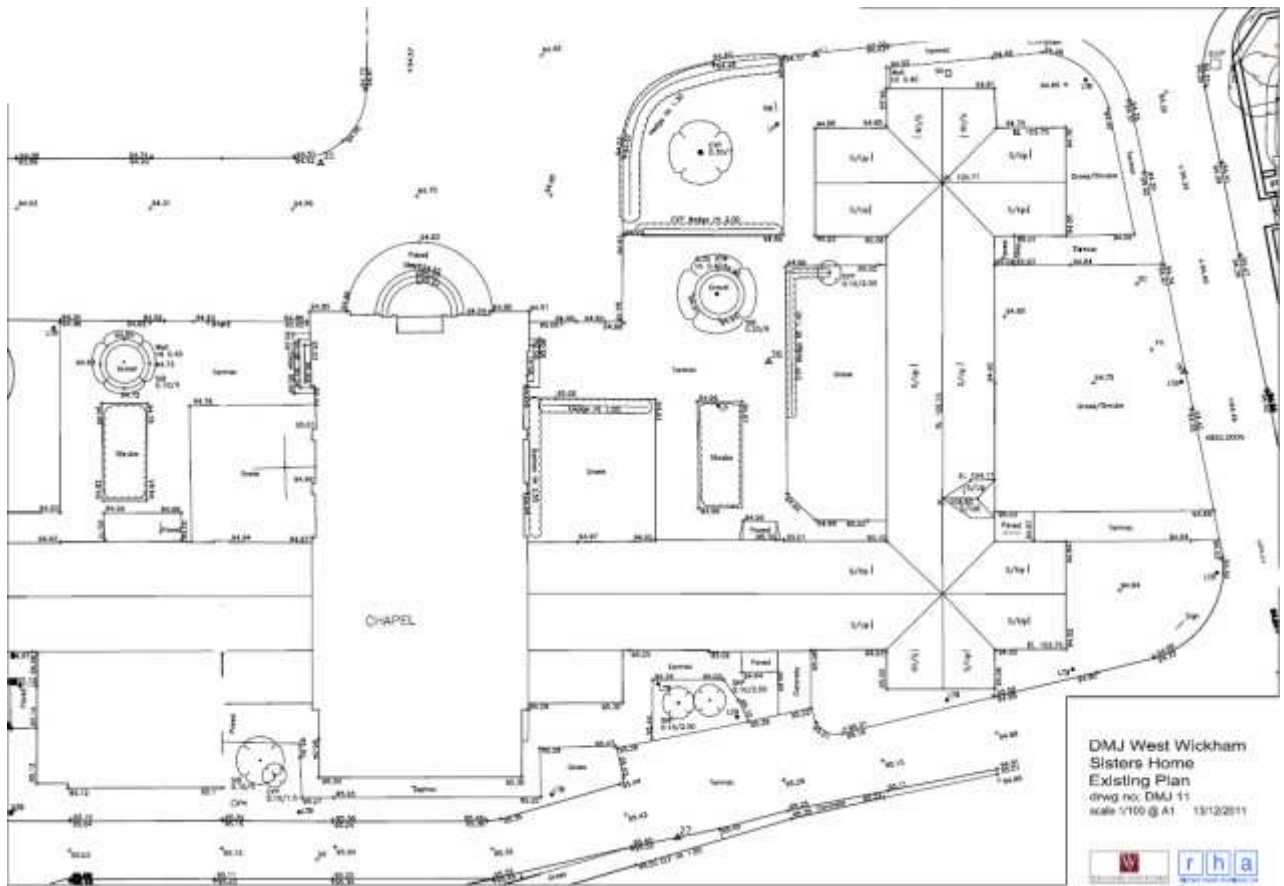


Fig. 3: Current site plan

The geological survey (BGS, 1998) indicates that the site lies on Thanet Sand overlying chalk.

The watching-brief at The St John Rigby College in 2002 (just to the north of this site) uncovered the natural Thanet Sand deposit at between 90.4mOD and 91.1mOD (c.1 – 2m beneath the present ground-surface).

## **3.2 Archaeology and history**

### **3.2.1 Prehistoric**

A number of Palaeolithic hand-axes and flints have been found in the general vicinity of the site (although many of these are unprovenanced antiquarian findspots) – nonetheless, this does suggest that there may have been some Palaeolithic activity in the area.

Mesolithic finds, in the form of burnt and struck flint, were uncovered during an evaluation at Schiller University, Wickham Court (to the north-east of the site). This suggests that there may have been Mesolithic activity, possibly itinerant hunters moving through the area.

Some Neolithic / Bronze Age finds have also been uncovered in this area, including a survey of the area around Fox Hill which uncovered over 6,000 pot-boilers and 5,000 waste flakes. This suggests significant Neolithic – Bronze Age activity in the area, possibly associated with flint-production, although excavations have not yet uncovered any features of this date.

Iron Age finds have been uncovered in the area, including a late Iron Age brooch, a number of Iron Age coins, and Iron Age pot uncovered during the Schiller University evaluation. This general area appears to have been an Iron Age landscape, with possible dwellings along the plateau, a possible Iron Age hillfort on Hayes Common, and the general area possibly being farmed during the Iron Age.

### **3.2.2 Roman**

The London to Lewes road ran north-south, c.250m to the west of the site. It was 44miles long, constructed of chalk covered by packed flints, between 15 and 20ft wide, and dated to the late 1<sup>st</sup> – early 2<sup>nd</sup> century (Margary, 1965).

Excavations indicate that there may have been a roadside settlement (designated as a SAM), just to the north-west of this site (occupation evidence, including possible structures, was uncovered during trial excavations by West Kent Border Archaeological Group in 1977). A watching brief undertaken by Compass Archaeology in 2005 on Corkscrew Hill and the adjacent area of Sparrow's Den playing fields also uncovered seven 3<sup>rd</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> century coins (indicating roadside activity) and the line of a Roman stream. Other Roman finds in this area include coins, brooches, rings, a pin, a seal, and a spoon, dated to between 200AD and 410AD. The precise extent of the Roman settlement, and associated roadside activity, is unknown, although could be relatively substantial.

1963-4 excavations at Fox Hill also uncovered a Roman farm, with finds dated to 80 – 140AD. This suggests that there may have been Roman activity in the wider area around the site, and not just directly in association with the road.

### **3.2.3 Saxon**

The manor of ‘West Wickham’ is mentioned in the Domesday Book, and the name ‘Wickham’ does indicate an early Anglo-Saxon settlement (the ‘wic’ element refers to a street or way; and the ‘ham’ to a dwelling). No archaeological evidence for Saxon activity has, however, been found in this area.

### **3.2.4 Medieval**

West Wickham was mentioned in the Domesday Book, as having a total of about 38 households, plus a church and mill. However, despite this relatively large population, few archaeological finds have been uncovered, aside from a brooch, five coins, and two strap fittings.

The present church (St John the Baptist), positioned to the north of the site, was built in the 13<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> century, suggesting that the medieval centre of population may have been around this area. The manor house, Wickham Court, was constructed in about 1469 by Sir Henry Heydon, to the north of the site. The excavation at Schiller University uncovered a 15<sup>th</sup> century brick wall, possibly associated with the house.

### **3.2.5 Post-Medieval**

The manor house was gradually expanded throughout the post-medieval period, until it was sold in 1935 to be used as a hotel, and then sold to the Daughters of Mary and Joseph after WWII.

Previous archaeological work in the vicinity of the site has uncovered a range of post-medieval remains, including ditches, a wall foundation, and drains at the Schiller University site; and a 17<sup>th</sup> century wall-base observed during a watching brief at The St John Rigby College.

Cartographic evidence indicates that the site remained broadly as open fields until the mid-later 20<sup>th</sup> century. The first map is Hasted’s 1778 Map (fig.4), which simply depicts the church and Wickham Court, with the surrounding area undeveloped. The same layout is depicted on the 1798 Map (fig.5). The 1838 tithe map, 1862 25inch OS Map (fig.6), and 1897 25inch OS Map, all show the area in broadly the same way, with the church, Wickham Court, and further buildings along the western edge of Wickham Court (probably stabling and carriage buildings) and to the south (probably farm buildings). The 1909 OS Map (fig.7) depicts a small building (probably a farm building) in the north-western part of the site, although this had disappeared by the 1936 OS Map. The site itself remained as open land until 1964, when the chapel and sisters accommodation were constructed (see 1972 OS Map, fig.9, which is the first depiction of the current buildings on this site).



Fig. 4: Extract from Hasted's 1778 Map, with site marked (in area of open fields). Wickham Court, and the Church, are depicted



Fig. 5: 1798 Map, with site marked (in area of open fields)



Fig. 6: 1862 25inch OS Map, with site marked (in area of open fields, but with development to the west)

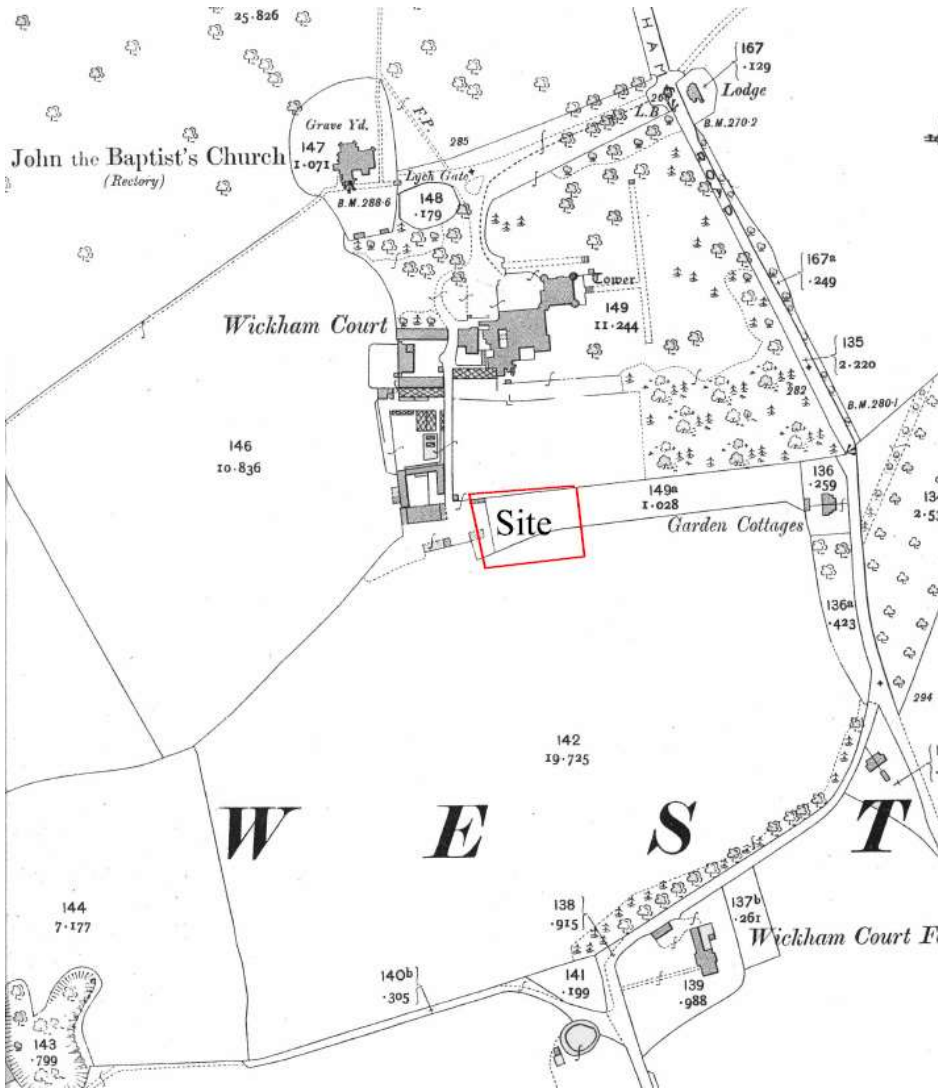


Fig. 7: 1909 OS Map, with site marked. One small building is depicted in the north-west corner of the site, but otherwise it remains open

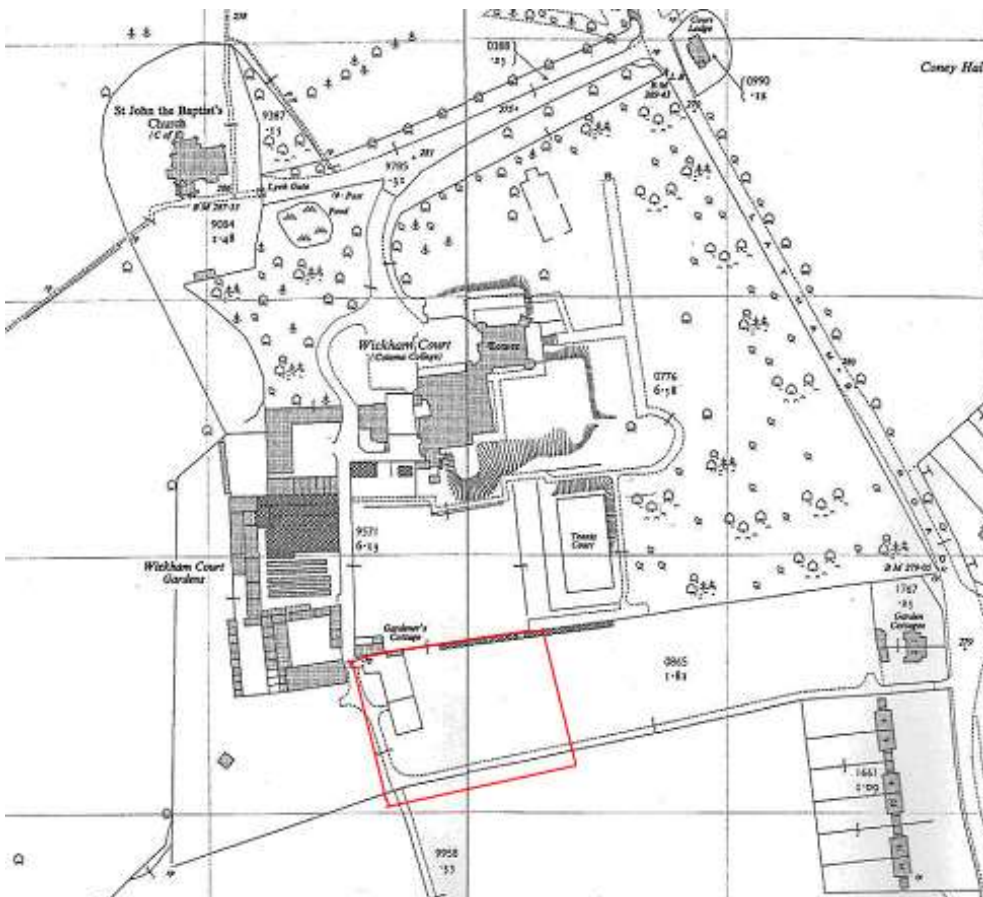


Fig. 8: 1955 OS Map, with site marked (undeveloped)

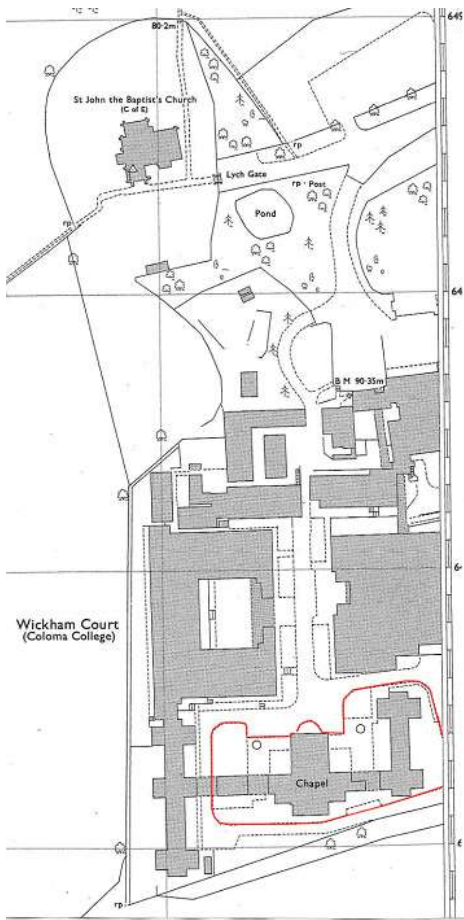


Fig. 9: 1972 OS Map, with site marked (depicting the buildings currently on the site)

#### **4. Aims and objectives of the archaeological evaluation**

##### **4.1 The proposed development**

The proposed redevelopment involves the demolition of the existing chapel and convent, and the construction of another chapel and 19-bedroom sisters home, with associated accommodation including offices, kitchens, and dining areas (see fig.10) (Planning Ref: 11/03995/FULL1).



Fig. 10: Proposed development plan

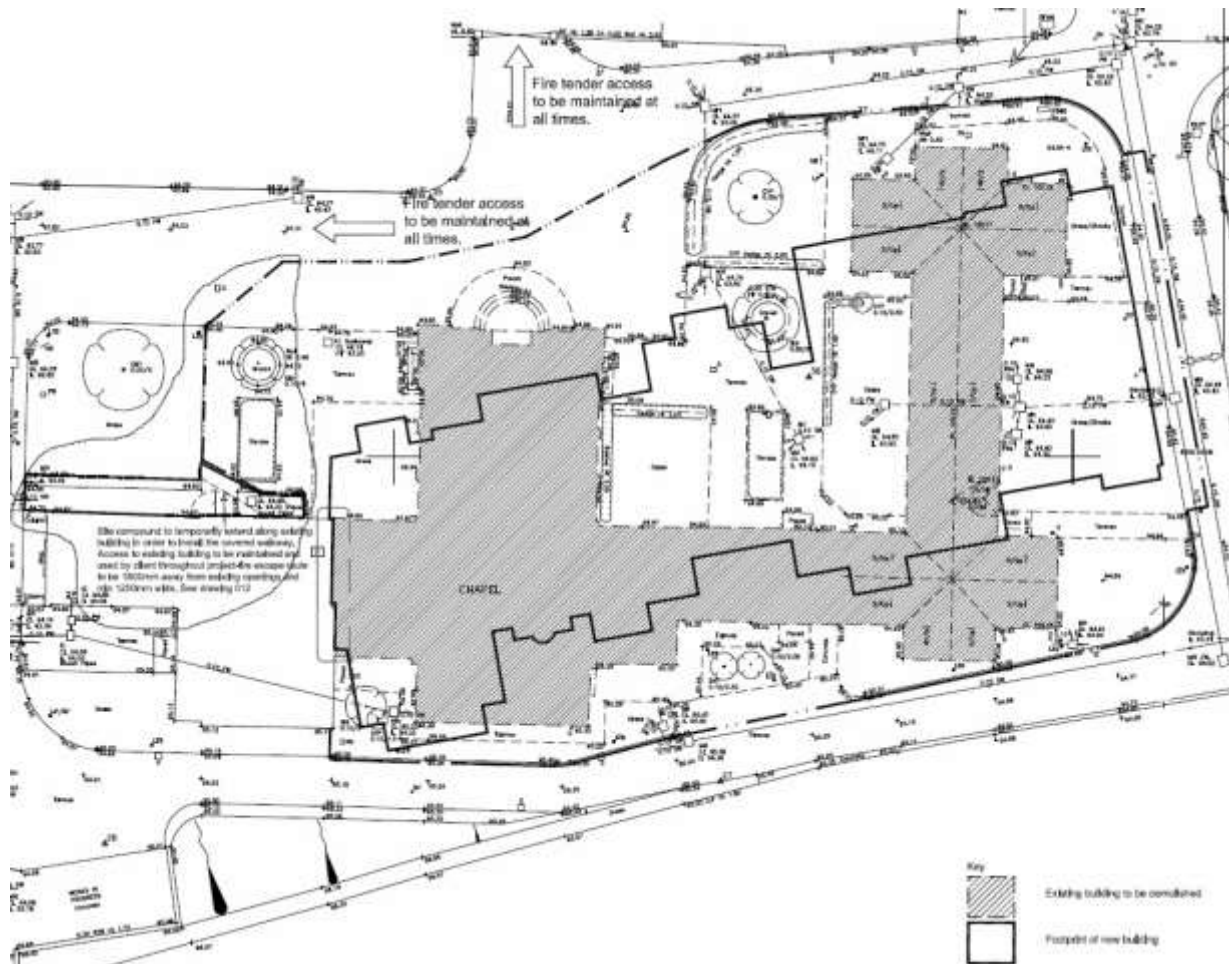


Fig. 11: Plan showing the outline of the current and proposed buildings

Archaeological trial trenching on the site was recommended by English Heritage as part of the Local Authority planning process, in response to a condition of the planning consent.

#### **4.2 Archaeological research questions**

The site presented an opportunity to address several research questions, as defined in the preliminary Written Scheme of Investigation (*Compass Archaeology, December 2012*):

- Is there any evidence for prehistoric activity in the site-area? What period does this date from, and what form does this take? What does this suggest about prehistoric activity in this area – was it itinerant or settled; associated with agriculture or flint-production; etc?
- Is there any evidence for Roman activity in the area? Is this related to the Roman road to the west of the site (possibly occupation associated with this); or related to more general Roman activity?
- Is there any evidence for Saxon and / or medieval activity in the site-area? What form does this take, and what does this suggest about the type and intensity of Saxon / medieval activity in this area? Does this provide any indication about the possible location of the Saxon / early medieval settlement?
- Is there any evidence relating to the post-medieval development of the area? In particular, is there any indication that there may have been buildings / activity not depicted in cartographic evidence (possibly associated with Wickham Court)?
- At what levels do any archaeological or geological deposits survive across the area?
- Can the watching brief works inform on the research questions of the Museum of London and English Heritage's '*A Research Framework for London Archaeology*' publication 2002?

### **5. Methodology**

- 5.1** The fieldwork and post-excavation work was carried out in accordance with the English Heritage guidelines (in particular, *Standards for Archaeological Work*, July 2009) and those of the Institute for Archaeologists. Overall management of the project was undertaken by a full member of the Institute. The Written Scheme was produced prior to the start of fieldwork.

Fieldwork was carried out in accordance with the Construction (Health, Safety & Welfare) Regulations. All members of the fieldwork team had valid CSCS Cards (Construction Skills Certificate Scheme), and wore hi-vis jackets, hard-hats, and steel-toe-capped boots as required.



**5.2** The work comprised of four trenches located in the area of the proposed development, as indicated on fig.12. Two of these trenches measured approximately 10m in length by 1.8m in width; and two measured approximately 5m in length by 1.8m in width. This covered an area of approximately 54m<sup>2</sup>, within an area of c.2600m<sup>2</sup> (just over 2% of the footprint).

Initial clearance of the trial trenches was undertaken by a mechanical excavator (JCB using a ditching bucket and working under archaeological supervision). Modern topsoil and undifferentiated subsoil was removed to reveal the natural deposits, c.0.5m beneath the modern ground-surface. This was then cleaned, recorded, and photographed by the archaeologists, and any features appropriately investigated.

**5.3** The deposits and features exposed in the trenches were recorded on *pro-forma* sheets by written and measured description, and drawn in plan (scale of 1:20) and section (scale 1:10). The recording system used followed the MoL Site Manual for on-site work. By agreement the recording and drawing sheets used were directly compatible with those developed by the Museum. The fieldwork record was supplemented by photography as appropriate. Levels were derived from the existing site survey (fig.11) and derived from an OSBM on the eastern face / southeastern corner of the boundary wall on the western side of Layhams Road, opposite the junction with Sulvan Way (value 85.054mOD).

The trench position was located to the existing standing buildings by taped measurement, with the resultant plan in turn related as a 'best fit' to the Ordnance Survey grid as derived from the 1:1250 map.

The records from the work have been allocated the site code: DMJ12 by the Museum of London Archaeological Archive. An ordered and indexed site archive will be compiled in line with the MoL *Guidelines* and will be deposited in the Museum of London Archive.

## **6. The archaeological evaluation**

### **6.1 Summary of the findings**

Four trial trenches were dug from the present ground-surface (between 94.6mOD and 95.18mOD). Excavation was to the top of the natural deposits, removing modern deposits and undifferentiated soil horizons (to a level of between 94mOD and 94.45mOD).

The sequence of deposits was broadly the same in all trenches, with two trenches revealing no features of archaeological significance. The modern topsoil (or tarmac) overlay a thin yellow sandy make-up layer, over a brown-grey gravelly deposit. These are all modern layers, associated with the construction of the buildings in the 1960s. A number of services were also observed in all of the trenches.

These modern layers directly overlay the natural deposits (a yellow sandy deposit, with lenses of clay), observed at an uppermost level of *c.*0.35m beneath the present ground-surface (94.6mOD).

A linear ditch, running approximately northwest – southeast across the site, *c.*1m in width, and at least 0.6m in depth (although possibly deeper if the upper levels have been truncated by modern development), was observed in trenches 2 and 4. It is unclear precisely what this feature was or its date, because of the lack of dating material recovered from it, however its size and shape makes it seem likely that it formed a land division or agricultural ditch of some kind, possibly prehistoric or, more probably, Roman in date.

The following sections discuss each trench individually, and include photographs, plans, and sections.

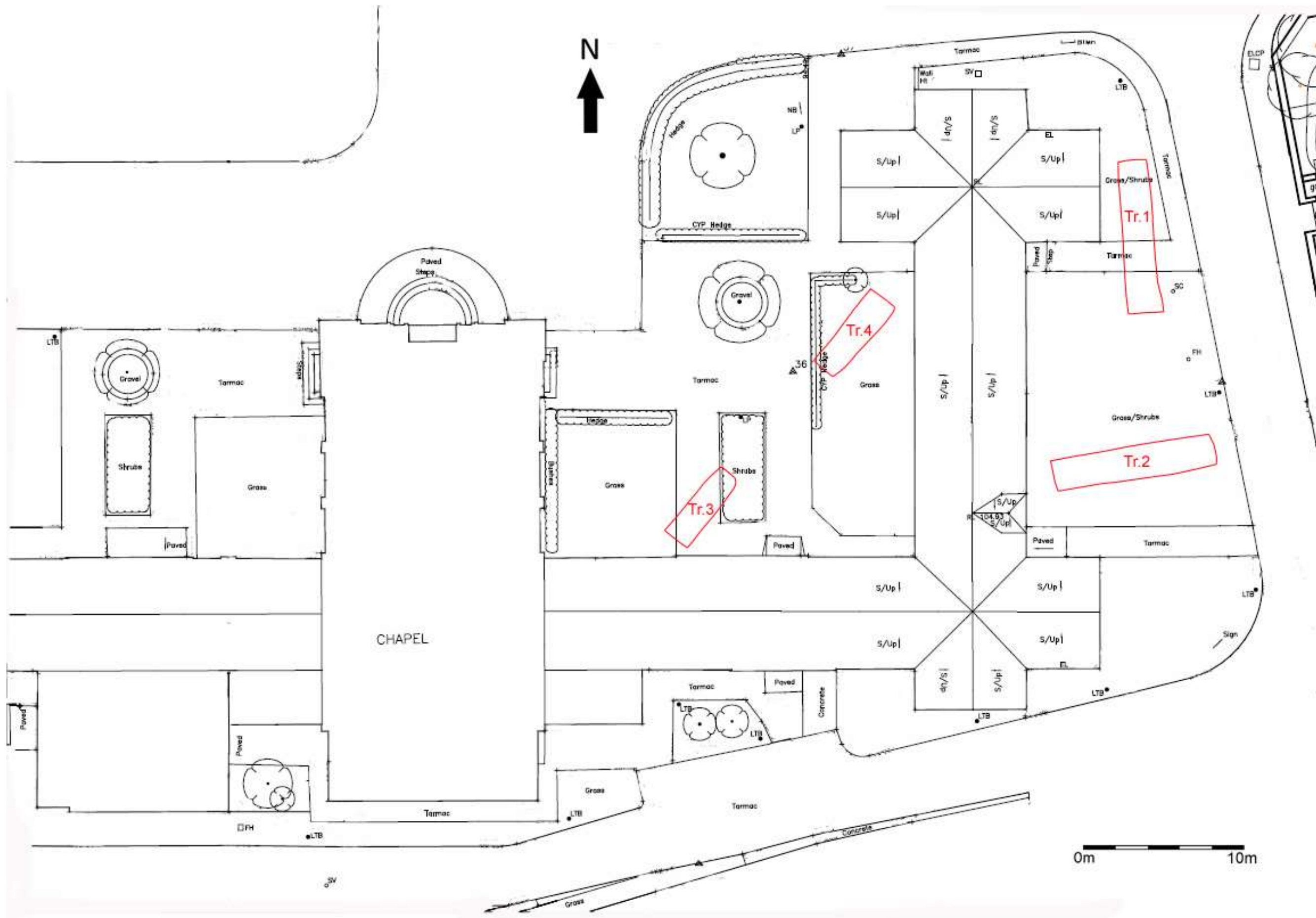


Fig. 12: Plan showing trench locations

## 6.2 List of recorded contexts

Context	Description	Interpretation
1	Deposit Loose dark-grey-brown brown silty deposit, with lots of root disturbance, organic matter, and small pebbles. Observed across the whole site, between 0.17m and 0.36m thick.	Topsoil.
2	Deposit Yellow-grey sandy make-up layer. Observed across the whole site, between 30mm and 200mm in thickness.	Modern make-up layer, possibly associated with the construction of these buildings.
3	Deposit Brown-grey silty-clayey-gravelly deposit. Observed across the whole site, for a general thickness of c.0.15m.	Modern subsoil-type deposit, associated with the construction of these buildings.
4	Deposit Orange / yellow / cream silty-sand, with pockets of cream-coloured clay. Observed at an uppermost level of c.0.35m beneath modern ground-surface, 94.6mOD.	Natural deposits – Thanet Sand deposit. Truncated slightly by modern development.
5	Cut Linear cut observed in trenches 2 and 4, running approximately northwest to southeast across the site. 1.15m in width and 0.65m in depth (although may have originally been deeper). Steep sided cut on its southwestern side, shallow on northeastern side, with a relatively flat base. Base at 93.48 – 93.77mOD.	Cut of linear feature. Possibly a land division or drainage ditch. Unknown date – prehistoric or Roman?
6	Fill of [5], in trench 2. Light brown / cream silty deposit, with some orange iron staining and frequent pebbles (more frequent towards the base of the cut). Medium compaction. Single episode of backfilling.	Fill of linear feature [5].
7	Fill of [5], in trench 4. Light brown / cream silty deposit, with some orange iron staining and frequent pebbles (more frequent towards the base of the cut). Medium compaction. Single episode of backfilling.	Fill of linear feature [5].

### 6.3 Trench 1

Trench 1 was aligned approximately north - south, in the northeastern corner of the site. It measured approximately 9.4m in length, by 1.98 – 2.3m in width, and was excavated to a general depth of 0.6m (c.94mOD).

The loose dark-grey-brown topsoil (context 1) was observed for c.0.15m in depth, overlying a yellow sandy make-up layer (context 2) for c.0.2m in depth. This overlay the light brown gravelly-deposit (context 3), which was between 0.12m and 0.2m in thickness. This overlay the natural deposits (context 4) – a mixture of orange-cream silty sands, and lenses of cream-coloured clay. This was present from an uppermost level of 0.4m beneath the modern ground-surface, and generally at c.0.45m beneath modern ground-surface (c.94.2mOD).

Two service runs were observed running north-south down the centre of the trench. These were surrounded by a pink sandy service backfill. A number of other services were observed running east-west across the trench, all surrounded by service backfills and disturbance.

No archaeological finds or features were observed in this trench.



Fig. 13: Photo of trench 1, looking north

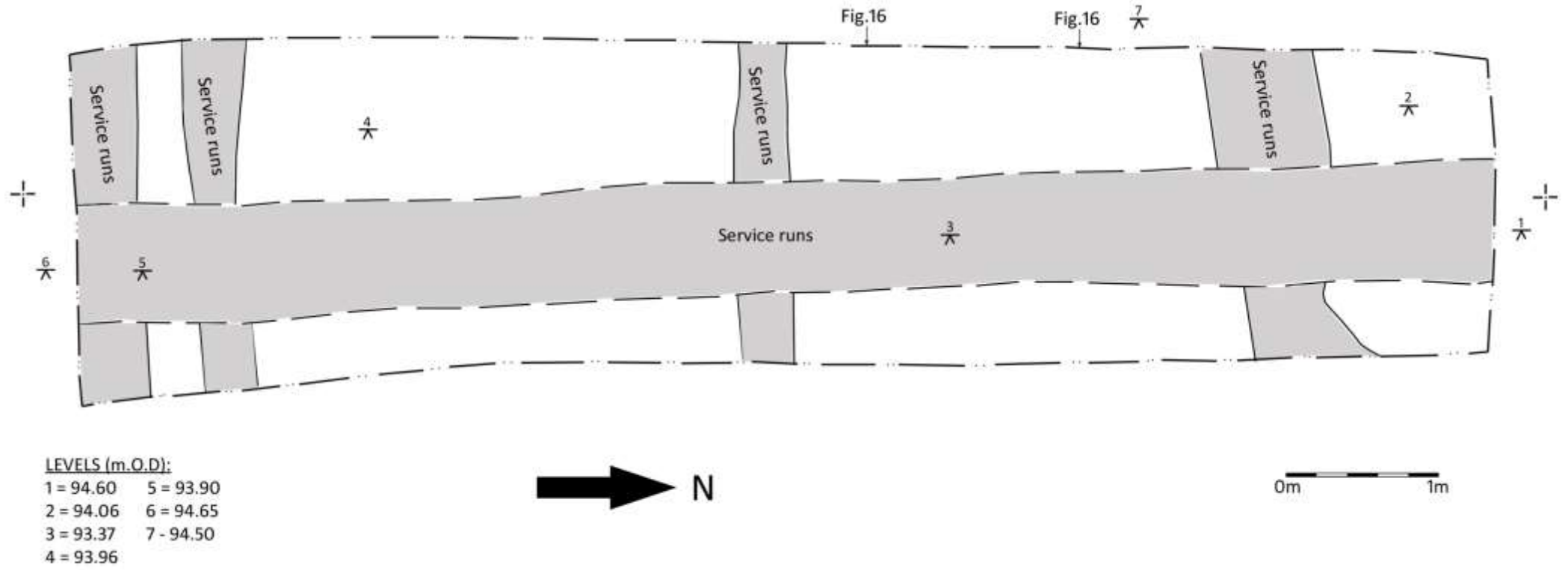


Fig. 14: Plan of trench 1



Fig. 15: Photo of east-facing section in trench 1

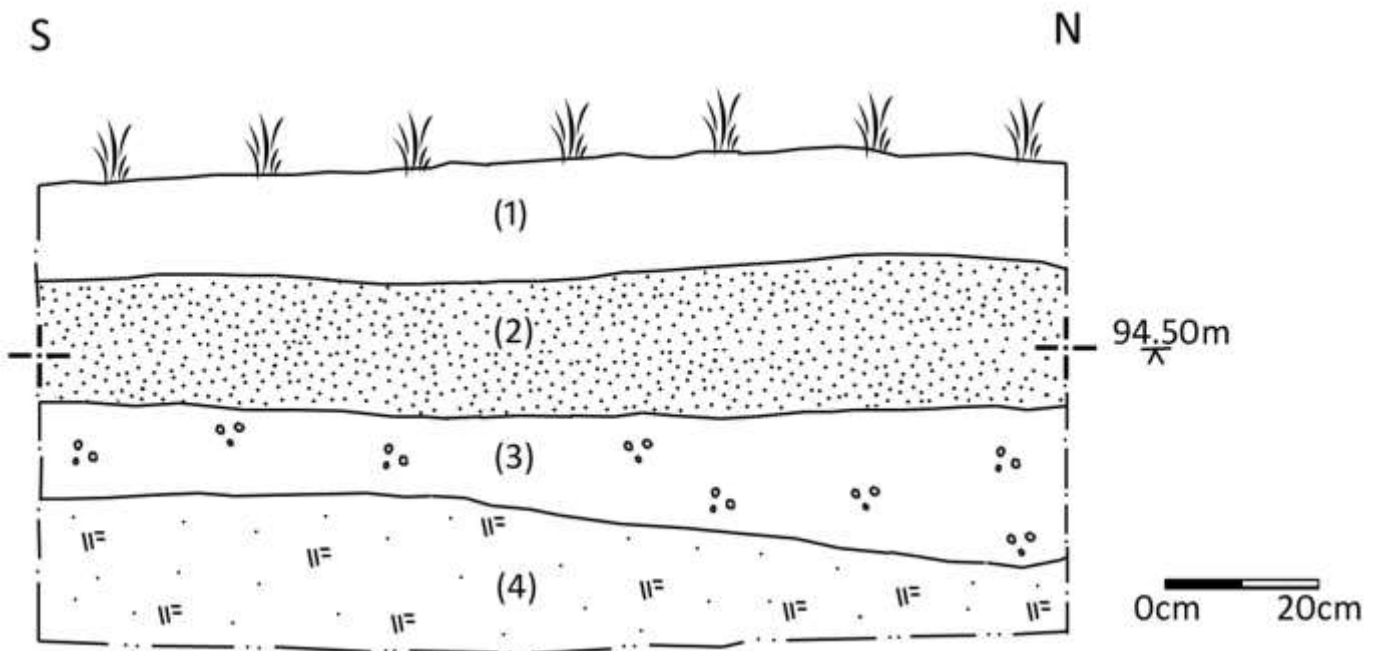


Fig. 16: Section in trench 1

## 6.4 Trench 2

Trench 2 was aligned approximately east – west, to the south of trench 1. It was approximately 9.9m in length, by *c.*2m in width, and was excavated to a depth of between 0.5 and 0.75m beneath modern ground-surface (*c.*94.15mOD).

The dark-grey-brown topsoil (context 1) was observed for *c.*0.25 – 0.3m in depth, overlying a layer of yellow-cream silty (context 2) for *c.*50mm in thickness. This overlay the grey-brown silty-clay-gravel deposit (context 3) for *c.*0.15m in depth. This overlay the sterile natural deposit (context 4) – a mixture of orange-cream silty sands, with lenses of cream-coloured clay. This was observed approximately 0.5m beneath the modern ground-surface (94.15 – 94.4mOD).

Services were also observed in this trench, including the continuation of the two north-south services observed in trench 1 (towards the eastern part of trench 2). Another drain was observed running approximately east-west along the southern part of the trench, plus a north-south aligned service in the far eastern part of the trench.

One linear cut feature was observed in the far western part of the trench (context 5). This was aligned northwest to southeast, running for a length of *c.*2m, and heading into the sections to the northwest and the south. This was observed to be approximately 1.15m in width. It was *c.*0.65m in depth, with its base at 93.48mOD, however truncation of past soil horizons / made-ground deposits, and the surviving level of the natural deposits, suggests that it may have originally been about 0.5m deeper. Its cut was steeper to the southwest (45°) and it had a relatively flat base.

Its fill (context 6) was a homogeneous light brown / cream silty deposit, with occasional orange iron staining and frequent pebbles. These pebbles were more frequent towards the base of the feature, suggesting that they may have been deliberately placed – possibly to aid drainage? No dating evidence was recovered from this fill – only one sherd of post-medieval pottery from later disturbance caused by the drain cutting the feature. There was no indication of different layers within this feature, suggesting that it was backfilled in a single episode.

It is unclear precisely what this feature was, or its date. Its size and shape, however, suggest that it was a relatively substantial feature – possibly a land division of some kind, or a drainage ditch. The colour and consistency of its fill suggests that it may be relatively early in date – possibly prehistoric or Roman. It seems more likely that it would be Roman in date, based on the proximity of the site to the Roman road and other Roman finds in the area.





Fig. 17: Photo of trench 2, looking east. The unexcavated fill [6] of the linear cut feature [5] is visible in the foreground

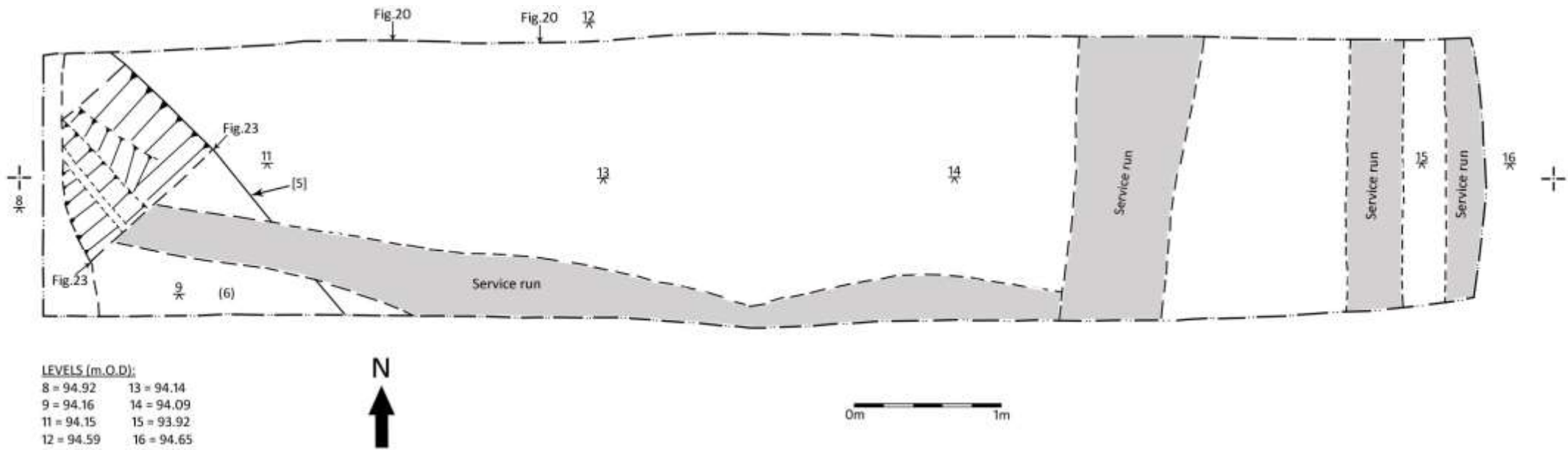


Fig. 18: Plan of trench 2



Fig. 19: Photo of south-facing section in trench 2

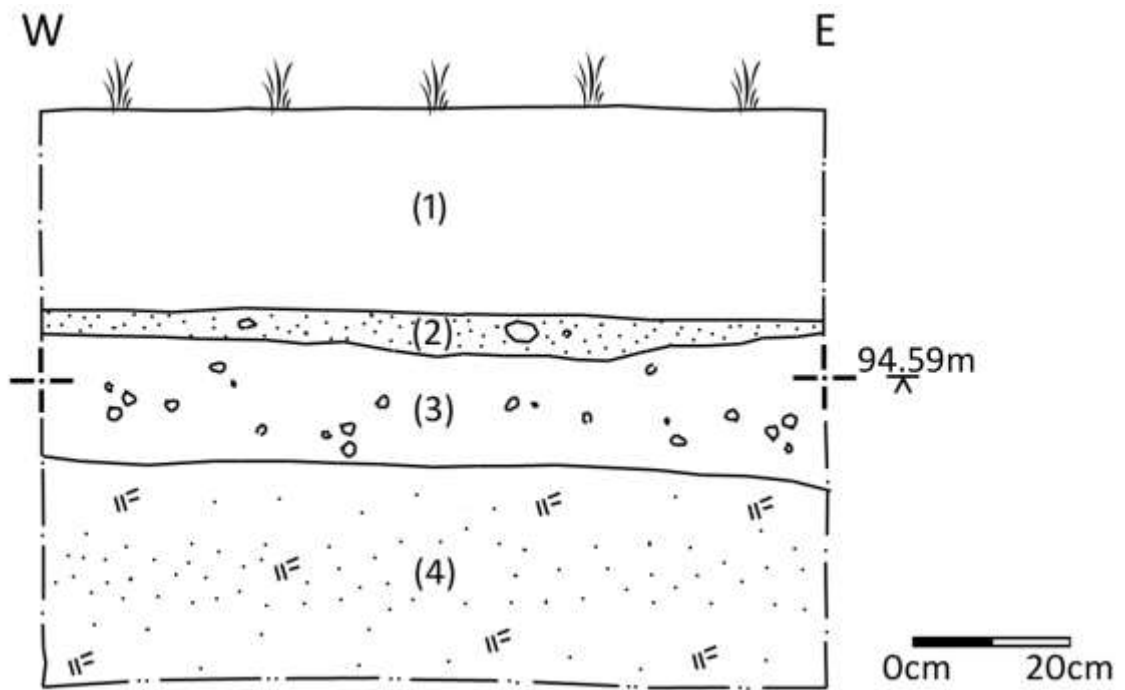


Fig. 20: Section in trench 2



Fig. 21: Photo of partly-excavated linear cut feature [5], looking southeast



Fig. 22: Close-up photo of linear cut feature [5]

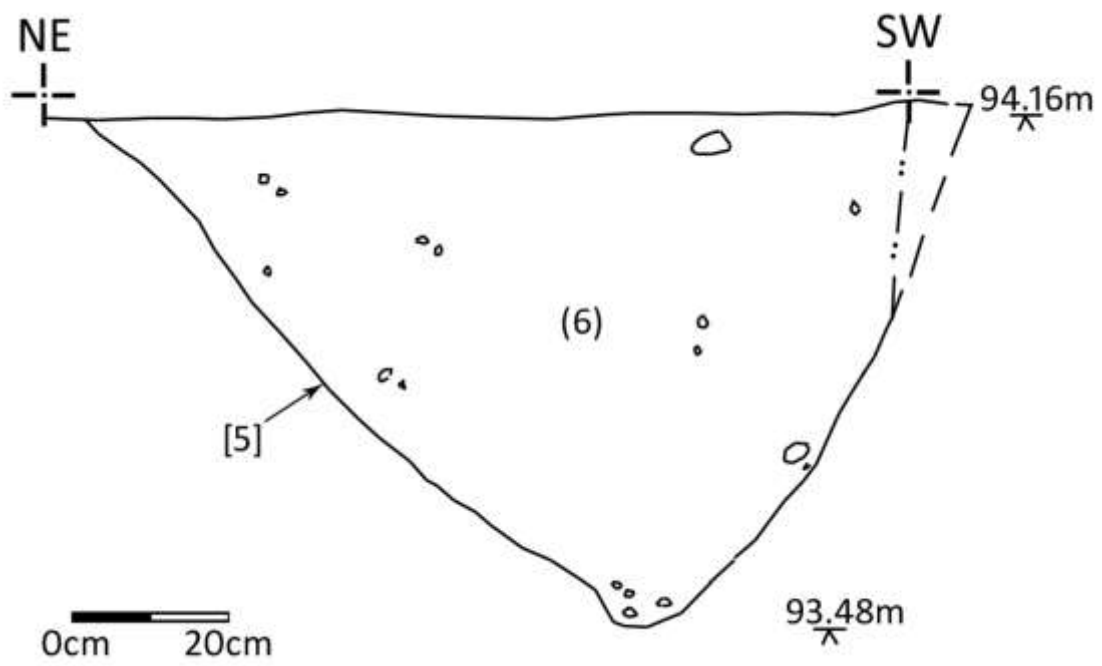


Fig. 23: Section through linear cut feature [5]

## 6.5 Trench 3

Trench 3 was aligned approximately northeast - southwest, in the southern part of the area between the chapel and the convent buildings. It measured 5.25m in length, by approximately 1.9m in width. It was excavated to a general depth of *c.*0.5m (*c.*94.45mOD).

The modern tarmac surface (0.2m thick) overlay a yellow-grey sandy make-up layer (context 2 – 0.15m thick) over the natural deposits – a yellow-orange sandy deposit with lenses of clay in. This was observed *c.*0.35m beneath the modern ground-surface (*c.*94.6mOD). Here, any earlier soil horizons or made-ground deposits must have been removed by the construction of the convent buildings, such that the modern surfaces associated with these buildings directly overlay the natural deposits.

A drain was observed running approximately east-west along the centre of the trench. A drain-box, and regular square area of modern disturbance, was also observed in the far southwestern corner of the trench.

No archaeological finds or features were observed in this trench.



Fig. 24: Photo of trench 3, looking northeast

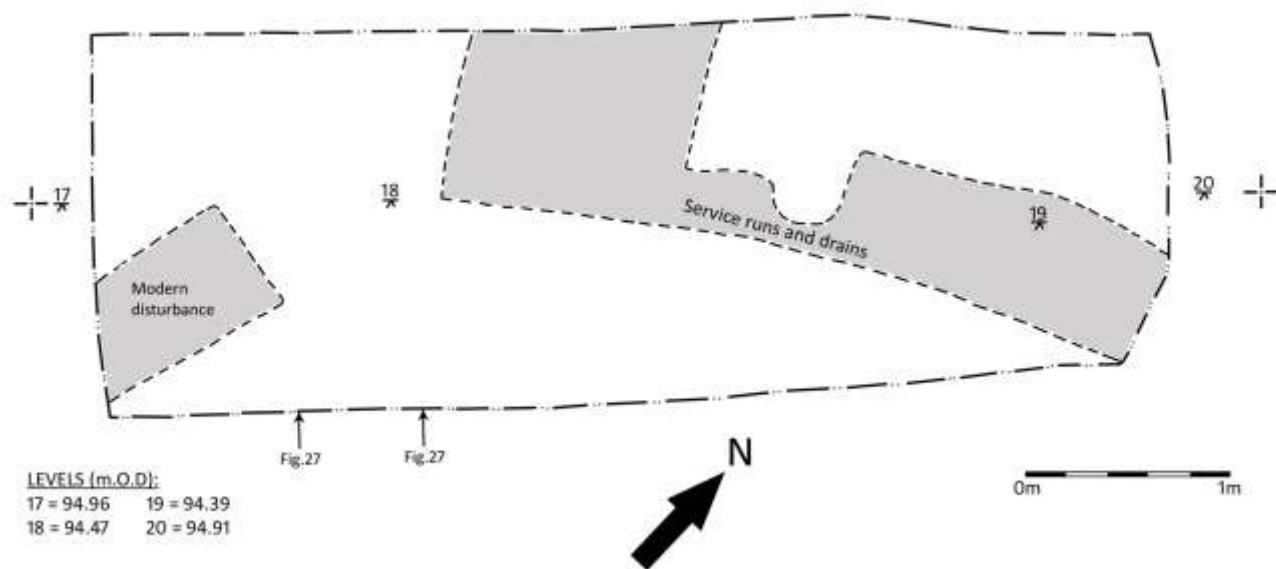


Fig. 25: Plan of trench 3



Fig. 26: Photo of northwest-facing section in trench 3

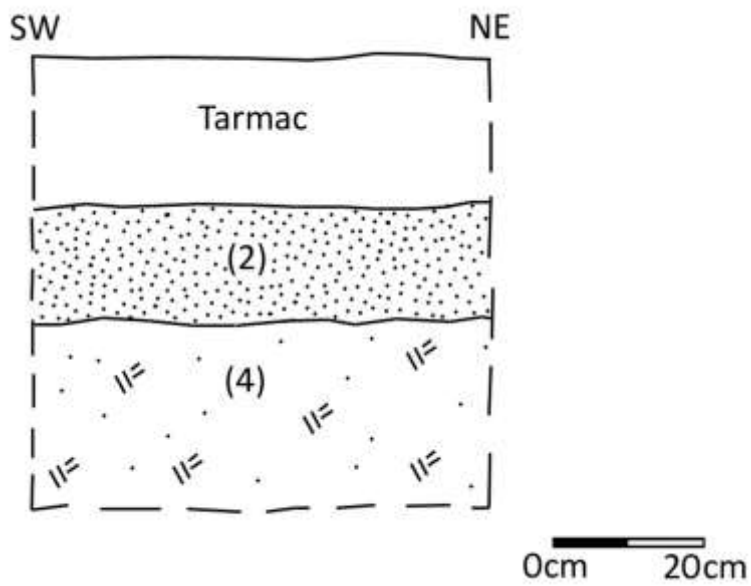


Fig. 27: Section in trench 3



## 6.6 Trench 4

Trench 4 was aligned northeast - southwest, and positioned in the northeastern part of the area between the chapel and convent buildings. It measured *c.*5.6m in length, by 1.9m in width. It was excavated to depths of between 0.55m and 0.8m (*c.*94.4mOD).

The topsoil in this trench (context 1) was *c.*0.2m thick, overlying *c.*30mm of the yellow-grey sandy make-up layer (context 2), over *c.*0.3m of the grey-brown silty-gravelly deposit (context 3). The natural deposit (context 4) was observed *c.*0.55m beneath the modern ground-surface (94.4mOD), and was a yellow sandy deposit, with lenses of light grey clay.

A continuation of the linear cut feature [5], observed in trench 2, was observed running northwest – southeast across the trench (for a distance of *c.*1.9m, and continuing into both the northern and southern sections). This was *c.*1m in width, and excavated to a depth of *c.*0.6m (base at 93.77mOD). Its profile was very similar to that observed in trench 2 – steep to the southwest and shallower to the northeast. Its fill [7] was the same as fill [6] in trench 2 – a light brown / cream silty deposit, with occasional orange iron staining and frequent pebbles. The only finds recovered from this feature were two pieces of burnt flint. It is clearly a continuation of that seen in trench 2 (see fig.33) – possibly a linear land division or agricultural ditch.



Fig. 28: Photo of trench 4, looking northeast. The unexcavated linear cut feature [4] is visible just behind the scale

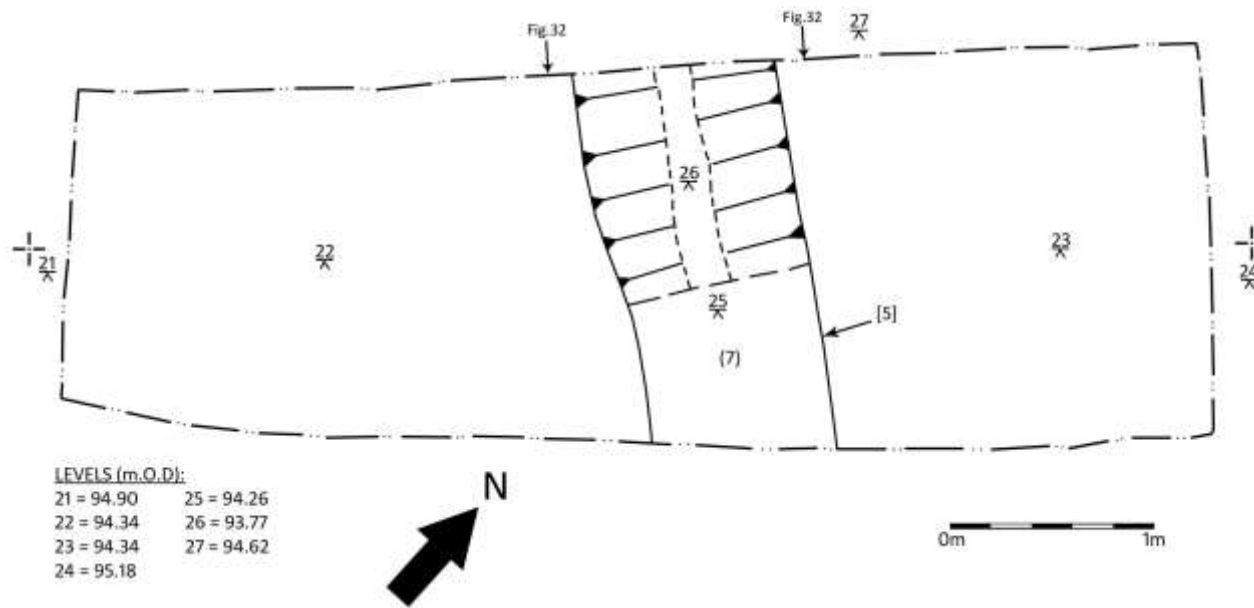


Fig. 29: Plan of trench 4



Fig. 30: Photo of linear cut feature [5], looking northwest



Fig. 31: Photo of section of trench 4, showing the linear cut feature [5] and overlying deposits

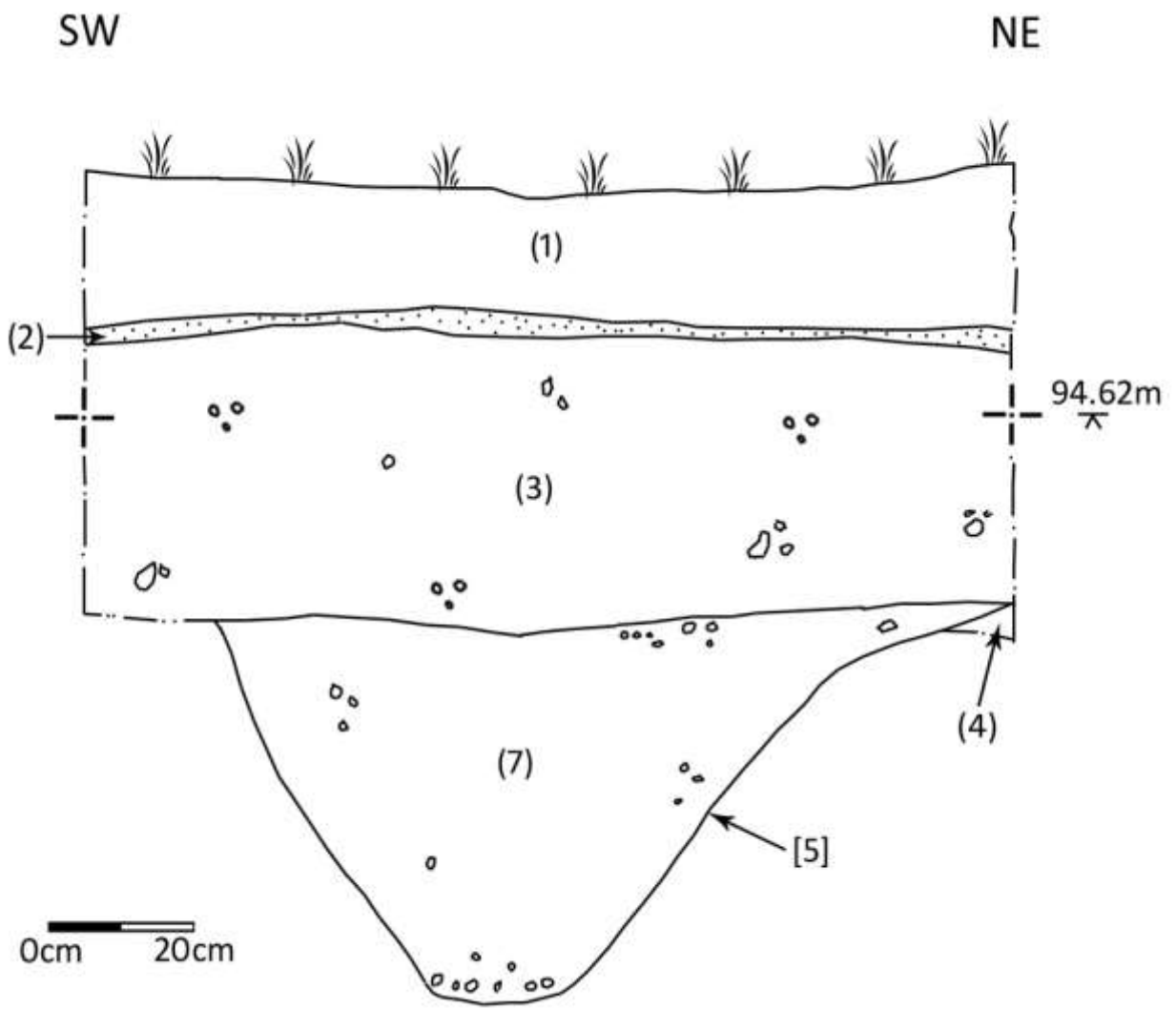


Fig. 32: Section through linear cut feature [5], trench 4. Compare with fig.23 for similarity in profile

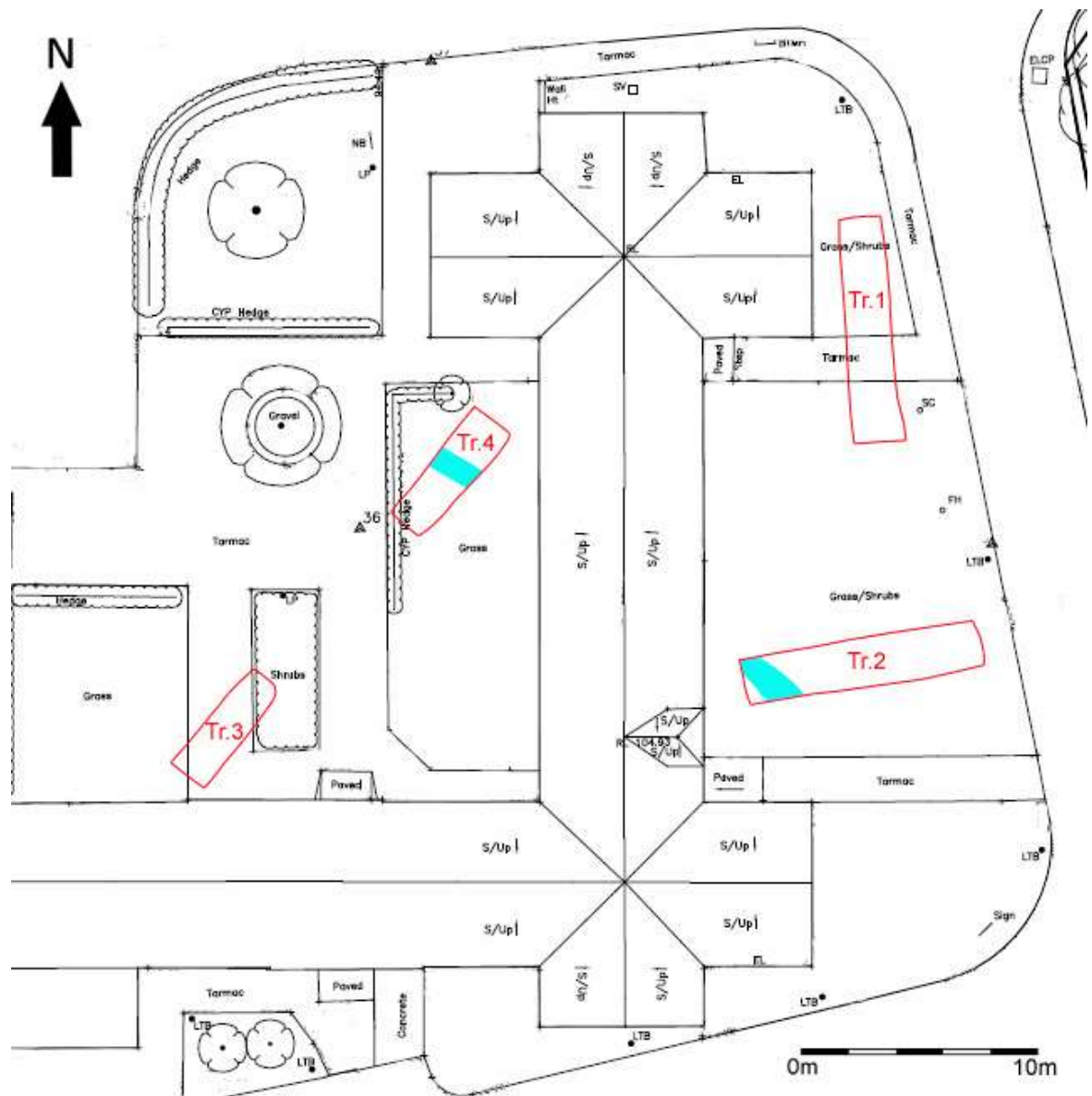


Fig. 33: Plan showing the line of the linear cut feature [5] in trenches 2 and 4

## 7. Assessment of the results of the evaluation

The archaeological evaluation has provided an opportunity to address the site-specific objectives that were defined within the preliminary *Written Scheme* (4.2 above). The responses to these are outlined below:

- Is there any evidence for prehistoric activity in the site-area? What period does this date from, and what form does this take? What does this suggest about prehistoric activity in this area – was it itinerant or settled; associated with agriculture or flint-production; etc?

*No definitive evidence for prehistoric activity was uncovered during this evaluation. It is possible that the linear ditch feature [5] may have been prehistoric in date, although this is by no means certain.*

- Is there any evidence for Roman activity in the area? Is this related to the Roman road to the west of the site (possibly occupation associated with this); or related to more general Roman activity?

*No definitive evidence for Roman activity was uncovered during this evaluation. The linear ditch feature [5] may have been Roman in date, particularly considering its proximity to the Roman road and the Roman settlement, however this is not certain. If it is Roman, this feature may have been a land division or agricultural ditch of some kind.*

- Is there any evidence for Saxon and / or medieval activity in the site-area? What form does this take, and what does this suggest about the type and intensity of Saxon / medieval activity in this area? Does this provide any indication about the possible location of the Saxon / early medieval settlement?

*No evidence for Saxon or medieval activity was uncovered during this evaluation.*

- Is there any evidence relating to the post-medieval development of the area? In particular, is there any indication that there may have been buildings / activity not depicted in cartographic evidence (possibly associated with Wickham Court)?

*No evidence for earlier post-medieval development of the area was uncovered during this evaluation. Instead, the deposits uncovered related to the 1960s construction of the buildings on the site. This took the form of modern topsoil (or tarmac in trench 3), overlying a sandy make-up layer, over a grey-brown gravelly deposit. These directly overlay the natural deposits, with no indication of earlier soil horizons or made-ground layers. The construction of the buildings in the 1960s clearly cut away any earlier soil horizons or made-ground deposits that may have once existed, and also truncated the uppermost level of the natural deposit (see discussion below).*

- At what levels do any archaeological or geological deposits survive across the area?

*Natural deposits were observed at an uppermost level of 94.6mOD (0.35m beneath the modern ground-surface, in trench 3). Elsewhere, it was observed at a level of c.94.15 – 94.4mOD (around 0.5m beneath the modern ground-surface). These natural deposits had clearly been truncated when the buildings were constructed in the 1960s (along with any earlier soil horizons / made-ground deposits which may have existed), and were presumably present originally at an even higher level.*

*The archaeological cut feature was observed directly beneath the modern deposits, and dug down through the natural deposits for 0.6m in depth (base at 93.77mOD). It is believed that it was originally cut from a higher level, which has since been truncated by the modern development on the site.*

## **8. Conclusions**

This archaeological evaluation generally uncovered a simple sequence of deposits relating to the construction of the buildings in the 1960s. This took the form of the modern topsoil (or tarmac), overlying a thin yellow sandy make-up layer, over a brown-grey gravelly deposit. These are all modern layers, associated with the construction of the buildings in the 1960s. They directly overlay the natural Thanet Sand deposits (a yellow sandy deposit, with lenses of clay), observed at an uppermost level of c.0.35m beneath the present ground-surface (94.6mOD). This clearly indicates that any earlier soil horizons or made-ground deposits which once existed have been cut away, when the buildings were constructed in the 1960s.

One feature of archaeological interest was observed in two trenches. This took the form of a linear ditch, running approximately northwest – southeast across the site, c.1m in width, and at least 0.6m in depth (although possibly deeper if the upper levels have been truncated by modern development). It is unclear precisely what this feature was, or its date, because of the lack of dating material recovered from it, however its size and shape makes it seem likely that it formed a land division or agricultural ditch of some kind. It is possible that this is prehistoric or Roman in date, as activity from this date has been uncovered in the vicinity of this site. In particular, the site lies in close proximity to the Roman road and Roman settlement to the north-west of this site, suggesting that this feature could be Roman.

## **9. Bibliography**

### **9.1 General Sources**

Greater London Historic Environment Record

London Archaeological Archive and Resource Centre (LAARC) database

### **9.2 Bibliography**

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### **9.3 Map Sources**

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*Ordnance Survey Maps*. Various dates and scales

## Appendix I. OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM: England

OASIS ID: [compassa1-139460](#)

### Project details

Project name	The Convent of the Daughters of Mary and Joseph, Layhams Road, West Wickham
Short description of the project	An archaeological evaluation was undertaken at 'The Convent of the Daughters of Mary and Joseph', Laymans Road, West Wickham, in advance of the demolition of the existing convent buildings, and construction of a new chapel and Sister's home. This evaluation took the form of four trenches. A simple sequence of deposits, relating to the construction of the buildings (still standing) in the 1960s, was generally uncovered. This took the form of the modern topsoil (or tarmac), overlying a thin yellow sandy make-up layer, over a brown-grey gravelly deposit. They directly overlay the natural deposits (a yellow sandy deposit, with lenses of clay), observed at an uppermost level of c.0.35m beneath the present ground-surface (94.6mOD). This suggests that any earlier soil horizons or made-ground deposits which once existed have been cut away, when the buildings were constructed in the 1960s. A linear ditch, running approximately northwest - southeast across the site, c.1m in width, and at least 0.6m in depth (although possibly deeper if the upper levels have been truncated by modern development), was observed in two trenches. It is unclear precisely what this feature was, or its date, because of the lack of dating material recovered from it, however its size and shape makes it seem likely that it formed a land division or agricultural ditch of some kind, possibly prehistoric or Roman in date.
Project dates	Start: 11-12-2012 End: 12-12-2012
Previous/future work	No / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	DMJ12 - Sitecode
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	None
Current Land use	Other 2 - In use as a building
Monument type	DITCH Early Prehistoric
Significant Finds	POT Post Medieval
Methods & techniques	""Sample Trenches""
Development type	Convent
Prompt	Planning condition
Position in the planning process	After full determination (eg. As a condition)

### Project location

Country	England
Site location	GREATER LONDON BROMLEY BROMLEY The Convent of the Daughters of Mary and Joseph, Layhams Road, West Wickham
Postcode	BR4 9QJ
Study area	2600.00 Square metres
Site coordinates	TQ 3898 6464 51 0 51 21 47 N 000 00 12 W Point

Height OD / Depth Min: 94.00m Max: 95.00m

### Project creators

Name of Organisation	Compass Archaeology
Project brief originator	English Heritage/Department of Environment
Project design originator	Compass Archaeology
Project director/manager	Geoff Potter
Project supervisor	Emma Jeffery
Type of sponsor/funding body	Developer
Name of sponsor/funding body	RHA Architects Ltd

### Project archives

Physical Archive recipient	Museum of London archaeological archive
Physical Contents	"Ceramics"
Digital Archive recipient	Museum of London archive
Digital Contents	"Ceramics","other"
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography","Text"
Paper Archive recipient	Museum of London Archive
Paper Contents	"Ceramics","other"
Paper Media available	"Context sheet","Correspondence","Photograph","Plan","Report","Section","Unpublished Text"

### Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	The Convent of the Daughters of Mary and Joseph, Layhams Road, West Wickham: An Archaeological Evaluation
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Jeffery, E
Date	2012
Issuer or publisher	Compass Archaeology
Place of issue or publication	5-7 Southwark Street, London, SE1 1RQ
Description	Short report detailing the results of the archaeological evaluation. Includes discussion of background to site, plus plans, sections, photos, and discussion of the results of the evaluation.

## Appendix II. London Archaeologist Summary

Site Address:	The Convent of the Daughters of Mary and Joseph, Layhams Road, West Wickham, BR4 9QJ
Project type:	Evaluation
Dates of Fieldwork:	December 2012
Site Code:	DMJ12
Supervisor:	Emma Jeffery
NGR:	TQ 3898 6464
Funding Body:	Developer

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken at ‘The Convent of the Daughters of Mary and Joseph’, Layhams Road, West Wickham, in advance of the demolition of the existing convent buildings, and construction of a new chapel and sisters home. This evaluation took the form of four trenches.

A simple sequence of deposits, relating to the construction of the buildings (still standing) in the 1960s, was generally uncovered. This took the form of the modern topsoil (or tarmac), overlying a thin yellow sandy make-up layer, over a brown-grey gravelly deposit. They directly overlay the natural deposits (a yellow sandy deposit, with lenses of clay), observed at an uppermost level of *c.*0.35m beneath the present ground-surface (94.6mOD). This suggests that any earlier soil horizons or made-ground deposits which once existed have been cut away, when the buildings were constructed in the 1960s.

A linear ditch, running approximately northwest – southeast across the site, *c.*1m in width, and at least 0.6m in depth (although possibly deeper if the upper levels have been truncated by modern development), was observed in two trenches. It is unclear precisely what this feature was, or its date, because of the lack of dating material recovered from it, however its size and shape makes it seem likely that it formed a land division or agricultural ditch of some kind, possibly prehistoric or, more probably, Roman in date.