

432 - 434 CHURCH STREET, EDMONTON, N9 9HT

LONDON BOROUGH OF ENFIELD

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

December 2006

COMPASS



ARCHAEOLOGY

432 – 434 CHURCH STREET, EDMONTON, N9 9HT

LONDON BOROUGH OF ENFIELD

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

SITE CODE: CGU 06

SITE CENTRE NGR: TQ 3283 9472

LB. OF ENFIELD PLANNING REF: TP/04/0556

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Project ENFI 002

Abstract

An archaeological watching brief took place between September and November 2006 on a redevelopment site at Edmonton, in the London Borough of Enfield. This work was carried out as part of the Local Authority planning process and in response to recommendations made by English Heritage.

The site lies in an archaeological priority area due to the existence of a Roman settlement at Enfield. Previous archaeological work in the area has yielded Roman artefacts, and there are records from the site itself for the discovery of a Roman cup and a possibly associated inhumation (GLSMR Refs. 080639 & 080640). Moreover, historic maps indicate that the area was not developed until after 1914.

The main groundworks comprised of piling and strip footings, which roughly followed the outline of the two residential buildings that were demolished to make way for the new construction.

There was no evidence for prehistoric, Roman, medieval or earlier post-medieval activity. The natural brickearth was exposed throughout the excavated area, although this was frequently truncated by recent activity.

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1** An archaeological watching brief was carried out on a redevelopment site at 432 – 434 Church Street, Edmonton in the London Borough of Enfield. (Figure 1: site approximately centred at National Grid Reference TQ 3283 9472). The fieldwork took place between September and early November 2006.
- 1.2** The archaeological programme was recommended by English Heritage, further to an archaeological condition attached to a successful planning appeal for residential redevelopment (Appeal Ref: APP/Q5300/A/05/1176366; Condition 7 // LB of Enfield Application Ref: TP/04/0556).
- 1.3** The Watching Brief followed a preliminary Written Scheme of Investigation that was agreed with English Heritage. The development entailed replacement of the two existing detached properties with a new build, comprising of eight-teen apartments.
- 1.4** The site lies within an Archaeological Priority Area as defined by the London Borough of Enfield Unitary Development Plan. It was considered that the site had potential for archaeological remains, particularly in relation to Roman activity due to a Roman settlement at Enfield as well as a. previous finds on the site.

2. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The developer, Bermac Properties Plc, commissioned the archaeological work, and the constructors BarHale gave further on-site assistance. Graham Dalling of the London Borough at Enfield Local History Unit, Palmers Green Library, gave assistance with the provision of historic maps of the area.

The project was monitored on behalf of the London Borough of Enfield by Jill Hummerstone, English Heritage Greater London Archaeology Advisory Service.

3. SITE LOCATION AND HISTORY

- 3.1** Historic map evidence shows that Church Street is a long-established route, although the adjacent land was apparently undeveloped until the 20th century. Archaeological observations were carried out during contractor's groundworks, including grubbing out of previous foundations. The site is approximately located at NGR TQ 3283 9472, fronting onto Church Street to the east (Figure 1) and some 3 km to the west of the River Lea. The surrounding ground surface is fairly level, at about 22.5m OD, although the southwest side of the plot lies roughly on the line of a former stream course (Salmons Brook; see Figure 2). It is understood that this was culverted and subsequently buried in 1908 (G. Dalling, Pers. Comm. 30/10/06).
- 3.2** The site itself is approximately square in plan, with overall dimensions of about 48m by 43m. The houses that previously occupied the site were built independently of one another. The first appears on the OS map of 1935, while the SMR indicates that the second was constructed c. 1959- 60.
- 3.3** Prehistoric activity of various periods is documented in the general area of the Lea valley, and is quite likely to be associated with the gravel terraces.

- 3.4** The site had particular potential for Roman remains, based on finds that were made during previous development groundworks in the late 1950s. References from the Sites and Monuments record supplied by English Heritage show two specific discoveries: a Roman drinking or feeding cup found at a depth of 10 feet (Ref: 080639/00/00), and human remains (apparently a skeleton; Ref. no: 080640/00/0). The latter is not independently dated, but is suggested to be Roman by the proximity of the cup (itself a possible grave good).
- 3.5** It is unknown whether either of these remains originated on the site, or – as seems likely at least in the case of the cup – were imported onto it during infilling of the former stream course in 1908. There are a number of references to Roman material in the vicinity, including burials and cremations, so it is possible that the finds derived from elsewhere.
- 3.6** In later periods it is likely that the site area formed open and possibly cultivated land. Although Church Street appears on historic maps including the early 19th century OS First Edition (published 1822), subsequent maps up to 1914 do not show any development on the site itself.

4. THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 4.1** Planning permission has been granted on Appeal for demolition of the existing buildings and erection of a three-storey block of flats with associated car parking and vehicular access (Ref: APP/Q5300/A/05/1176366). The permission included an archaeological condition (No. 7).
- 4.2** An existing and proposed site plan has been supplied by the Client (G & A Partnership dwg no. 06.087/05). A site location plan and a copy of the Appeal Decision have also been received.

5. THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROGRAMME

5.1 Standards

The field and post-excavation work were carried out in accordance with English Heritage guidelines (in particular, *Standards and Practices in Archaeological Fieldwork, Guidance Paper 3*). Works also conformed to the standards of the Institute of Field Archaeologists (*Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs*). Overall management of the project was undertaken by a full Member of the Institute.

5.2 Fieldwork

The archaeological watching brief took place during the contractors' groundworks, and involved one archaeologist on site to monitor works and to investigate and record any archaeological remains.

6. ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The watching brief presented an opportunity to address the following questions:

- Is there any evidence for prehistoric activity, and how does this relate to other finds in the area?
- Are there any Roman remains or artefacts, and can the nature of these be defined (*e.g.*, settlement, burials and associated grave goods, agriculture)? Also, can the provenance of finds be established or have these been disturbed or imported onto the site during modern infilling/levelling works?
- Assuming that there is further evidence for human remains from the site, can this be independently dated to the Roman period?
- Is there any evidence for post-Roman to earlier post-medieval land use or other activity?
- What evidence is there for later post-medieval land development and usage, including the extent of made ground/levelling associated with the former stream channel?

7. METHODOLOGY

7.1 The *Written Scheme of Investigation* was agreed prior to the fieldwork (Compass Archaeology, 23.08.06).

7.2 Exposed deposits and features were recorded by scaled drawing and digital photography. Individual elements were described but did not produce any significant finds and were therefore not separately contexted. Levels were derived from the existing topographical survey of the site.

7.3 The fieldwork records have been allocated the site code: CGU 06 by the Museum of London Archaeological Archive: there were no retained finds.

8. ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELDWORK

8.1 Summary

The site itself was approximately square in plan, with overall dimensions of about 48m by 43m (c 1800m²). The principal groundworks involved piling with subsequent excavation for strip footings and covered an L-shaped area with longer sides of just some 21m to 27m (Figure 1). The local ground surface was approximately 22.5m OD.

8.2 The natural ground surface

The British Geological Survey (*North London: Sheet 256*, 1993) indicates that the site lies on or close to the east-west junction of two fairly recent River Terraces (Taplow & Kempton Park), which are described as gravel, sandy and clayey in part. The much older London Clay is exposed further to the west and the gravels are overlain by brickearth to the northeast.

The natural brickearth deposits could be seen most areas of the site and were fairly close to the ground surface. This surface was subsequently made up during the development, as can be seen in Figure 13, where the natural ground surface comprised a sandy silt that was light beige in colour. Above this was a mid brown coloured modern redistribution layer of demolition material and silty sand.

8.3 Pre-20th century development

Almost all evidence for previous development on the site related to the recently demolished houses. No evidence was seen towards the south of the site for any infilling that would have been associated with the culverting of Salmons Brook around 1908.

8.4 Mid-later 20th century disturbance

The previous houses on the site were built between the early 1930s and 1971 according to maps of the area. These developments caused considerable ground disturbance within the new footprint, and so had generally removed previous soil horizons and any other evidence of occupation. Evidence of this appeared in the sections in Figures 10 and 12. These disturbed deposits contained mortar, demolition and tarmac layers above the natural deposit.

9. ASSESSMENT OF RESULTS

The archaeological fieldwork has provided an opportunity to address the site-specific questions. The responses are outlined below:

- Is there any evidence for prehistoric activity, and how does this relate to other finds in the area?

There was no evidence for prehistoric activity, nor were there any residual finds removed from the site.

- Are there any Roman remains or artefacts, and can the nature of these be defined (*e.g.*, settlement, burials and associated grave goods, agriculture)? Also, can the provenance of finds be established or have these been disturbed or imported onto the site during modern infilling/levelling works?

There was no evidence for any Roman activity on the site.

- Assuming that there is further evidence for human remains from the site, can this be independently dated to the Roman period?

There was no evidence for human remains on the site.

- Is there any evidence for post-Roman to earlier post-medieval land use or other activity?

There was no evidence for either post-Roman or earlier post-medieval land use or other activity.

- What evidence is there for later post-medieval land development and usage, including the extent of made ground/levelling associated with the former stream channel?

There was no evidence for later post medieval land development and usage on the site.

10. CONCLUSION

The Watching Brief recorded deposits and features relating to 20th century activity. This also included demolition spread from the two houses that previously existed on the site.

The Watching Brief did not provide any evidence for prehistoric, Roman, post-Roman, medieval or earlier post-medieval activity, nor for human remains. Such evidence could have been removed by the foundations of the two houses that previously existed on the site, and as the new development roughly followed the previous foundations and certainly exposed mainly disturbed ground it is perhaps unsurprising that no archaeological evidence was yielded. However, the groundworks did expose natural deposits at approximately 0.40m below present ground level.

References:

Compass Archaeology; *Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Watching Brief: 432-434 Church Street, Edmonton N9 9HT, London Borough of Enfield* (23/08/06)

Graham Dalling of London Borough of Enfield Local History Unit, Palmers Green Library

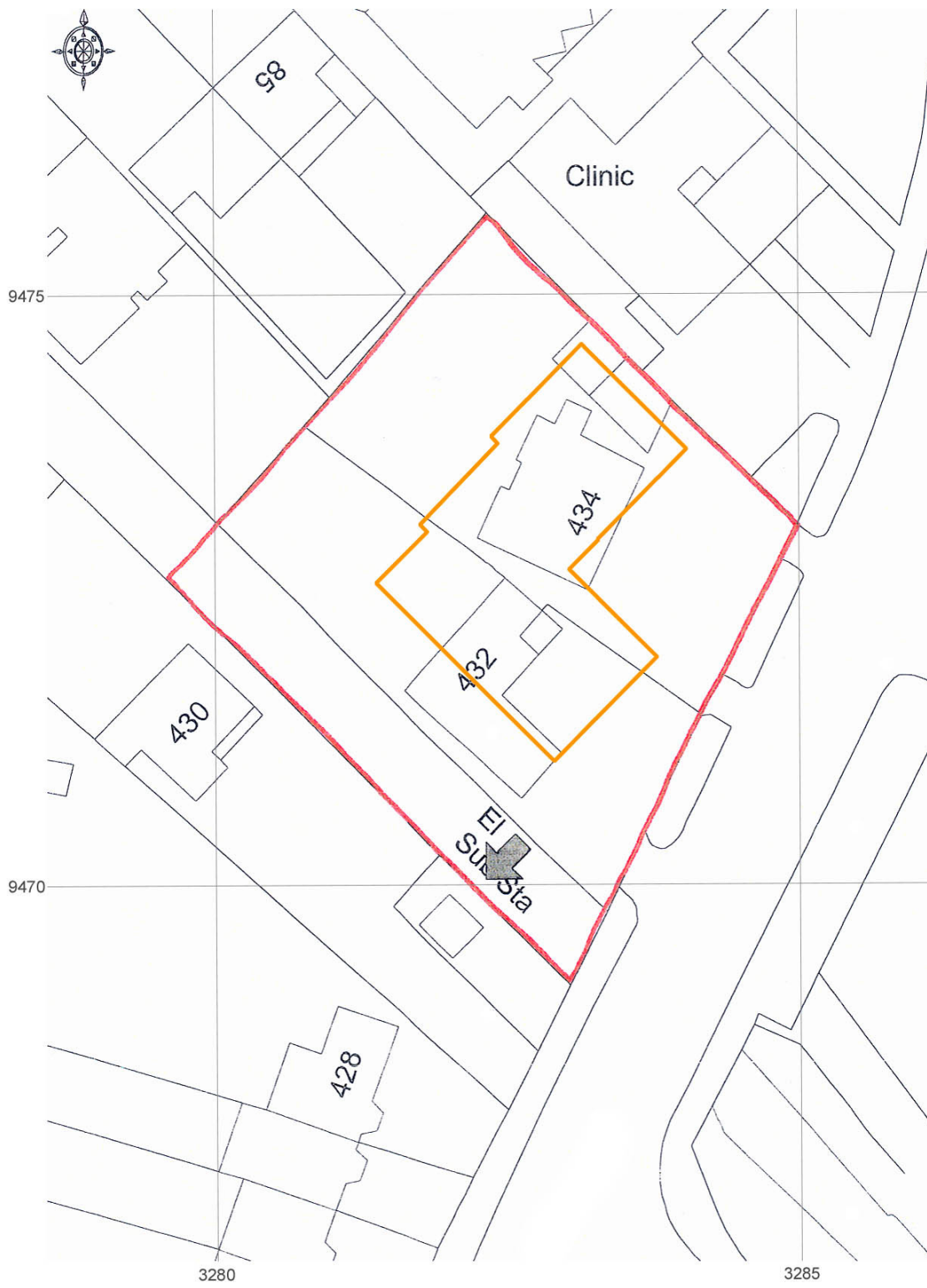


Fig 1. The site outline and redevelopment footprint (in orange), in relation to the current Ordnance Survey map reproduced at 1: 500 (extract Plan TQ 3294 NW)

*Reproduced from the OS map with permission of the HMSO. ©Crown Copyright. All rights reserved.
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Fig 2. Extract from the Ordnance Survey map of c. 1862-71, showing the site location and the former open stream course of Salmons Brook immediately to the southwest

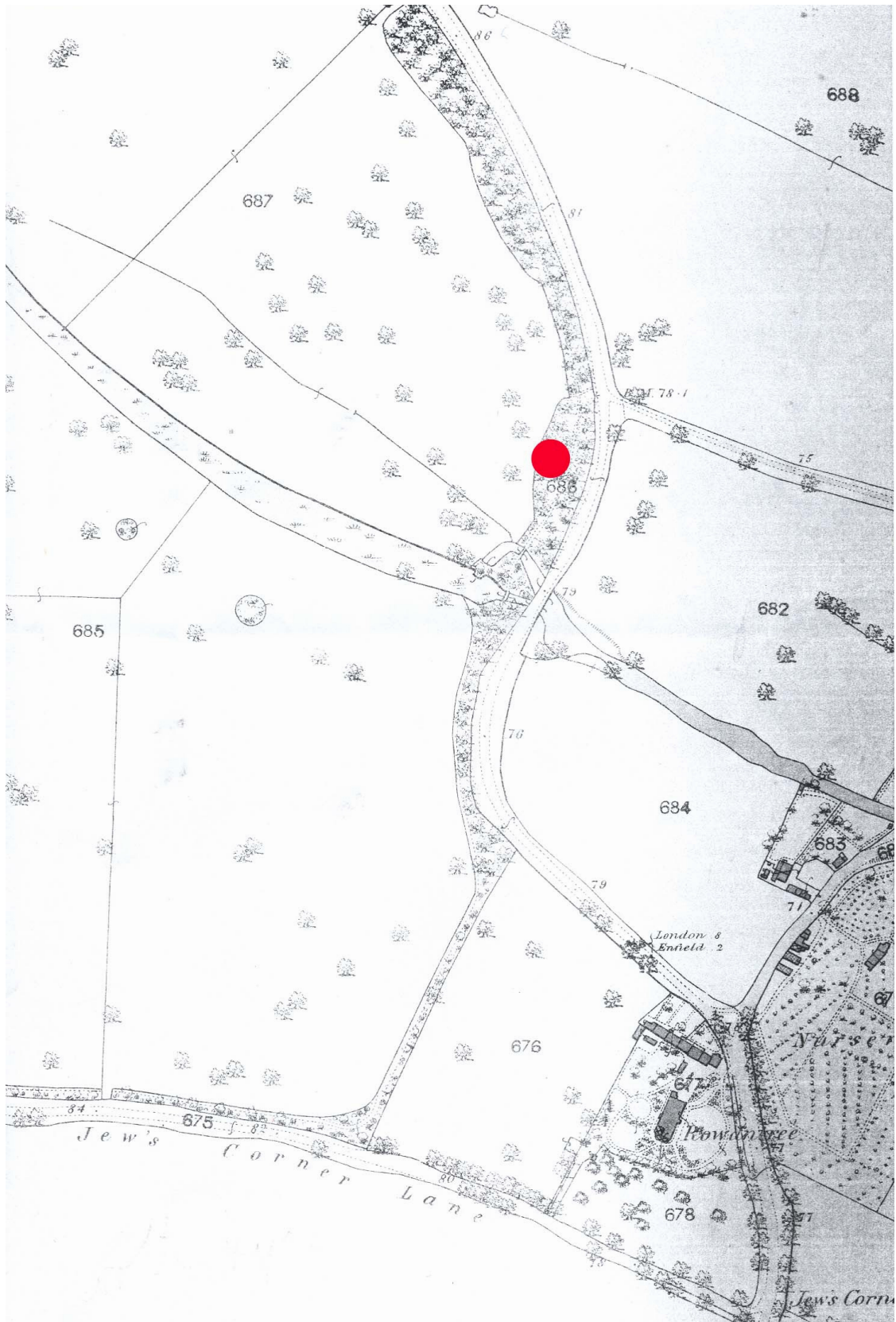


Fig 3. Larger scale map of 1867 showing the approximate site area (highlighted)

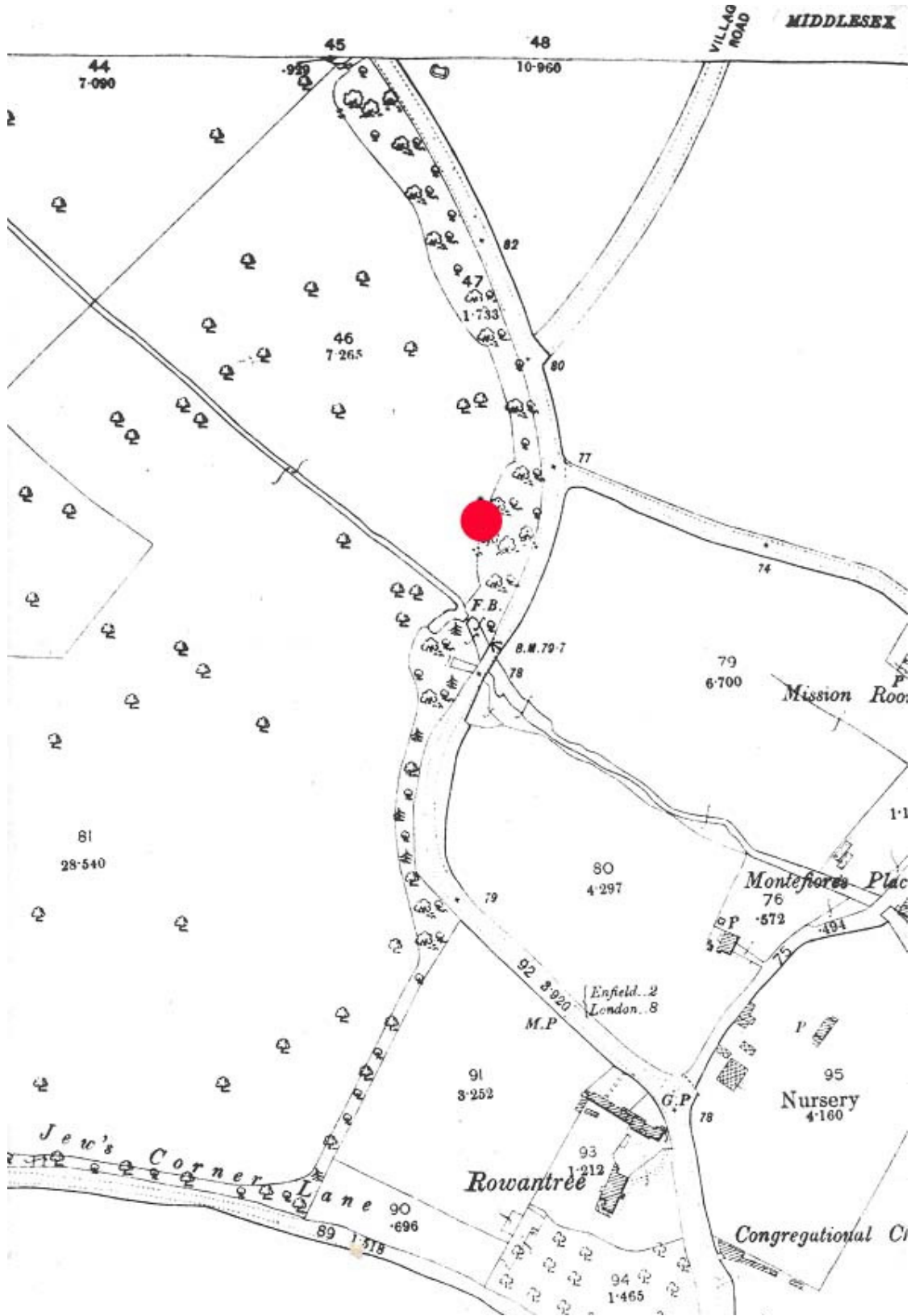


Fig 4. 1894-6 map showing the approximate site area (highlighted).

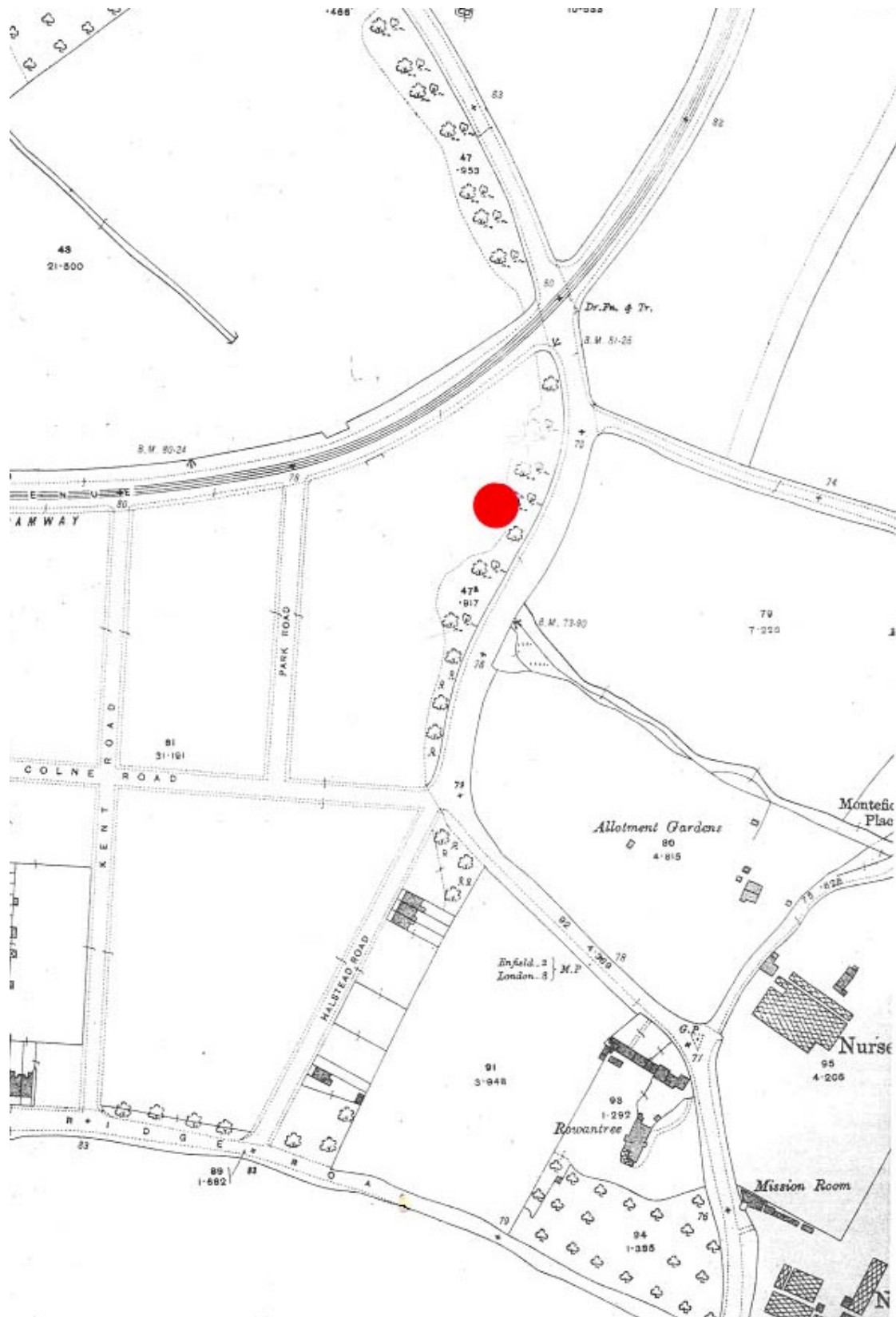


Fig 5. 1914 map showing the approximate site area (highlighted).



Fig 6. 1935 map showing the site area (highlighted).

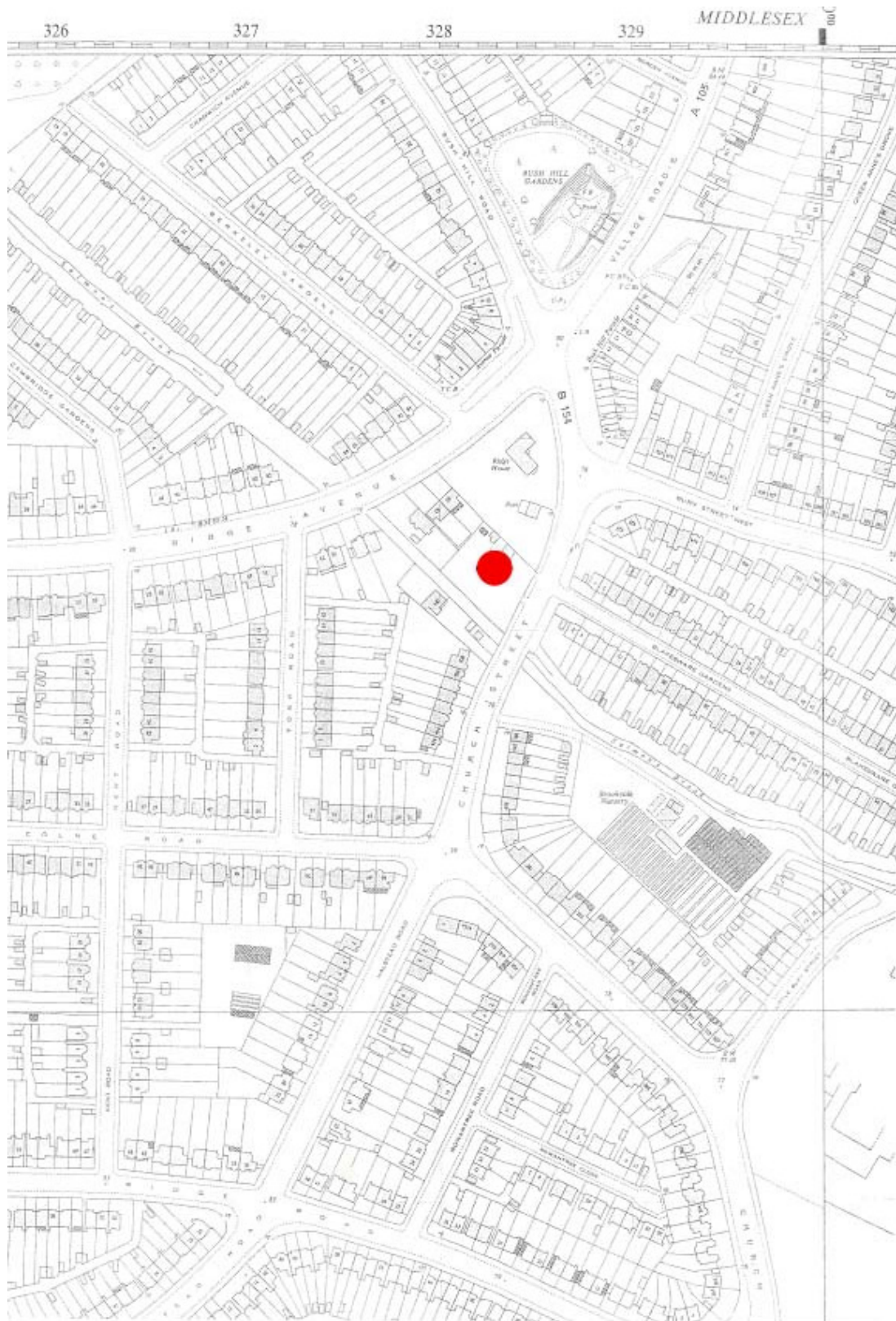


Fig 7. 1960 map showing the site area (highlighted).

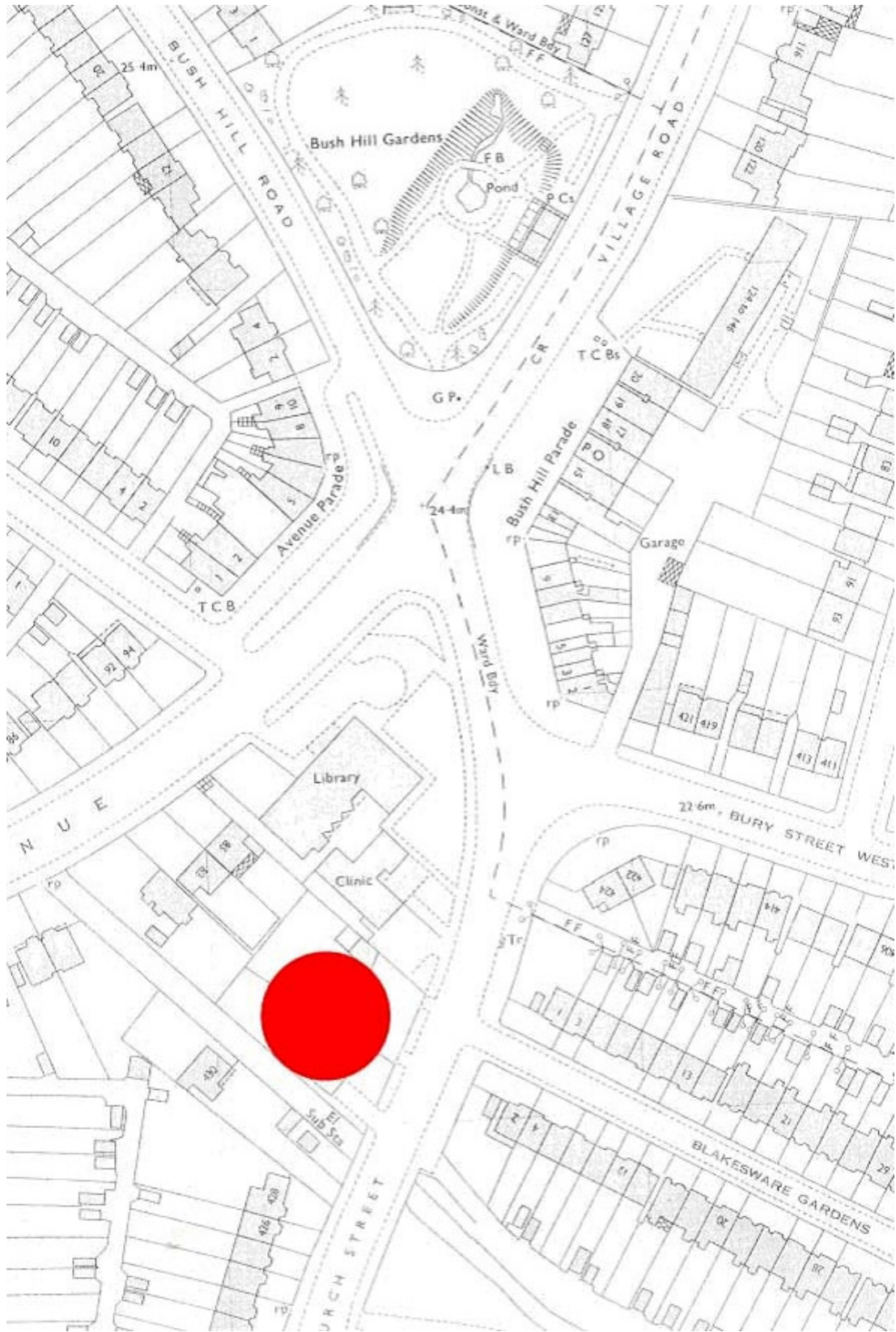


Fig 8. 1971 Map showing the site area (highlighted).



Fig 9. Photograph showing section facing towards the west (Section 1: 0.2m scale)

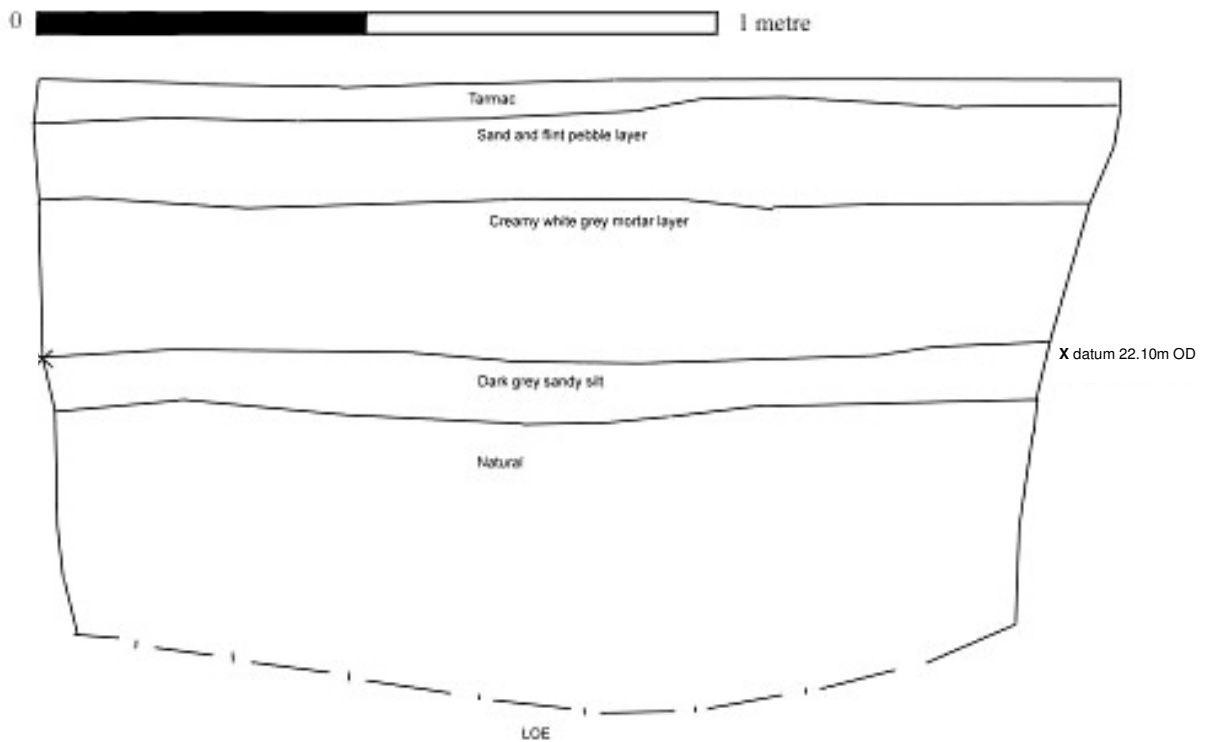


Fig 10. Drawing of the above western-facing section (Section 1)



Fig 11. Photograph showing west-facing section (Section 2)

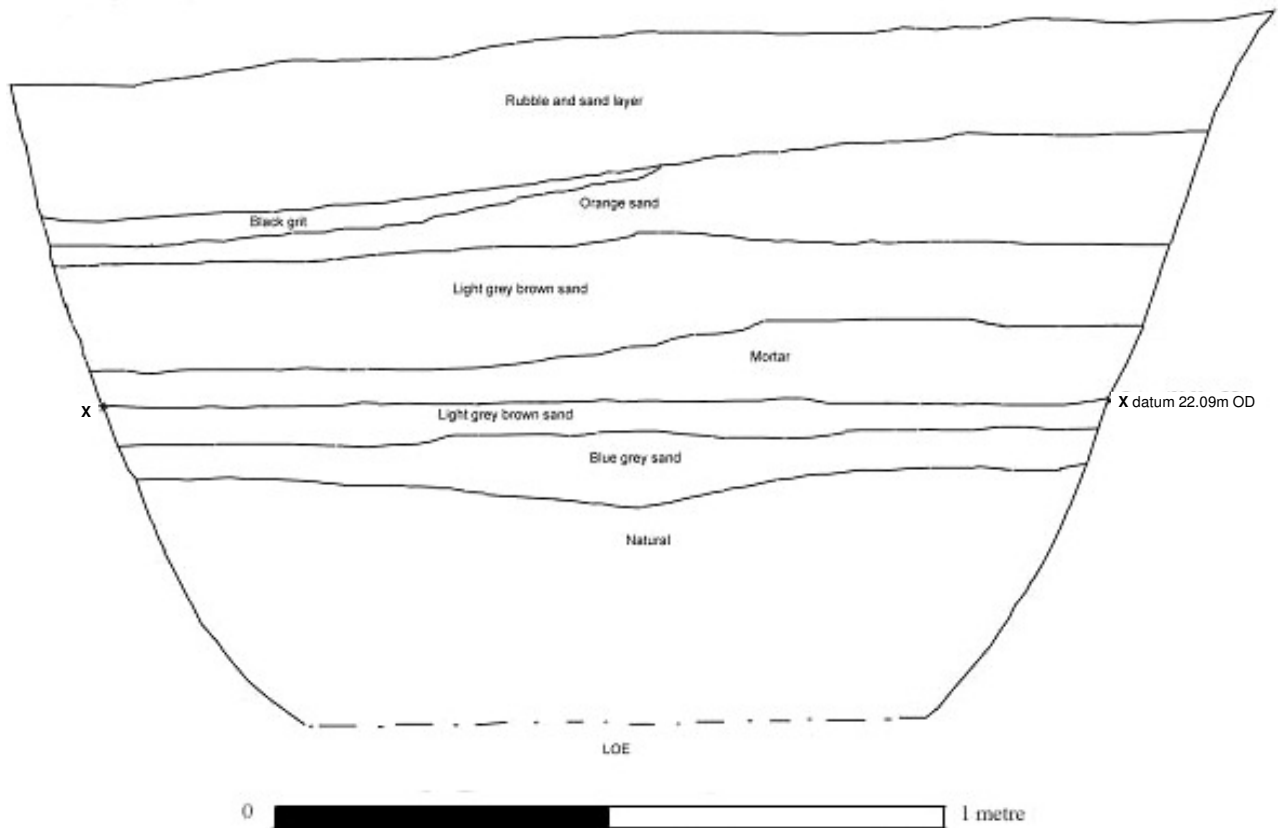


Fig 12. Drawing of the above section (Section 2)



Fig 13. View of the first phase of strip footing works, looking towards Church Street at the east of the site

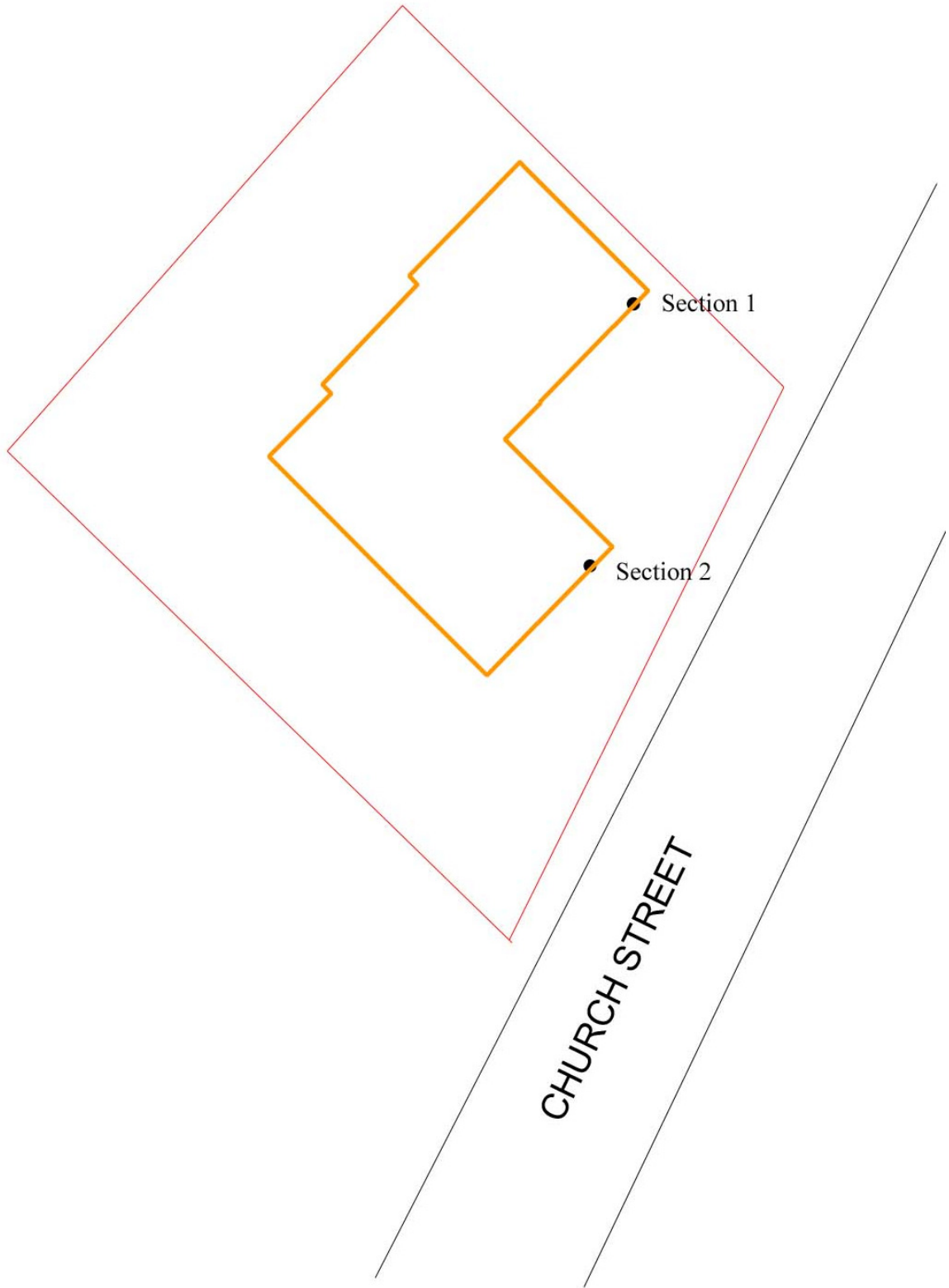


Fig 14. Site plan showing the redevelopment marked in orange, with the site boundary marked in red and section locations shown as black circles (reproduced at 1:400)

Appendix I.

OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM: England

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OASIS ID: compassa1-20992

Project details

Project name	Church Street, Edmonton
Short description of the project	Archaeological watching brief for a new housing development, comprising demolition of two existing houses to make way for an apartment block containing 18 units. The site lies in an archaeological priority area due to the existence of a Roman settlement at Enfield. Previous development of the site has also yielded a Roman drinking vessel and possibly associated human remains. Historic maps indicate that the area was not developed until after 1914. No significant remains were found. The ground had been heavily disturbed by previous development, although natural brickearth was exposed across the site.
Project dates	Start: 12-09-2006 End: 09-11-2006
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	CGU 06 - Sitecode
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	Area of Archaeological Importance (AAI)
Current Land use	Residential 1 - General Residential
Monument type	MODERN Uncertain
Significant Finds	CERAMICS MODERN Modern

Project location

Country	England
Site location	GREATER LONDON ENFIELD EDMONTON 432 - 434 Church Street
Postcode	N9 9HT
Study area	1800.00 Square metres
Site coordinates	TQ 32 94 51.6288246164 -0.09268560230590 51 37 43 N 000 05 33 W Point
Height OD	Min: 21.60m Max: 21.90m

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
Type of sponsor/funding body	Developer
Project archives	
Physical Archive recipient	Museum of London archaeological archive
Digital Archive recipient	Museum of London archive
Digital Media available	'Images raster / digital photography'
Paper Archive recipient	Museum of London Archive
Paper Media available	'Correspondence', 'Drawing', 'Map', 'Report', 'Section'
Project bibliography 1	
Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	432 - 434 Church Street, Edmonton, N9 9HT. An Archaeological Watching Brief
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Entered by	Wilson, C (mail@compassarchaeology.co.uk)
Entered on	11 December 2006

Appendix II. London Archaeologist Summary:

Site Address: 432 - 434 Church Street, Edmonton N9 9HT

Project Type: Watching brief

Dates of Fieldwork: September 2006 – November 2006

Site Code: CGU 06

Supervisor/ Project Manager: Christine Wilson/ Geoff Potter

NGR: TQ 3283 9472

Funding Body: Bermac Properties Plc

Summary:

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken at a redevelopment site at Church Street, Edmonton (September – November 2006).

The site lies in an Archaeological Priority Area due to a Roman settlement at Enfield. In addition, a Roman drinking vessel and possibly associated skeleton were recorded on the site in the 1950s, and as a result it was thought that there was particular likelihood of remains relating to the Roman period. Historic maps show that the site was undeveloped until the first half of the 20th century when the first of two dwellings was erected.

It was found that the work for the development roughly matched the footprints left by two previous buildings, and as such the ground was in parts heavily disturbed. No archaeological features, deposits or artefacts were found on the site, but natural deposits of brickearth were seen across the area of study.