

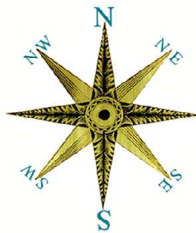
**32 NEW COURT, FLASK WALK, HAMPSTEAD, NW3 1HD**

**LONDON BOROUGH OF CAMDEN**

**AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF**

**May 2008**

**COMPASS**



**ARCHAEOLOGY**



32 NEW COURT, FLASK WALK, HAMPSTEAD, NW3 1HD

LONDON BOROUGH OF CAMDEN

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

NGR: TQ 26455 85905

SITE CODE: NCU08

Planning Ref. 2007/4107/P & Listed Building Ref. 2007/4110/L

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May 2008

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## ***Abstract***

*An archaeological watching brief was undertaken during groundworks at 32 New Court, Flask Walk, Hampstead NW3 1HD, London Borough of Camden between 4<sup>th</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup> April 2008. Eight test-pits were observed inside the existing basement and in the adjacent courtyard area.*

*This work was partly carried out to establish the presence or absence of archaeological remains in the area, and hence the need for any further mitigation during subsequent foundation and ground reduction works.*

*A part-collapsed brick-built arched drain was observed in one of the external test-pits running on an approximately east-west orientation. The drain was considered to be of early 19<sup>th</sup> century date and is presumably related to the buildings that stood on the site until the existing apartments were constructed in 1871. The drain was partly truncated by the associated wall foundations.*

*No further archaeological finds or features were observed – the other external pit revealing only recent made ground. Elsewhere natural deposits of clayey sand were truncated by 19<sup>th</sup> century ground reduction for present basement, and it is clear that any potential archaeological horizon has been destroyed by these works.*

*Following discussion with English Heritage it was agreed that this report should be issued as an evaluation of the site, and that in view of the lack of significant remains no further archaeological fieldwork would be carried out.*

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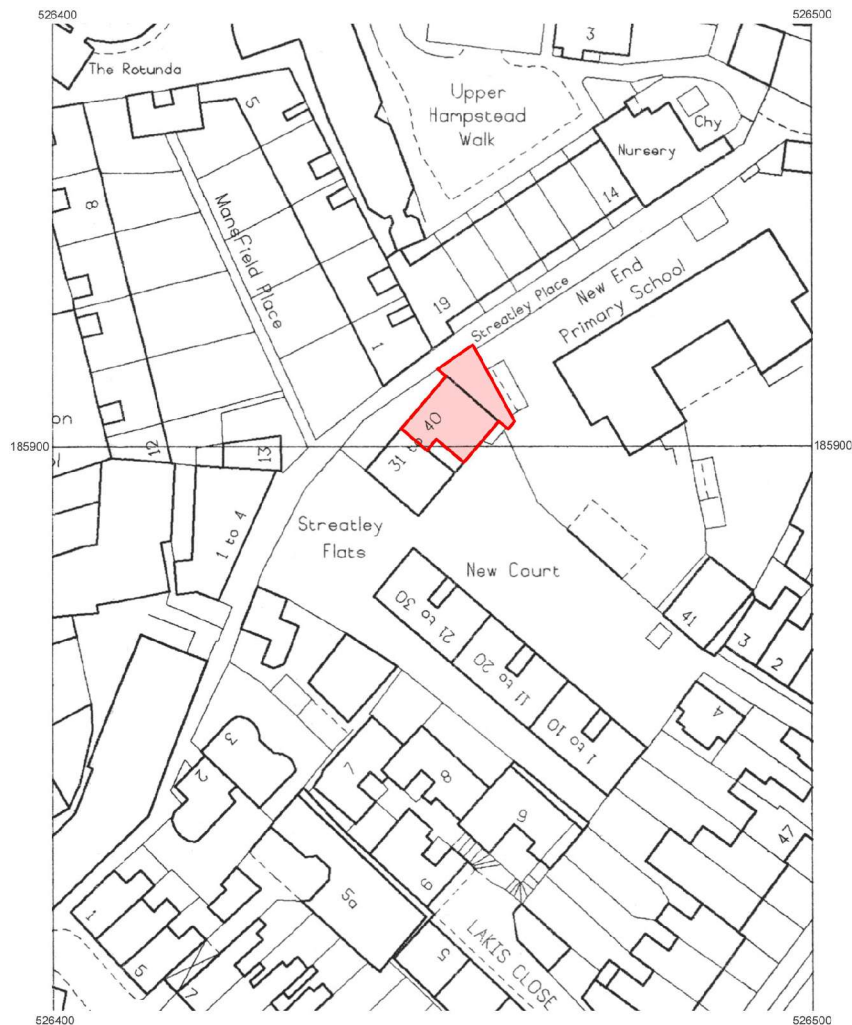
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## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report details the results of an archaeological watching brief undertaken at 32 New Court, Flask Walk, Hampstead, NW3 1HD, London Borough of Camden, between 4<sup>th</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup> April 2008, during preliminary groundworks in the basement area of the property (Planning Ref. 2007/4107/P: Listed Building Ref. 2007/4110/L).
- 1.2 The archaeological work comprised the monitoring and recording of 8 trial pits excavated within the basement and adjacent courtyard. This work was undertaken prior to the underpinning of existing walls and subsequent reduction of floor and yard surfaces, and sought to establish the presence or absence of any archaeological remains (and hence the need for further mitigation) prior to full-scale groundworks.



**Figure 1:** Site location based on the Ordnance Survey 1:1250 map.

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1.3 The archaeological work was commissioned by John Doyle Construction on behalf of the Client, in response to recommendations made by English Heritage. Background information on the site area was provided by the LB of Camden Local Studies and Archive Centre.

## 2. Site Location and Geology

2.1 The site is located to the northwest of Flask Walk, on an approximately east-facing slope and at a surface level of slightly above 100m OD. The site is centred at NGR TQ 26455 85905.

2.2 The British Geological Survey indicates that the site lies on or close to a junction between Claygate deposits (described as silt and fine-grained sand) and more recent Bagshot Formation Sand to the west. The Claygate beds overlie London Clay, which is exposed over a wide surrounding area (British Geological Survey 1993: *North London. Sheet 256*).

## 3. Archaeological and Historical Background

3.1 The area was considered to have some potential for prehistoric and Roman finds, although the main feature of this site is its position within the historic settlement. The manor of Hampstead is mentioned twice in the 10<sup>th</sup> century and subsequently in Domesday (Weinreb & Hibbert 1983 *The London Encyclopaedia*, 355). Other evidence for medieval and early post-medieval settlement is provided by past archaeological investigation, for example 12<sup>th</sup> to early 16<sup>th</sup> century pottery and features some 300m to the west at Mount Vernon (site code MTV95).

3.2 Rocque's map of c 1746 shows the line of Streatley Place (as it is now called) immediately to the north of the site, although it is not clear if there were any buildings in the study area.

3.3 The first detailed map appears to be the Hampstead Manor map of 1762. The site can be quite accurately plotted, and mainly falls within *a large garden in the occupation of William Wall*. However, there are buildings and smaller landholdings immediately to the north, and apparently in the area of the present external yard. The lane to the north was at this time known as Brewer's Alley, and subsequently as Brewhouse Lane.

3.4 Considerable development is shown on the Ordnance Survey 1<sup>st</sup> Edition 5 feet: mile map of 1866, including a possible terraced structure that is annotated as *Hitchman's Buildings*. This plan probably represents wholesale rebuilding, although it does retain something of the earlier property alignment.

3.5 The present residential block comprising 31-40 New Court dates to 1871, and is a Grade 2 Listed Building (Ref No: 798-1-45826). Originally the yard that adjoins the basement to the northeast was about twice its present size, but this was



probably reduced when the neighbouring school was built in the early 1900s. Subsequent maps show no change to the immediate environs.

#### **4. Archaeological Research Questions**

The trial pits presented an opportunity to address several research questions, as follows:

- Is there any evidence for early (prehistoric, Roman or Saxon) activity, either *in situ* features or residual finds?
- Is there any evidence for medieval activity, and does this throw any light on the nature of the contemporary settlement?
- Is there evidence for earlier post-medieval development and occupation, for example that shown on the Hampstead Manor map of 1762?
- Are there any remains of the buildings shown on the Ordnance Survey 5 feet: mile map of 1866, and can these be more accurately dated?

#### **5. The Archaeological Programme**

##### **5.1 Introduction**

The field and post-excavation work was 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. The recording system followed the procedures set out in the Museum of London recording manual. By agreement the recording and drawing sheets used were directly compatible with those developed by the Museum.

##### **5.2 Fieldwork**

###### **5.2.1 Attendance**

The on-site archaeological work took place during the excavation of trial pits within the existing basement and in the small adjoining yard, and involved one archaeologist on site to monitor the groundworks. These observations proved the absence of significant archaeological remains, and it was apparent that the existing ground surface had been heavily truncated by previous ground reduction in the area.

Due to the absence of archaeological remains it was considered unnecessary for further monitoring to take place during the ensuing groundworks and

underpinning of existing walls. This conclusion was drawn in discussion with English Heritage.

### **5.2.2 Methodology**

Deposits and features were investigated and recorded in stratigraphic sequence, and where appropriate finds dating evidence recovered. Contexts were recorded on *pro-forma* sheets by written and measured description, and where necessary drawn in plan and/or section, generally at scales of 1:10 or 1:20. The investigations were recorded on a general site plan, and related to the Ordnance Survey grid. The fieldwork record was supplemented as appropriate by photography, including 35mm and digital formats.

## **6. Post-Excavation**

The fieldwork was followed by off-site assessment and compilation of a report, and by ordering of the site archive.

### **6.1 Finds and Samples**

No finds or samples were recovered during the course of the watching brief, with the exception of a brick sample from the drain in Test Pit H. However, systems were in place to deal with these in accordance with the appropriate guidelines, including the Museum of London's *'Standards for the Preparation of Finds to be permanently retained by the Museum of London'*.

### **6.2 Report Procedure**

Copies of this report will be supplied to the Client, to English Heritage and to the Local Authority and Local Studies Library. A short summary of the project is appended using the OASIS Data Collection Form, and in paragraph form suitable for publication within the 'excavation round-up' of the *London Archaeologist*.

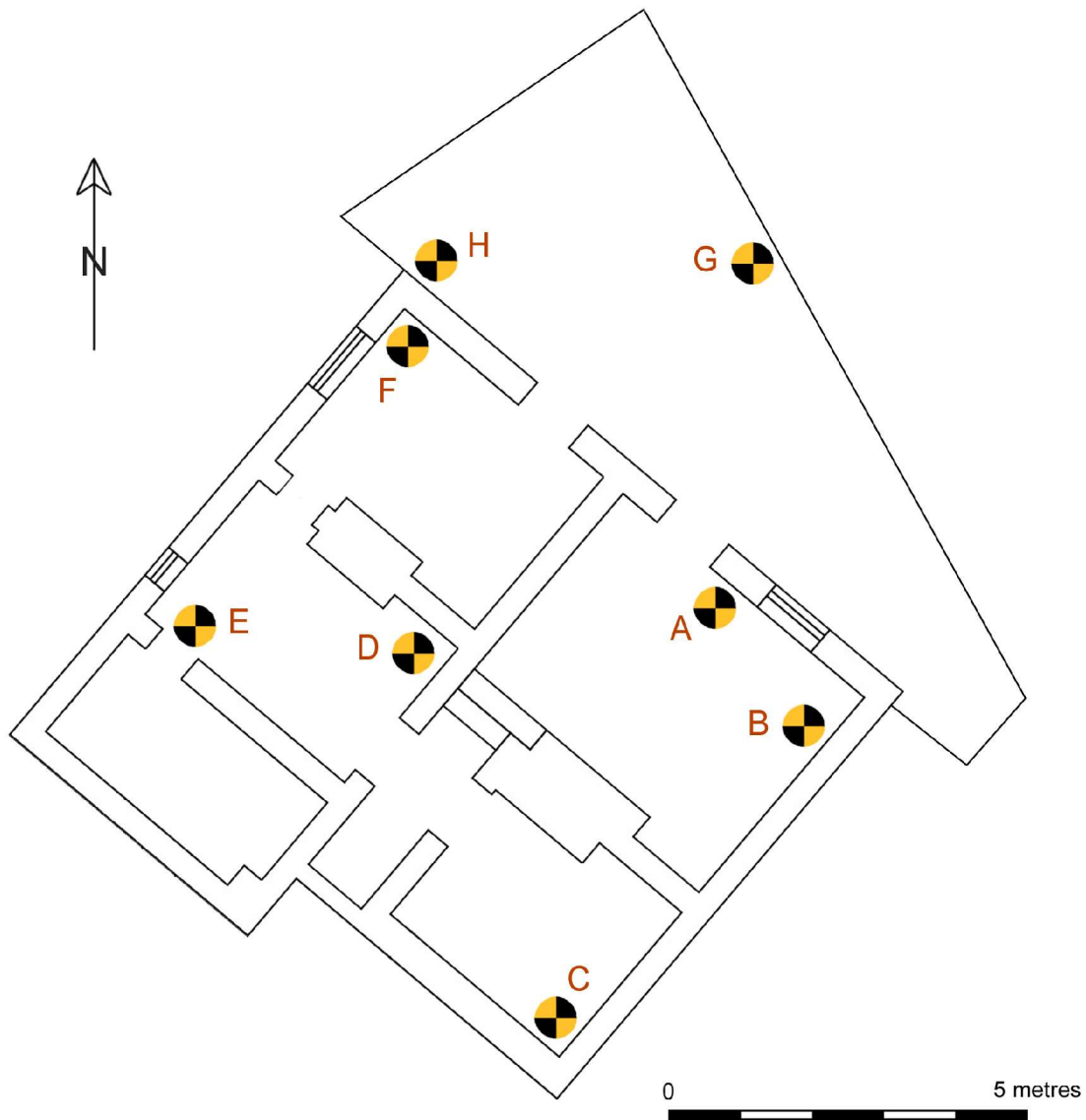
## **7. The Site Archive**

The records of the watching brief will be ordered in line with MoL *Guidelines for the Preparation of Archaeological Archives* and will be deposited in the Museum of London Archaeological Archive.

## **8. The Archaeological Watching Brief**

The archaeological watching brief consisted of the monitoring of six trial pits excavated within the basement area of the property, and a further two located in the adjacent courtyard area. The following table provides the dimensions of the trial pits and should be read in conjunction with Figure 2, showing pit locations.

Trial Pit	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)
A	0.86	0.80	0.95
B	0.93	0.80	0.90
C	1.20	1.12	1.20
D	1.23	1.02	0.90
E	1.14	0.96	0.80
F	0.85	0.80	0.90
G	1.00	0.90	0.86
H	1.40	0.76	0.70



**Figure 2:** Plan showing the location of trial pits A-H in relation to the existing basement and courtyard. *Based on a drawing provided by John Doyle Construction*

## 8.1 Trial Pits A - F

8.1.1 Trial pits A-F were located inside the property within the existing basement and located as shown on Figure 2. All six pits exposed the same sequence of truncated natural sands and clay [3] overlain by mixed concrete and rubble hardcore [2] beneath the existing brick basement floor [1]. The following illustrations show the varying depths of these deposits and overlying made ground in each trial pit.

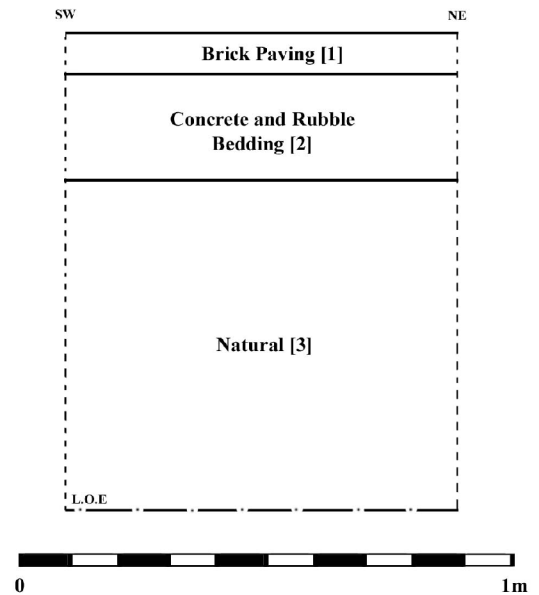


Figure 3: Test Pit A (1m scale)

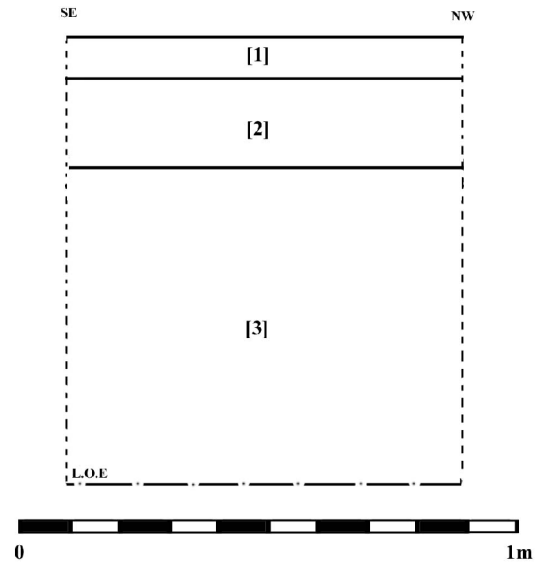
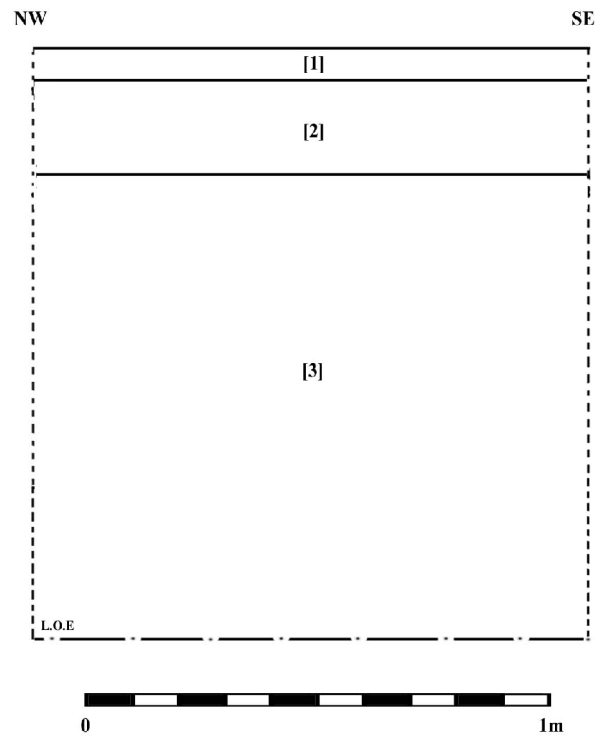
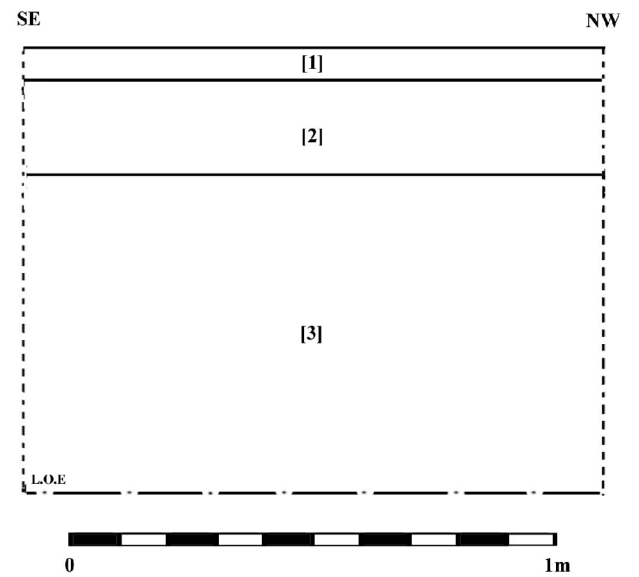


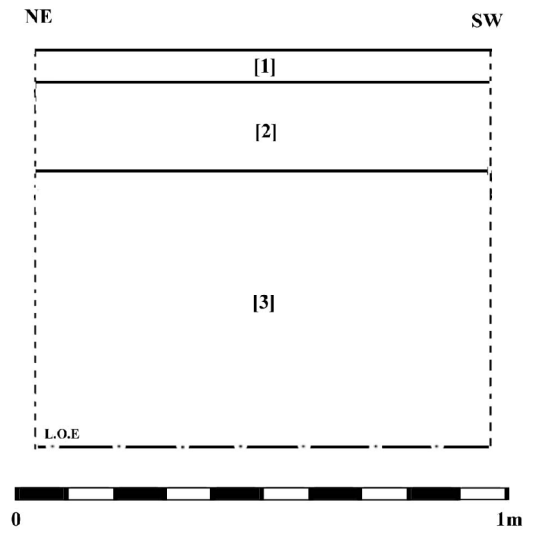
Figure 4: Test Pit B



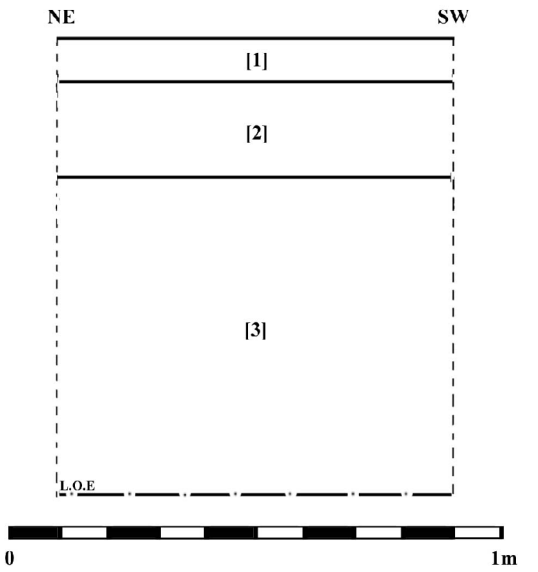
**Figure 5: Test Pit C**



**Figure 6: Test Pit D**



**Figure 7: Test Pit E**



**Figure 8: Test Pit F**

### 8.1.2 Summary

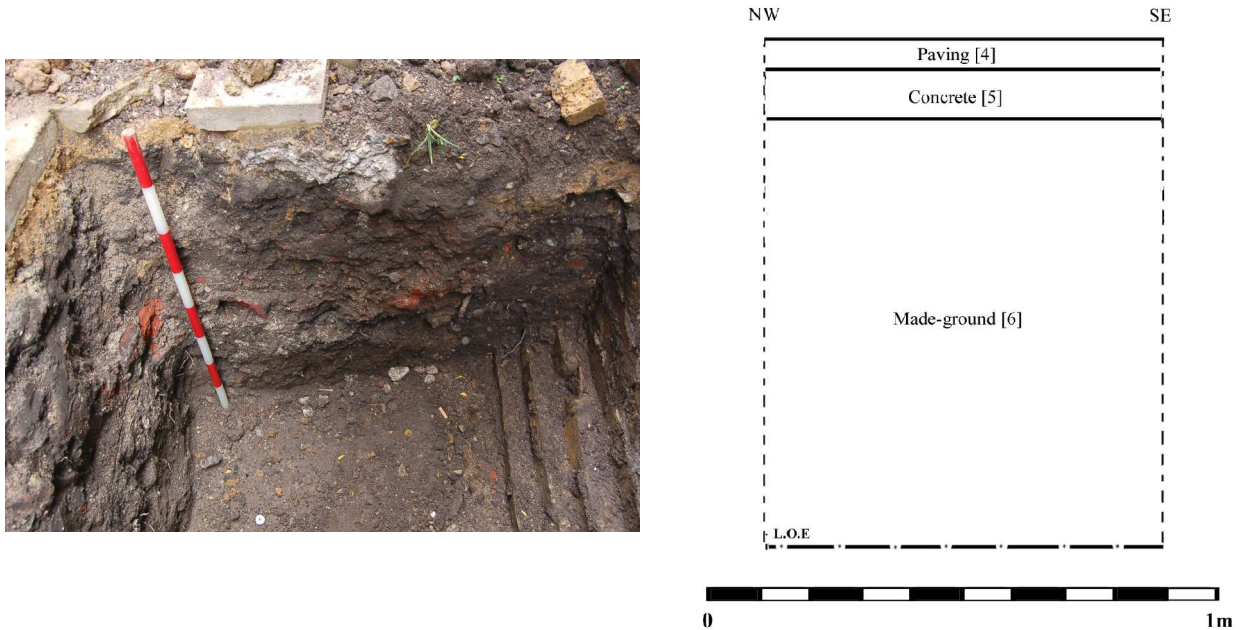
Test Pits A-F exposed the same sequence of compacted rubble made ground overlying natural clayey or silty sand, the former representing a foundation for the existing floor. It is clear that previous ground reduction works in the basement have truncated the natural ground level, and thus any archaeological remains have been destroyed. No archaeological finds or features were recorded in any of the six internal test pits.

## 8.2 Test Pits G and H

**8.2.1** Test pits G and H were excavated in the courtyard area adjacent to the basement to the northeast (see Figure 2). Both test pits exposed the existing paving slabs [4] overlying sand and concrete bedding [5], with a mixed made-ground layer [6] to the limit of excavation. Deposit [6] consisted of a mid-dark grey/brown silty/sandy clay soil with frequent brick and gravel inclusions. Presumably this represents ground makeup following reduction and suggests that underlying natural deposits are heavily truncated.



**Figure 9:** Overall view of Test Pit G, looking northeast towards the boundary wall (1m scale).



**Figure 10:** Test Pit G, looking northwest

### 8.2.2 Test Pit H

Test pit H, located at the northern corner of the standing building, was the only excavation to expose an archaeological feature. The remains of a brick-built arched drain were exposed running on an approximately east-west axis at about a 25° angle from the existing wall. The drain was exposed *c.* 0.56m below present ground surface. Its structure was relatively intact on its northern side but collapsed in to the south, presumably due to truncation during construction of the existing wall foundations.

It is probable that the drain belongs to a previous phase of buildings on the site in the earlier 19<sup>th</sup> century, prior to the construction of the present building in 1871. It may well relate to the similarly-aligned structures shown on the Ordnance survey map of 1866 (Figure 13), a theory also borne out by the materials and structure, which are of typically earlier 19<sup>th</sup> century design.

The brick drain filled the extent of the test-pit, and despite hand-removal of the structure to expose underlying deposits the brickwork continued beyond the limit of excavation. Considering the depth of this feature (0.7m+) and the depth of excavations in adjacent areas, it is almost certain that underlying natural deposits have been heavily truncated, and any earlier archaeological remains destroyed. The drain was overlain by apparently the same made-ground deposit [6] as exposed in Test Pit G, with concrete and sand bedding [5] overlain with paving slabs [4], and kerbstones along the north edge stepping to a raised area.

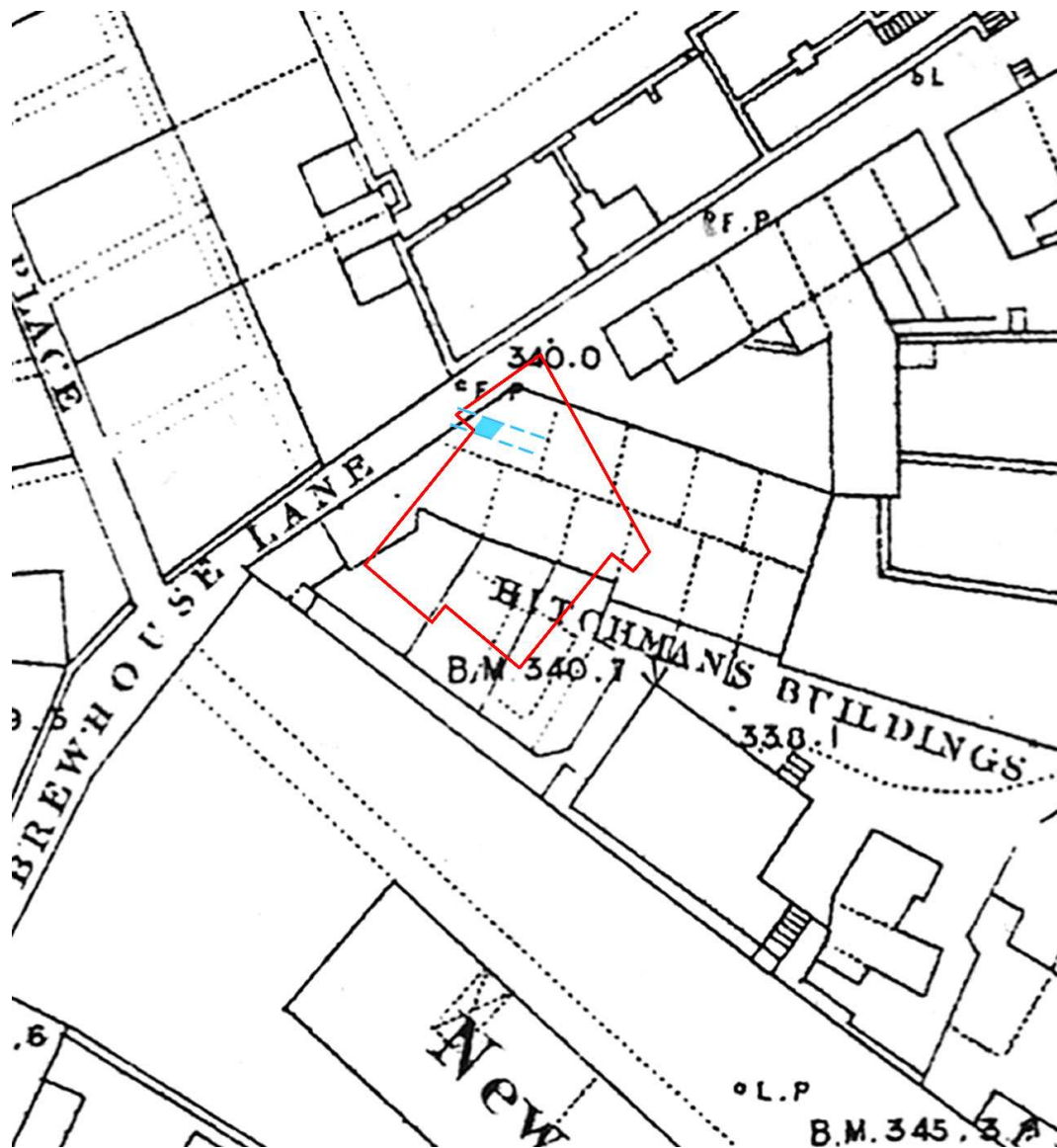




**Figure 11:** Test Pit H (view west) showing the part-collapsed brick drain truncated by the existing wall foundations.



**Figure 12:** Northwest-facing section of Test Pit H showing the part-collapsed brick drain.



**Figure 13:** Site outline and location of the brick drain in Test Pit H in relation to the Ordnance Survey 1<sup>st</sup> Edition 5 feet: mile map of 1866 (*London Sheet II.89; published 1871*).

## 9. Summary and Conclusions

The deposits exposed within the test pits imply a heavy degree of truncation across the entire site, dating from the construction of the present building in 1871.

No archaeological finds or features were recorded except for a single part-collapsed brick drain of probable earlier 19<sup>th</sup> century origin. The existing basement and adjacent reduced courtyard area have apparently already exceeded the depth of the potential archaeological horizon – consequently further reduction works in the basement area will have no affect on archaeological deposits.

Following discussion with English Heritage it was agreed that this report would form an evaluation of the site, and that given the lack of any significant remains no further archaeological fieldwork would be carried out.

## Bibliography

**Compass Archaeology.** 2008. *Written Scheme of Investigation for Archaeological Monitoring and Recording during groundworks at 32 New Court, Flask Walk, Hampstead NW3 1HD, London Borough of Camden.*

Weinreb, B, & Hibbert, C, 1983 *The London Encyclopaedia*

## Appendix I: OASIS Data Collection Form

**OASIS ID: compassa1-41705**

### Project details

Project name	32 New Court, Flask Walk, Hampstead NW3 1HD, London Borough of Camden.
Short description of the project	An archaeological watching brief undertaken during groundworks in the basement and adjacent courtyard area of a Listed Building at 32 New Court, Flask Walk, Hampstead. 8 test pits were excavated preceding works to reduce the basement floor level. No significant archaeological finds or features were observed - a part-collapsed brick drain of earlier 19th century date was exposed in the courtyard area. Elsewhere natural clayey sand deposits were heavily truncated by previous ground reduction.
Project dates	Start: 04-04-2008 End: 07-04-2008
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	NCU08 - Sitecode
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	Archaeological Priority Area Listed Building
Current Land use	Other 2 - In use as a building
Monument type	DRAIN Post Medieval
Investigation type	'Watching Brief'
Prompt	Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPG16

### Project location

Country	England
Site location	GREATER LONDON CAMDEN HAMPSTEAD 32 New Court, Flask Walk, Hampstead
Postcode	NW3 1HD
Study area	150.00 Square metres
Site coordinates	TQ 26455 85905 51.5573448394 -0.175680371477 51 33 26 N 000 10 32 W Point

### 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	Jonathan Henckert
Type of sponsor/funding body	Landowner

### Project archives

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	Museum of London archive
Digital Contents	'none'
Digital Media available	'Images raster / digital photography'
Paper Archive recipient	Museum of London Archive
Paper Contents	'none'
Paper Media available	'Map','Notebook - Excavation',' Research',' General Notes','Photograph','Plan','Report'

### Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	32 New Court, Flask Walk, Hampstead, London Borough of Camden: An Archaeological Watching Brief
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Cummings, R
Date	2008
Issuer or publisher	Compass Archaeology
Place of issue or publication	5-7 Southwark St, SE1 1RQ
Description	Bound report detailing the results of the archaeological watching brief at 32 New Court, Flask Walk, Hampstead.
Entered by	Rosie Cummings (mail@compassarchaeology.co.uk)
Entered on	2 May 2008

## **Appendix II: London Archaeologist Summary**

Site Address: 32 New Court, Flask Walk, Hampstead, NW3 1HD

Project type: Watching brief.

Dates of Fieldwork: 4<sup>th</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup> April 2008

Site Code: NCU08

Supervisor: Jonathan Henckert

NGR: TQ 26455 85905

Funding Body: Property Owner

The watching brief recorded a part-collapsed brick-built arched drain, presumably associated with the earlier 19<sup>th</sup> century buildings which stood on the site until the present building was constructed in 1871. The foundations of the latter also truncated the drain to the southwest. No further archaeological finds or features were recorded – deposits consisted of made-ground layers and floor surfaces associated with the existing basement. Natural sands and clay were heavily truncated by previous ground reduction.