

**An Archaeological Evaluation at Barnet College,  
Wood Street, Barnet**

**NGR 2455 9635**

**Project 3387**

**Site Code BCV08**

**ASE Report No. 2008055**

**OASIS Id 42941**

**David Fallon**

**With Contributions by  
Trista Clifford and Lucy Allott**

**May 2008**

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**Abstract**

*An archaeological evaluation was undertaken at Barnet College, Wood Street, Barnet between the 21<sup>st</sup> and the 24<sup>th</sup> of April 2008. The work was commissioned by CgMs Consulting Ltd on behalf of their clients Barnet College and their planning advisors GVA Grimley. Four trenches totalling 69.00m were excavated to assess the archaeological potential of the site. Although the site lay within an area of potential for medieval remains, only one feature of archaeological interest was discovered, which was a possible early medieval property boundary.*

*The underlying geology of Stanmore Gravels (mid yellow coarse sand and gravel) was encountered at a maximum height of 127.331m OD in the north of the site falling away to 125.233m OD in the southeast. Above the natural there were successive layers of made ground used to even out the gradient prior to previous developments.*

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## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Site Background**

1.1.1 Archaeology South East (ASE), a division of the Centre for Applied Archaeology at the Institute of Archaeology, University College London, was commissioned by CgMs to undertake an archaeological evaluation of Barnet College, Wood Street, Barnet, prior to the refurbishment of the College (NGR TQ 2455 9635) (Figure 1).

### **1.2 Geology and Topography**

1.2.1 The site occupies land to the south of Wood Street, Barnet (see Fig. 1). It lies between 127.331m OD in the north (Trench 1), dropping away to 125.238m OD in the southeast (Trench 2), sloping from north to south.

1.2.2 Substantial landscaping of the site has taken place with a significant reduction of the ground level to the north of the site in the area of Trench 1 and a levelling of the gradient in the east in the area of trenches 2 – 4 (Fig.2).

1.2.3 According to the British Geological Survey (Sheet 265) the underlying geology of the site is Stanmore Gravel overlying London Clay.

### **1.3 Planning Background**

1.3.1 The site of Barnet College is proposed for redevelopment with a new College facility.

1.3.2 Given the location of the site, within an area of archaeological potential in proximity of St. John the Baptist Church and Tudor Hall, a programme of archaeological works was therefore initiated in compliance with the Barnet Unitary Development Plan; Policy HC 17.

1.3.3 An archaeological evaluation was deemed appropriate to assess the impact of the proposed development on any archaeological remains and a specification for this fieldwork was produced by CgMs Consulting (Meager 2008). A Written Scheme of Investigation was subsequently prepared by Archaeology South-East with reference to the Specification, for submission to CgMs Consulting Ltd.

### **1.4. Aims and Objectives**

1.4.1 The purpose of the evaluation was to locate and define any archaeological remains within the area of the proposed redevelopment and to assess their condition and significance.

1.4.2 The aims specific to the evaluation of the site were:

- To establish the presence or otherwise of any medieval or earlier or later activity and to define the date and nature of such activity

- To establish the environmental context of any medieval activity with any earlier and/or later activity
- Evaluate the likely impact of past land use and development
- Provide sufficient information to construct an archaeological mitigation strategy

## **1.5 Scope of Report**

- 1.5.1 This report presents the results of the evaluation carried out by David Fallon (Archaeologist), Chris Russell and Kayleigh Whiting (Asst Archaeologists) between the 21<sup>st</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> of April 2008. The project was managed by Diccon Hart (fieldwork) and Louise Rayner (post-excavation).

## **2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The archaeological and historical background of the site has been considered in detail in the Desk Based Assessment and is summarised below with due acknowledgement (Meager 2007).
- 2.2 Despite its location overlooking the Brent Valley, a location likely to conducive to prehistoric settlement, there have been no recorded prehistoric finds or indications of prehistoric activity from the site.
- 2.3 A low level of Roman activity has been identified from the vicinity of the site but none from the site itself.
- 2.4 However, the site is located within an area of medieval activity with the Church of St John the Baptist directly to the northeast of the site across Wood Street. Barnet High Street follows the medieval street frontage and the medieval market took place in the area adjacent to St John's Church. A number of archaeological excavations along High Street and Wood Street have produced evidence for the medieval town, including finds of structural remains and rubbish pits containing pottery (Meager 2007, 11).
- 2.5 The Tudor Hall, which lies immediately to the west of the site and to the southwest of Trench 1, is dated to c 1577 with later additions (see Fig 1). This building formed part of a school up until its transfer to a new site in 1932.
- 2.6 There has been no previous archaeological fieldwork undertaken at the site.

### **3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY**

- 3.1 The site, located in a heavily built-up area with concentrations of services, imposed restraints upon locating the evaluation trenches. However, the evaluation trenches were excavated as close as was possible to the original trench plan (see Fig.2). The contingency trench was not required.
- 3.2 The four trenches were excavated mechanically. These trenches were located to assess the archaeological potential of the site and to ascertain the threat posed by the development on any archaeological remains present (see Fig.2). The trenches varied in length between 15m and 24m and were 2m wide.
- 3.3 Trench 1 was located in the north of the site (Fig. 2). However, on-site conditions necessitated an alteration in the location of Trench 1, which was approved by CgMs and GLAAS prior to excavation.
- 3.4 The trenches were excavated under constant archaeological supervision by a 6 tonne mini mechanical excavator using a 0.90m wide grading bucket.
- 3.4 The trenches were located with reference to a scale drawing and off-set from fixed points within the area of investigation.
- 3.5 The topsoil was reduced to the underlying natural or the archaeological horizon; whichever was the higher. Any archaeological features revealed were cleaned for definition. When appropriate, selected 1m wide sections were hand cleaned in order to clarify and record the trench's stratigraphy. Where the section of a trench was not consistent throughout the trench it was drawn in its entirety. Trench 2 was 1.83m deep and was therefore too deep to enter. The section of Trench 2 was drawn by reference to a datum established along the trench edge. Trench plans were drawn at 1:50. Trench sections were drawn at 1:10.
- 3.6 The colours of the deposits were established by visual inspection rather than by reference to a Munsell Colour Chart.
- 3.7 A photographic record, including digital, colour slide and monochrome, was kept of the trenches.
- 3.8 One deposit suitable for sampling was encountered. A 20% sample was taken of this context.
- 3.9 The site archive quantification can be tabulated as shown:

Number of Contexts	30
Number of Files/Paper Record	1 File
Plan and Section Sheets	2
Bulk Samples	0
Photographs	63 Digital, 13 colour slide, 15 monochrome
Bulk Finds	1
Registered Finds	0
Environmental Flots/Residue	2

Table.1: Quantification of site archive



## 4.0 RESULTS

### 4.1 Trench 1

4.1.1 The location of this trench was altered after consultation with CgMs and GLAAS, necessitated by the on-site conditions: the presence of telecommunication, electrical and other services and the presence of a flight of concrete steps meant that the excavation of Trench 1 in its original position was not feasible. However, the spatial constraints of the site did not allow for a major divergence in the position (Fig. 2).

Trench 1 measured 24m east to west, 2m wide and 0.98m deep. Electrical services were encountered at the eastern end of this trench. Therefore, this area of the trench remained unexcavated (Fig. 3)

#### List of Recorded Contexts

Number	Type	Description	Same as	Max Len.	Max. Wid.	Max. Thickness.	O/D
1/001	Layer	Topsoil		Tr.	Tr.	0.43m	128.000m
1/002	Layer	Levelling	2/002	Tr.	Tr.	0.32m	127.821m
1/003		Natural		Tr.	Tr.	/	127.331m
1/004	Cut	Construction					
1/005	Masonry	Wall					127.761m
1/006	Cut	Construction					
1/007	Masonry	Wall					127.741m

#### 4.1.2 Summary

The natural [1/003], mid reddish yellow coarse sand, was encountered between 127.461m OD in the west dropping away to 127.331m OD in the east. Above the natural there was a levelling deposit comprised of dark grey clay silt with occasional fragments of brick and a medium sand [1/002] (Fig. 3). Two modern masonry structures, [1/004] and [1/006], were seen to cut the surface of [1/002]. Concrete paving slabs laid onto a sand levelling layer sealed the deposits in this trench.

### 4.2 Trench 2

4.2.1 Trench 2 measured 15m east to west, 2m wide and 2m deep. It was located to the east of the site (Fig. 2). Electrical and water services were encountered at the eastern and western ends of this trench. Therefore these segments of Trench 2 remained unexcavated.

#### List of Recorded Contexts

Number	Type	Description	Same as	Max Len.	Max. Wid.	Max. Thickness.	O/D
2/001	Layer	Tarmac	3/001 4/001	Tr.	Tr.	0.15m	127.008m
2/002	Layer	Levelling	1/002	Tr.	Tr.	0.75m	126.308m
2/003	Layer	Made Ground		Tr.	Tr.	0.60m	126.508m
2/004		Natural		Tr.	Tr.	/	125.238m
2/005	Layer	Made Ground	3/002	Tr.	Tr.	1.05m	125.238m
2/006	Cut	Modern Pit	/	/	0.40m	0.30m	127.288m

2/007	Fill	Fill of 2/006	/	/	0.40m	0.30m	127.812m
2/008	Cut	Construction	/	Tr.	1.20m	0.50m	/
2/009	Masonry	Modern Wall	/	Tr.	1.20m	0.50m	126.708m
2/010	Cut	Construction	/	Tr.	0.80m	0.50m	/
2/011	Masonry	Modern Wall	/	Tr.	0.80m	0.50m	126.608m
2/012	Cut	Construction		Tr.	0.60m	/	/
2/013	Masonry	Modern Wall		Tr.	0.50m	/	127.008m

#### 4.2.2 Summary

The natural [2/004], mid yellow coarse sand and gravels, was encountered at 125.238m OD. Above the natural there were successive layers of made ground [2/003] and [2/005] (Fig. 3, Section 4) probably make-up layers utilized to reduce the gradient. The high level of disturbance within these layers meant that two features, [2/006] and [2/008], were observed in the trench section only (see Fig.3, Section 4). Two early 20<sup>th</sup> century walls [2/008] and [2/010] and a pit [2/006] were cut through [2/005]. A third wall [2/012] was seen to cut [2/003] with a layer of levelling sealing all these deposits prior to a tarmac car park, [2/001], being laid (Fig. 3).

No archaeological features were seen to cut the surface of the natural.

#### 4.3 Trench 3

4.3.1 Trench 3 measured 15m north to south, 2m wide and 1.30m deep. It was located to the east of the site (Fig. 2)

##### List of Recorded Contexts

Number	Type	Description	Same As	Max Len.	Max. Wid.	Max. Thickness	O/D
3/001	Layer	Tarmac	2/001 4/001	Tr.	Tr.	0.04m	127.308m
3/002	Layer	Made Ground	2/005	Tr.	Tr.	0.47m	127.348m
3/003	Layer	Subsoil		Tr.	Tr.	0.10m	126.748m
3/004	Layer	Natural	2/004 4/004	Tr.	Tr.		126.748m

#### 4.3.2 Summary

The natural [3/004], mid yellow coarse sand and gravels, was encountered between at 126.748m OD. Above the natural there was a thin layer of dark red brown clay silt subsoil [3/003] above which was made ground [3/002], probably a make-up layer utilized to reduce the gradient. A layer of levelling sealed all these deposits prior to a tarmac car park [3/001] being laid (Fig. 4).

No archaeological features were seen to cut the surface of the natural.

#### 4.4 Trench 4

4.4.1 Trench 4 measured 15m northwest to southeast, 2m wide and 1.20m deep. It was located to the east of the site (Fig. 2).

### List of Recorded Contexts

Number	Type	Description	Same As	Max Len.	Max. Wid.	Max. Thickness	Height m OD
4/001	Layer	Tarmac	2/001 3/001	Tr.	Tr.	0.05m	127.848m
4/002	Layer	Made Ground		Tr.	Tr.	0.50m	127.348m
4/003	Layer	Subsoil	/	Tr.	Tr.	0.54m	126.948m
4/004	Layer	Natural	2/004 3/004	Tr.	Tr.	/	126.698m
4/005	Fill	Fill of 4/006			1.80m	0.22m	126.528m
4/006	Cut	Ditch			1.80m	0.22m	126.528m

#### 4.4.2 Summary

The natural [4/004], mid yellow coarse sand and gravels, was encountered at 126.698m OD. Above the natural there was a deposit of dark red brown clay silt subsoil [4/003]. Above this was a layer of made ground [4/002] probably a make-up layer utilized to reduce the gradient. A layer of levelling sealed all these deposits prior to a tarmac car park [4/001] being laid (Fig 4).

One linear archaeological feature [4/006] was seen to cut the surface of the natural. This shallow ditch contained a single fill [4/005] of mid grey fine sandy silt. No finds were recovered from the fill.

**5.0 THE FINDS** by Trista Clifford and Lucy Allott

5.1 A small collection of finds was recovered from two contexts during the evaluation at Barnet College, quantified in below:

Context	Pottery	wt (g)	CBM	wt (g)	Flint	wt(g)	Glass	wt(g)	CTP	wt (g)
U/S					1	28				
1/008	4	28	1	68					1	2
2/005	2	68					3	178		
Total	6	96	1	68	1	28	3	178	1	2

Table.2: Quantification of finds by weight

- 5.2 Context [1/008] contained two fragments from a blue transfer ware cup or bowl and a rim from a blue transfer ware plate, along with a red glazed earthenware fragment. The pottery is of 19<sup>th</sup> century date. A single red brick fragment was recovered. The fabric is well fired and abundant fine sand tempered. This context also contained the stem fragment from a clay tobacco pipe of 19<sup>th</sup> century date.
- 5.3 Context [2/005] contained two Victorian flowerpot fragments with a plain white china plate fragment. Clear glass fragments from the rim and base of a jar or flask of 19<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> century date were also recovered from [2/005].
- 5.4 A single end-struck flint flake was collected from unstratified deposits. Its dorsal surface is heavily patinated and retains a natural flake scar. No retouch is evident.

**6.0 THE ENVIRONMENTAL EVIDENCE** by Lucy Allott

- 6.1 A single environmental sample was taken from [4/005]. The sample was bucket floated and the flot and residue were retained on 250µm and 500µm meshes and air dried.
- 6.2 The flot and residue contain moderate quantities of charcoal and some charred weed seeds. Bone and teeth fragments and small quantities of CBM and slag were also recovered from the residues. The presence of charred botanicals and other archaeological remains provide evidence for anthropogenic activities at the site during the infilling of this feature.

Sample Number	Context	Weight g	Flot volume ml	Uncharred %	Sediment %	Seeds uncharred	Charcoal <4mm	Charcoal <2mm	Crop seeds charred	Identifications	Preservation	Weed seeds charred	Identifications	Preservation
1	4/005	4	5	<5	10	*	*	**	*	indet.	poor	**	<i>Brassica</i> Chenopodiaceae type	sp., poor

Table.3: Flot Quantification (\* = 0-10, \*\* = 11-50, \*\*\* = 51-250)

Sample Number	Context	Sample Volume litres	sub-Sample Volume litres	Charcoal >4mm	Weight (g)	Charcoal <4mm	Weight (g)	Bone and Teeth	Weight (g)	Other (eg ind, pot, cbm)
1	4/005	12	12	***	14	****	24	*	1	CBM */<1, Slag */26

Table.4: Residue Quantification (\* = 0-10, \*\* = 11-50, \*\*\* = 51-250) and weight

## **7.0 DISCUSSION**

- 7.1** Despite the location of the site in an area of some archaeological potential only very limited remains were found. However, the results of the investigation allow for conclusions to be reached regarding the archaeological potential of the site and the impact that the development will have upon any archaeological remains. In this regard the works carried out at Barnet College can be seen to have fulfilled the aims of the investigation.
- 7.2** Only a single feature of archaeological interest was uncovered, comprising linear feature [4/006] which was aligned with the current and historical property boundaries. Therefore, it is probable that this feature is demarcating a tenement to the rear of the street frontage. This feature remains undated. However, the current property boundaries running perpendicular to the High Street were established by 1817 (1817 Chipping Barnet Enclosure Map) and probably 1766 (Drury and Andrews Map of Hertfordshire).
- 7.3** The topsoil, subsoil and natural were consistent through out the site and any other cut features would have been easily observed.
- 7.4** The natural deposits are undisturbed beneath the made ground and therefore any archaeological remains within it will be relatively undisturbed. However, the results of this evaluation show that the potential for such remains is very low.

## **8.0 CONCLUSION**

- 8.1** Situated in an area of some potential for medieval remains, the proposal to redevelop Barnet College, Wood Street, Barnet (Fig. 1) necessitated the undertaking of an archaeological evaluation of this plot of land.
- 8.2** A gradual mechanical reduction of the topsoil in four trenches until the natural deposits were reached did not reveal any extensive archaeological remains.
- 8.3** Though limited in scale this evaluation and its results allowed definitive conclusions to be reached regarding the potential of this development to impact upon archaeological remains.
- 8.4** There are no significant archaeological remains present within the boundaries of this site. Therefore the impact of this development will be negligible.

## **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

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Meager, R, 2007: *Archaeological Desk Based Study and Impact Assessment, Barnet College Wood Street Barnet*. CgMs Consulting unpub report

Meager, R, 2008: *Specification for an archaeological evaluation*. CgMs Consulting unpub. report

## APPENDIX ONE

**OASIS ID: archaeol6-42941**

### Project details

Project name	An Archaeological Evaluation at Barnet College, Barnet
Short description of the project	Small scale evaluation of footprint of planned development of existing college of further education consisting four trenches - only a single possibly medieval property boundary was found to south east of site otherwise nothing of an archaeological interest was uncovered
Project dates	Start: 21-04-2008 End: 24-04-2008
Previous/future work	Yes / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	BCV 08 - Sitecode
Type of project	Field evaluation
Current Land use	Community Service 1 - Community Buildings
Monument type	NONE None
Significant Finds	NONE None
Methods & techniques	'Targeted Trenches'
Development type	Public building (e.g. school, church, hospital, medical centre, law courts etc.)
Prompt	Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPG16
Position in the planning process	Pre-application

### Project location

Country	England
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Site location	GREATER LONDON BARNET BARNET Barnet College
Postcode	EN5 5
Study area	69.00 Square metres
Site coordinates	TQ 2455 9635 51.6516481458 -0.199437815102 51 39 05 N 000 11 57 W Point
Height OD	Min: 125.23m Max: 127.33m

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### **Project creators**

Name of Organisation	Archaeology South East
Project brief originator	CgMs Consulting
Project design originator	CgMs Consulting
Project director/manager	Diccon Hart
Project supervisor	David Fallon
Type of sponsor/funding body	Client

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### **Project archives**

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	Local Museum
Digital Contents	'Stratigraphic'
Digital Media available	'Images raster / digital photography','Text'

Paper Archive recipient	Local Museum
Paper Contents	'Stratigraphic'
Paper Media available	'Context sheet', 'Drawing', 'Photograph', 'Plan', 'Report', 'Section', 'Unpublished Text'

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### **Project bibliography 1**

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	An Archaeological Evaluation at Barnet College, Wood Street, Barnet
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Fallon, D
Other bibliographic details	Report 2008055
Date	2008
Issuer or publisher	Archaeology South East
Place of issue or publication	Units 1 and 2, Chapel Place, Portslade
Description	A4 soft cover word processed

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Entered on	27 May 2008



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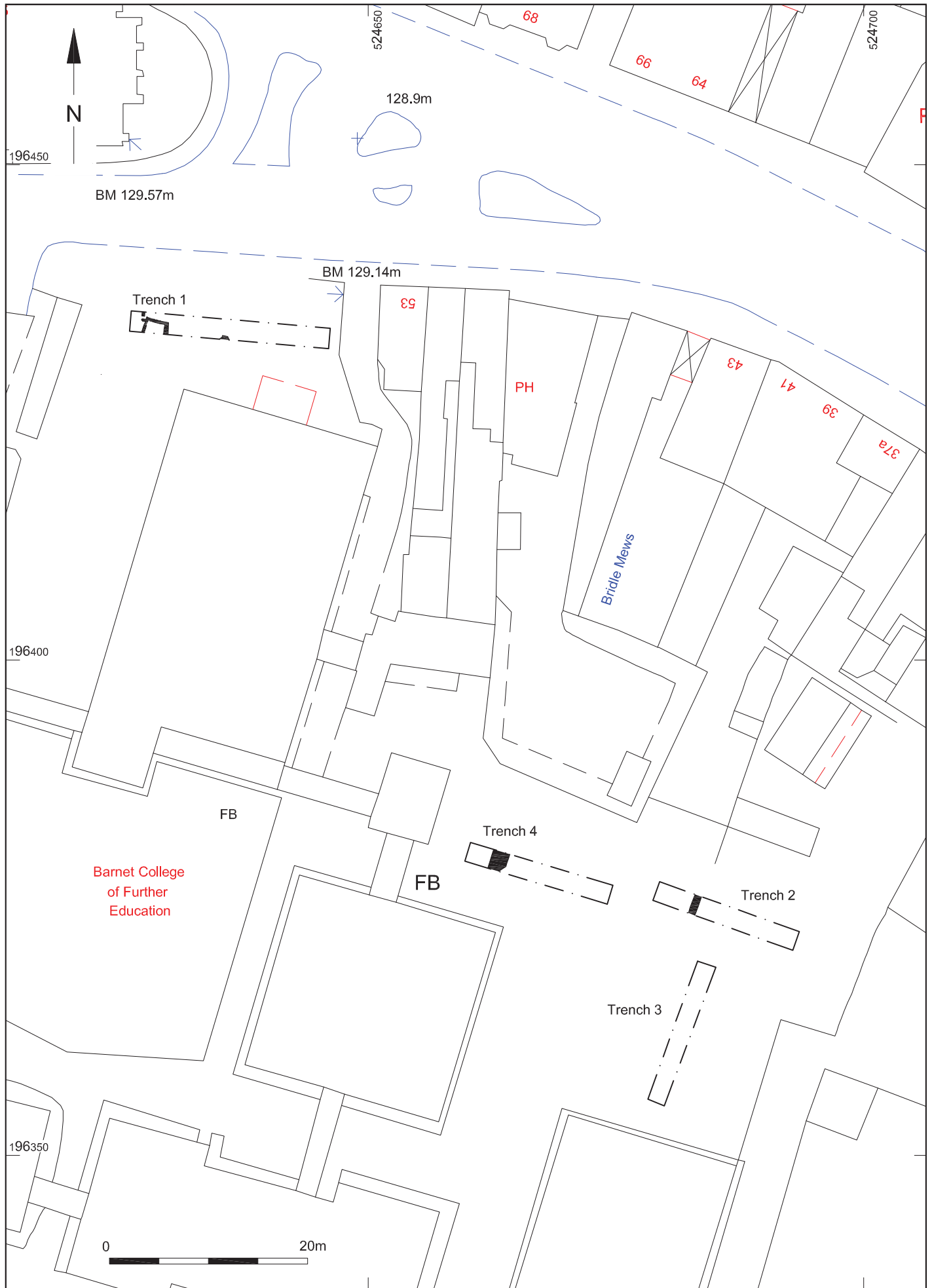


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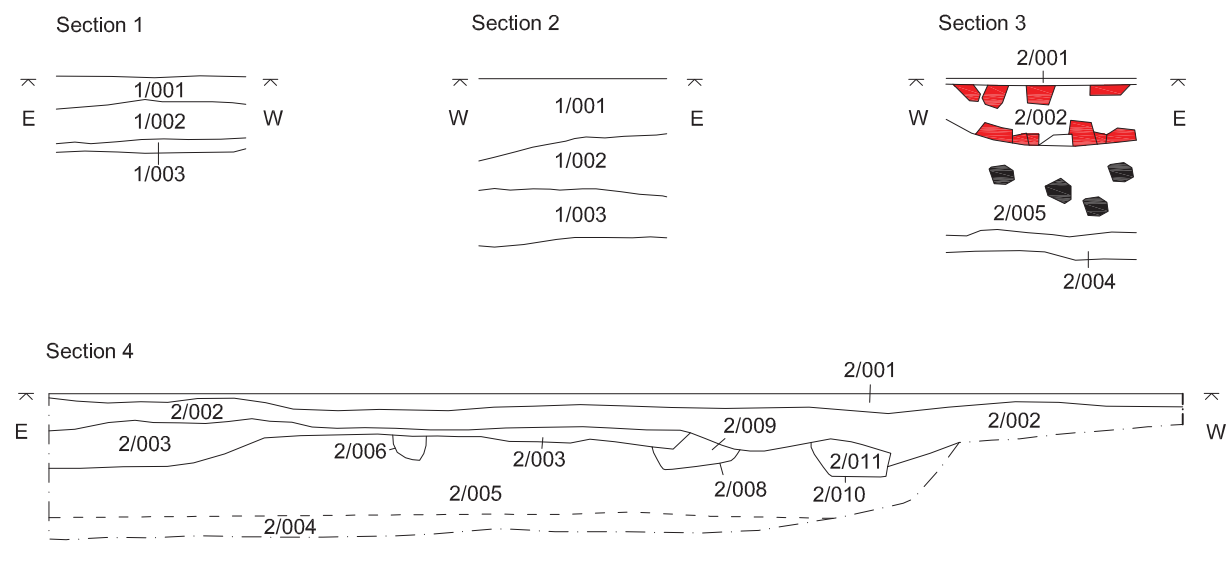
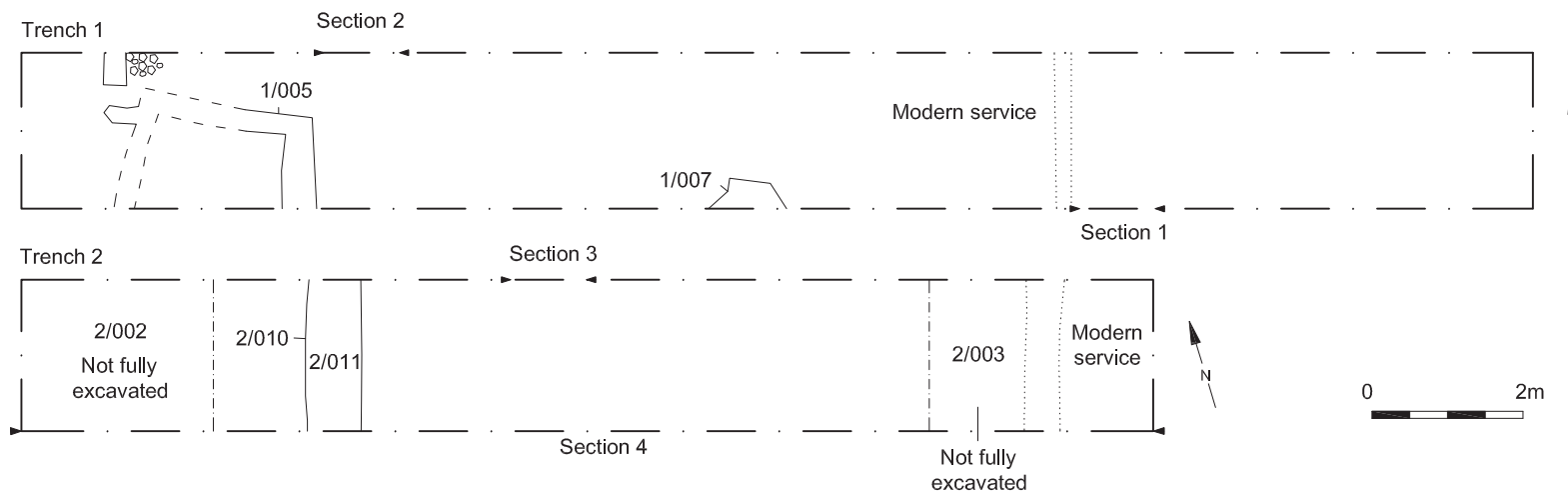
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Project Ref: 3387	May 2008	Site Location Plan	
Report Ref: 2008055	Drawn by: SM		

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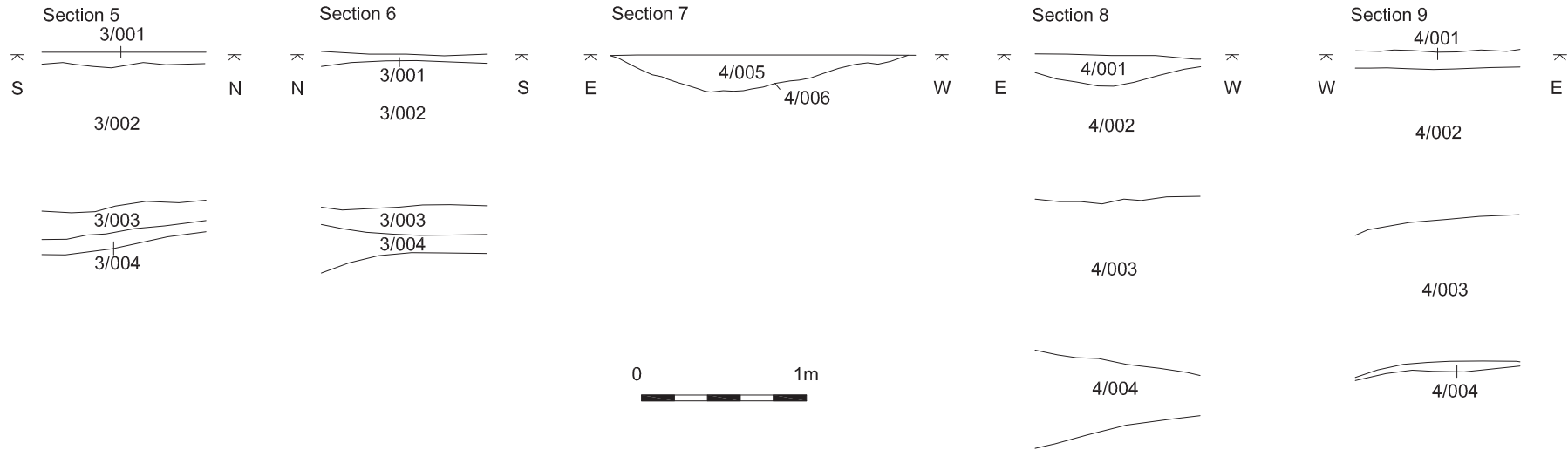
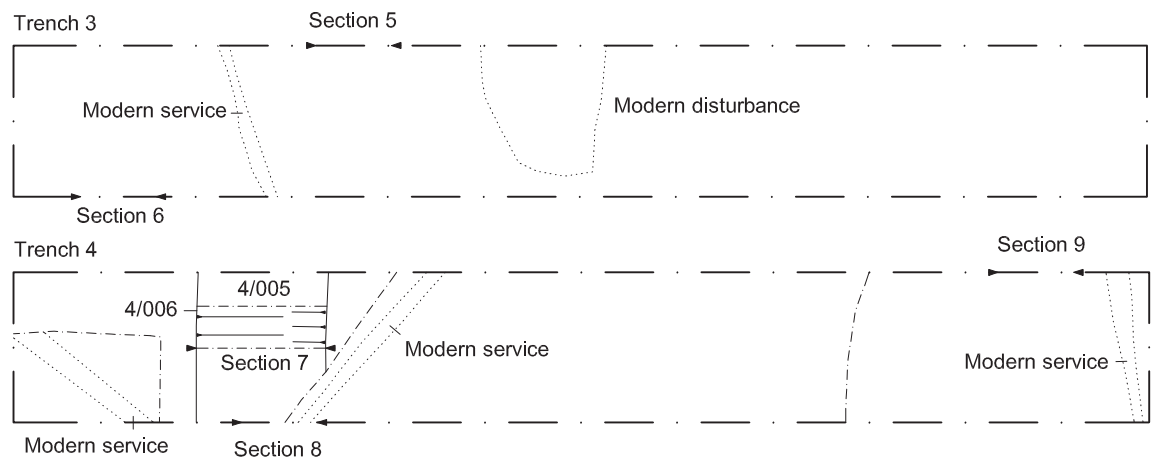
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Project Ref: 3387	May 2008	Trench Location Plan	
Report Ref: 2008055	Drawn by: SM		



■ Brick  
■ Pebbles/flint



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Report Ref: 2008055	Drawn by: HLF		



© Archaeology South-East		Barnet College	Fig. 4
Project Ref: 3387	May 2008	Trench plans and sections	
Report Ref: 2008055	Drawn by: HLF		



Fig. 5.1: Trench 1, south facing section



Fig. 5.2: Trench 2, south facing section

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Project Ref: 3387	May 2008	Photographs	
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Fig. 6.1: Trench 3, east facing section



Fig. 6.2: Trench 4, north facing section

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Fig. 7.1: 4/006

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