
ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOLUTIONS LTD

**1 DRAX AVENUE, WIMBLEDON,
LONDON SW20 0GE**

ARCHAEOLOGICAL OBSERVATION & RECORDING

Authors: Zbigniew Pozorski	
NGR: TQ 2258 7038	Report No: 4141
District: LB Merton	Site Code: DRX 12
Approved: Claire Halpin MIfA	Project No: 4883
Signed:	Date: September 2012

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OASIS SUMMARY SHEET

Project details			
Project name	<i>1 Drax Avenue, Wimbledon, London SW20 0GE</i>		
<i>In August and September 2012 Archaeological Solutions (AS) carried out archaeological observation and recording at 1 Drax Avenue, Wimbledon, London SW20 0GE (NGR TQ 2258 7038). The monitoring was commissioned by Mrs Simpson in compliance with a planning condition attached to planning permission for the construction of a two-storey side extension with basement.</i>			
<i>The site lies within the Wimbledon Common Archaeological Priority Zone (APZ) as identified on the LB Merton UDP. The identification relates to the prehistoric landscape of the area, principally the Scheduled Ancient Monument of the late Bronze Age/iron Age fort called 'Caesars Camp' located within the common and to the north of the site. Part of the medieval core of Wimbledon APZ also lies to the south of the site, extending along the southern side of Copse Hill. The site had a potential mainly for prehistoric and medieval archaeological remains.</i>			
<i>In the event the observation revealed no archaeological features or finds.</i>			
Project dates (fieldwork)	<i>24/08 and 07/09/2012</i>		
Previous work (Y/N/?)	<i>N</i>	Future work (Y/N/?)	<i>N</i>
P. number	<i>4883</i>	Site code	<i>DRX 12</i>
Type of project	<i>Archaeological Observation & Recording</i>		
Site status	<i>Within Wimbledon Common Archaeological Priority Zone</i>		
Current land use	<i>Garage and kitchen (demolished)</i>		
Planned development	<i>Side extension with basement</i>		
Main features (+dates)	<i>-</i>		
Significant finds (+dates)	<i>-</i>		
Project location			
County/ District/ Parish	<i>Greater London</i>	<i>London Borough of Merton</i>	<i>Wimbledon</i>
HER/ SMR for area	<i>Greater London HER</i>		
Post code (if known)	<i>SW20 0GE</i>		
Area of site	<i>c. 1400m²</i>		
NGR	<i>TQ 2258 7038</i>		
Height AOD (min/max)	<i>c. 42m AOD</i>		
Project creators			
Brief issued by	<i>Planning requirement of EH GLAAS</i>		
Project supervisor/s (PO)	<i>Zbigniew Pozorski</i>		
Funded by	<i>Mrs Simpson</i>		
Full title	<i>1 Drax Avenue, Wimbledon, London SW20 0GE: Archaeological Observation & Recording</i>		
Authors	<i>Pozorski, Z.</i>		
Report no.	<i>4141</i>		
Date (of report)	<i>September 2012</i>		

1 DRAX AVENUE, WIMBLEDON, LONDON SW20 0GE ARCHAEOLOGICAL OBSERVATION & RECORDING

SUMMARY

In August and September 2012 Archaeological Solutions (AS) carried out archaeological observation and recording at 1 Drax Avenue, Wimbledon, London SW20 0GE (NGR TQ 2258 7038). The monitoring was commissioned by Mrs Simpson in compliance with a planning condition attached to planning permission for the construction of a two-storey side extension with basement.

The site lies within the Wimbledon Common Archaeological Priority Zone (APZ) as identified on the LB Merton UDP. The identification relates to the prehistoric landscape of the area, principally the Scheduled Ancient Monument of the late Bronze Age/Iron Age fort called 'Caesars Camp' located within the common and to the north of the site. Part of the medieval core of Wimbledon APZ also lies to the south of the site, extending along the southern side of Copse Hill. The site had a potential mainly for prehistoric and medieval archaeological remains.

In the event the observation revealed no archaeological features or finds.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 In August and September 2012 Archaeological Solutions (AS) carried out archaeological observation and recording at 1 Drax Avenue, Wimbledon, London SW20 0GE (NGR TQ 2258 7038; Figs. 1 & 2). The monitoring was commissioned by Mrs Simpson in compliance with a planning condition attached to planning permission for the construction of a two-storey side extension with basement (London Borough of Merton Planning Ref. 12/P0546).

1.2 The project was undertaken in accordance to requirement of English Heritage Greater London Archaeological Advisory Service (EH GLAAS; advisors to the Local Planning Authority) and a written scheme of investigation (specification) prepared by AS (dated 08/06/2012), and approved by EH GLAAS. The project conformed to the EH (London Region) *Archaeological Guidance Papers* (AGPs, revised 1998), in particular *Archaeological Guidance Paper No 3; Standards and Practices in Archaeological Fieldwork in London*. It also followed the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA) *Code of Conduct and Standard and Guidance for An Archaeological Watching Brief* (revised 2008).

1.3 The project aimed to identify any evidence of archaeological deposits and/or artefacts, and to determine the nature and extent of those deposits within the limits of the construction groundworks.

Planning policy context

1.4 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2012) states that those parts of the historic environment that have significance because of their historic, archaeological, architectural or artistic interest are heritage assets. The NPPF aims to deliver sustainable development by ensuring that policies and decisions that concern the historic environment recognise that heritage assets are a non-renewable resource, take account of the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits of heritage conservation, and recognise that intelligently managed change may sometimes be necessary if heritage assets are to be maintained for the long term. The NPPF requires applications to describe the significance of any heritage asset, including its setting that may be affected in proportion to the asset's importance and the potential impact of the proposal.

1.5 The NPPF aims to conserve England's heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, with substantial harm to designated heritage assets (i.e. listed buildings, scheduled monuments) only permitted in exceptional circumstances when the public benefit of a proposal outweighs the conservation of the asset. The effect of proposals on non-designated heritage assets must be balanced against the scale of loss and significance of the asset, but non-designated heritage assets of demonstrably equivalent significance may be considered subject to the same policies as those that are designated. The NPPF states that opportunities to capture evidence from the historic environment, to record and advance the understanding of heritage assets and to make this publicly available is a requirement of development management. This opportunity should be taken in a manner proportionate to the significance of a heritage asset and to impact of the proposal, particularly where a heritage asset is to be lost.

2 DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE

2.1 The site is located in west Wimbledon, London between Copse Hill and Crooked Billet c. 2km west of Wimbledon centre (Fig. 1). The area is occupied by residential properties although Wimbledon Common has its southern limit just 100m to the north of the property at No.1 Drax Avenue. The site is rectangular, and occupied by a detached house and its rear garden.

3 TOPOGRAPHY, GEOLOGY AND SOILS

3.1 The site lies at c. 42m AOD within Copse Hill on land gently sloping towards the west but the slope becomes steep towards the south beyond Ridgeway. The site and the surrounding area are located on a solid geology of Eocene Palaeogene London Clay (BGS 1978). The soils in this urbanised area remain unsurveyed. Known soils to the north of the site within Wimbledon Common are those of Holidays Hill association described as Tertiary and Cretaceous sand, loam and clay (Soil Survey of England and Wales 1983).

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Prehistoric

3.2.1 The earliest evidence for prehistoric activity in the vicinity of the site comprises a Mesolithic or early Neolithic flint implement recorded in Shadwell Wood c. 500m to the north-west (HER MLO9014), and a Neolithic/Bronze Age core, debitage and burnt flint recovered from Woodhayes Road c. 600m to the east (HER MLO73510). The prehistoric landscape of Wimbledon is dominated by the presence of 'Caesar's Camp' (HER MLO10722), a late Bronze Age to Iron Age univalate hill fort c. 600m to the north of the site on Wimbledon Common. Archaeological investigations adjacent to the hill fort (HER MLO76328) have suggested that there were no outworks. The fort is a Scheduled Ancient Monument and the site lies within the Wimbledon Common Archaeological Priority Zone (APZ) as identified on the LB Merton UDP. The APZ extends beyond the boundary of the Common.

Romano-British

3.2.2 No Romano-British archaeology has been recorded within a c. 750m radius of the site.

Medieval

3.2.3 Wimbledon is not recorded in the Domesday Survey, but may have formed an outlying grange of the extensive Mortlake estate. It emerges as a separate entity in the early 14th century, when the historic core of the settlement was focussed on the modern Wimbledon High Street and Church Road c. 1.5km to the north-east. Medieval archaeology in the vicinity of the site is limited to the remnants of ridge and furrow cultivation that are preserved within the Caesar's Camp hill fort (HER MLO71564). Part of the medieval core of Wimbledon APZ lies to the south of the site, extending along the southern side of Copse Hill.

Post-medieval

3.2.4 From the 17th century onwards Wimbledon became favoured as a country retreat from urban London, reflected by the development of ornamental parkland at Cannizaro Park, c. 650m to the north east, beginning in the 18th century (HER MLO59246). Substantial houses were built adjacent to the historic core of Wimbledon, including Gothic Lodge (HER MLO90534) and Chester House (HER MLO90415), both c. 750m to the east of the site. This development did not approach the site until the early/mid 19th century when numerous properties were constructed on Copse Hill a short distance to the east (i.e. HER MLO90474, MLO90550, MLO90395, MLO90475, MLO90572 & MLO90492). Atkinson Morley's Hospital was constructed on the south side of Copse Hill (HER ML099462) c. 150m to the south of the site, as one of the earliest convalescent homes in Britain. Christ Church, c. 600m to the east (HER MLO90491) was also built during this period, while

archaeological evaluations on Copse Hill have also walls and drains from this period (HER MLO71872 & MLO99461).

5 METHODOLOGY

5.1. The archaeological monitoring comprised the observation of all groundworks, the inspection of the subsoil and natural deposits for archaeological features and the examination of spoil heaps and the recording of soil profiles. Archaeological features and deposits were recorded using *pro-forma* recording sheets, drawn to scale and photographed as appropriate. Excavated spoil was checked for finds and the excavated area was scanned by metal detector.

5.2 The principal element monitored was the mechanically-excavated trench for a new basement within the proposed side (eastern) extension to the house (Fig. 2), along with minor levelling works outside this footprint. The work was conducted in two stages.

6 DESCRIPTION OF RESULTS

6.1 Deposits located within the area of excavation were recorded in sample sections:

<i>Sample section 1 (DP 3)</i> <i>Excavation for new basement, central part, facing south</i> <i>0.00 = 42.24m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.12m	M1000	Concrete floor of former kitchen and garage.
0.12 – 0.22m	L1001	Made Ground. Dark grey, compact, silty sand with frequent CBM fragments.
0.22m+	L1002	Natural. Light to mid yellow, loose, sandy gravel overlying mid yellow, compact, clay.

<i>Sample section 2 (DP 4)</i> <i>Excavation for new basement, southern part, facing north</i> <i>0.00 = 42.63m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.12m	M1003	Concrete pavement to the rear of former kitchen and garage.
0.12 – 0.49m	L1004	Subsoil. Dark yellow, friable, clayey silt.
0.49m+	L1002	Natural. Gravel over clay. As above.

6.2 The stratigraphy of the site was uniform and comprised modern concrete floors overlying thin (0.20 – 0.25m) deposits of made ground. The latter overlay the natural gravel. Subsoil L1003 was recorded only in the southern part of the excavated area. The natural gravel was also exposed in

the south-eastern corner of the site beyond the excavation area where a shed had been removed (DP 7).

6.3 No archaeological features or finds were identified.

7 CONFIDENCE RATING

7.1 It is not felt that any factors inhibited the recognition of archaeological features or finds during the programme of archaeological monitoring and recording.

8 DISCUSSION

8.1 The site had a potential for archaeological remains, in particular for late Bronze Age/Iron Age and medieval archaeology. Such remains have been recorded in the local area.

8.2 In the event no archaeological features or finds were revealed. No indication of any previous development of the site was identified other than that related to the construction of the house. No residual finds were recovered.

9 DEPOSITION OF THE ARCHIVE

9.1 Archive records, with an inventory, will be deposited with any donated finds from the site at London Archaeological Archives and Resource Centre (LAARC). The archive will be quantified, ordered, indexed, cross-referenced and checked for internal consistency.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Solutions would like to thank Mrs Simpson for funding the project and for her assistance, and the project architects, DNA Architecture Ltd for their assistance (in particular Mr George Hodgson).

AS gratefully acknowledge the input and advice of Ms Diane Abrams of English Heritage Greater London Archaeological Advisory Service, and the staff of the Greater London Historic Environment Record.

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Soil Survey of England and Wales (SSEW), 1983, *Legend for the 1:250,000 Soil Map of England and Wales*. SSEW, Harpenden

PHOTOGRAPHIC INDEX



DP 1. The eastern side of the house with excavation area. Looking south-west.



DP 2. The southern part of the excavation. Looking south.



DP 3. Sample section 1. Looking north.



DP 4. Sample section 2. Looking south.



DP 5. Excavations in the northern part of the area. Looking north-north-east.



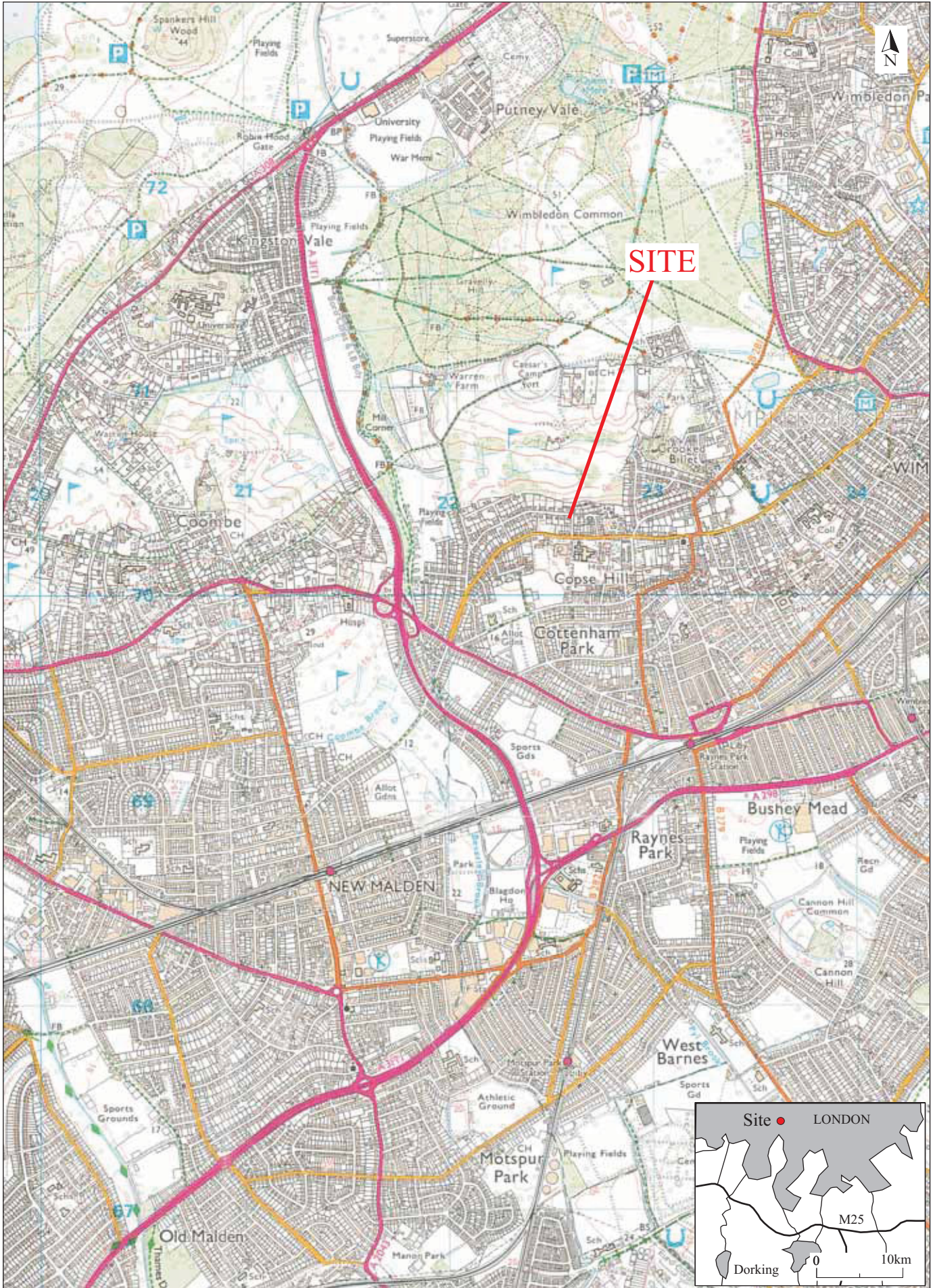
DP 6. The excavation area. Looking south-east.



DP 7. The south-eastern corner of the property. Looking east-north-east.

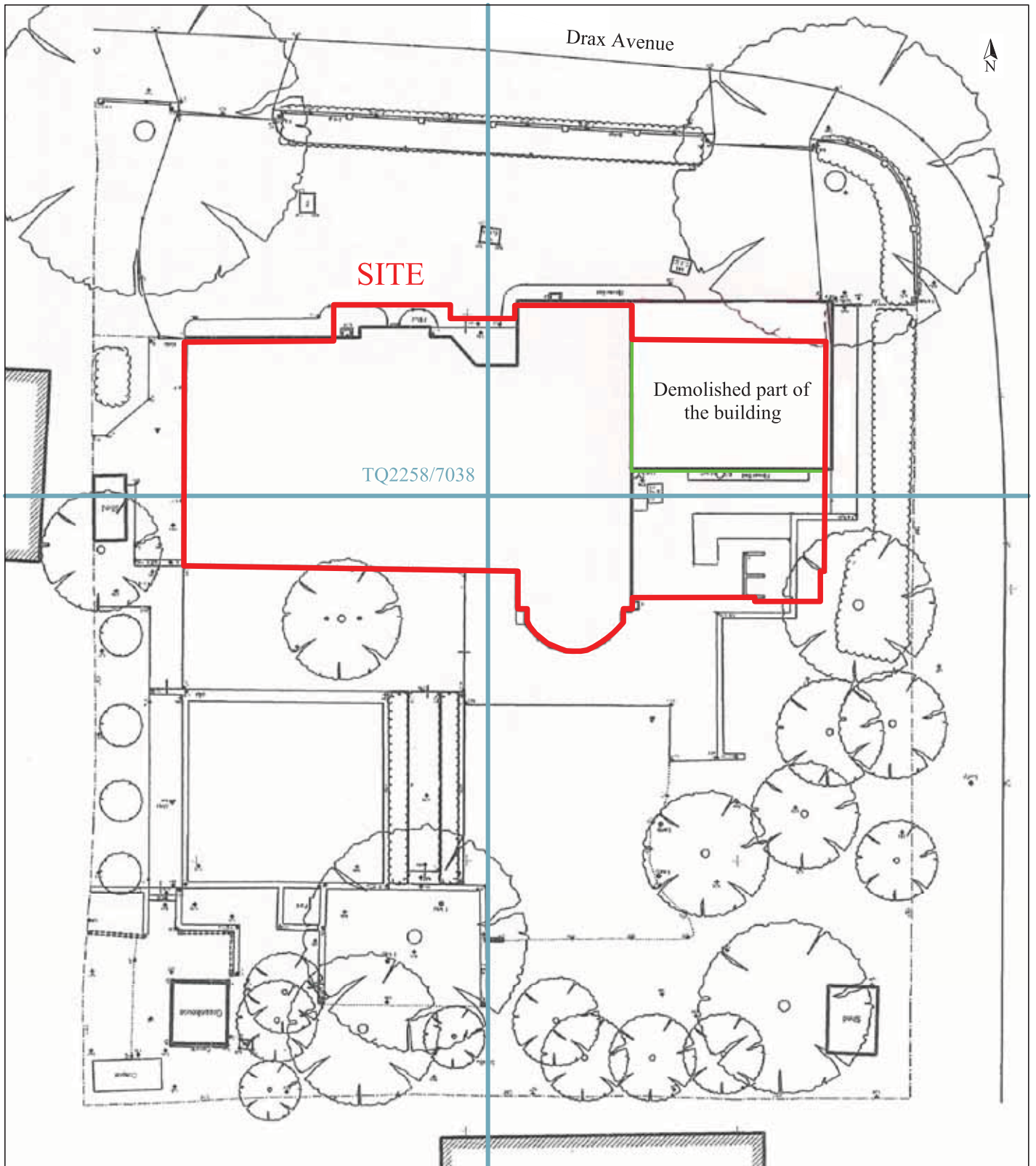


DP 8. Rear of the house. Looking north-west.



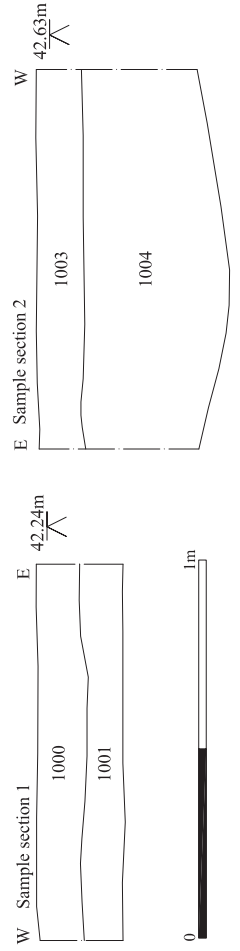
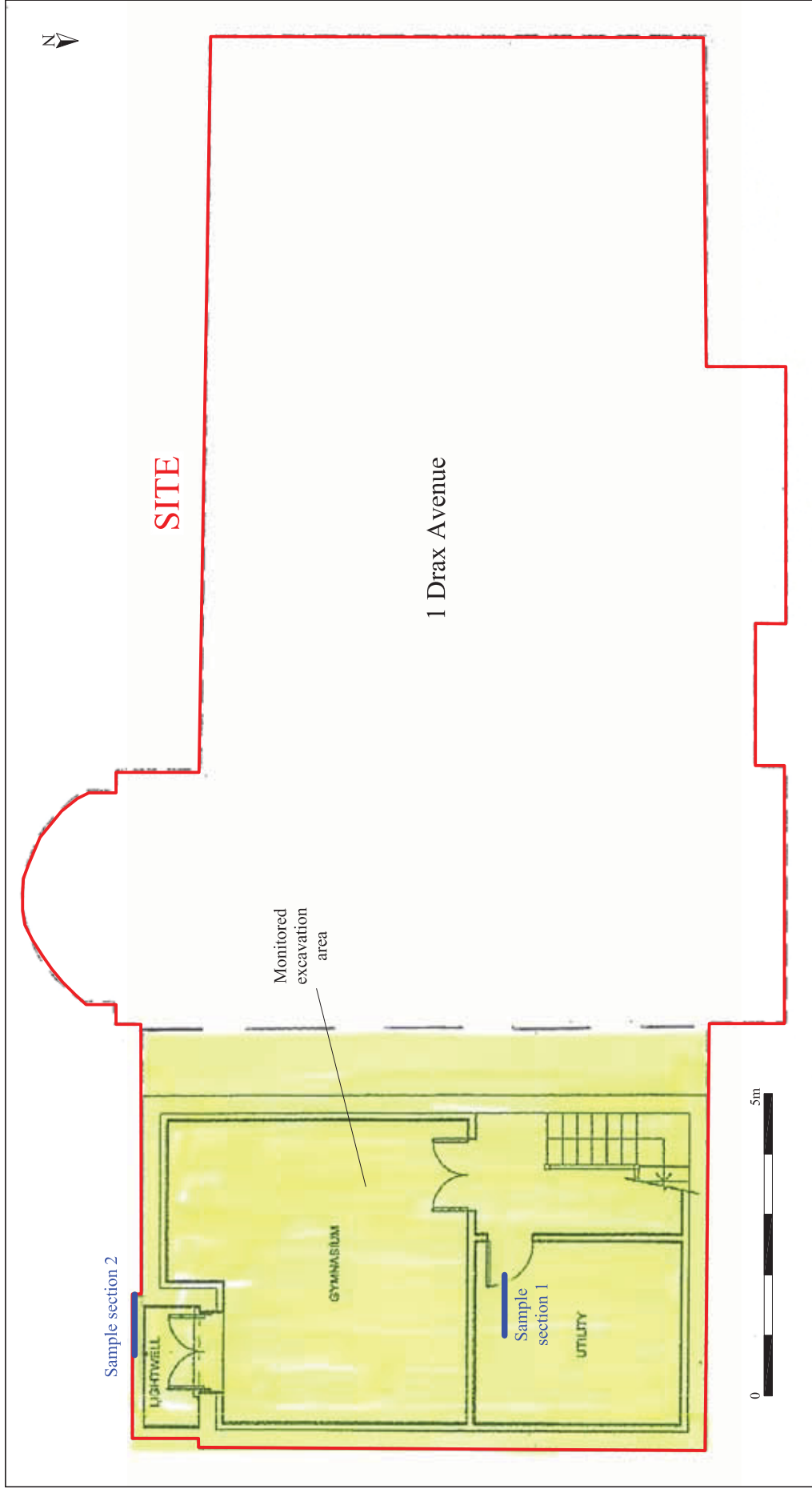
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Fig. 1 Site location plan
 Scale 1:25,000 at A4



0 10m

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Fig. 2 Detailed site location
 Scale 1:200 at A4



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Fig. 3 Area of watching brief & sample sections
 Scale plan at 1:100 & sections at 1:20 at A4