

THE DAIRY SITE Parsons Green London SW6

London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham

An archaeological evaluation report

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MUSEUM OF LONDON

Archaeology Service

THE DAIRY SITE
Parsons Green
London
SW6

London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham

An archaeological evaluation report

Site Code: DSP06
National Grid Reference: 524994 176595

Project Manager
Author
Graphics

Lesley Dunwoodie
Peter Cardiff
Carlos Lemos

Museum of London Archaeology Service
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Mortimer Wheeler House, 46 Eagle Wharf Road, London N1 7ED
tel 020 7410 2200 fax 020 7410 2201
email molas@molas.org.uk
web www.molas.org.uk

Summary (non-technical)

This report presents the results of an archaeological evaluation carried out by the Museum of London Archaeology Service on the site of the Dairy, Parsons Green, London SW6. The report was commissioned from MoLAS by Higgins Construction plc.

Following the recommendations of English Heritage Greater London Archaeology Advisory Service (GLAAS), five evaluation trenches were excavated on the site.

Quarry pits of post-medieval date, possibly pre-dating the 19th century were recorded in Trenches 4 and 5 in the western part of the site. Evidence of 19th century residential development was recorded in the eastern part of the site. This comprised a series of three brick-built cesspits/privies and associated east-west brick walls, representing outbuildings or annexes to the rear of houses fronting onto Parsons Green. Extensive dumping of 19th century date was recorded in Trenches 1, 3, and 4. In Trenches 2 and 5, 20th century disturbance had removed any earlier horizontal deposits, though in Trench 5 post-medieval cut features survived below the truncation.

The results of the field evaluation have helped to refine the initial assessment of the archaeological potential of the site. The evaluation would suggest that the earliest material likely to be affected by the development is of post-medieval date. Any remains likely to be affected would be those located in the areas of new foundations, piles/pile caps, services and other below-ground features/areas of ground reduction.

It is likely that any further work required would be in the form of a watching brief during groundworks in order to record any remaining archaeological deposits and features on the site.

The decision on the appropriate archaeological response to the deposits revealed during the evaluation rests with the Local Planning Authority and their designated archaeological advisor.

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1 Introduction

1.1 Site background

The evaluation took place at the Dairy Site, Parson's Green, London SW6, hereafter called 'the site'. The site comprises a collection of buildings constructed at various times during the 19th and 20th centuries, and associated open yard/car park areas. The site is located on the west side of Parsons Green and is bounded on the south by Heathmans road and Brigade House and to the north-west by the District Line underground railway and Parsons Green Station (see Fig 1). The Ordnance Survey National Grid Reference for the centre of the site is 524994 176595. Modern ground level immediately adjacent to the site is *c* 4.5m OD. The site code is DSP06.

The site lies within an Archaeological Priority Area, as defined in the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham Unitary Development Plan. It does not contain any listed buildings. The south-eastern part of the site is within the Parsons Green Conservation Area (No 10).

A desk-top *Archaeological impact assessment* was previously prepared, which covers the whole area of the site (Miles 2004) The *assessment* document should be referred to for detailed information on the natural geology, archaeological and historical background of the site, and the initial interpretation of its archaeological potential.

An archaeological field evaluation was subsequently carried out between 7th and 11th August 2006, when six evaluation trenches were excavated (see Fig 2).

1.2 Planning and legislative framework

The legislative and planning framework in which the archaeological exercise took place was summarised in the Archaeological Impact Assessment which formed the project design for the evaluation (see Section 2, Miles 2004).

1.3 Planning background

The evaluation was undertaken in response to the archaeological planning condition placed on the development by the local authority (condition 45, planning ref 2005/03095/FUL)

1.4 Origin and scope of the report

This report was commissioned by Higgins Construction plc and produced by the Museum of London Archaeology Service (MoLAS). The report has been prepared within the terms of the relevant Standard specified by the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA, 2001).

Field evaluation, and the *Evaluation report* which comments on the results of that exercise, are defined in the most recent English Heritage guidelines (English Heritage, 1998) as intended to provide information about the archaeological resource in order to contribute to the:

- formulation of a strategy for the preservation or management of those remains; and/or
- formulation of an appropriate response or mitigation strategy to planning applications or other proposals which may adversely affect such archaeological remains, or enhance them; and/or
- formulation of a proposal for further archaeological investigations within a programme of research

1.5 Aims and objectives

All research is undertaken within the priorities established in the Museum of London's *A research framework for London Archaeology, 2002*

The following research aims and objectives were established in the *Method Statement* for the evaluation (Section 2.2):

- What is the nature and level of natural topography?
- Is there any evidence that the Late Bronze Age/Iron Age occupation found to the east of the site extends into the present site?
- Is there any evidence of Roman or Saxon occupation on the site associated with the redeposited material found to the east of the site?
- Can evidence for medieval and post-medieval managed agriculture/horticulture be determined from the site?
- Are there any structural remains from the medieval and post medieval periods present on the site?

2 Topographical and historical background

A detailed description of the geology, archaeology and history of the site was provided in the earlier *Archaeological impact assessment* (Miles 2004). A brief resume is provided here:

The site is located on the first River Terrace Gravel over London Clay. It is clear from other sites excavated in the vicinity that there are areas of brickearth surviving in places. Taking into account this evidence it is probable that natural brickearth is to be found beneath the site at *c* 3.4m OD.

Previous archaeological work in the vicinity indicates that the site has moderate potential for the discovery of *in situ* archaeological prehistoric remains. Excavations at Lady Margaret School, Parson's Green (site code PGN96), 90m east of the site, produced evidence of an Iron Age settlement, in the form of a probable Iron Age round-house and associated rubbish pits. Activities associated with these features included weaving and agriculture. It is unlikely that this was single round-house, but was part of a small group. Although the extent of this settlement remains undefined it was probably small, focusing on a farm. A sherd of Bronze Age pottery was found redeposited in a later feature does not necessarily imply Bronze Age cultural activity in the area.

Little in the way of archaeological remains from the Roman period has been recorded in the immediate vicinity. A single sherd was produced from Lady Margaret School site 90m to the east, but the suggestion that this implies that the localised Iron Age settlement continued into the Roman period seems tenuous.

Archaeological remains from the Saxon period have not been recorded in the immediate vicinity of the site, apart from a single sherd of pottery from Lady Margaret School.

The site is located on the northern periphery of the medieval hamlet of Parsons Green along with its associated field systems. The site is located within the freelands or 'manor' of Rosamund's. This derives its name from the family first associated with it, the Rosemont, Rosemond or Rosamund. The estate seems to have been on the west side of Parsons Green Lane and stretched from Percy Cross to Rectory Road. It dates from at least the early 15th century, with the final involvement from the Rosamund family coming in 1440, after which it passed through many hands. It is not clear where the manor house was located, if there was one, but the 18th century mansion house for the estate was built close to the junction of Parsons Green Lane and Fulham Road, some distance to the north of the site. This was known as High Elms House, then later Park House and is shown on various maps dating from 1746 to 1862; it is, however, marked as Rosamund's on Faulkner's map of 1813.

The early map evidence indicates that until at least 1874 the proposal site was located within a semi-rural landscape of small market gardens and orchard plots. There is

potential for survival of these smaller post-medieval and post-enclosure field systems within the proposal site.

The building known as Rosamund's was a large house built in the second half of the 17th century, but does not seem to have been the manor house for the manor (see above). It was located under what is currently Brigade House, just to the south-east of the site.

Evidence of outbuildings relating to either Rosamund's 'manor' freelands or the 17th-century Rosamund's house may be present on the site.

3 The evaluation

3.1 Methodology

All archaeological excavation and monitoring during the evaluation was carried out in accordance with the preceding *Method Statement* (MoLAS, 2006, and the MoLAS *Archaeological Site Manual* (MoLAS, 1994).

Five evaluation trenches were excavated across the site: four in external areas, and one within the M Clark motors workshop fronting onto Heathmans Road.

The ground was broken out and cleared by contractors under MoLAS supervision. Trenches were excavated by machine by the contractors, and monitored by a member of staff from MoLAS.

The locations of evaluation trenches were surveyed by the MoLAS Geomatics team. This information was then plotted onto the OS grid.

A written and drawn record of all archaeological deposits encountered was made in accordance with the principles set out in the MoLAS site recording manual (MoLAS, 1994). Levels were calculated by measuring down from known levels adjacent to each trench, established on a topographical survey of the site (Aworth Survey Consultants dwg no. 1925, dated 14/07/04). The levels on this survey are related to the Ordnance Survey benchmark of 3.20m OD on the east face of Parsons Green Station, Parsons Green Road.

The site has produced: 1 trench location plan; 33 context records; 5 section drawings at 1:20 and 1:10; and 13 photographs. In addition 1 box of finds was recovered from the site.

The site finds and records can be found under the site code DSP06 in the MoL archive.

3.2 Results of the evaluation

In the following section, numbers in square brackets [] refer to context numbers. For trench locations see Fig 2.

<i>Evaluation Trench 1</i>	
Location	Extreme north east of the site
Dimensions	18m N/S x 2.50m E/W
Modern ground level	4.15m OD (north end), 4.20m O.D. (south end)
Base of modern fill	Approx 3.50m OD
Depth of archaeological deposits seen	1.80m

Level of base of deposits observed	1.90m OD
Natural observed	2.76m OD

Trench 1 was located in the north-east of the site, in an external area to the rear of buildings fronting onto Parsons Green Lane. It was aligned roughly north-south.

A pale brown brickearth deposit [19], which probably represented natural brickearth was observed at 2.76m OD, overlying natural River Terrace Gravels [20] at 2.55m OD (see Fig 3). Cutting these natural deposits was a shallow-sided feature [28] observed only in section, at least 1.20m deep. It was filled with a sandy brickearth [10], which produced the earliest pottery retrieved from the site – a London area post-medieval slipped redware (fabric code PMSRG) domed lid, an uncommon vessel form for this particular industry; this was dated to the 16th century. The feature was sealed by two late 18th/early 19th century dark grey clayey silt makeup/levelling dumps [9] and [11], whose upper surface lay at 3.80m OD. An intervening gravel deposit [21] may be the remnants of a pathway to the north of wall [15].

Cutting into the layers described above were the remains of three brick-built domed structures ([2], [5] and [16]) – probably a row of cesspits or privies (see Fig 3). The best surviving example, [16] measured 2.05m in diameter. Although the domes had been largely demolished, it seems likely that there had once been a chute through the middle of the dome, with a seat supported on a timber floor. On the north face of wall [3] a 70mm step may have been for joists for such a floor. At a similar level (3.45m O.D), a row of bricks [14] laid flat on the ground to the north of cesspit [5] may represent a brick path. The demolition fills of these three features ([1], [6] and [11]) were all loose dark reddish brown silt, and contained pottery of mid-19th century date. Context [6] yielded nine vessels of factory made pottery dating between 1820 and 1880 with yellow wares (fabric code YELL) most frequently found serving as chamber pots and serving dishes.

The remains of four east-west aligned boundary walls ([3], [15] [7] and [8]), each c 3.4m apart were recorded between the domed structures. These appear to belong to a row of terraced houses built in the first half of the 19th century, as they do not appear on Faulkner's map of Fulham dated 1800 but do appear on the 1853 Tithe map (see Miles 2004, Figs 4 and 5). These walls were each trench built, made of unfrogged brick fragments two courses wide and bonded with compact yellow mortar. Walls [8] and [15] included fragments of worked Portland stone, possibly from a high status house in the area that had been demolished. In the extreme south of the trench was a robber cut [18] for another boundary wall that was probably demolished in the early 20th century (the infill included a Bovril bottle of that date). The modern concrete slab sealing the features in this trench was 0.20m to 0.25m thick and overlay 20th century made ground.

<i>Evaluation Trench 2</i>	
Location	North east of the site
Dimensions	20.00m E/W x 2.00m N/S
Modern ground level	4.56m OD (west end), 4.52m O.D. (east end)

Base of modern fill	N\A
Depth of archaeological deposits seen	N\A
Level of base of deposits observed	N\A
Natural observed	2.32m OD

Trench 2 was located in the north-eastern part of the site in an external area to the rear of nos 70-72 and 74 Parsons Green Lane; the trench was aligned roughly east-west.

The entire area of the trench was taken up by a network of 20th century wall foundations, supported in places by steel girders and concrete slabs. These were located beneath a 0.80m thick layer of modern building rubble, which was in turn sealed by the concrete slab which was 0.25m thick. Truncated natural gravel was observed in the extreme north of the trench at 2.32m OD.

<i>Evaluation Trench 3</i>	
Location	South of the site
Dimensions	11.00m N/S x 2.00m E/W
Modern ground level	4.55m OD
Base of modern fill	3.50m OD
Depth of archaeological deposits seen	1.00m
Level of base of deposits observed	2.40 m OD
Natural observed	2.90m OD

Trench 3 was located in the south-west of the site, in an external area adjacent to nos. 4-5 Heathmans Road. It was aligned approximately north-south.

The southern end of the trench had been truncated down to the natural gravel by a large early 20th century pit measuring at least 7.00m north-south. Natural gravel was recorded in the northern part of the trench at 2.90m OD and was sealed by mid brown redeposited brickearth containing occasional charcoal and chalk flecks [24] at 3.20m OD. Above the brickearth was a 0.40m thick deposit of a dark brown clay-silt [23] containing fragments of post-medieval tile, oyster shell and charcoal flecks; the upper surface of this deposit lay at 3.45m OD. Above this, late 19th/early 20th century dumps up to 1.10m thick lay directly below the 0.13m thick concrete slab.

<i>Evaluation Trench 4</i>	
Location	Extreme south-west of site
Dimensions	15.00m NNW/SSE x 2.00m WSW/ENE
Modern ground level	4.52m OD
Base of modern fill	3.43m O.D.
Depth of archaeological deposits seen	4.20m
Level of base of deposits observed	Minus 1.32 m OD
Natural observed	3.53m OD

Trench 4 was located in the south-west of the site, within the M Clark motors workshop fronting onto Heathmans Road. It was aligned NNW/SSE.

Two large 20th century ground beams ran east -west across the centre of the trench. Natural gravel [26] was observed at 3.53m O.D. At the north end of the trench, a large pit [27] measuring at least 5.00m in diameter and at least 3.50m deep was recorded, extending beyond the northern limit of excavation. It was filled with mid brown redeposited brickearth [25] containing occasional fragments of post-medieval tile and charcoal flecks. The extent and depth of this feature suggests that it was a quarry, probably for brickearth and gravel. This feature was sealed by a series of late 19th/early 20th century dumps/made ground up to 1.10m thick. The overlying concrete slab was 0.40m thick.

<i>Evaluation Trench 5</i>	
Location	Centre of site
Dimensions	19.00m E/W x 3.00m N/S
Modern ground level/top of slab	4.56m OD
Base of modern fill	3.36m OD
Depth of archaeological deposits seen	2.05m
Level of base of deposits observed	2.51m OD
Natural observed	3.36m OD

Trench 5 was located externally in the central part of the site and was aligned approximately east-west.

Beneath the 0.15m thick concrete slab were two layers of modern made ground, 0.96m thick, overlying a 0.40m thick deposit of early 20th century black coal ash [28], containing brick and glass fragments. These deposits represented modern truncation down to 3.36m O.D, the level at which natural gravel [33] was recorded (see Fig 4). At the west end of the trench the gravel was cut by a large feature [30], which measured at least 3.0m across and continued beyond the western limit of excavation; this may have been a quarry for brickearth /gravel. It was at least 0.95m deep and continued below the limit of excavation at the base of the trench. It was infilled with [29], a mid grey silt containing occasional fragments of post-medieval tile, pale grey mortar flecks and a fragment of vitrified brick. At a distance of 1.50m to the east, another feature [32], measuring at least 3.50m east-west, was also recorded cutting natural deposits; this contained a silty gravel fill [31] and was probably another gravel quarry. The eastern end of the trench had been truncated by a modern pit, at least 5.00m in diameter which extended below the limit of excavation.

3.3 Assessment of the evaluation

GLAAS guidelines (English Heritage, 1998) require an assessment of the success of the evaluation ‘in order to illustrate what level of confidence can be placed on the information which will provide the basis of the mitigation strategy’. In the case of this site, the archaeological features and finds were of limited significance. Given the size and spread of the evaluation trenches, it is considered that they provide a representative sample of the area due to be affected by the development.

4 Archaeological potential

4.1 Realisation of original research aims

- *What is the nature and level of natural topography?*

Natural brickearth was recorded at 2.76m OD in Trench1 in the north-east of the site. Elsewhere it had been entirely truncated. Natural gravels were observed at a maximum height of 3.53m OD in Trench 4, and 3.36m OD in Trench 5.

- *Is there any evidence that the Late Bronze Age/Iron Age occupation found to the east of the site extends into the present site?*

There was no evidence of prehistoric activity within the areas of the evaluation trenches.

- *Is there any evidence of Roman or Saxon occupation on the site associated with the redeposited material found to the east of the site?*

There was no evidence of either deposits or features of Roman or Saxon date on the site.

- *Can evidence for medieval and post-medieval managed agriculture be determined from the site?*

There was no evidence for medieval or post-medieval managed agriculture or horticulture on the site. External features of post-medieval date comprised several large brickearth and gravel quarry pits, recorded in Trenches 4 and 5. It is possible that some of the post-medieval quarrying pre-dates the 19th century, but there was a lack of firm dating evidence.

- *Are there any structural remains from the medieval and post-medieval periods present on the site?*

There were no structures of medieval date on the site. Structural remains associated with post-medieval buildings of early 19th century date were recorded in Trench 1. These comprised a series of three brick-built cesspits/privies and associated east-west brick walls. These features appear to represent outbuildings or annexes to the rear of houses fronting onto Parsons Green.

4.2 General discussion of potential

The archaeological evaluation did not produce any positive evidence for activity prior to the post-medieval period. The evaluation has shown that the potential for survival of horizontal archaeological deposits of earlier date than the post-medieval period on the site is low, due to the extent of later (19th century and later) disturbance.

There is some potential for the survival of deeper cut features, although it should be noted that all those encountered in the evaluation were of post-medieval date. Large scale quarrying from this period in the western part of the site in particular is likely to have caused additional truncation of earlier features. It is possible that some of the post-medieval quarrying pre-dates the 19th century, but there is a lack of firm dating evidence.

4.3 Significance

Whilst the archaeological remains are undoubtedly of local significance there is nothing to suggest that they are of regional or national importance.

5 Proposed development impact and recommendations

The proposed redevelopment comprises the demolition of the present buildings on the site and the construction of residential apartments spread over five blocks, with office and retail space at ground level and associated landscaping/car parking.

The evaluation would suggest that the earliest material likely to be affected by the development is of post-medieval date. Any remains likely to be affected would be those located in the areas of new foundations, piles/pile caps, services and other below-ground features/areas of ground reduction.

It is possible that the Greater London Archaeological Advisor will require further work in the form of a watching brief during groundworks in order to record any remaining archaeological deposits and features on the site.

The decision on the appropriate archaeological response to the deposits revealed during the evaluation rests with the Local Planning Authority and their designated archaeological advisor.

6 Acknowledgements

MoLAS would like to thank Higgins Construction plc for commissioning the archaeological evaluation and report. The author would like to thank Arthur Cooke of Higgins Constuction plc and Frank and Patrick, for their assistance during the evaluation.

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8 NMR OASIS archaeological report form

8.1 OASIS ID: molas1-17607

Project details

Project name	Evaluation
Short description of the project	Evaluation of 5 trenches at The Dairy Site, Parsons Green, London, SW6
Project dates	Start: 07-08-2006 End: 11-08-2006
Previous/future work	No / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	DSP06 - Sitecode
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	None
Current Land use	Industry and Commerce 1 - Industrial
Monument type	BRICKEARTH QUARRIES Post Medieval
Monument type	BRICK LINED PRIVIES Post Medieval
Significant Finds	POTTERY Post Medieval

Project location

Country	England
Site location	GREATER LONDON HAMMERSMITH AND FULHAM FULHAM The Dairy Site, Parsons Green, London, SW6

Postcode SW6

Study area 204.00 Square metres

National grid reference TQ 24994 76595 Point

Height OD Min: 2.36m Max: 2.76m

Project creators

Name of Organisation MoLAS

Project brief originator English Heritage/Department of Environment

Project design originator MoLAS

Project director/manager Dunwoodie, Lesley

Project supervisor P. Cardiff

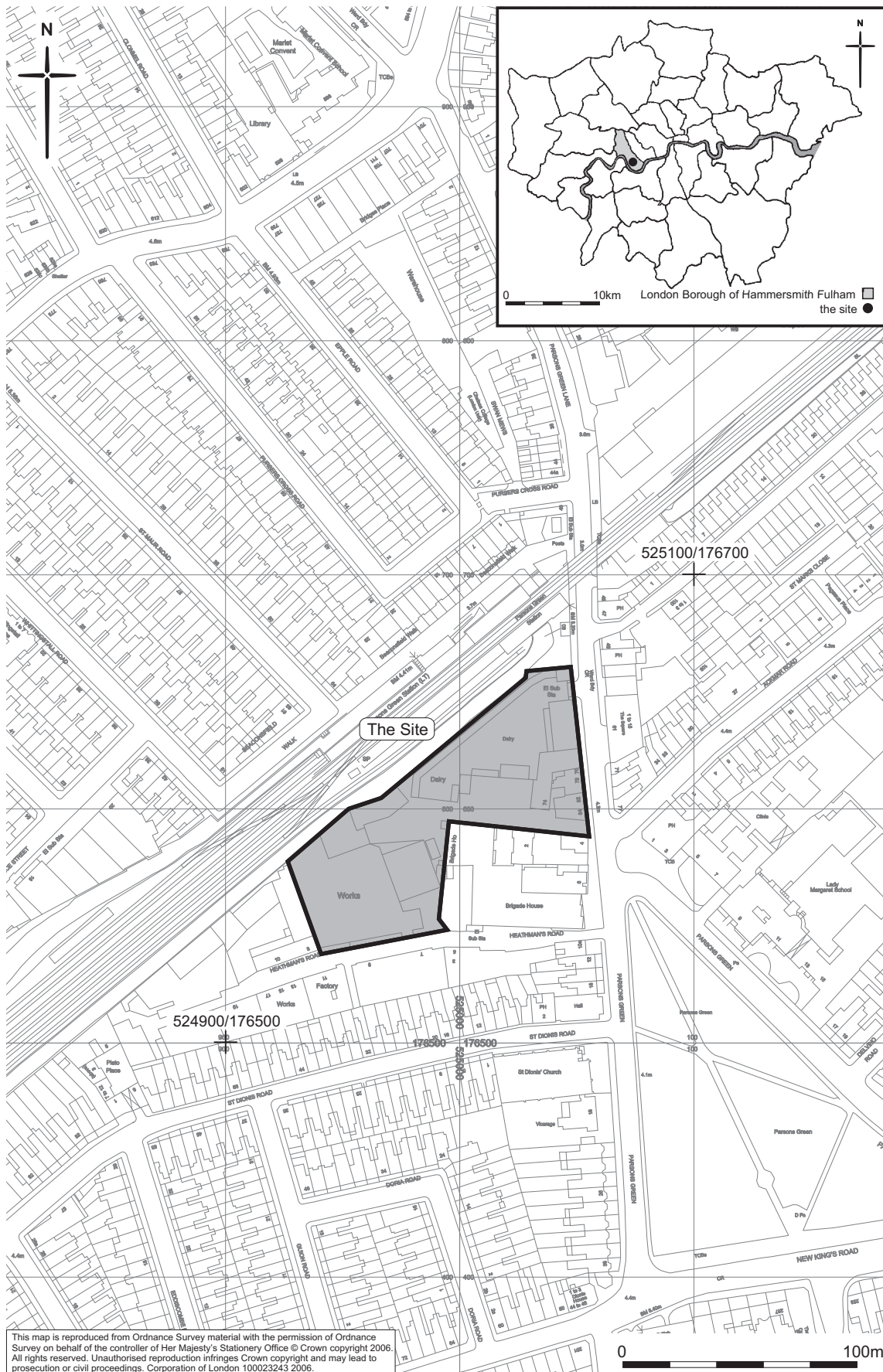
Sponsor or funding body Higgins Construction plc

Project archives

Physical Archive LAARC
recipient

Entered by Peter Cardiff (pcardiff@museumoflondon.org.uk)

Entered on 23 August 2006



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Fig 1 Site location

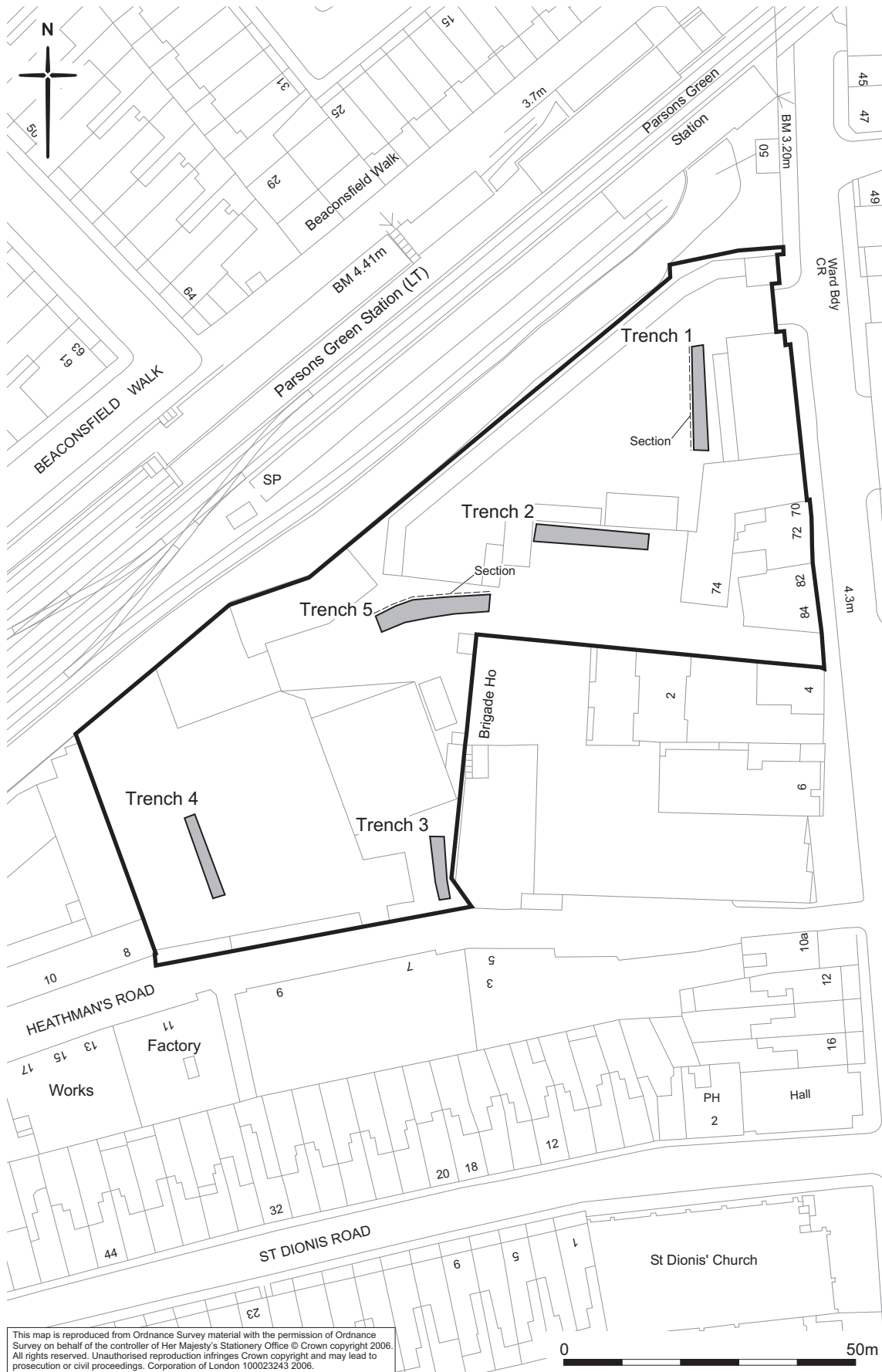


Fig 2 Trench locations

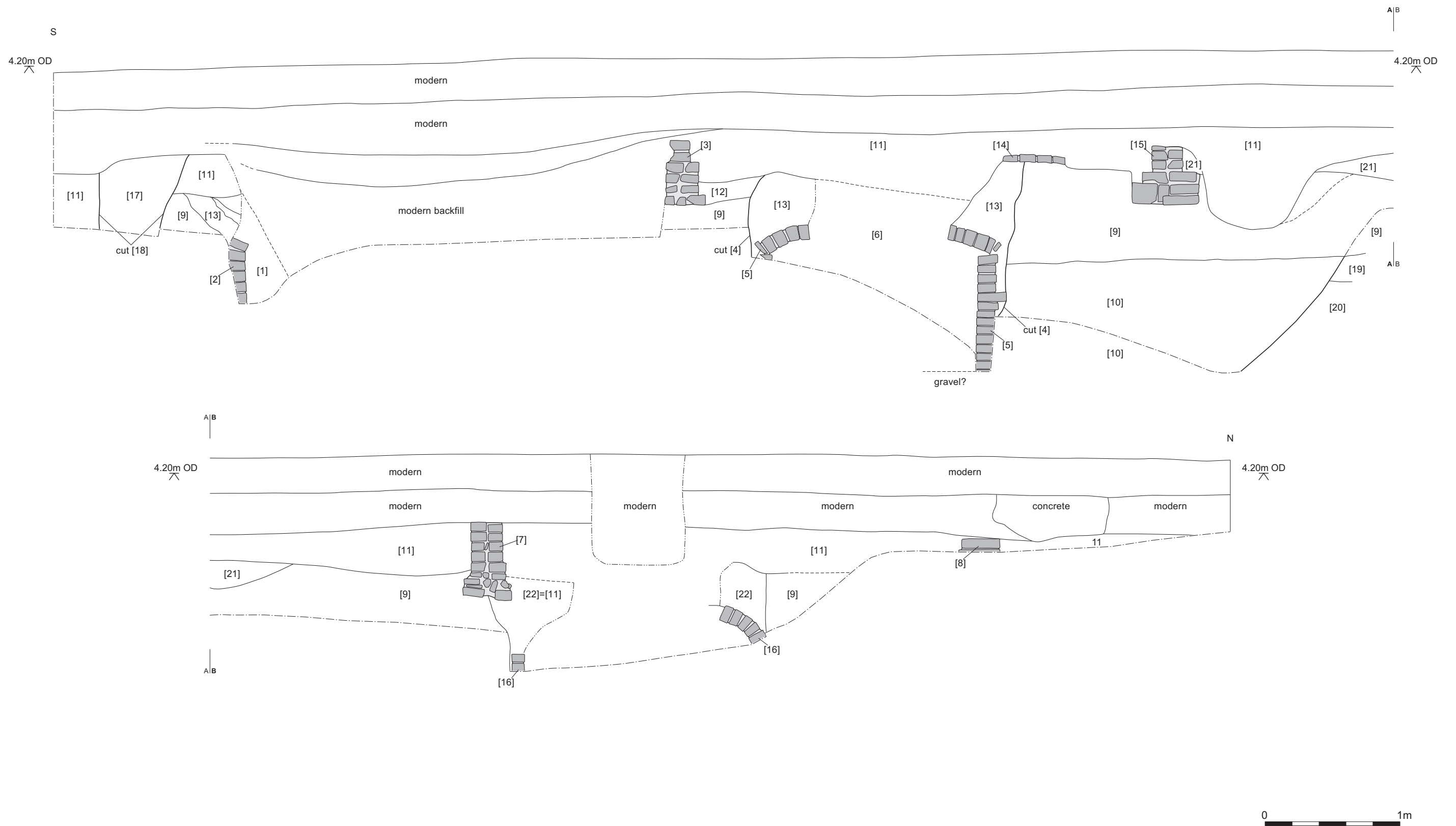


Fig 3 East facing section in Trench 1

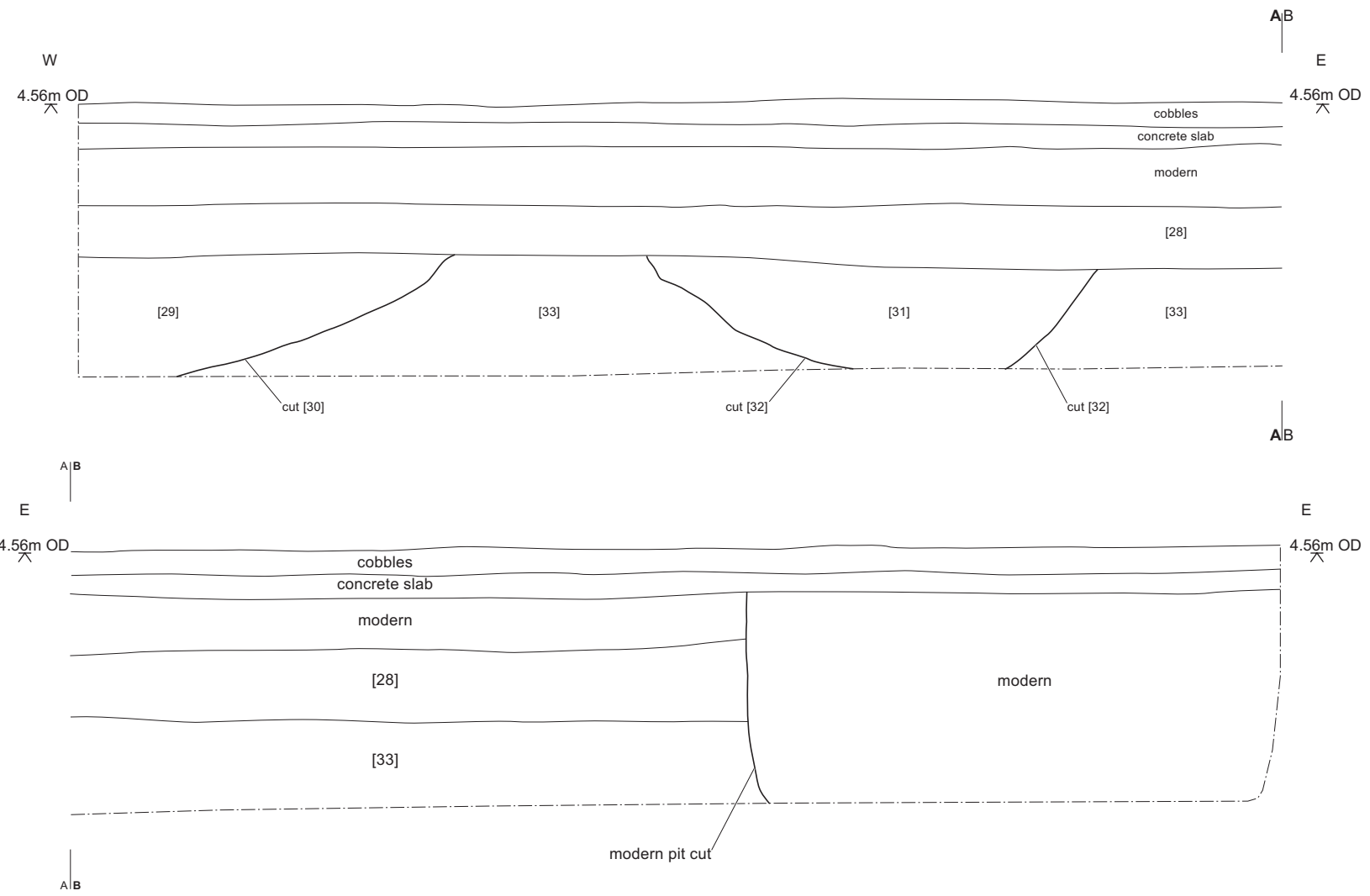


Fig 4 South facing section in Trench 5