

**LAND AT THE JUNCTION OF EDRIDGE ROAD AND
COOMBE ROAD
London CR0 1BD**

London Borough of Croydon

Pre-determination archaeological evaluation report

April 2018



**Land at the junction of Edridge Road and Coombe Road
Croydon
London, CR0 1BD**

Pre-determination Evaluation Report

NGR 532569 164870

Sign-off history

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Photo 1: Trench 1 showing the remains of the 20th century houses (looking south-west)

Photo 2: Trench 2 the modern cut truncating natural clay (looking east)

Executive summary

This report presents the results of an archaeological evaluation carried by MOLA (Museum of London Archaeology) on the site of the land at the junction of Edridge Road and Coombe Road, Croydon, London, CR0 1BD in the London Borough of Croydon. The report was requested by the local planning authority in support of a planning application in order to clarify the site's potential for archaeological remains, and their likely significance. The results will inform the consideration by the local planning authority of the archaeological implications of the planning application of the site following the submission of a planning application (ref: 17/06330/FUL) to develop the site for residential use. The evaluation was commissioned by Brick by Brick.

The evaluation comprised two trenches. Trench 1 found natural geology had been truncated by 20th century landscaping that probably related to the construction of local housing. In Trench 2 there were the remains of 20th century housing, comprising a concrete slab with several brick walls built on it. These houses were destroyed in the Second World War and the area landscaped. Both trenches showed there was truncation caused by this landscaping.

The results of the field evaluation have helped to refine the initial assessment of the archaeological potential of the site.

The development proposals comprise the removal of the existing soft landscaping and the construction of a four storey housing structure connected to a three storey single residence. The foundation is expected to be piled for both structures. No basement is currently proposed. This work will impact upon the archaeological remains found in the evaluation.

In light of the site's low archaeological potential, as determined by the evaluation, it is recommended that no further archaeological work is required.

1 Introduction

1.1 Site background

- 1.1.1 The evaluation took place at the land at the junction of Edridge Road and Coombe Road, Croydon, London, CR0 1BD in the London Borough of Croydon, hereafter called 'the site'. It is bounded by a road to the south and west and by garden walls to the north and east. The Ordnance Survey National Grid Reference for the centre of the site is 532569 164870. The site code is ED118.
- 1.1.2 A desk-top Historic Environment Assessment was prepared by MOLA (Museum of London Archaeology) in 2017 (MOLA 2017) and provides in depth detail on the natural geology, archaeological and historical background of the site, and the initial interpretation of its archaeological potential. The results of the evaluation have provided further information of the archaeological potential within the site. The evaluation has taken place at the pre-planning stage, and the report will be submitted as part of the planning application, to enable the local planning authority (LPA) to formulate an appropriate mitigation strategy for the impacts of the proposed development on archaeology.

1.2 Designated heritage assets

- 1.2.1 The site does not contain any nationally designated (protected) heritage assets, such as scheduled monuments, listed buildings or registered parks and gardens. A grade II listed building, Ruskin House (NHL 1294673), and associated grade II listed gate piers (NHL 1079324) are immediately adjacent to the site to the east. Ruskin House is an early 18th century residential building.
- 1.2.2 The site is within an LPA archaeological priority area (APA), the Central Croydon Archaeological Priority Area 2.2 (APA) and was formerly within the Croydon Archaeological Priority Zone (APZ) numbered 15 as defined by the LPA, designated for its potential for archaeological remains pertaining to the settlement and development of Central Croydon (Historic England 2016, 63).

1.3 Aims and objectives

- 1.3.1 The purpose of archaeological evaluation as defined by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists is to confirm 'as far as is reasonably possible, the nature of the archaeological resource within a specified area using appropriate methods and practices' (CIfA 2014). The aim of such an investigation 'pre-determination', i.e. prior to the determination of planning consent is to clarify the site's potential for archaeological remains and so inform the LPA's consideration of the implications of the planning application. The results will also help the LPA to set out an appropriate strategy for any further investigation and/or mitigation which may form a condition as part of planning consent.
- 1.3.2 Objectives for this evaluation as set out in the preceding Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI; MOLA, 2018) were to confirm:
- the extent and depth of modern disturbance;
 - the depth and nature of the natural deposits;
 - the presence of archaeological remains within the site, their nature and significance, primarily:
 - any human remains, especially Saxon burials;
 - evidence of later medieval agricultural remains;
 - evidence of the footings and basement features of the early 18th century stables and outbuildings and early 19th century terraced housing.

2 Archaeological and historical background

2.1 Topography and geology

- 2.1.1 A description of the topology and underlying geology is detailed in the Historic Environment Assessment (MOLA 2017). In summary, the known / predicted levels of natural deposits and truncation are as follows :
- The current ground level is at 54.6–57.1m OD, the ground slopes from the north-east to the south-west;
 - The top of truncated natural sands clay and gravels is recorded between 0.3–1.5mbgl

2.2 Predicted archaeological potential

- 2.2.1 The potential of the site to contain archaeological remains as predicted prior to the evaluation is set out in the Historic Environment Assessment (MOLA 2017), and summarised here.

Prehistoric period (800,000 BC–AD43)

- 2.2.2 The well-drained gravels close to the River Wandle would have attracted early settlement or other activity. Bronze Age pottery sherds, worked flint flakes, pits and gullies were found along suggesting some form of more settled activity during this period. However, the scant evidence from all other prehistoric periods suggests that such activity was focused to the north of the site. The nature and extent of the activity in the area is uncertain and it is possible that post-medieval development has removed much of the evidence of prehistoric activity.
- 2.2.3 The site has low potential to contain prehistoric remains the significance of which would depend on their nature and extent

Roman period (AD 43–410)

- 2.2.4 By AD 43, the town of *Londinium* was established on the north bank of the Thames where the City of London now stands, 16km to the north of the site.
- 2.2.5 The site's position overlooking the Wandle Valley would have been attractive for use or occupation. However, Roman remains found near the site are mainly residual in nature except a late Romano-British burial, found 180m north of the site and a set of features, pits and a ditch, probably agricultural in nature, found 180m south-west of the site. The site's distance from a main Roman Road also suggests that habitation would lie further to the west. The nature and extent of the activity in the area is uncertain and it is possible that post-medieval development has removed much of the evidence of Roman activity.
- 2.2.6 The site has low potential to contain Roman remains, the significance of which would depend on their nature and extent. Any burials would be of high significance whereas agricultural features would be low significance.

Early medieval/Saxon period (AD 410–1066)

- 2.2.7 Following the withdrawal of the Roman army from England in the early 5th century AD, Germanic ('Saxon') settlers arrived from mainland Europe, with occupation in the form of small villages and an economy initially based on agriculture. The nearest known main Saxon settlement was founded in Croydon, 3.km to the north-northeast of the site possibly from the 9th-10th century.
- 2.2.8 A 5th–7th century Saxon cemetery was reported to have been discovered in 1893–4 during the creation of Edridge Road and the housing development associated with it. Subsequent investigations in the vicinity of the Edridge Road development have discovered inhumation and cremation burials dated to the Saxon period. Investigations located between the Saxon cemetery and the site did not find additional burials or any other type of Saxon period remains.

The southern limits of the Saxon cemetery have not been clearly delineated through archaeological investigation and it is possible that the Saxon cemetery extends to the site. The site of the Saxon settlement of Croydon has not been definitively located and it is possible that later medieval and post-medieval development has removed evidence of Saxon occupation layers within the area.

- 2.2.9 The site has low to moderate potential to contain Saxon remains. Any burials would be of high significance.

Late medieval period (AD1066–1485)

- 2.2.10 The site lies within the southern boundary of medieval Croydon's expansion during the 15th century. There is no evidence that the site was developed during this period, however, evidence from investigations in the vicinity of the site suggest the area was used for agriculture.
- 2.2.11 The site has moderate potential to contain later medieval remains the significance of which would depend on their nature and extent.

Post-medieval period (AD1485–present)

- 2.2.12 The growth of Croydon continued through the later medieval period. Despite its economic expansion, Croydon underwent relatively gradual change in area and geographical extent until the mid-18th century. Rocque's Surrey map of 1762 depicts increased development within South Croydon in general. Two buildings are depicted within or near the site, a smaller building to the west, possibly the series of outbuildings associated with the house and seen within the site in later maps, and a larger building in the same location as the current Ruskin House (National List ref 1294673).
- 2.2.13 The Ordnance Survey 1st edition 5ft:mile map of 1870 shows the site as containing seven small outbuildings and a small fenced area, while the Ordnance Survey 2nd edition 5ft:mile map of 1896 records the addition of a glass greenhouse within the site orientated north-south.
- 2.2.14 The Ordnance Survey 3rd edition 25":mile map of 1913 shows that the outbuildings and greenhouse have been demolished and four terrace houses have been built on the site as part of a development that runs the length of Edridge Road.
- 2.2.15 The local ARP map of 1942 documents the explosion of a 'parachute' landmine within the vicinity of the site which damaged the houses resulting in demolition which was confirmed on the Ordnance Survey 1:1250 scale map of 1954. This map shows the site in its modern state, with the land now a small green space and currently landscaped with small bushes and trees and two small areas of hard landscaping that lead to benches. The present-day layout of the site is shown on Fig 2.
- 2.2.16 The site has high potential to contain post-medieval foundations and cellars associated with Ruskin House. Such remains would be considered of low significance.

3 The evaluation

3.1 Methodology

- 3.1.1 All archaeological excavation, monitoring and recording during the evaluation was carried out in accordance with the WSI (MOLA, 2018).
- 3.1.2 The evaluation involved the excavation and recording of two trenches.
- 3.1.3 The ground was broken out and cleared by contractors under MOLA supervision. Trenches were excavated by a combination of machine by the contractors and hand cleaning by MOLA.
- 3.1.4 Trenches were located – off setting from adjacent building/walls and plotted onto a base map. The trenches were then plotted by MOLA geomatics onto the OS grid.
- 3.1.5 The site has produced: 1 trench location sketch plan; 7 context records; and 34 digital photographs. In view of the recent nature of the finds none were kept from the site.
- 3.1.6 The site finds and records can be found under the site code EDI18 in the MoL archive.

3.2 Results

- 3.2.1 For trench locations see Fig 2.

Evaluation Trench 1 (see photo 1)

Location	Centre of site
Dimensions	8m x 2m
Modern ground level/top of slab	55.37m OD (NE) to 54.95m OD (SW)
Modern fill/slab	0.15m to 0.25m thick
Depth of archaeological deposits seen	1.0m
Level of base of deposits observed and/or base of trench	54.0m OD
Natural observed	54.00–54.10-m OD

- 3.2.2 The natural geology in this trench was gravel, [7], at 54.00–54.10-m OD, and these levels were probably truncated as there was no evidence of any natural clay such as that found in trench 2.
- 3.2.3 The only archaeological features found in this trench were early 20th century in date. These comprised a concrete slab at c 55.04m OD with several walls built on top of it.
- 3.2.4 One wall, [1], ran NW to SE, and a short distance away two parallel walls, [2] and [3] ran NE-SW. To the NW of wall [3] was an area of brick, [4], at 55.15m OD and an area of concrete. Most of the bricks were red and had frogs and some were marked LBC (London Brick Company) suggesting these are 20th century in date. These features were only 0.15m below the ground level and were sealed by modern topsoil.
- 3.2.5 Elsewhere in the trench there was up to 0.80m of a silty deposit, [6], that contained occasional brick fragments that sealed the natural gravels [7]. This was probably modern landscaping alongside Coombe Road.

Evaluation Trench 2 (See photo 2)

Location	North-east part of the site
Dimensions	2m x 2m
Modern ground level/top of slab	55.70 m OD (E) to 55.48m OD (W)
Modern fill/slab	0.25m thick
Depth of archaeological deposits seen	1.0m thick
Level of base of deposits observed and/or base of trench	54.60m OD
Natural observed	55.21m OD

- 3.2.6 Most of the trench was disturbed by a large cut running SW to NE that was filled with clay with some modern bricks. This was not bottomed when excavation finished at 1.0m below ground level which was 54.60m OD. This cut may be landscaping as the gardens behind the houses on Eldridge Road to the north of this trench were at a noticeably lower level when compared with this area of the site.
- 3.2.7 In the undisturbed part of the trench the natural, [5], a yellow clay was found at 55.21m OD and sloping slightly down to the SW. This was 0.10m thick and was over gravels.
- 3.2.8 There were no archaeological features or deposits in this trench.

3.3 Significance of the results

- 3.3.1 The remains found in Trench 1 are of the early 20th century buildings that were destroyed in the Second World War (1939–45) and sealed when the area was landscaped. There is also evidence the site had been truncated when the area was landscaped resulting in several deposits that contain occasional brick fragments.
- 3.3.2 There are no remains on site which may be required by the local planning authority to be preserved *in situ*.

3.4 Assessment of the evaluation

- 3.4.1 The evaluation has achieved its purpose to show the depth of natural and the archaeological remains. It has also shown the level of truncation on the site.
- 3.4.2 There is a high level of confidence in the information provided by this evaluation which will provide the basis of the mitigation strategy. The archaeological remains encountered on the site relate to the early 20th century buildings known to have existed here until their destruction in the Second World War and can be considered of low significance.

4 Proposed development impact and recommendations

- 4.1.1 The proposed development comprises the removal of the existing soft landscaping and the construction of a four storey housing structure connected to a three storey single residence. The foundation is expected to be piled for both structures. No basement is currently proposed.
- 4.1.2 The proposed development will have an impact on the archaeological remains identified in the evaluation.
- 4.1.3 In light of the site's low archaeological potential, as determined by the evaluation, it is recommended that no further archaeological work is required.

5 Planning framework

- 5.1.1 Current planning legislation and policies are detailed in section 9 of the Historic Environment Assessment (MOLA 2017).

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7 NMR OASIS archaeological report form

OASIS ID: molas1-313025

Project details

Project name Land at the junction of Edridge Road and Coombe Road, Croydon, London

Short description of the project A pre-determination evaluation found natural in Trench 1 had been truncated by 20th century landscaping that probably related to the construction of local housing. In Trench 2 there were the remains of 20th century housing, comprising a concrete slab with several brick walls built on it. These houses were destroyed in the Second World War and the area landscaped.

Project dates Start: 19-03-2018 End: 23-03-2018

Previous/future work No / Not known

Any associated project reference codes EDI18 - Sitecode

Type of project Field evaluation

Site status Local Authority Designated Archaeological Area

Current Land use Other 14 - Recreational usage

Monument type BUILDINGS Modern

Methods & techniques "Sample Trenches"

Development type Urban residential (e.g. flats, houses, etc.)

Prompt Voluntary/self-interest

Position in the planning process Pre-application

Project location

Country England

Site location GREATER LONDON CROYDON CROYDON Land at the junction of Edridge Road and Coombe Road, Croydon, London,

Postcode CR0 1BD

Study area 630 Square metres

Site coordinates TQ 32569 64870 51.366884847378 -0.095415922268 51 22 00 N 000 05 43 W Point

Height OD / Depth Min: 54m Max: 55.21m

Project creators

Name of Organisation	MOLA
Project brief originator	Client
Project design originator	MOLA
Project director/manager	Paul Riggott
Project supervisor	Tony Mackinder
Type of sponsor/funding body	Developer
Name of sponsor/funding body	Brick by Brick

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Physical Archive recipient	London Archaeological Archive
Physical Archive ID	EDI18
Digital Archive recipient	London Archaeological Archive
Digital Archive ID	EDI18
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography","Survey"
Paper Archive recipient	London Archaeological Archive
Paper Media available	"Context sheet","Diary","Matrices","Photograph","Plan"

Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	Land at the junction of Edridge Road and Coombe Road, Croydon, London, CR0 1BD
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Fig 1 Site location

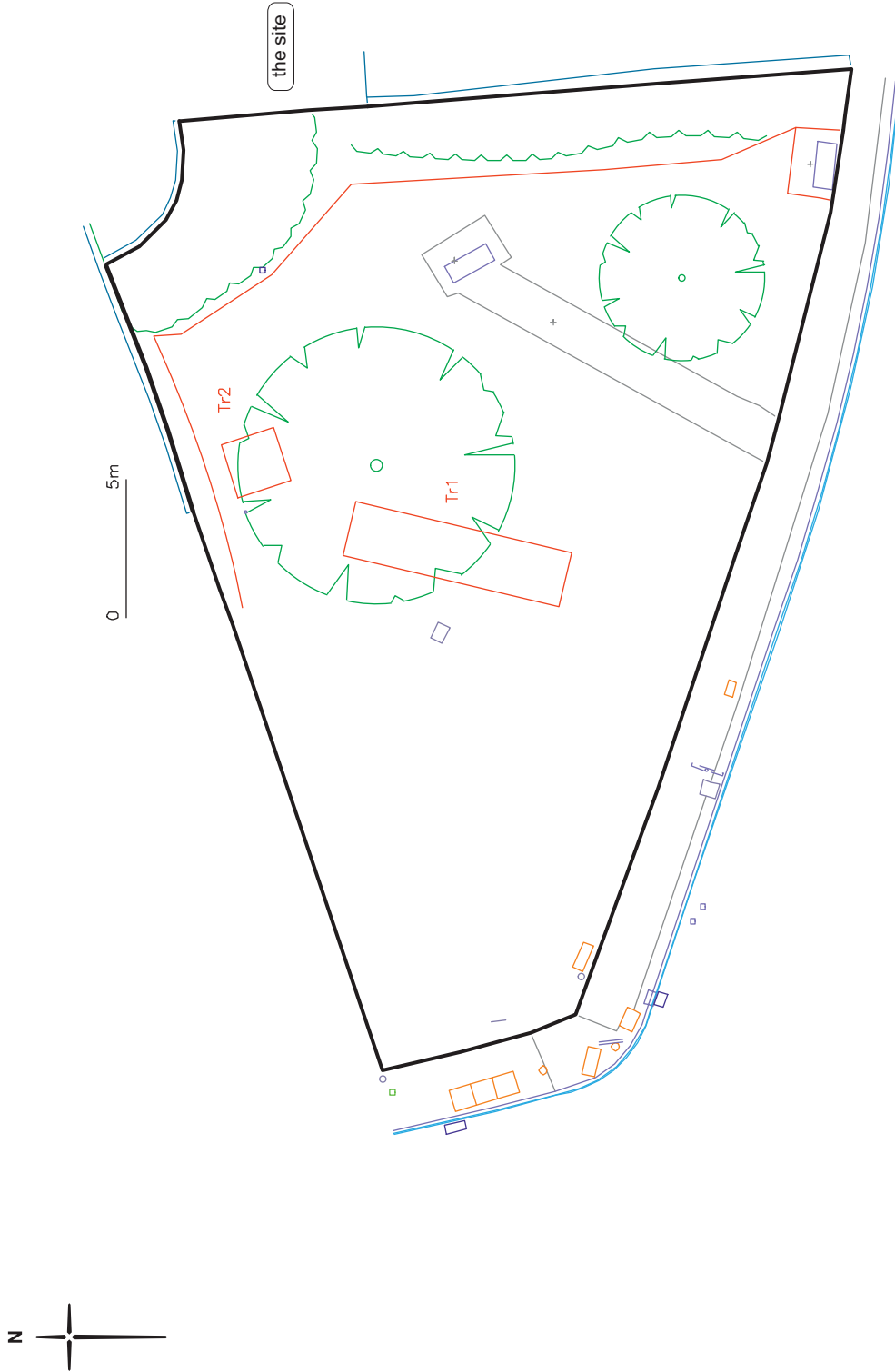


Fig 2 Trench layout

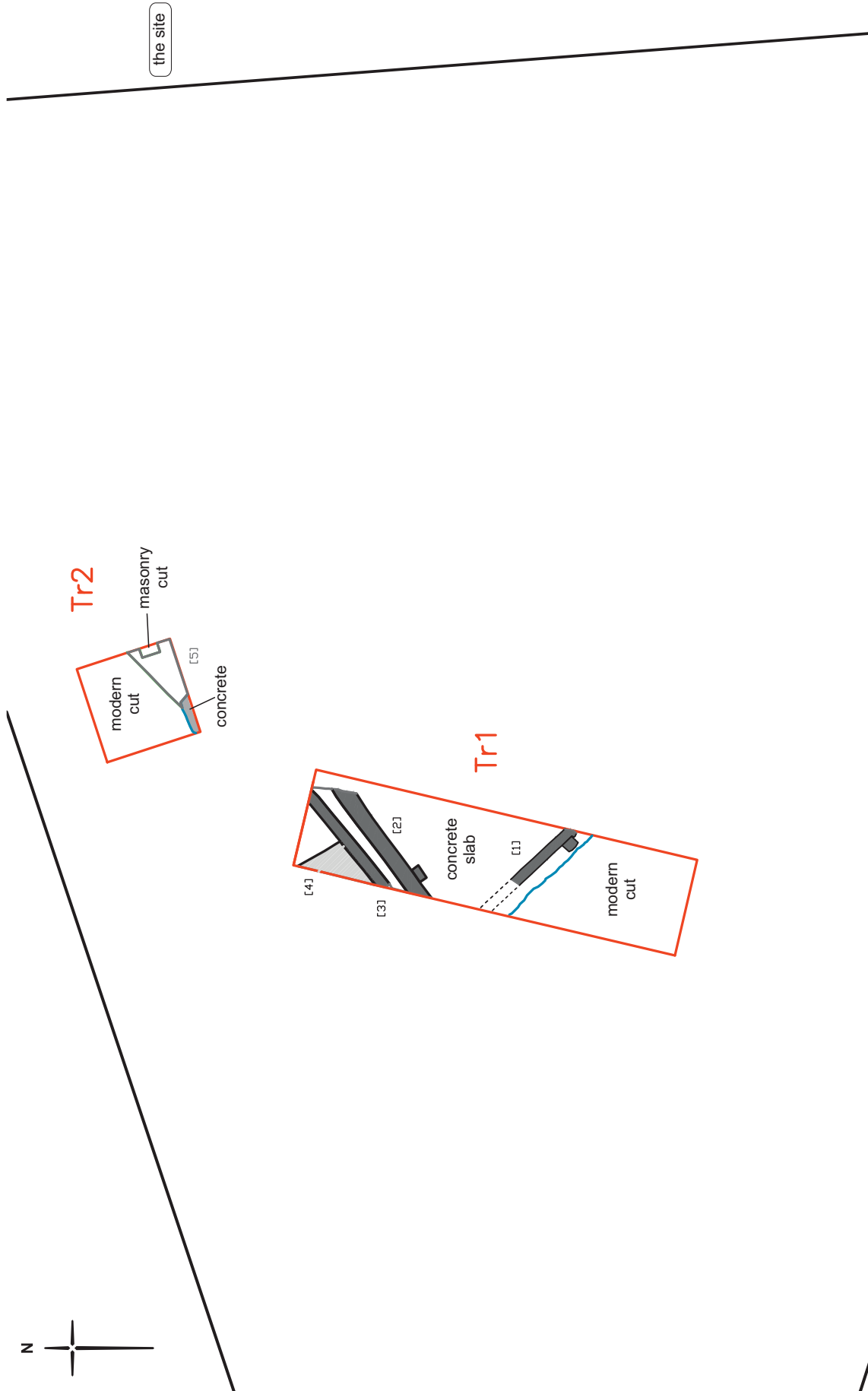


Fig 3 Archaeological features



Photo1: Trench 1 showing the remains of the 20th century houses (looking south-west)



Photo 2: Trench 2 the modern cut truncating natural clay (looking east)