

52 BREWSTER ROAD  
Leyton  
London  
E10

London Borough of Waltham Forest

An archaeological evaluation report

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Archaeology Service

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52 BREWSTER ROAD  
Leyton  
London  
E10

London Borough of Waltham Forest

An archaeological evaluation report

Site Code: WBF05  
National Grid Reference: 537805 187216

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## 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 52 Brewster Rd London, E10. The report was commissioned from MoLAS by I B Mistry.*

*Following the recommendations of English Heritage Greater London Archaeology Advisory Service (GLAAS) an evaluation trench was excavated on the site.*

*The results of the field evaluation have helped to refine the initial assessment of the archaeological potential of the site. The evaluation revealed no archaeological deposits earlier than 20th century garden soils relating to the present building. Natural gravel deposits were recorded at a height of 12.20m OD, 0.55m higher than the present pavement level adjacent to the site.*

*In the light of revised understanding of the archaeological potential of the site the report concludes the impact of the proposed redevelopment is low. It is therefore recommended that further archaeological work be limited to monitoring ground reduction during construction works.*

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# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Site background

The evaluation took place at 52 Brewster Rd, Leyton, London E10. The site comprises the current building and land adjacent, and is bounded by Brewster Rd to the north and on all other side by properties fronting onto Vicarage Rd and Crawley Rd. The centre of the site lies at National Grid reference 537805 187216. Modern pavement level near to the site lies at c 11.65m OD.

The proposed redevelopment involves the demolition of the existing building and the construction of 4 residential flats in a two-storey block. The site has not been the subject of an archaeological impact assessment.

An archaeological field evaluation was subsequently carried out on a single evaluation trench in the garden of the property on 21/3/2005.

## 1.2 Planning and legislative framework

The legislative and planning framework in which the archaeological exercise took place was summarised in the *Method Statement*, which formed the project design for the evaluation (see Section 1.2, Lakin, 2005).

## 1.3 Planning background

The evaluation was undertaken in response to a condition placed on planning permission (2004/1829).

## 1.4 Origin and scope of the report

This report was commissioned by I B Mistry 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?
- What are the earliest deposits identified?
- What are the latest deposits identified?
- Do late prehistoric features such as those found at George Mitchell School remain on the site?

## 2 Topographical and historical background

The site lies in an area that has shown evidence of settlement over a considerable period of time, probably because of its location the high ground formed by the Taplow Terrace Gravels, on the eastern edge of the floodplain of the River Lea.

The Greater London Sites and Monuments Record shows a concentration of Neolithic and Palaeolithic handaxes in the vicinity, while to the south-west of the site, excavations at the Oliver Close Estate have revealed evidence of an extensive settlement dating to the Late Bronze Age (Sabel 1993).

In 1978 excavations in Church Road, to the south-west, recorded Roman and Medieval ditches (Greenwood 1979). Further evidence of Roman occupation was revealed in 1718 when the masonry foundations of a massive Roman building, complete with arches, were discovered in the Leyton Grange gardens, to the west of the site (Kennedy 1894).

In 1992 excavations at George Mitchell School Playing Fields to the east of the site revealed three residual flint tools of Neolithic or Early Bronze Age date. The earliest stratigraphy recorded was of Early Iron Age date and consisted of pits, post holes, and a large number of stake holes. Several sherds of pottery dating to the Early Iron Age and a collection of flint scrapers, blades, debitage and also associated stone tools were also recovered. Evidence of a Medieval boundary ditch and associated ridge and furrow ploughing was also recorded on the site (Thrale and Truckle 1995).



### 3 The evaluation

#### 3.1 Methodology

All archaeological excavation and monitoring during the evaluation was carried out in accordance with the preceding *Method Statement* (Lakin, 2005), and the MoLAS *Archaeological Site Manual* (MoLAS, 1994).

A single evaluation trench measuring 2m by 2m was excavated in the western half of the garden of 52 Brewster Road (Fig 2).

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

The location of the evaluation trench was recorded by MoLAS by offsetting from adjacent standing walls. 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 relative to Ordnance Datum via a traverse to the OS benchmark of 11.78m OD on the corner of Vicarage Road and Farmer Road to the North of the site.

The site has produced: a trench location plan; a section drawing at 1:20; a trench plan at 1:20; and a series of digital photographs.

The site records can be found under the site code WFB05 in the MoL archive.

### 3.2 Results of the evaluation

For trench location see Fig 2.

| <i>Evaluation Trench 1</i>            |                        |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------|
| Location                              | Western half of garden |
| Dimensions                            | 2m by 2m               |
| Modern ground level/top of slab       | 12.50m OD              |
| Base of modern fill/slab              | 12.40m OD              |
| Depth of archaeological deposits seen | 0.20-0.30m             |
| Level of base of deposits observed    | 12.20m OD              |
| Natural observed                      | 12.20m OD              |

Trench 1 was located in the western half of the garden of 52 Brewster Road. Natural banded sandy gravel deposits [2] were recorded at a height of 12.20m OD. This deposit, which was orange/brown in colour and consisted of sand and sub-angular to rounded flint gravel, was excavated in a slot along the southern edge of the trench to a depth of 1.10m. The deposit included several level bands of light grey sand and gravel between 5-10cm thick.

Overlying this was a dark brown, moderately compact, 0.20-0.30m thick layer of gravelly silt [1] recorded at a height of 12.40m OD. This garden soil layer contained sherds of pottery and fragments of CBM dating from the early to late 20th century.

Truncating this layer and the gravel deposits was an E/W running live ceramic service pipe that ran across the middle of the trench.

Sealing this and the garden soil was a 0.10m thick layer of dark brown silt topsoil for the present grass surface of the garden which was recorded at a height of 12.50m OD.

### 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 evaluation has shown that natural gravel deposits are present at a height of 12.20m OD. This suggests that this gravel deposit has been terraced in the north during construction of Brewster Road, which lies at c 11.65m OD adjacent to the site, and also to the west during construction of Elin Church on the corner of Brewster Road and Vicarage Road.

Overlying these sandy gravel deposits was a 0.20-0.30m thick layer of gravel and silt garden soil dating to the 20th century, recorded at a height of 12.40m OD and sealed by a 0.10m thick layer of silt topsoil, recorded at a height of 12.50m OD.

The evaluation has produced no evidence of occupation on the site dating to before the construction of the present buildings and gardens along Brewster Road.

## 4 Archaeological potential

### 4.1 Realisation of original research aims

- What is the nature and level of natural topography?

Natural banded deposits of sandy gravel were recorded at a height of 12.20m OD and probably represent Taplow Terrace Gravels on the eastern edge of the floodplain of the River Lea.

- What are the earliest deposits identified?

The earliest deposit identified was a 0.20-0.30m thick layer of gravel and silt garden soil, associated with the present building and dating to the 20th century, recorded at a height of 12.40m OD.

- What are the latest deposits identified?

The latest deposits identified are the E/W running live ceramic service drain and the silt topsoil of the present garden, recorded at a height of 12.50m OD.

- Do late prehistoric features such as those found at George Mitchell School remain on the site?

No features earlier than those relating to the present building and garden were seen during the evaluation.

### 4.2 General discussion of potential

As no ancient ground surfaces (horizontal archaeological stratification) or cut features were seen during the evaluation the potential for their presence on the remaining area of the site is low.

The evaluation has also shown that the potential for survival, if present would be very limited in the eastern half of the site due to truncation by building foundations, related services and out buildings.

### 4.3 Significance

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

The height of the natural gravels recorded during the evaluation has provided information for the differing ground levels in the area.

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

## 5 Assessment by EH criteria

The recommendations of the GLAAS 1998 guidelines on *Evaluation reports* suggest that there should be:

‘Assessment of results against original expectations (using criteria for assessing national importance of period, relative completeness, condition, rarity and group value) .....’ (Guidance Paper V, 4 7)

A set of guide lines was published by the Department of the Environment with criteria by which to measure the importance of individual monuments for possible Scheduling. These criteria are as follows: *Period; Rarity; Documentation; Survival/Condition; Fragility/Vulnerability; Diversity; and Potential*. The guide lines stresses that ‘these criteria should not...be regarded as definitive; rather they are indicators which contribute to a wider judgement based on the individual circumstances of a case’.

#### *Criterion 1: period*

Taken as a whole, archaeology in the Application site is not characteristic of any particular period.

#### *Criterion 2: rarity*

There is nothing to suggest that any of the likely deposits are rare either in a national or regional context.

#### *Criterion 3: documentation*

There are no surviving documentary records for remains in the area.

#### *Criterion 4: group value*

None of the likely deposits are associated with contemporary single Monuments external to the site.

*Criterion 5: survival/condition*

The results above have demonstrated that archaeological remains will be horizontally truncated in the eastern half of the site in areas of building foundations, out buildings and services. If present elsewhere on the site, archaeological deposits are unlikely to be significantly truncated.

*Criterion 6: fragility*

There is no indication that archaeological remains of any fragility are present on the site.

*Criterion 7: diversity*

There is no indication of diversity in the archaeological remains present on the site.

*Criterion 8: potential*

The absence of remains in the evaluated area, suggests that the archaeological potential of the site is very low.

## 6 Proposed development impact and recommendations

The proposed redevelopment at 52 Brewster Rd, Leyton E10 involves the demolition of the existing building and the construction of 4 residential flats in a two-storey block. The impact of this on any surviving archaeological deposits will be to truncate these deposits in areas of ground reduction of a depth of over 0.30m below the present ground surface of 12.50m OD.

As depths of deposits were recorded at between 0.20-0.30m it is likely that any further ground reduction, especially in areas of foundations and service trenches will result in the complete truncation of surviving deposits.

However no archaeological features were observed on the site and consequently the archaeological potential of the site is deemed to be low. It is therefore recommended that further investigation be limited to monitoring ground reduction during construction..

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

## 7 Acknowledgements

The author would like to thank I B Mistry for commissioning the report from MoLAS and for on site assistance.

## 8 Bibliography

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## 9 NMR OASIS archaeological report form

OASIS ID: molas1-7797

### Project details

Project name 52 Brewster Road, Leyton, E10; London Borough of Waltham Forest

Short description of the project An archaeological evaluation was carried out by the Museum of London Archaeology Service (MoLAS) on the site of 52 Brewster Rd London, E10. The proposed redevelopment involves the demolition of the existing building and the construction of 4 residential flats in a two-storey block. An archaeological field evaluation was subsequently carried out on a single evaluation trench in the garden of the property on 21/3/2005. The evaluation revealed no archaeological deposits earlier than 20th century garden soils relating to the present building. Natural gravel deposits were recorded at a height of 12.20m OD, 0.55m higher than the present pavement level adjacent to the site.

Project dates Start: 21-03-2005 End: 21-03-2005

Previous/future work No / No

Any associated project reference codes WFB05 - Sitecode

Type of project Field evaluation

Current Land use Residential 1 - General Residential

Monument type GARDEN SOILS Modern

Methods & techniques 'Targeted Trenches'

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

Prompt Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPG16

Position in the

planning process

**Project location**

Country England  
Site location GREATER LONDON WALTHAM FOREST LEYTON 52 Brewster Road, Leyton, E10  
Postcode E10  
Study area 50.00 Square metres  
National reference grid TQ 53780 18721 Point  
Height OD Min: 12.20m Max: 12.20m

**Project creators**

Name of Organisation MoLAS  
Project originator brief English Heritage/Department of Environment  
Project director/manager David Lakin  
Project supervisor Paul Thrale  
Sponsor or funding body I B Mistry

**Project archives**

Physical recipient Archive LAARC  
Physical Exists? Archive No  
Digital recipient Archive LAARC  
Digital Contents 'Survey'

Digital available      Media      'Survey', 'Text'

Digital Exists?      Archive      Yes

Paper recipient      Archive      LAARC

Paper available      Media      'Context sheet', 'Photograph', 'Plan', 'Report', 'Section', 'Survey'

Paper Exists?      Archive      Yes

---

**Project bibliography 1**

Publication type      Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

Title      52 Brewster Road, Leyton, E10

Author(s)/Editor(s)      'Thrale, P'

Date      2005

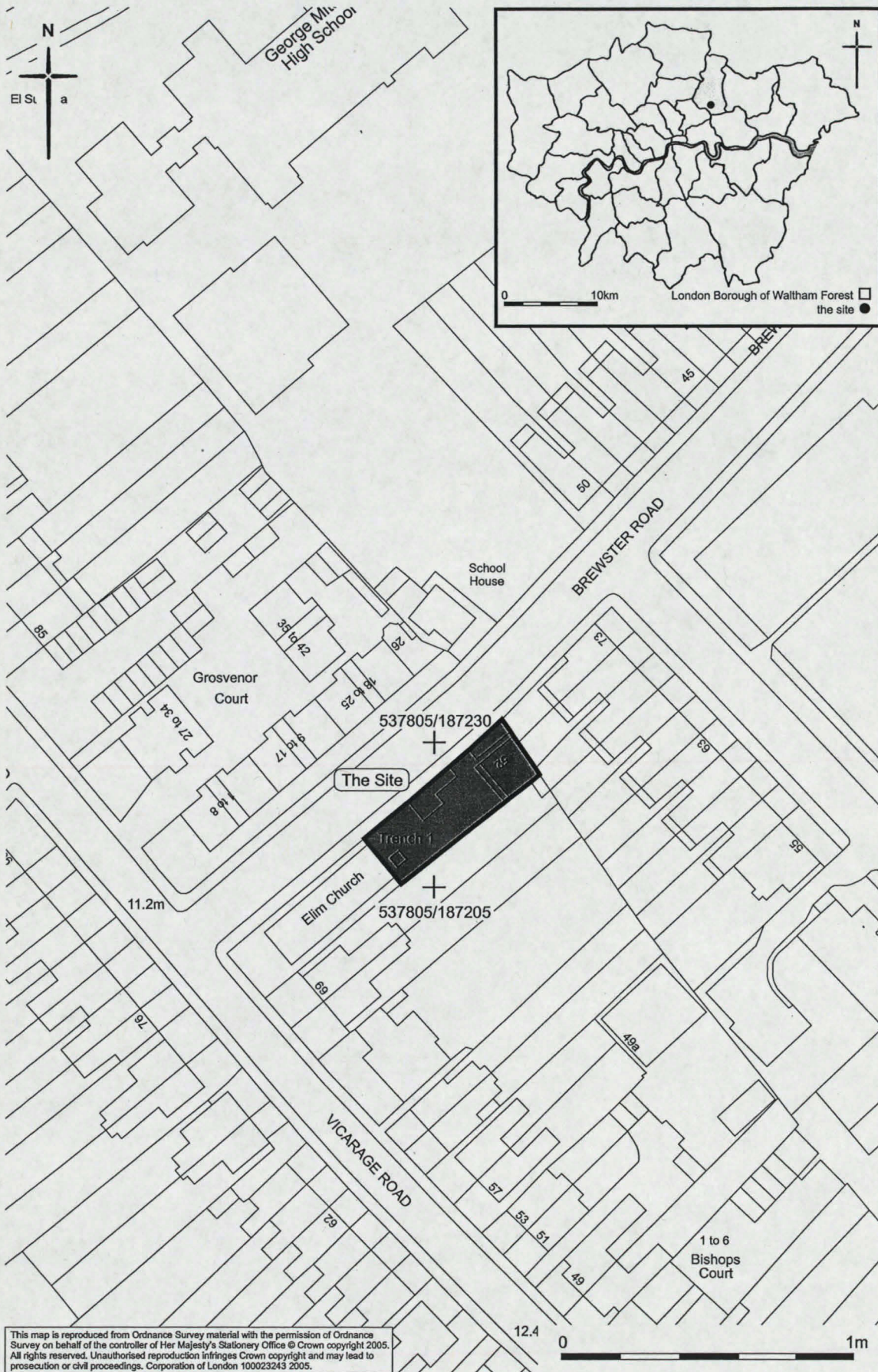
Issuer or publisher      MoLAS

Place of issue or publication      MoLAS

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Entered on      18 April 2005



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Fig 1 Site location

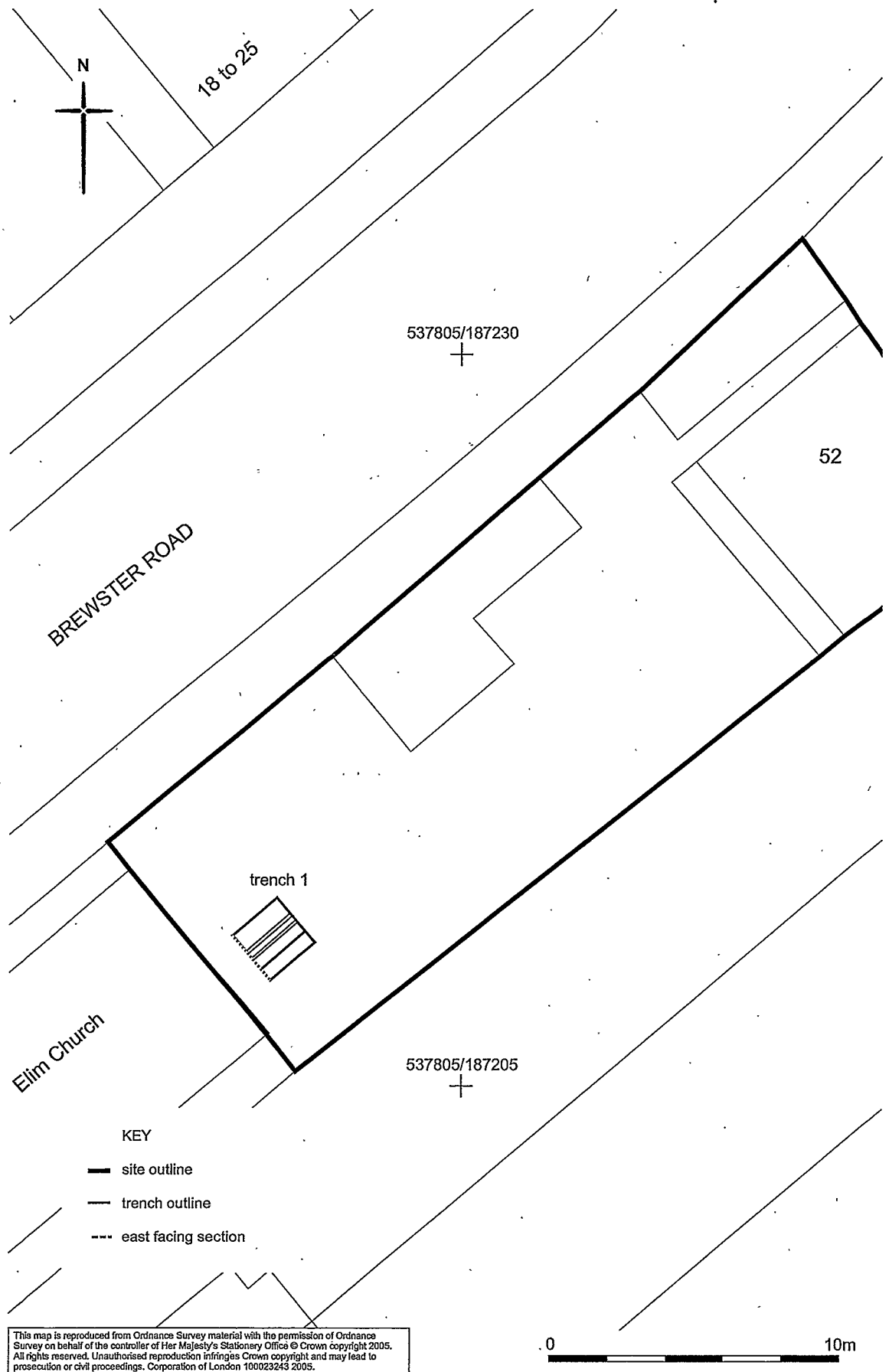


Fig 2 Trench location

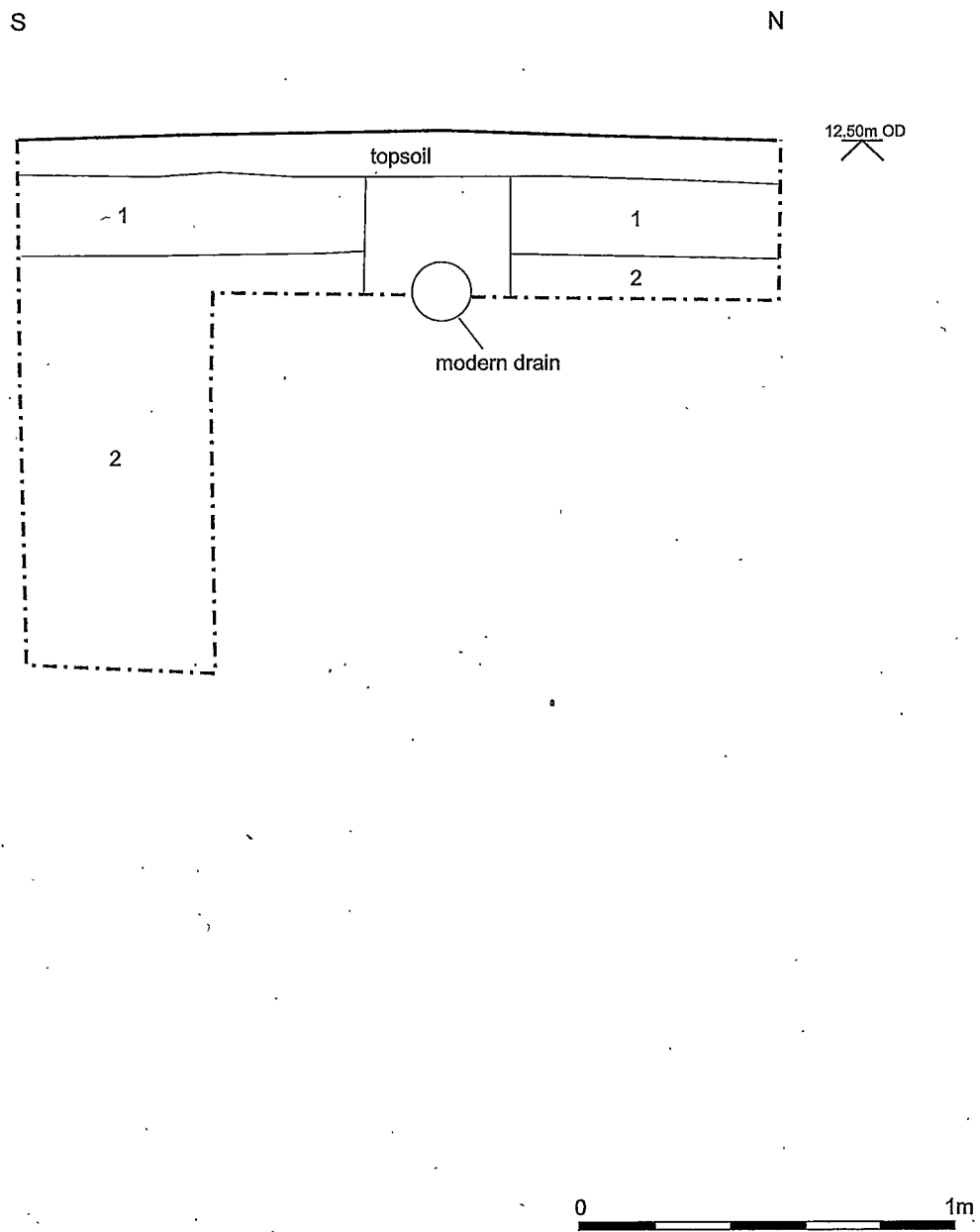


Fig 3 East facing section of trench