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Eastside Park Chesterfield Derbyshire

Archaeological Evaluation

Report No. Y341/18

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Commissioned by	Unwin Jones Partnership
Date Issued	March 2018
Version	1.0
Planning Ref	CHE/17/00647/FUL
OASIS Reference	cfaarcha1- 312637
Grid Ref.	SK 38689 73339

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**Eastside Park,
Chesterfield, Derbyshire**

Archaeological Evaluation

Report No. Y341/18

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SUMMARY

An archaeological evaluation was carried out by CFA Archaeology on Eastside Park, Chesterfield, Derbyshire during March 2018. Seven trenches were excavated across the proposed site of a new development in order to evaluate potential surviving remains that were highlighted in a heritage statement. There were no intact archaeological remains apart from a backfilled clay-extraction pit and the remains of a single brick built wall.

1. INTRODUCTION

This report presents the results of an archaeological evaluation undertaken by CFA Archaeology Ltd (CFA) during March 2018 Eastside Park, Chesterfield, Derbyshire (Fig.1, NGR SD 507 648). The work was commissioned by Unwin Jones Partnership and was carried out in accordance with a Written Scheme of investigation (WSI) produced by CFA with agreement from the development control archaeologist for Derbyshire County Council. This stage of the work was carried out in advance of the proposed construction of a commercial/retail complex.

1.1 Site Location and Description

An active railway bounds the development site to the east, the A61 and commercial outlets to the west and south. Eastside road bisects the site into two halves with an active car park on the southwestern corner of the site. Both halves are below the level of road and relatively flat at between 66 and 67m above the Ordnance Datum (AOD)

At the time of excavation the site comprised scrub and was partially heavily waterlogged.

The underlying geology of the site comprised of Pennine Lower Coal measures of siltstone and mudstone, with underlying superficial deposits gravel, sand, silt and clay alluvium (BGS 2018)

1.2 Historical and Archaeological Background

The following historical and archaeological background is taken from the WSI (CFA 2018), the Derbyshire Extensive Urban Survey report for Chesterfield (Stroud 2002). And the Heritage Assessment (ABRS 2017).

Archaeological evidence indicates that the site upon which Chesterfield developed was already attractive to humans from an early period, probably due to the advantages of its position at the end of a spur of high ground overlooking a river valley. The prehistoric features dated on the basis of the stone tool assemblage to the Later Mesolithic period and Neolithic/Bronze Age flint implements hints at Chesterfield's attraction. However, only in the Iron Age is there possible evidence of more permanent occupation in the form of a ditch and a single sherd of pottery.

Placename evidence for Roman occupation is evident in the name 'Chesterfield': Old English *ceaster* + *feld*, meaning open land near a Roman fort or settlement; which has been verified by archaeological investigations within the centre of the town and at

developments along the A61, along with stratified remains for medieval and prehistoric periods. The Roman fort with its possible associated vicus existed near Chesterfield Parish Church, with the Roman town present where Chesterfield's town centre exists today. However, definite archaeological evidence for pre-conquest Chesterfield is elusive.

Limited analysis of pottery from excavations in Chesterfield has suggested that there was a local industry, probably established in the 11th century and persisting throughout the medieval period, although the location of such a pottery or potteries is not known. Much more needs to be known about the various trades and industries which were important in medieval and post-medieval Chesterfield. The pottery industry within the borough is poorly known and there is no regional type series for the town or the area around it and there has also been the suggestion of clay pipe and glass manufacture.

In general, the later 18th century pottery industry, together with the coal and iron industries, tended to develop just outside the boundaries of the borough, in particular, beyond the south-western boundary, began to be developed for industrial purposes in the 1770s. However, a reference of 1657 to 'the Potthouse beneath the Chappel Schole', the latter presumably being the grammar school established in St Helen's chapel implies the presence of a 17th century pottery within the borough. By the mid 18th century a pottery and white clay pipe manufacturer, Robinsons, was established in or near Spa Lane, c.2km south of the proposed development area.

The Chesterfield Canal was opened in 1777, running alongside the River Rother at the point of the proposed development site. It continued to be of importance in the early 19th century but began to decline before becoming unnavigable, in the face of increasing competition from the railways.

Archaeology of the 19th century is only reported in any detail for the excavations at Swan Yard carried out in 1965, where the remains of a row of 19th century cottages were examined. However, ten potteries are known to have been in production at the height of Chesterfield's pottery industry in 1840, including the pottery located on the proposed development site: Pearson's Pottery

Generally, across Chesterfield, developments of the 20th century, including the construction of the A61 have destroyed or removed archaeological remains. However, archaeological investigations across Chesterfield have still been able to shed light on industrial activity including pottery, clay tobacco pipe and glass manufacture. These industries in turn may have removed earlier archaeological remains, though there may be potential nearer towards the River Rother.

1.3 Project Aims

In accordance with the Written Scheme of Investigation the primary aim of the of the evaluation was to determine the location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of, and record at an appropriate level, any archaeological remains within the proposed development area.

2. WORKING METHODS

CFA Archaeology Ltd is a registered organisation (RO) with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA). CFA Archaeology follows all relevant CIfA and Historic England Standards and Guidance (CIfA 2014a-b and EH 2008).

The excavation of seven trenches (each measuring 20 m x 2 m) across a number of known areas of interest that relate to Pearson's pottery and associated features such as the railway that was located to the south existing one. Table 2.1 shows the locations and reasons behind each trench.

Trench	Purpose
1	To evaluate the development of the south-west and include the rail line.
2	To evaluate the development of the pottery buildings.
3	Located within the footprint of the proposed buildings to evaluate the development of the buildings to the north.
4	Located within the footprint of the proposed buildings to evaluate the development of the north corner and rail line to the east.
5	Located within the footprint of the proposed buildings to evaluate the development buildings and rail line to the south-east of pottery complex.
6	To evaluate the sluice.
7	To evaluate the earliest phase of development of the mid-19th century.

Table 2.1 Proposed Trench Locations

The trenches were excavated by machine under direct archaeological supervision to remove topsoil to natural subsoil or the first significant archaeological horizon, whichever is reached first. Any further excavation required to fulfil the objectives of the evaluation was carried out by hand.

Samples of all features of archaeological interest were excavated in order to establish their likely date, nature, extent and condition. All such sample excavation was conducted by hand.

All excavation and on-site recording were carried out according to standard CFA procedures, principally by drawing, photography and by completing standard CFA record forms. The stratification were recorded even when no deposits of archaeological significance were discovered. The location of the trenches were recorded using industry standard surveying equipment and tied to the National Grid. Vertical survey control was tied to the Ordnance Survey Datum.

Sections were recorded by means of a measured drawing at an appropriate scale. Sections were drawn at 1:10. The height of a datum on the drawing was calculated and recorded. The locations of sections were also recorded on the site plans, relative to the site grid.

Photographs were taken using a high resolution digital data capture (high-res DSLR) and included an appropriate scale. All photographs were recorded on a photographic register detailing subject, location and direction of shot. A photographic record was maintained throughout the project, including pre-excavation photographs, working shots, and individual and location shots of all features.

A summary of the results of archaeological works will be submitted for inclusion in OASIS. The OASIS reference is cfaarcha1- 312637

An inventory of the primary archive is listed in the table below.

Phase	File/Box No.	Description	Quantity
Evaluation	File no. 1	Context register sheets	1
		Context sheets	4
		Drawing register	1
		Permatrace sheets A3	1
		Trench record sheets	7
		Digital photographic register sheets	2

Table 2.1- Inventory of Primary Archive

2.1 Trial Trenching

Seven trial trenches (Appendix 1) were excavated within the site boundary. A JCB 360 excavator equipped with a 1.80m wide smooth-bladed ditching bucket removed deposits in even, shallow spits. All mechanical excavation work was carried out under constant archaeological supervision. Any further excavation required to fulfil the objectives of the evaluation was carried out by hand. Trench one could not be excavated as it was within an active car park.

3. RESULTS

A context summary forms Appendix 1 whilst Trench summaries form Appendix 2. The following results should be read in conjunction with figures 1-3. All trenches except Trench 6 comprised only loose made ground comprising brick and other materials from the demolished buildings on the site and were void of any archaeological remains.

Topsoil on the site consisted of a thin layer of mid brown, clay (001) that varied in depth across the site from 0.02-0.05m. Below this was mixed with rubble in a redeposit clay matrix (002) that was full of concrete and fragments of ceramic building material (CBM) that varied from 0.5 to 1.8m. This layer was recorded in most of the trenches. Trenches 2, 3, 6 and 7 also had a layer of crushed material (003) below the redeposited rubble clay (002) layer. Due to the nature and depth of the demolition material and re-deposited clay, sondages were excavated at either end of the trenches in order to find the depth of the natural substrate, however due to the thickness of the overburden and its looseness the sondages were not excavated beyond a depth of 2m and the natural was not recorded in any trench.

A small red brick wall was recorded in the west-facing section of Trench 6 (fig 2.5 and 3.5, 004). The wall consisted of machine made red brick, bonded with a grey gritty mortar and constructed in an English garden bond of stretches. The wall measured 1m in height by at least 0.5m in width and continued beyond the limit of excavation. It is more likely that this section of wall was a part of the demolition material and not in situ. The rest of the trench comprised made ground consisting of concrete and bricks. However, a tip line with pottery was recorded above a 1.5m thick layer of ash and slag. A sample of the pottery was taken to assess its date (see below). This material is interpreted to be the backfill of a former clay extraction pit on site.

4. POTTERY REPORT

By Chris Cumberpatch

The assemblage, consisting of sixteen sherds of pottery weighing 1670 grams and was recovered from a clay extraction pit within Trench 6. The data pertaining to the pottery are summarised in Appendix 3.

Results

The pottery assemblage consisted primarily of sherds of stoneware with two sherds of porcelain. Three complete bottles and three sherds represented retail wares from flagons. None bore any indication of their contents or of the retailers for whom they were manufactured.

Sherds represented domestic pottery from bowls, jars and unidentified hollow wares. These included sherds bearing brightly coloured glaze as well as the more common brown glaze, as described in Appendix 3. The two porcelain sherds were broadly similar in character, one with a bright blue glaze, the other brown. None of them bore maker's marks and it is unclear whether they were products of the pottery that formerly occupied the site or whether they originated elsewhere.

Discussion

Few definite conclusions can be drawn from such a small assemblage of pottery other than that it would seem to indicate that the pit from which it was recovered was backfilled in the late 19th or early 20th century. The condition of the sherds and vessels suggest that the backfilling was rapid and involved material that had seen very little reworking or re-deposition.

The assemblage is significant given the limited amount of archaeological research undertaken into the Chesterfield's important early modern and more recent pottery industry.

5. CONCLUSION

The evaluation concluded that apart from an infilled former clay extraction pit there were no surviving archaeological remains within the development area. The entire site had been disturbed during the demolition of the former buildings on site and the construction of a motor garage and showrooms in 2010 (Fig. 3.4). The pottery recovered is of some research interest, and will be retained and deposited with the archive.

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© Google Earth Image (2010)

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Online Resources

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APPENDIX 1: TRENCH SUMMERIES

No.	Description
1	Not excavated due to location
2	<p>North-east to south-west orientated trench on top of rise with decline to the west to car park</p> <p>Two sondages were excavated at either end of the trench to a max depth of 2m. A layer of rubble in a clay matrix was 0.5m in thickness and sealed a 1.5m thick and layer of backfill material that consisted of ash, slag and CBM. Below this crushed material consisted of crushed CBM concrete and stone. The material was probably related to the demolition of the potteries in 2010</p>
3	<p>North to south orientated trench on waterlogged flat ground.</p> <p>Two sondages were excavated at either end of the trench to a max depth of 2m. A layer of rubble in a clay matrix was 1.5m thick and sealed a layer of crushed material a further 0.50m in thickness. The material was probably related to the demolition of the potteries back in 2010</p>
4	<p>North-east to south-west orientated trench on a risen bank to the north-east of site.</p> <p>Two sondages were excavated at either end of the trench to a max depth of 1.5m as ground water was coming from the sections. A 0.80m layer of rubble in a clay matrix was sealed a 0.7m thick backfill consisting of ash, slag and CBM.</p>
5	<p>North-east to south-west orientated trench on a risen bank to the eastern side of site.</p> <p>The trench consisted of a 0.5-1m thick layer of rubble in a clay matrix down to a concrete pad.</p>
6	<p>North-south orientated trench near the roundabout.</p> <p>Sondage was recorded at the Northern end of the trench down to 2m. 0.40m thick layer of rubble in clay matrix down to a 0.20m thick layer of rubble above a red brick wall that was above a 1.5m thick layer of ash and slag. Probably backfill material. 1m to the south of the wall was a pottery tip that followed the line of the ash deposit.</p>
7	<p>North-east to south-west orientated trench on a risen bank to the eastern side of site.</p> <p>1.5m sondage at both ends consisting of 0.5m thick layer of rubble in a clay matrix sealing a 0.8m thick of backfill material consisting of concrete and fragments of plastic piping.</p>
8	<p>East-west orientated trench to the south of the site.</p> <p>1.5m sondage at the eastern end shows 1m thick layer of rubble in a clay matrix sealing a layer of crushed stone and CBM.</p>

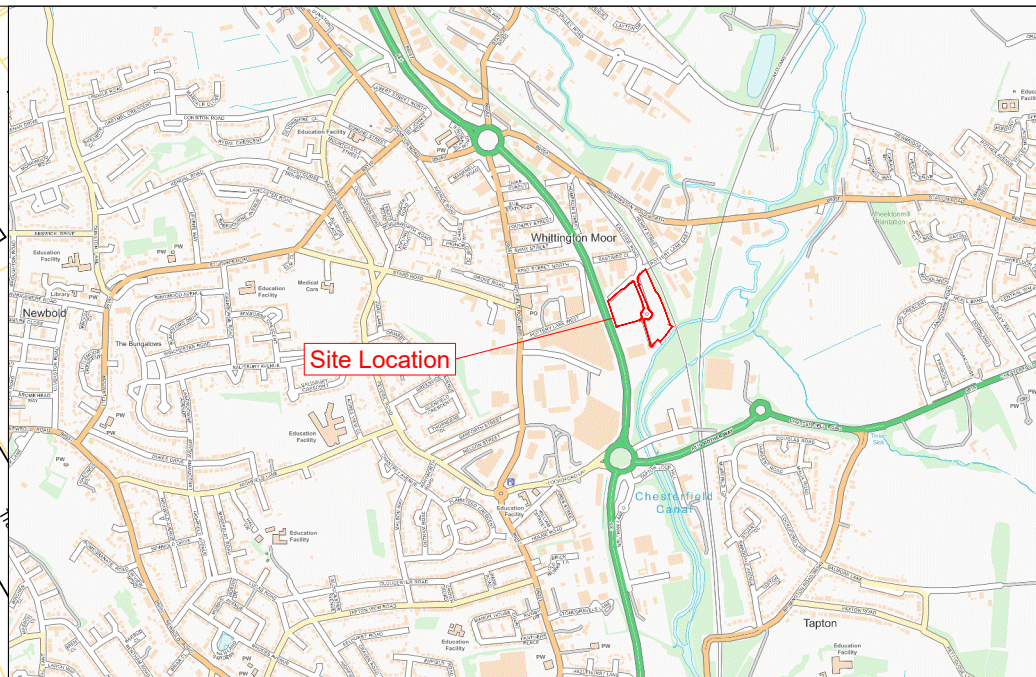
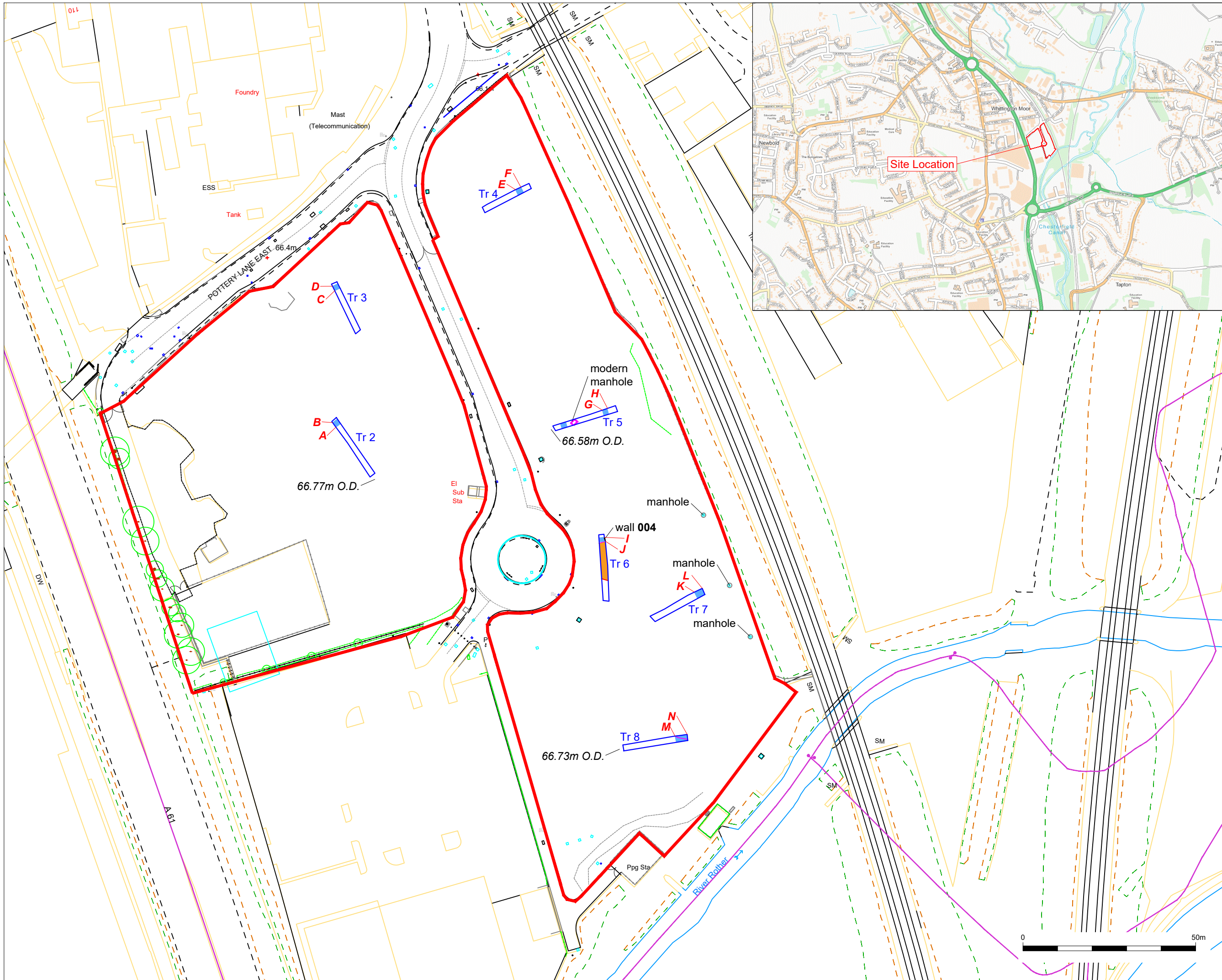
APPENDIX 2: CONTEXT SUMMARY

Context	Trench	Type	Fill of	Width (m)	Length (m)	Max Depth (m)	Description
001	Site	Topsoil	-	-	-	0.05	Topsoil. Brownish clay with CBM.
002	Site	Layer	-	-	-	1.80	Redeposited Clay and rubble
003	Site	Layer	-	-	-	1m	Layer of crushed material including CBM
004	6	Fill		0.75	-	0.50	Red brick wall with gritty yellow mortar and English garden bond construction

APPENDIX 3: POTTERY QUANTIFICATION

Context	Type	No	Wt	ENV	Part	Form	Decoration	Date range	Notes
Tr 6	Porcelain	1	43	1	Profile	Bowl	Brown glaze ext	LC19 th – EC20 th	Ring foot base; shallow bowl w/ short collared rim
Tr 6	Porcelain	1	26	1	BS & handle	Hollow ware	Bright blue glaze ext	LC19 th – EC20 th	
Tr 6	Stoneware	1	233	1	Complete	Small bottle	U/Dec	MC19 th – EC20 th	Small grey bottle; base diam 49.23; height 93.08mm
Tr 6	Stoneware	1	251	1	Complete	Small bottle	U/Dec	MC19 th – EC20 th	Small grey bottle; base diam 48.34; height 94.42mm
Tr 6	Stoneware	1	230	1	Complete	Small bottle	U/Dec	MC19 th – EC20 th	Small grey bottle; base diam 51.14; height 90.37mm
Tr 6	Stoneware	1	404	1	Profile	Bowl	Thick brown glaze int & ext	LC19 th – EC20 th	Ring foot base
Tr 6	Stoneware	1	131	1	Handle & BS	Flagon	Thick brown glaze ext	MC19 th – EC20 th	
Tr 6	Stoneware	1	44	1	BS/Shoulder	Flagon	Pale brown band w/ shallow impressed groove	MC19 th – EC20 th	
Tr 6	Stoneware	1	55	1	BS	Flagon	U/Dec	MC19 th – EC20 th	
Tr 6	Stoneware	1	85	1	Lid-seated rim	Lidded jar	Brown slightly mottled glaze ext	MC19 th – EC20 th	
Tr 6	Stoneware	1	91	1	Flat base	Hollow ware	Brown slightly mottled glaze ext	MC19 th – EC20 th	
Tr 6	Stoneware	1	10	1	Clubbed rim	Bowl	Turquoise glaze int & ext	E – MC20 th	
Tr 6	Stoneware	1	27	1	Ring foot base	Bowl?	Turquoise glaze int & ext	E – MC20 th	
Tr 6	Stoneware	1	21	1	Rim	Bowl?	Turquoise glaze int & ext	E – MC20 th	Curved inturned rim
Tr 6	Stoneware	1	13	1	BS	Hollow ware	Red-brown glaze int & ext	E – MC20 th	
Tr 6	Stoneware	1	6	1	BS	Hollow ware	Bright green glaze int & ext	E – MC20 th	
	Total	16	1670	16					

FIGURES 1-3



Key:

- Site Boundary
- Trench Outline
- Archaeological Feature
- Sondage
- Pottery Tip
- Modern Feature

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Title:
Site location and trench plan

Project:
East Side Park

Client:
Unwin Jones Partnership

Scale at A3:
1:1000

Drawn by: MP	Checked: SW	Date: 27/03/2018
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Report No: Y341/18	Fig. No: 1
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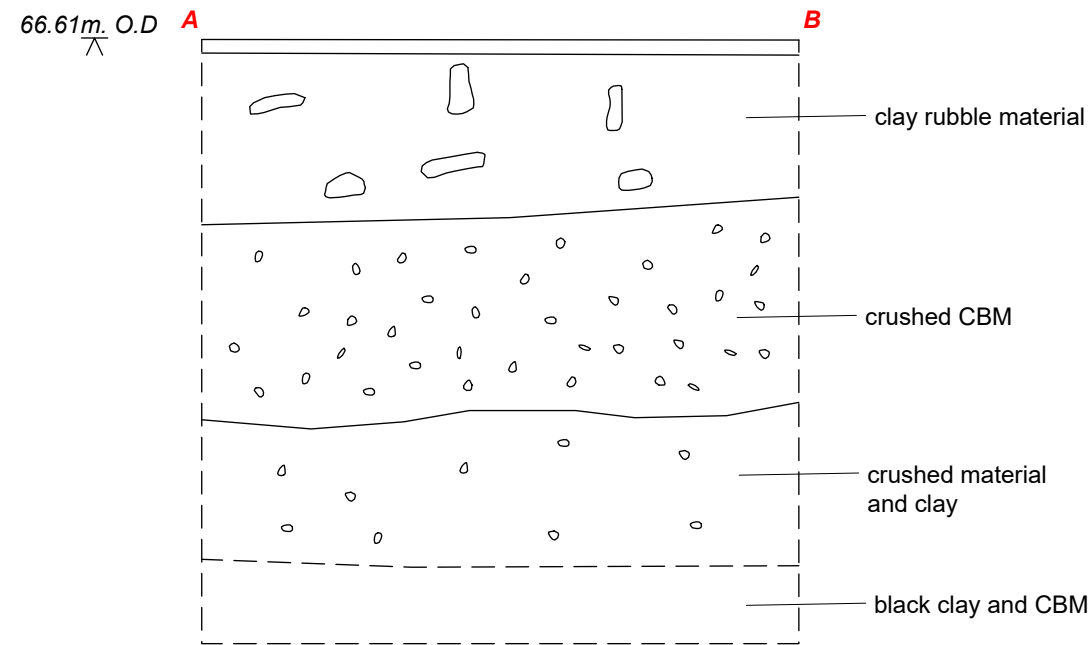


Fig. 2.1 - North-east-facing sondage of Trench 2

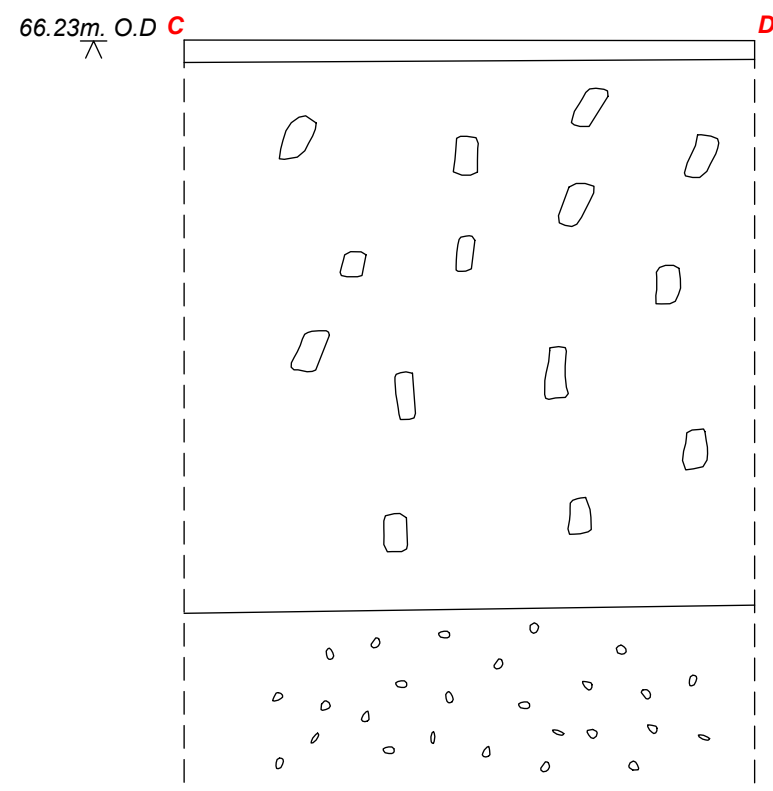


Fig. 2.2 - North-east-facing sondage of Trench 3

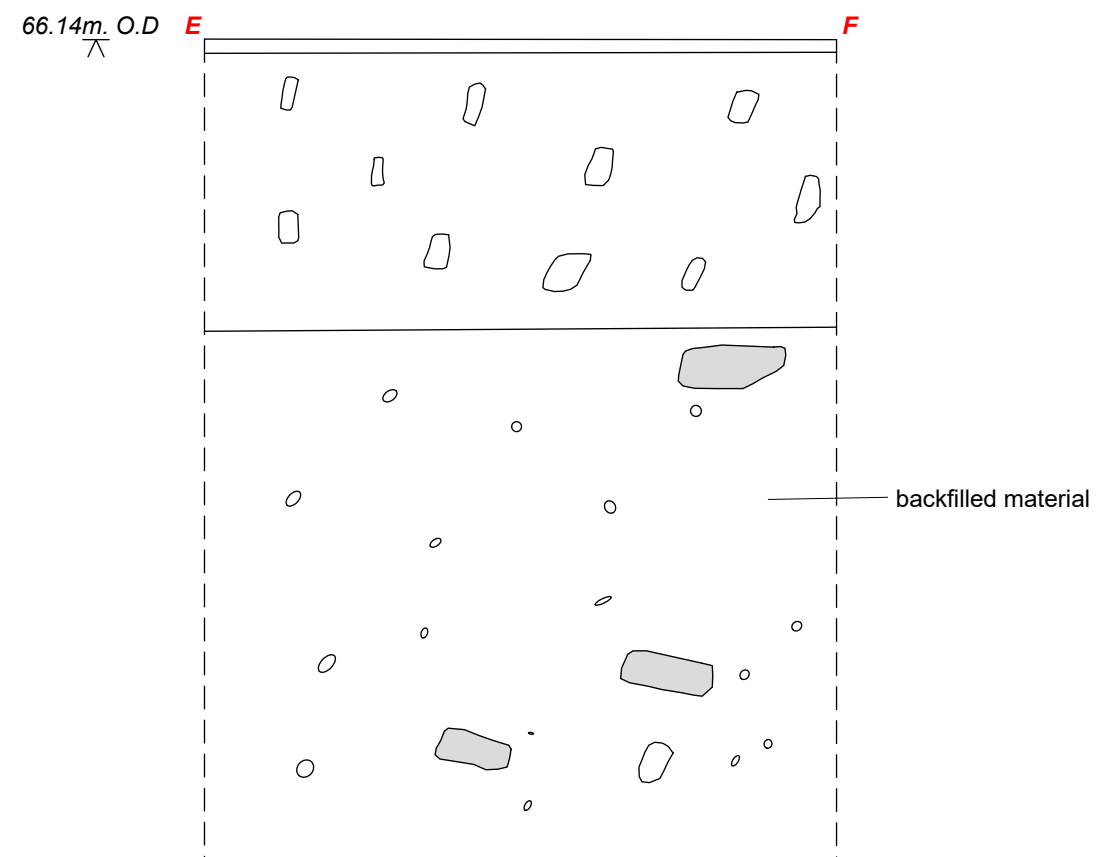


Fig. 2.3 - South-east-facing sondage of Trench 4

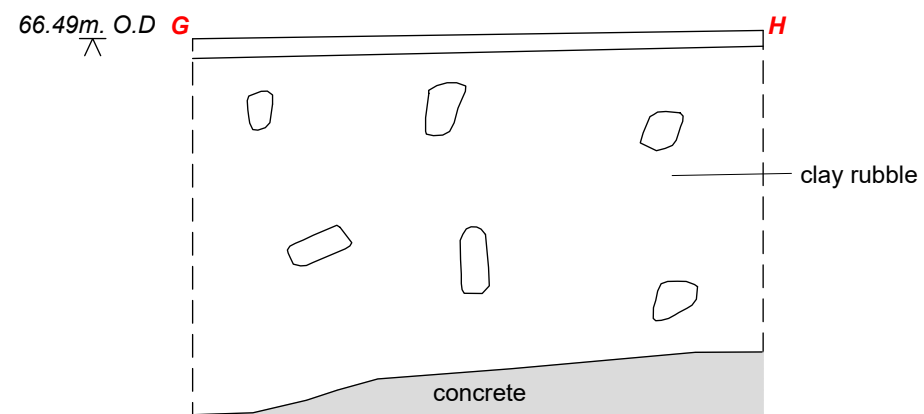


Fig. 2.4 - South-east-facing sondage of Trench 5

Key:

 Concrete



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Title:
Sample sections of trenches

Project:
East Side Park

Client:
Unwin Jones Partnership

Scale at A3:
1:20

Drawn by: MP	Checked: SW	Date: 27/03/2018
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Report No: Y341/18	Fig. No: 2.1-2.4
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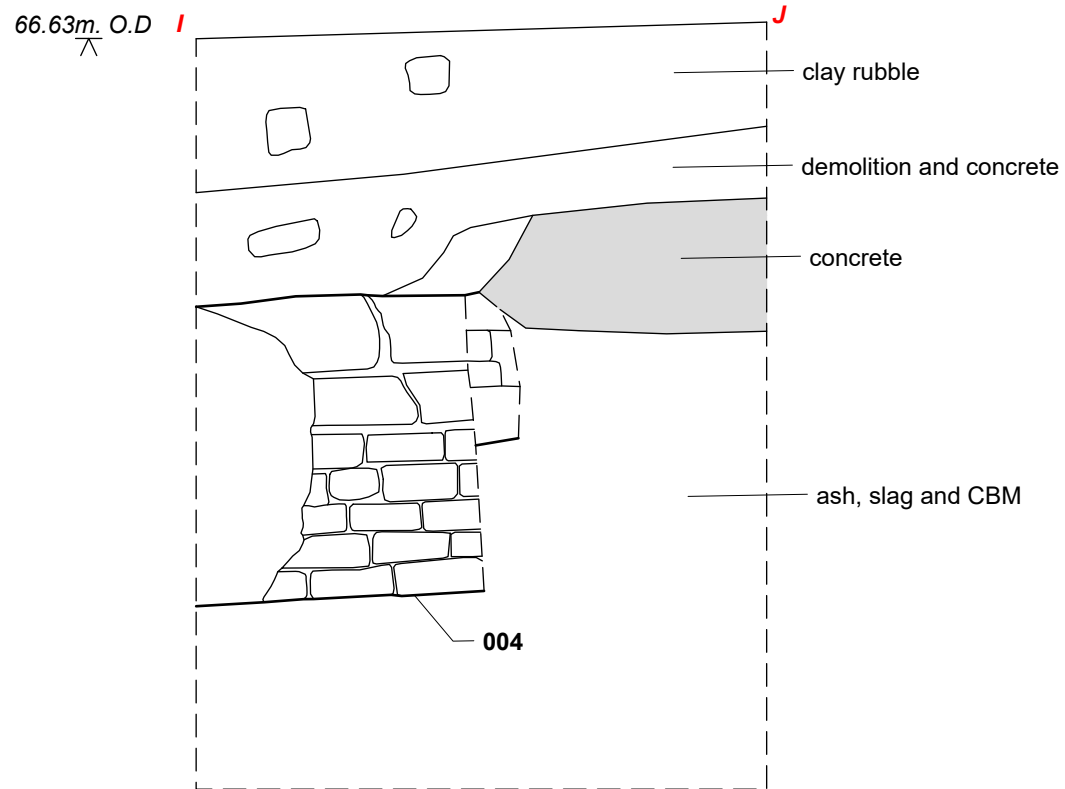


Fig. 2.5 - West-facing sondage of Trench 6

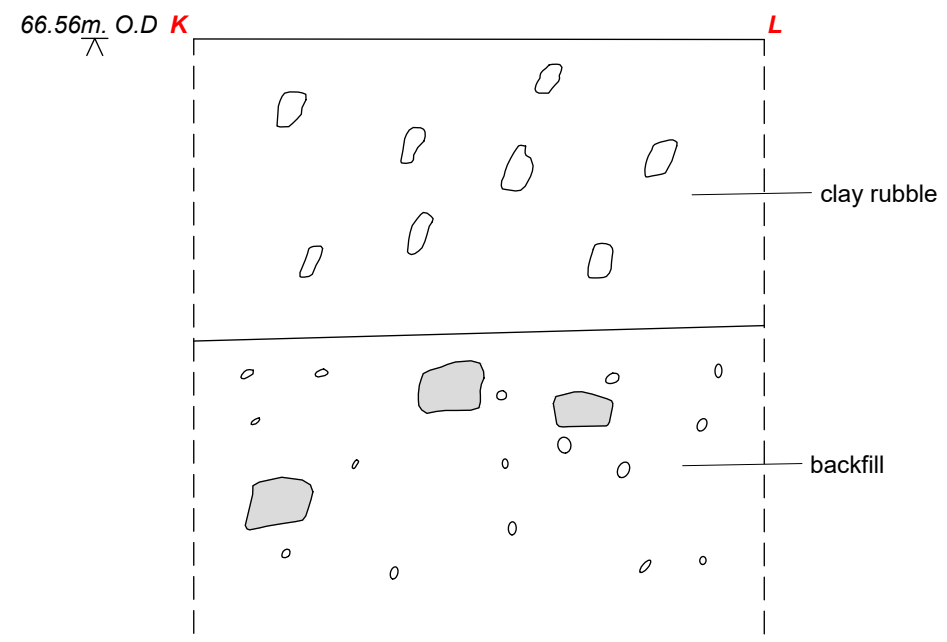


Fig. 2.6 - South-facing sondage of Trench 7

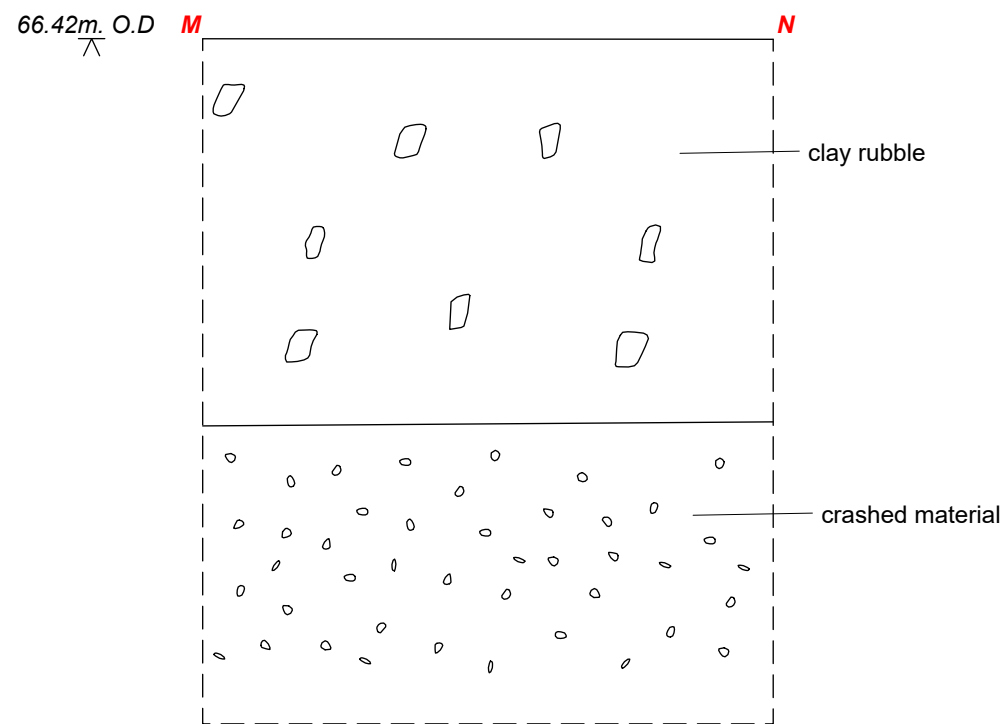


Fig. 2.7 - South-facing sondage of Trench 8



Key:

Concrete



Title:
Sample sections of trenches

Project:
East Side Park

Client:
Unwin Jones Partnership

Scale at A3:
1:20

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Fig. 3.1 - Northern end of Trench 3 sondage at 1m



Fig. 3.2 - Western end of Trench 5 looking east

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Fig. 3.3 - West-facing section of Trench 6 with wall 004



Fig. 3.4 - © Google Earth Image of site 2010

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