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46 - 60 Brent Street, Brent London Borough of Barnet

NGR TQ 2370 8875

Archaeological Evaluation Report

OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGICAL UNIT

February 1996

**46-60 Brent Street, NW4
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Oxford Archaeological Unit
January 1996

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1 Summary

- 1.1 The only deposits discovered during the evaluation were related post-medieval landscaping and the foundations of 19th and 20th century houses. The evaluation therefore appeared to establish that any medieval or earlier deposits that may have existed on the site have been completely destroyed by subsequent development.

2 Introduction

- 2.1 The Oxford Archaeological Unit undertook an archaeological evaluation on the site of 46-60 Brent Street, Brent, London Borough of Barnet, in January 1996. The work was carried out on behalf of Berkley Homes Limited, ahead of a proposed development of the site and was commissioned as part of the conditions of planning consent for this development.
- 2.2 The site lies within the medieval settlement of Brent Street and is situated along the north side of Brent Street itself. It was therefore possible that remains of buildings, and other archaeological features, associated with the medieval street frontage might be located on the site. The aim of the evaluation was therefore to establish the existence, and significance of any archaeological remains which might survive.
- 2.3 The investigation was carried out in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation, prepared by the Oxford Archaeological Unit and agreed by English Heritage.

3 Location and topography

- 3.1 The proposed development site covers an area of approximately 3,025 square metres. The site is bounded to the south west by Brent Street, to the north by the houses and back gardens that lie on the south side of West Avenue and to the east by Green Lane. A distinct slope is apparent, from the north edge of the site to the south, and evidence of landscaping was clearly visible prior to excavation. The level at the north edge of site at present is 58.07 m OD, falling to a level of 54.41 m OD to the south of the site and 53.41 m OD to the south west of the site. The natural geology underlying the site is London Clay.

4 Archaeological and historical background (by Ianto Wain)

- 4.1 The development site lies just to the south of the hamlet of Brent Street, historically the largest settlement in the parish. There is no firm evidence of pre-Roman settlement in the vicinity of the development area although the surrounding area has produced occasional finds of Mesolithic and Neolithic flintwork. Roman Watling Street, now represented by the line of Edgware Road, crosses the parish to the west of the development site and excavations in the area have produced occasional finds of Roman pottery and tile although no settlement sites have been identified. Hendon is first mentioned in a charter said to date from the late 10th century and it is likely that the earliest settlement grew up around the Church at Church End. Saxon activity, dating from the 6th century onwards has been identified close to St Mary's Church, a 13th century church with a Norman font which may mark the site of a pre-Conquest Church. The road of which Brent Street forms part is generally considered to be of at least medieval date: Norden writing in 1593 wrote that it was 'an ancient highway, now unaccustomed' suggesting that it may once have been preferred to Edgware Road. Excavations in Golders Green Road, which forms the southern extension to Brent St, uncovered a road surface sealed by 16th century deposits and a small trial hole in a garden at the southern end of Brent St revealed an undated possible road surface constructed of cobbles and pebbles, interpreted as possibly Roman from its form.
- 4.2 Historically the development site lies at the far southern end of a small triangle of land, formed by Brent Street, Green Lane and Brent Lane and is situated to the south of the hamlet of Brent Street, which clusters along the road of that name towards Brent. In the 19th century this triangle was the site of Hendon House, a large early 19th century house set in its own grounds. This house, which was demolished in 1909 replaced the earlier Hendon House, a 16th century, or earlier house which was the home of the mapmaker John Norden (1548-1625) and the politician Giles Earl (1678-1759). During the 18th and 19th centuries the development site lay to the south of the house in an area separated from the main landscaped gardens by an avenue of trees. On Rocques map of Middlesex (1754) it is shown as an open area lined with trees and on the Ordnance Surveyors Drawings as an area of what appears to be rough pasture. Both these maps show the old House situated close to Bell Lane. The first very detailed map of the House and its environs is the 1st edition 25" (1863) which shows Hendon House as a large L-shaped house set back from the road in its own landscaped grounds which extend to the east beyond Green Lane. The development site is shown as slightly wooded pasture, lined with trees on all three sides. This layout is also marked on the 2nd edition OS 25" (1896).
- 4.3 The first major change to the area occurs in the early 20th century. Hendon House was demolished in 1909 and by the time of the 1914 OS 25" its grounds have begun to be filled with a network of streets, comprising The Crest, Golders Rise and West Avenue. Although some housing has been constructed, primarily facing onto West Avenue and at the southern

end of Brent Street the development area itself is still open land. However by 1936 nos 46-60 Brent Street had been constructed and housing had spread all the way along Brent Street, West Avenue and Green Lane. The area to the rear of these houses is shown as open land in 1936 and as orchard in 1956.

5 Methodology (see Fig. 2 for trench locations)

- 5.1 The evaluation comprised of six trial trenches which were located with regard to achieving a good spatial distribution of excavation across the site, while avoiding live services (gas and electricity) and the large spoil heaps of demolition material that were still present. Priority was given to investigating the Brent Street frontage.
- 5.2 The trenches were excavated down to the top of the first significant archaeological deposits, or in their absence down to the top of the natural clay, using a 360° mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket. The trench sections and exposed surfaces were then cleaned by hand, and the various deposits were described, drawn and photographed.

6 Results

6.1 Trench 1

This trench was located in the north west corner of the site in a NW-SE alignment, running parallel to Brent Street, 20.2m long x 2m wide.

Natural clay (104) was revealed in the north-west end of this trench 0.50m below the existing ground level. The clay had been truncated throughout the remaining area of the trench by a modern brick and concrete structure (103). This structure was overlaid by a loose demolition deposit (101). The depth and solidity of the foundations of the modern structure were such that the mechanical excavator could not remove them.

6.2 Trench 2 (Fig. 3)

This trench was located in the west half of the site in a NE-SW alignment, running at right angles to Brent Street, 20.2m long x 2m wide.

Natural clay (209) was revealed in this trench at a depth of 0.80m below the existing ground level. Two sub-linear features, 206 and 208, cut the natural clay toward the east end of the trench. These were both filled by clay sand deposits (205, 207). A single sherd of post-medieval pot was recovered from deposit 205.

Overlying deposits 205 and 207 was a 0.5 m thick layer of silty clay (210=217) from which brick fragments were recovered. This in turn was

overlaid by a sequence of silty loams (201, 203 and 204). Layers 203 and 201 were cut by a 20th century structure and its construction trenches.

6.3 Trench 3 (Fig. 3)

This trench was also positioned at right angles to Brent Street, 7.75m long x 2m wide.

The top of the natural clay (307) was located at the NE end of the trench at a depth of 0.60m below the existing ground level. The clay was overlaid by two layers of silty loam, 303 and 306, the lower of which (306) contained post-medieval pottery. Layer 303 was truncated throughout the southern half of the trench by a 20th century structure and its construction trenches.

6.4 Trench 4

This trench was located towards the centre of the site in an E-W alignment, 9.25m long x 2m wide.

Natural clay (402) was exposed only 0.20m below the existing ground level and was overlaid throughout the trench by a deposit of sandy silt containing modern demolition material (401).

6.5 Trench 5

Located towards the north end of the site in a NE-SW alignment, 7m long x 2m wide.

Although this trench was excavated to a depth of 1.2m, no natural horizon was revealed. The earliest deposit was a 'redeposited natural' clay (503) containing clay-pipe stems and brick fragments. The clay was overlaid by deposits of yellowish clay (502) and a sandy silt containing modern demolition material.

6.6 Trench 6 (Fig. 3)

Located at the east end of the site in a NW-SE alignment, 22.3m long x 2m wide.

Natural clay (606) was only exposed in a small area at the north end of the trench, where it was located some 0.40m below the existing ground level. Throughout the remaining area of the trench was a deep deposit a yellow-brown 'redeposited natural clay' (604), and this was excavated to a maximum depth of 1.2 m, but continued down below this level. Overlying the clay (604) in the southern half of the trench were two deposits of loam (603 and 602). All of these deposits were truncated in the central area of the trench by the foundations of a 20th century structure.

Discussion and Conclusions

The only deposits discovered during the evaluation appear to be related to post-medieval landscaping, almost certainly representing landscaping of the park associated with Hendon House, and the foundations of 19th and 20th century buildings, and no finds other than post-medieval and modern material were retrieved from any of the deposits that were located.

The evaluation therefore appears to have established that any medieval, or earlier remains that may have existed on the site have been completely destroyed by subsequent development.

R. Brown and C. Bell
The Oxford Archaeological Unit
February 1996

Sources:

Archive Sources

The Greater London Sites and Monuments Record held by English Heritage (London Division).

Archive and published sources held by the Oxford Archaeological Unit and the Bodleian Library, Oxford.

Maps

Rocques 1754 Map of Middlesex

Ordnance Surveyors Drawings 1807-8

Ordnance Survey 1st edition 1" (1822)

Ordnance Survey 1st edition 25" (1863)

Bacons Map of London (1888)

Ordnance Survey 2nd edition 25" (1896)

Ordnance Survey 3rd edition 25" (1914)

Ordnance Survey 25" (1936)

Ordnance Survey 25" (1956)

Published Sources

Brett-James N S (1931) *The Story of Hendon, Manor and Parish*

Brewer J N (1816) *The Beauties of England: London and Middlesex* Vol 4.

Hopkins J (1964) *A History of Hendon*

VCH (1976) *The Victoria History of the County of Middlesex* Vol 5.

Appendix 1 Table of contexts

CTX	TYPE	DESCRIPTION
100	Deposit	Topsoil
101	Deposit	Modern demolition
102	Cut	Construction cut for structure 103
103	Structure	Modern (20th century) structure
104	Layer	Natural clay
105	Deposit	Yard surface associated with structure 103
106	Deposit	Redeposited natural in 102
200	Deposit	Modern demolition
201	Deposit	Garden soil, associated with 20th century structure
202	Deposit	Modern construction deposit for 218
203	Deposit	20th century garden soil
204	Deposit	19th century garden soil
205	Deposit	Gully fill of 206
206	Cut	Gully
207	Deposit	Gully fill of 208
208	Cut	Gully
209	Layer	Natural clay
210	Deposit	18th? century landscaping deposit?
211	Cut	20th century construction cut
212	Cut	20th century construction cut
213	Deposit	20th century hardcore/foundation
214	Deposit	20th century hardcore/foundation
215	Structure	20th century brick wall
216	Structure	20th century brick wall

217	Deposit	18th? landscaping deposit?
218	Structure	20th century brick wall
219	Cut	20th century brick wall foundation trench
220	Structure	20th century 'crazy paved' patio
301	Deposit	Modern demolition
302	Deposit	Tarmac yard surface
303	Deposit	19th? century garden soil
304	Structure	20th century brick wall
305	Cut	Construction cut for 304
306	Deposit	18th? century landscaping deposit?
307	Layer	Natural clay
308	Structure	20th century brick footing
309	Cut	Construction cut for 308
310	Structure	20th century 'crazy paved' patio
311	Deposit	20th century concrete raft
401	Deposit	Modern demolition
402	Layer	Natural clay
501	Deposit	Modern demolition layer
502	Deposit	Redeposited natural clay (503) + modern demolition (501) interface
503	Deposit	Redeposited natural clay, landscaping deposit
601	Deposit	Modern demolition
602	Deposit	Buried modern topsoil
603	Deposit	Clay-silt interface of 602 and 604
604	Deposit	Redeposited natural clay, landscaping deposit
605	Deposit	Make-up for 608
606	Layer	Natural clay
607	Cut	Construction cut for 608
608	Structure	20th century structure

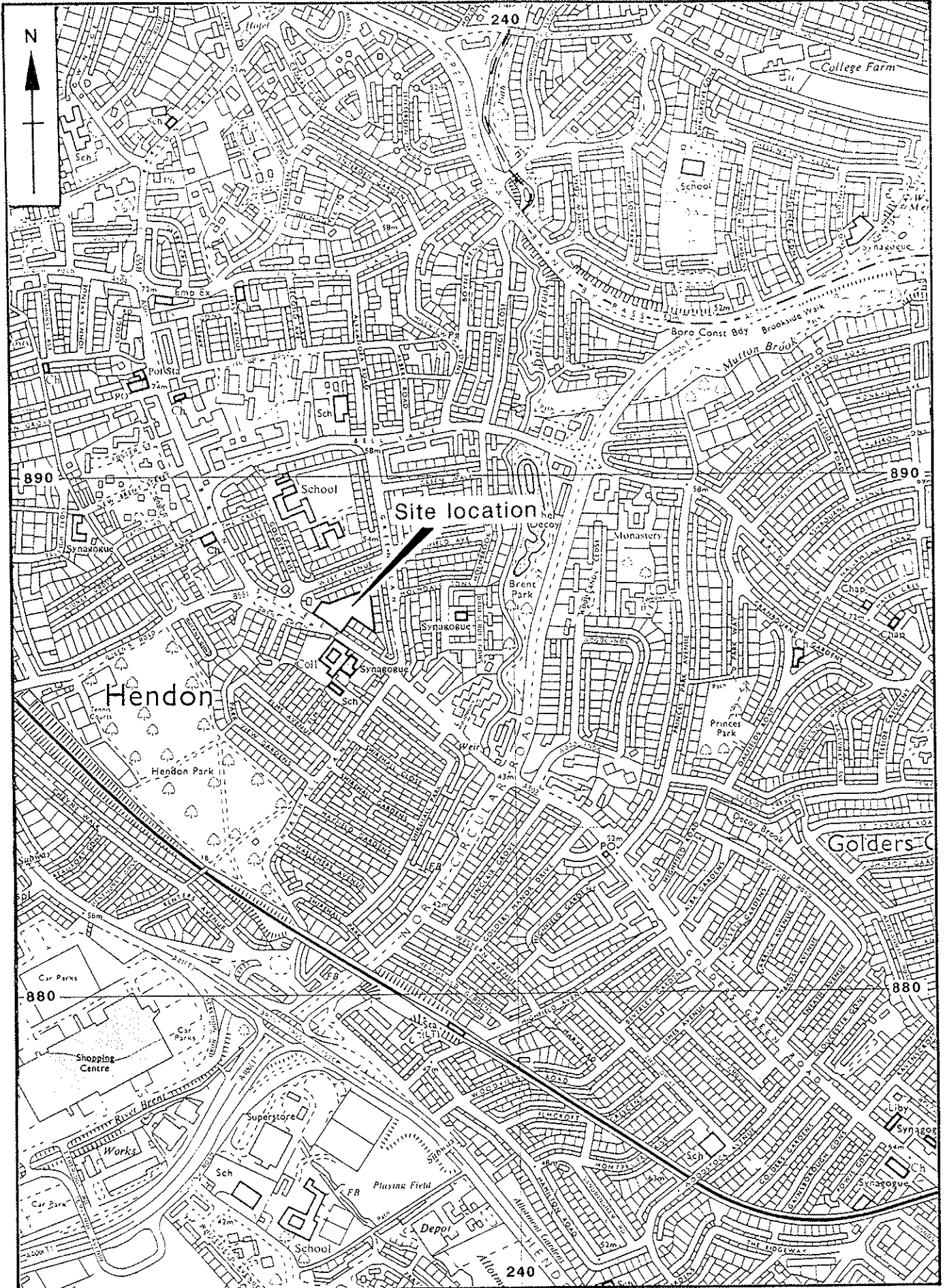
Appendix 2 Gazetteer of sites

- 1: Medieval and post-medieval site. Excavation in 1973 revealed an 12th-14th century occupation layer cut by the footings of a post-medieval building.
GLSMR no: 081927.
NGR: TQ 2271 8905.
- 2: Possible road surface, undated. Layer of cobbles and pebbles found at depth of 40-60cm found in small trialhole in 1983 in a garden at the south end of Brent St. The form suggests that it may be Roman but no dating evidence was recovered.
GLSMR no: 082237
NGR: TQ 238 885
- 3: Excavation on site of kitchen garden complex of Hendon Place House (demolished in 1934) revealed a substantial brick built wall, a complex network of brick and tile drains. Probably represents the remains of a Victorian Green House. These features had wiped out any earlier Archaeological layers.
GLSMR no: 081956
NGR: TQ 238897
- 4: Possible site of Hendon medieval Manor House.
GLSMR no: 081926
NGR: TQ 2289 8953
- 5: Roman, Anglo-Saxon and Medieval site. Excavations by Hendon District Archaeological Society between 1961 and 1969 revealed Roman and medieval pottery and an Anglo-Saxon ditch.
GLSMR nos: 081969, 081983-4.
NGR: TQ 228 894
- 6: Multi-period site. Excavation by Hendon District Archaeological Society at Church Terrace, Hendon between 1973-4 uncovered a Saxon ditch containing 6th-9th century pottery, 13th and 14th century ditches, four probably 14th or 15th century inhumations, a possibly 16th century wall and a number of post-medieval rubbish pits. The site also produced a number of unstratified finds including fourteen possibly worked flints of unknown prehistoric dated, late 3rd to early 4th century Roman pottery and a Saxon pin. A later (1993) Watching Brief to the rear of this site revealed no further features of archaeological interest.
GLSMR nos: 081850, 081852, 081912, 081928, 082360-1, 082651, 22168401.
NGR: TQ 2298 89503.
- 7: Findspot of a undated Prehistoric possibly worked flint core.
GLSMR no: 2465 8900
NGR: TQ 2465 8900

- 8: Trial trenching by Hendon District Archaeological Society in 1974 produced only 19th century pottery.
GLSMR no: 083459
NGR: TQ 232 895
- 9: General findspot of an Iron Age coin. Gallo-Belgic coin found in 1926.
GLSMR no: 081924
NGR: TQ 24 88
- 10: Excavation by Hendon District Archaeological Society in 1976 on the site of a possible 17th century cottage at 239-241 Golders Green Road failed to locate suspected line of Roman Road or the remains of the cottage. Excavation produced 'only a few post-medieval finds'.
GLSMR nos: 081976, 081996.
NGR: TQ 2427 8814
- 11: Medieval and post-medieval site. Excavation by Hendon District Archaeological Society on site of 19th century forge at 296 Golders Green Road revealed a possible road. This feature was sealed by a 16th century layer which was in turn sealed by a thick buried soil layer containing much 17th and 18th century pottery. This was in turn sealed by layers associated by the forge.
GLSMR nos: 082279, 082338.
NGR: 24140 88375
- 12: Mesolithic, medieval and post-medieval site. Excavation by Harrow District Archaeological Society at Church Farm museum in 1993 revealed scatter of mesolithic struck flint, a probably medieval buried land surface cut by later medieval postholes and gullies and large quantities of post-medieval tile and brick, largely Victorian or modern. Site also contained a late Saxon or medieval ditch containing a large quantity of burnt material interpreted as the remains of a hearth or a burnt wooden structure.
GLSMR nos: 082657-63.
NGR: TQ 2283 8958
- 13: Roman site at Grove House, Hendon. Re-opening of a gravel pit in 1889 led to the discovery of Roman pottery and tile fragments. This site is also said to have produced fragments of tessellated pavement and a cremation jar but the Greater London Sites and Monuments Record casts some doubt about the correctness of this attribution.
GLSMR nos: 081913, 08191301 & 18191302.
TQ 227 891
- 14: Site of 12th century or earlier church. A 12th century chancel was found on the present day site of St Mary's church, Hendon in 1929-31 (the present church dates from the mid 13th century). It is also possible that there may be an earlier Saxon church on the site.
GLSMR no: 081930.

- NGR: TQ 2287 8956.
- 15: Findspot of a 3rd century Roman coin.
GLSMR no: 081915
NGR: TQ 240 892
- 16: Findspot of a Neolithic Jadeite Axe.
GLSMR no: 081919
NGR: TQ 2396 8921.
- 17: Suspected route of Roman road believed to run through Copthall Fields and Sunny Hill Park.
GLSMR no: 081960.
NGR: TQ 236913 to 242893
- 18: Archaeological Excavation. Excavation at Peacocks Yard, Church End, Harrow by Hendon District Archaeological Society in 1969 revealed nothing earlier than post-medieval.
GLSMR no: 081970
NGR: TQ 228 895
- 19: Archaeological Evaluation. Evaluation by Herts Archaeological Trust in 1994 discovered one feature, a single ditch which contained a 16th-17th century bellarmine sherd and a number of tile fragments. Two undated prehistoric struck flints were recovered from the topsoil and one from the colluvial subsoil.
GLSMR nos: 052441-2
NGR: TQ 5240 8925
- 20: Archaeological Evaluation. Evaluation by Thames Valley Archaeological Services in 1995 at 15-17 Sunningfields Road revealed no archaeologically significant deposits: the only features on the site related to modern buildings.
GLSMR no: 083319
NGR: TQ 22960 89720
- 21: Findspot of a 2nd century Roman coin, attributed to the emperor Hadrian (AD 117-138).
GLSMR no: 081918
NGR: TQ 231 896
- 22: Archaeological Evaluation. Archaeological Evaluation by Museum of London Archaeological Services in 1992 at Tenterdon Grove revealed natural clay and gravel overlain by a late 19th century and 20th century layer of mixed subsoil and topsoil.
GLSMR no: 082574
NGR: TQ 2342 8950

- 23: Archaeological Evaluation. Archaeological Evaluation in 1969 uncovered post-medieval yard and some post-medieval artefacts associated with it.
GLSMR no: 081979
NGR: TQ 235896
- 24: Archaeological Evaluation. Excavation by Hendon District Archaeological Society at 50 the Borroughs, Hendon in 1986 produced only post-medieval finds.
GLSMR no: 081977
NGR: TQ 227 891
- 25: Archaeological Evaluation. An evaluation by the Museum of London Archaeological Services at the site of Former Hendon Bus Garage in Babington Road in 1993 located no archaeological features. This was interpreted as suggesting a low density of occupation consistent with the site being historically open land.
GLSMR no: 082484
NGR: TQ 2293 8932
- 26: Medieval Road. Excavations by the Hendon District Archaeological Society in 1968 revealed a medieval pebble road surface, nearly 4m wide, and associated pottery including Hertfordshire Greyware and 14th and 15th century Surrey and West Kent Wares.
GLSMR no: 081910
NGR: TQ 2410 8850.



TQ 28 NW

scale 1:10,000

Reproduced from the Ordnance Survey's 1:10,000 map of 1993
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Figure 1

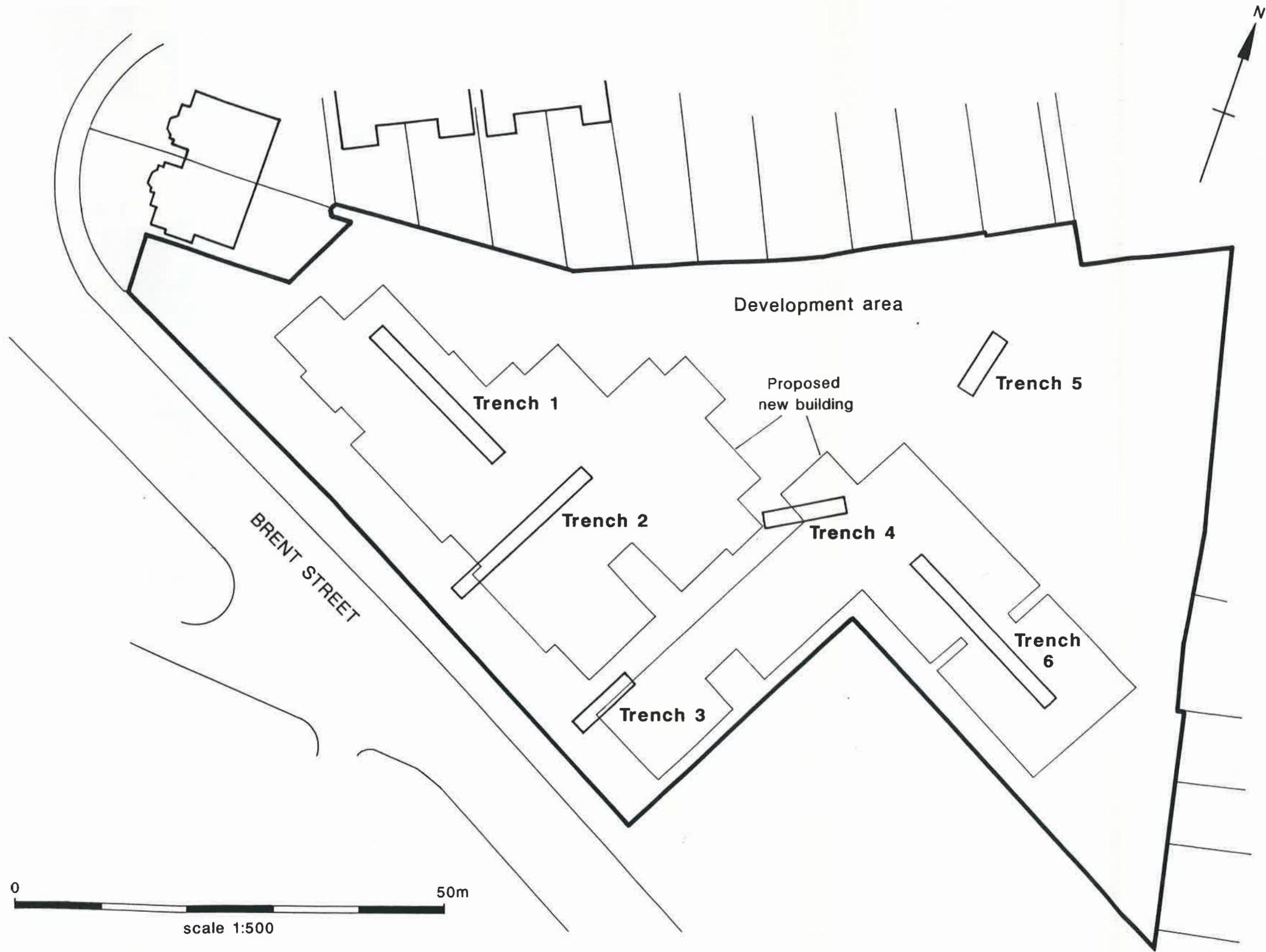


Figure 2

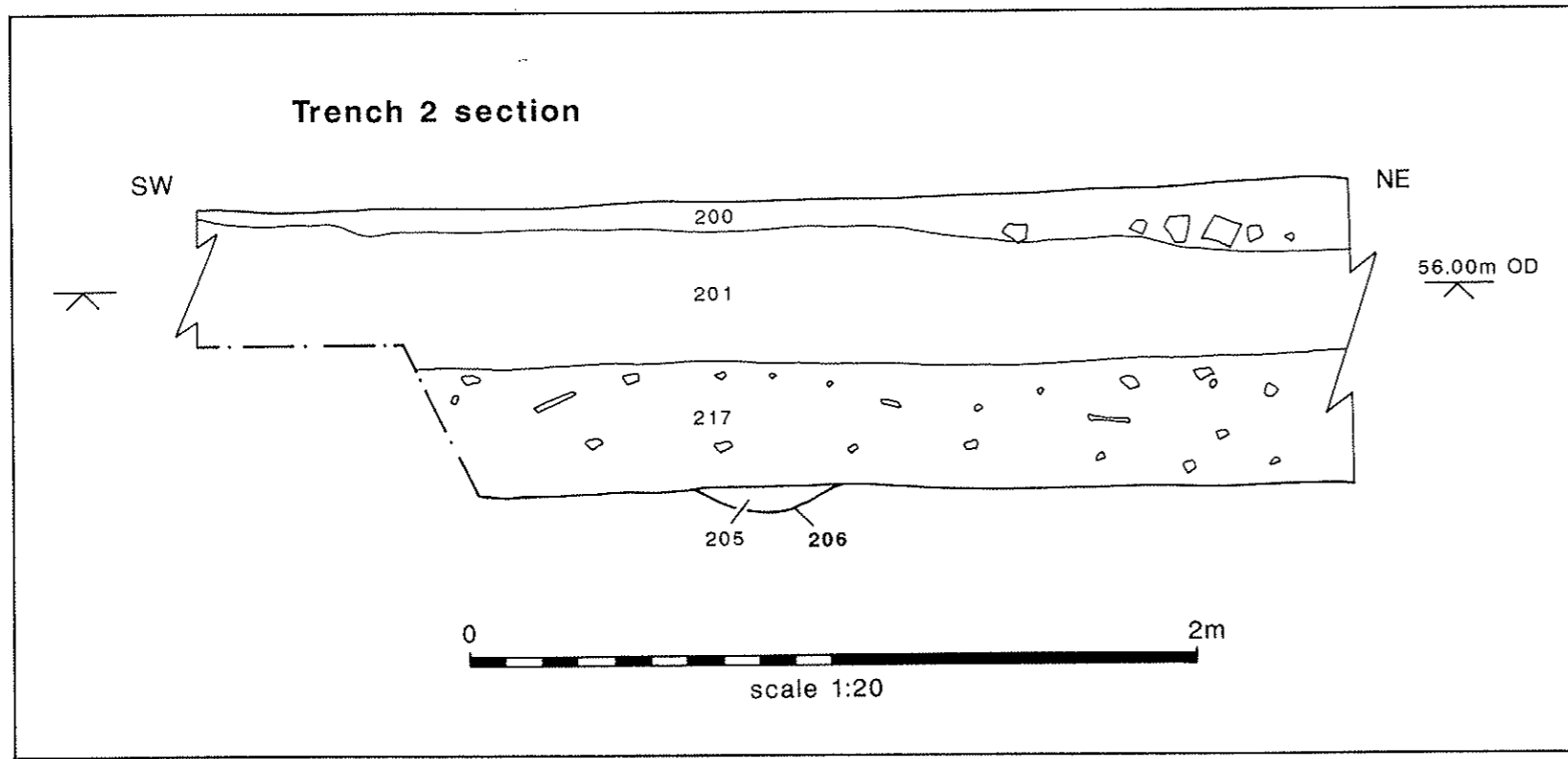
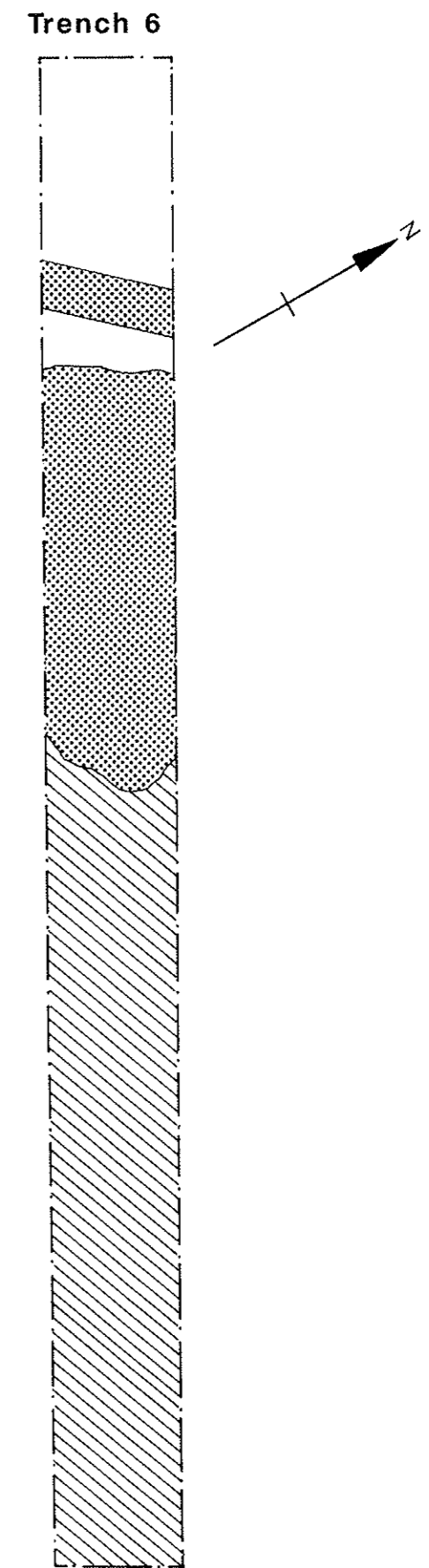
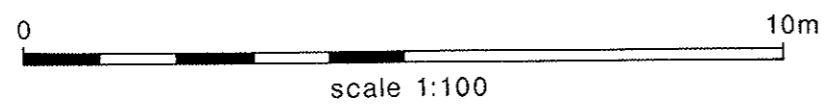
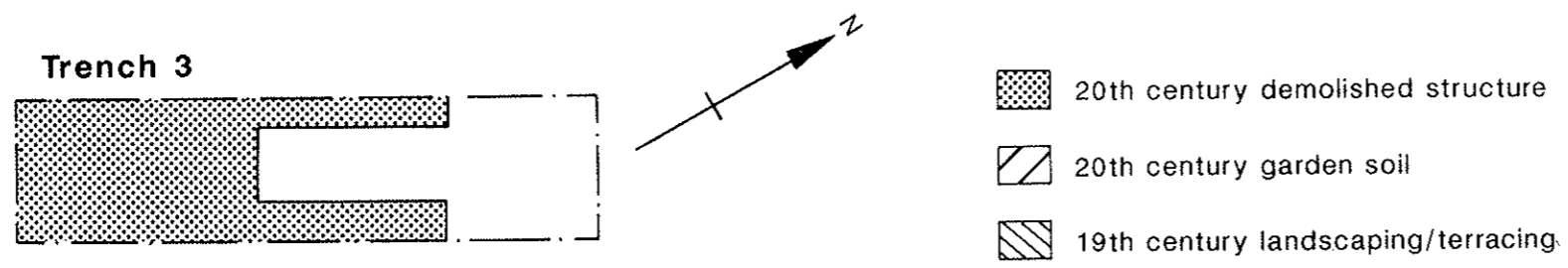
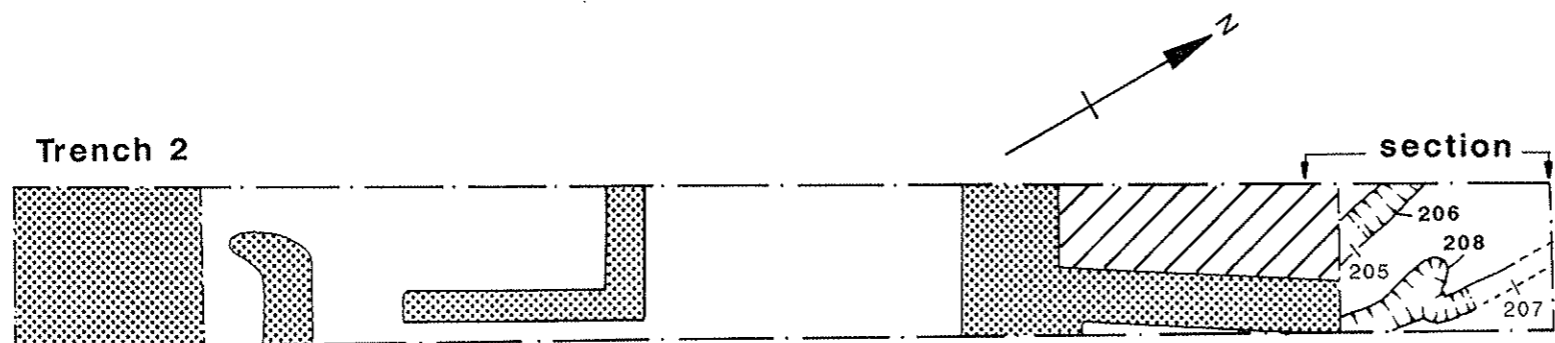


Figure 3



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