Archaeology South-East

ASE

An Archaeological Evaluation at the London Irish Rugby Ground, Sunbury-on-Thames, Surrey

Planning Ref: Pre-determination

NGR 510400 169600
(TQ 104 696)

Project No:4484
Site Code: LIR10

ASE Report No. 2010130
OASIS id: 81552

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With contributions by
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Abstract

Archaeology South-East was commissioned by Scott Wilson to undertake an archaeological evaluation on land at the London Irish Rugby Ground, Sunbury, Surrey. A total of 16 trial evaluation trenches with a combined total area of 567 square metres were excavated. These trenches revealed a boundary ditch of probable post-medieval date which may have run north to south the full length of the site. Plough scarring and a shallow gully were also identified at the north eastern corner of the site. Eight of the sixteen trenches revealed no archaeological features with a further five containing only modern intrusive features. Comparison with the previous geophysical survey of the site indicated that a gully feature had been picked up by the survey whilst the larger boundary ditch was not detected.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Site Background

1.1.1 Archaeology South-East, the contracting division of The Centre for Applied Archaeology at the Institute of Archaeology, University College London, was commissioned by Scott Wilson on behalf of their client to undertake an evaluation on land at the London Irish Rugby Club, Sunbury-on-Thames, Surrey (NGR: TQ104 696, Figure 1).

1.2 Geology and Topography

1.2.1 The underlying geology of the area is river terrace gravels. The site has been use for rugby pitches and playing fields with associated access roads and club house.

1.3 Planning Background

1.3.1 The archaeological evaluation is part of pre-determination works ahead of a planning application for a residential development.

1.4 Aims and Objectives

1.4.1 The aims of the investigations as detailed in the specification (Scott Wilson 2010) are:-

- to identify the presence/absence of buried archaeological remains
- to assess the geoarchaeological and palaeoenvironmental potential of the proposed development area
- To determine (where possible) the nature, depth, extent, character and date of any archaeological deposits or features encountered (as far as circumstances permit)
- To determine the condition or state of preservation of any archaeological remains present.
- To aid in the design of a suitable mitigation strategy as necessary.

1.4.2 The fieldwork is to be carried out within the general parameters defined by the Surrey Structure Plan.

1.4.3 The final aim is to make public the results of the archaeological evaluation, subject to any confidentiality restrictions.

1.5 Scope of Report

1.5.1 This report presents the findings of the fieldwork (trial trench evaluation)

undertaken by Sarah Porteus (Archaeologist), Leslie Davison (Surveyor), Karine LeHegarat, Ben Sharp and Chris Russel (Assistant Archaeologists) between the 26th of July and the 3rd of August 2010. The project was managed by Andy Leonard (fieldwork) and Jim Stevenson (post-excavation).

2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Summary

2.1.1 The specification) contains an archaeological and historical background which is summarised here with due acknowledgement (Scott Wilson 2010.

2.1.2 No archaeological sites, find-spots, or areas of historical interest exist within the site apart from St Teresa's Convent, a Grade II Listed Building.

2.2 Prehistoric

2.2.1 No Palaeolithic (c.450,000 -10,000 BC) finds have been recovered from the immediate area.

2.2.2 There are a number of find-spots dating to the Mesolithic and Neolithic periods which mainly consist of isolated finds of axes.

2.2.3 The majority of prehistoric archaeological material dates to the Bronze Age. Two Bronze Age cemeteries are located within the wider area. There are also a number of Bronze Age weapon find-spots associated with ritual deposition in the River Thames and its environs. Other Bronze Age features in the area include a pit and ditch, a possible barrow and several crop marks.

2.2.4 No Iron Age features or finds are known from the area.

2.3 Roman

2.3.1 There is little indication of Roman activity in the area, apart from a small quantity of Roman pottery, a spearhead, ditch, pit and posthole uncovered during trial trenching in 2005.

2.4 Medieval

2.4.1 During archaeological trial trenching at Kempton Park Racecourse from 1971-73 by the West London Archaeological Field Group, sherds of medieval pottery were recovered. The medieval town of Sunbury developed along the banks of the River Thames, c. 1-1.5km south of the site.

2.5 Post-medieval and modern

2.5.1 Also during archaeological trial trenching at Kempton Park Racecourse from 1971-73 by West London Archaeological Field Group, remains of the former Hyde House dating mainly to the 17th century with 18th century additions were uncovered. In 1999, observations of footing trenches under the direction of a watching brief for a residential development at 1113 Forge Lane, post-medieval and modern 20th century deposits were recorded.

2.5.2 During the early modern and modern periods, there was a significant rise in the population of Lower Sunbury and Upper Sunbury and the archaeological and historical evidence supports this, recording numerous residential

buildings.

2.6 Geophysical Survey

2.6.1 A geophysical survey of the area was undertaken immediately prior to the trial trenching detail in the current report (Stratascan 2010). A series of anomalies were indicated (Fig.7) some of which lay within the area to be investigated by trial trenching.

3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

3.1 Summary of Methodology

3.1.1 A total of 11, 30 metre by 1.5 metre trenches (Fig. 2) were excavated in their original proposed location. A further five were excavated in full or part due to mitigating circumstances (see section 3.2). Eight trenches were unable to be excavated (see section 3.2).

3.1.2 A total area of 567m was investigated. Excavations were undertaken in spits of no more than 0.10m thickness using an 8 tonne 360 mechanical excavator fitted with a 1.5m wide toothless ditching bucket under constant supervision by a suitably qualified archaeologist.

3.1.2 Excavation by machine was taken down to the top of any archaeological layer or deposit or the top of 'natural' substrate where no archaeological deposits were found at a higher level.

3.1.3 The surface of the excavated area was cleared of loose spoil by hand following machine excavation.

3.1.4 Any finds recovered were bagged separately and clearly labelled by context and retained for examination by ASE specialists. All removed spoil was scanned using a metal detector to recover any artefacts.

3.1.5 Material excavated from features suitable for environmental processing were collected up to a maximum of 30 litres per bulk sample.

3.1.6 All contexts were recorded on pro forma context recording forms.

3.1.7 A full digital photographic record was maintained of the excavations with colour slide and black and white photographs taken as appropriate.

3.1.8 A full running section of the stratigraphy of trenches containing archaeological features were made at a scale of 1:50 with individual detailed sections at 1:20. Representative sample sections of 2m length were recorded for trenches containing no archaeological features at a scale of 1:20. The trench and feature locations were located using GPS surveying equipment and all features were planned in relation to ordinance datum heights.

3.1.9 Following consultation with Scott Wilson and the County Archaeological Officer the trenches were backfilled, compacted, no reinstatement was undertaken.

3.2 Fieldwork constraints

3.2.1 Constraints on fieldwork prevented the excavation of eight of the proposed trenches and permitted only partial excavation of five of the proposed trenches, with one further trench being moved to permit excavation of full length (Fig. 2). Details of constraints by trench are given below.

3.2.2 Trench 1 lay to the south of a gas main as identified on the service plan. Upon arrival on site manholes indicating the exact location could not be identified, though a number of man holes relating to services in locations not indicated on the map were identified. One such man hole, possibly connected to the gas main, lay immediately to the north of the location of Trench 1. This left a degree of uncertainty as to the location of the gas main. The trench could not be moved to the south due to the unidentified man hole and an established row of young trees. The trench could not be moved to the north due to a BT man hole and as this would move the excavations closer to the location of the gas main as indicated on the map. The proposed location lay upon a bank of what appeared to be made ground.

3.2.3 The proposed location of Trench 2 lay partly within the established bank of young trees to the south. Uncertainty over the location of the gas main remained for the location of trench 2. A BT service plan also indicated a proposed line across the middle of the trench. Trench 2 also lay within a substantial bank of what appeared to be made ground. The trench was not excavated.

3.2.4 Trench 4 lay beneath the tree canopy of mature established deciduous trees flanking the rugby pitch to the north. The trench as originally planned was not excavated, though a five metre extension from the western end of the trench was excavated as this area lay outside of the canopies. The trench could not be moved to the south due to uncertainty as to the location of the edge of the rugby pitch.

3.2.5 Trench 5 lay beneath the tree canopy of mature deciduous trees flanking the pitch to the north prohibiting excavation of the majority of the trench. A five metre section of the trench which lay outside the canopy zone was excavated. The trench could not be moved to the south due to uncertainty as to the location of the edge of the rugby pitch.

3.2.6 Trench 9 was partially excavated. Two 3 by 1.5 metre test pits were excavated at either end of the proposed location of Trench 9. This strategy was adopted due to depth of made ground making trenches unsafe to enter.

3.2.7 Trench 10 lay within an area of high grass with steep sloping sides up to the south and west with mature tree hedgerow to the north. A current fox den was located immediately to the north of the trench. Upon commencement of excavation of Trench 10 a nest of bees was disturbed within the grassy vegetation. The trench was abandoned for safety reasons.

3.2.8 Trench 13 was not excavated. Two electric live electric cables were detected by CAT scanning leading to the pitch flood lights, one cable ran across the northern end, the second ran diagonally up and across in a south west to north east direction. Tree canopies to the south prevented movement to the south and the pitch prevented movement to the east.

3.2.9 Trench 14 was not excavated to its full depth. An electric cable not identified by CAT scanning was identified through excavation of the trench running down the centre of the trench, no damage was done to the duct..

3.2.10 Trench 15 was partially excavated. It constrained by the location of the pitch and the presence of an established hedgerow in the location of the eastern end of the trench and was excavated to a length of 8 metres.

3.2.11 The location of Trench 19 was altered. LoElectric service cables, not appearing on existing service plans were identified in the proposed location of trench 19 using the CAT scanner. The trench was moved to the south and joined to Trench 18.

3.2.12 Trenches 21, 22, 23, 24 were not excavated. Electric cables not appearing on service plans were identified in the location of Trenches 21, 22, 23, and 24. The services identified through the CAT scan survey indicated the presence of two cables running parallel to the trench locations on either edge of the trench locations. Movement of the trenches was not possible as any movement to avoid the cables would have impacted upon the current pitch location.

Number of Contexts	66
No. of files/paper record	1file
Plan and sections sheets	3
Bulk Samples	3
Photographs	1 digital CD, 1 sheet of slides and 1 sheet of black and white photographs.
Bulk finds	1 small box
Registered finds	0
Environmental flots/residue	3

Table 1: Quantification of site archive

4.0 RESULTS

4.1 For ease of presentation, evaluation trenches in the same vicinity, with identical stratigraphy and also containing no archaeological remains are described together. All other trenches are described independently.

4.2 Trenches 3, 4 and 5

4.2.1 List of recorded contexts Trench 3

Number	Type	Description	Max. Length	Max. Width	Deposit Thickness	Height m.AOD
3/001	Dep	Topsoil	Tr.	Tr.	0.31m	11.414
3/002	Nat	Natural	N/A	N/A	N/A	11.104

4.2.2 List of recorded contexts Trench 4

Number	Type	Description	Max. Length	Max. Width	Deposit Thickness	Height m.AOD
4/001	Dep	Topsoil/ tarmac	Tr.	Tr.	0.27m	11.713
4/002	Nat	Natural	N/A	N/A	N/A	11.443

4.2.3 List of recorded contexts Trench 5

Number	Type	Description	Max. Length	Max. Width	Deposit Thickness	Height m.AOD
5/001	Dep	Topsoil	Tr.	Tr.	0.10m	11.865
5/002	Dep	Subsoil	Tr.	Tr.	0.20m	11.765
5/003	Nat	Natural	N/A	N/A	N/A	11.565

4.2.4 Summary

The stratigraphy of Trenches 3, 4 and 5 located around the edges of the northern pitch was similar.

A loose light yellowish brown fine silt with moderate sub angular flint gravels natural substrate [3/002], [4/002] and [5/003] was encountered at 11.104, 11.443 and 11.565mAOD respectively. The natural substrate was overlain by a thin yellowish brown silty sand subsoil, [5/002], of 0.20m thickness in Trench 5, this layer had been entirely removed and levelled in Trenches 3 and 4. Each trench was sealed by a loose mid grey orange brown sandy silt topsoil [3/001], [4/001] and [5/003] of 0.31m, 0.27m and 0.10m thickness respectively. Trench 4 was also partially overlain by a tarmac footpath.

No archaeological remains were identified in any of these trenches.

4.3 Trench 6 (Fig. 3)

4.3.1 List of recorded contexts

Number	Type	Description	Max. Length	Max. Width	Deposit Thickness	Height m.AOD
6/001	Dep	Topsoil	Tr.	Tr.	0.10	12.136
6/002	Nat	Natural	N/A	N/A	N/A	12.036
6/003	Cut	Ditch cut	Tr.	3.0m	1.20m	12.036
6/004	Fill	Ditch Fill	Tr.	2.40m	0.55m	12.036
6/005	Fill	Ditch fill	Tr.	1.20m	0.65,	11.486

4.3.2 Summary

The natural gravels [6/002] were encountered at 12.036mAOD.

Cut into the natural gravel was a north to south orientated linear ditch, [6/003], of 3.0m maximum width at the top narrowing to 0.40m at base, the ditch sides had a stepped profile with slightly rounded base. The basal fill of the ditch [6/005] comprised a loose mid grey brown silty sand of 0.65m thickness containing common well sorted flint gravels up to 30mm diameter. The uppermost fill of the ditch [6/004] was a loose light orangey brown sandy silt with frequent well sorted sub angular flint pebbles up to 0.20mm diameter and a small quantity of animal bone, the fill was of 0.55m thickness.

Overlying the uppermost ditch fill and sealing the trench was a light mid greyish orange brown fine sandy silt topsoil [6/001]. Plough scarring was observed cut into the natural at the east end of the trench only.

4.4 Trench 7

4.4.1 List of recorded contexts

Number	Type	Description	Max. Length	Max. Width	Deposit Thickness	Height m.AOD
7/001	Dep	Topsoil	Tr.	Tr.	0.28	11.984
7/002	Nat	Natural	N/A	N/A	N/A	11.704
7/003	Cut	Cut modern pit	0.69m+	0.50m	1.0m+	11.704

4.4.2 Summary

The loose light yellowish brown fine silt with moderate sub angular flint gravels natural substrate [7/002] was encountered at 11.704mAOD.

Cut into the natural substrate was a large modern pit [7/003] of 0.50m north to south width and a length of 0.69m extending beyond the limit of the trench which contained a machine sawn portion of a large tree trunk laid side on in the pit with modern milk bottle glass adhering to the sides.

A 0.28m thick deposit of loose mid grey orange brown sandy silt topsoil [7/001] overlay the top of the pit and the remainder of the trench.

No archaeological remains were observed.

4.5 **Trench 8** (Fig. 4)

4.5.1 List of recorded contexts

Number	Type	Description	Max. Length	Max. Width	Deposit Thickness	Height m.AOD
8/001	Dep	Topsoil	Tr.	Tr.	0.10m	12.024
8/002	Dep	Subsoil	Tr.	Tr.	0.20m	11.924
8/003	Nat	Natural	N/A	N/A	N/A	11.724
8/004	Cut	Ditch cut	Tr.	5.60m	1.26m	11.724
8/005	Fill	Fill of ditch	Tr.	1.40m	0.50m	11.124
8/006	Cut	Cut plough scars	3.60m	0.10m	0.20m	11.724
8/007	Fill	Fill of plough scars	3.60m	0.10m	0.20m	11.724
8/008	Cut	Cut of linear	Tr.	0.75m	0.40m	11.724
8/009	fill	Fill of linear	Tr.	0.75m	0.40m	11.724
8/010	Fill	Fill of ditch	Tr.	0.80m	0.20m	11.524
8/011	Fill	Fill of ditch	Tr.	5.20m	0.60m	11.724

4.5.2 Summary

The natural gravel was encountered at 11.724mAOD. A 0.20m thick interface deposit of yellowish brown silty sand [8/002] was identified overlying the natural. Cut into [8/002] were a series of linear features.

The most westerly was north to south orientated ditch [8/004] which measured 5.60m wide and had a depth of 1.26m with a slightly stepped profile and near flat base. The basal fill of the ditch [8/005] was a loose dark brown sandy silt containing abundant pea gravel and river rolled flint up to 40mm in diameter of 0.50m thick. A single large sherd of pottery of mid 18th to 19th century date was recovered from context [8/005]. On the western edge of the ditch cut was a probable slumping deposit, [8/010], 0.20m thick and comprising a dark brown sandy silt with moderate pea gravel inclusions. The uppermost fill of ditch [8/004] was a pale brown sandy silt, [8.011], with abundant pea gravel of 5.20m width and 0.60m width.

To the east of ditch [8/004] was a shallow gully or ditch [8/008] orientated north to south of 0.75m width and 0.40m depth with a shallow 'U' shaped profile. Gully [8/008] contained a single fill, loose dark brown sandy silt [8/009]. The gully appears to be aligned with a geophysical anomaly identified during the survey (Fig. 7).

Plough scarring [8/006] was also visible to the west of gully [8/008] orientated west to east each 0.10m wide with 0.20m spacing between scars and extending across the width of the trench and continuing 3.60m from the eastern end. The plough scars were filled by a dark sandy silt [8/007]. Sealing the features was a light mid greyish orange brown fine sandy silt topsoil [8/001].

4.6 **Trench 9** (Fig. 6)

4.6.1 List of recorded contexts

Number	Type	Description	Max. Length	Max. Width	Deposit Thickness	Height m.AOD
9/001	Dep	Topsoil	Tr.	Tr.	0.15m	11.158-11.275
9/002	Dep	Made ground	Tr.	Tr.	0.25-0.90m	11.008-11.125
9/003	Dep	Buried topsoil/ made ground	Tr.	Tr.	0.21m	10.758 – 10.225
9/004	Nat	Natural	N/A	N/A	N/A	10.548 – 10.015

4.6.2 Summary

This trench was excavated as two test pits. The natural gravel was identified at 10.548m AOD. Overlying the natural was a dark greyish brown sandy silt deposit [9/003] of 0.21m thickness which contained brick coal metal and topsoil and may represent a buried topsoil from the construction works or a deposit of topsoil moved as part of the made ground works. Overlying [9/003] was a firm brown sandy silt [9/002] containing brick, coal, plastic and concrete and modern building materials of between 0.25 and 0.90m thickness. The made ground was overlain by a friable dark greyish brown sandy silt topsoil of 0.15m thickness.

No archaeological remains were observed.

4.7 **Trench 11 and 12** (Fig.6)

4.7.1 List of recorded contexts Trench 11

Number	Type	Description	Max. Length	Max. Width	Deposit Thickness	Height m.AOD
11/001	Cut	Cut for path	Tr.	Tr.	N/A	10.584
11/002	dep	Path	Tr.	Tr.	0.15m	10.734
11/003	Dep	Subsoil	Tr.	Tr.	0.20	10.584
11/004	Dep	Natural	N/A	N/A	N/A	10.384

4.7.2 List of recorded contexts Trench 12

Number	Type	Description	Max. Length	Max. Width	Deposit Thickness	Height m.AOD
12/001	Cut	Cut for path	Tr.	Tr.	N/A	10.584
12/002	Dep	Path	Tr.	Tr.	0.15m	10.734
12/003	Dep	Subsoil	Tr.	Tr.	0.20	10.584
12/004	Dep	Natural	N/A	N/A	N/A	10.384
12/005	Cut	Cut of modern pit	0.30m	0.30m	0.20m	10.584
12/006	Fill	Fill of	0.30m	0.30m	0.20m	10.584

		modern pit				

4.7.3 Summary

Trenches 11 and 12 ran in a line close together and revealed a similar stratigraphic sequence.

The natural substrate, a loose light yellowish brown fine silt with moderate sub angular flint gravels, [11/004] and [12/004], was encountered at 10.384mAOD. Cut into the natural substrate of Trench 11 were a series of north to south aligned plough scars or machine bucket teeth marks which did not continue for the length of the trench. Overlying this was a 0.20m thick subsoil/interface of yellow fine silty sand with occasional CBM fragments [11/003] [12/003]. A modern pit of 0.30m diameter and 0.20m depth, [12/005], was identified, cut into the subsoil and contained a modern beer bottle and a brownish yellow silty sand [12/006]. The subsoil had been truncated by the levelling cut [11/001] [12/001] for the insertion of a compacted gravel path [11/002] [12/002].

No archaeological remains were observed.

4.8 Trenches 14, 15 and 16 (Fig. 6)

4.8.1 List of recorded contexts Trench 14

Number	Type	Description	Max. Length	Max. Width	Deposit Thickness	Height m.AOD
14/001	Dep	Topsoil	Tr.	Tr.	0.20m	11.556
14/002	Dep	Subsoil	Tr.	Tr.	0.25m	11.356
14/003	Nat	Natural	N/A	N/A	N/A	11.106

4.8.2 List of recorded contexts Trench 15

Number	Type	Description	Max. Length	Max. Width	Deposit Thickness	Height m.AOD
15/001	Dep	Topsoil	Tr.	Tr.	0.15m	11.605
15/002	Dep	Subsoil	Tr.	Tr.	0.17m	11.455
15/003	Nat	Natural	N/A	N/A	N/A	11.285

4.8.3 List of recorded contexts Trench 16

Number	Type	Description	Max. Length	Max. Width	Deposit Thickness	Height m.AOD
16/001	Dep	Topsoil	Tr.	Tr.	0.30	11.605
16/002	Dep	Subsoil	Tr.	Tr.	0.10	11.305
16/003	Nat	Natural	N/A	N/A	N/A	11.205

4.8.4 Summary

Trenches 14, 15 and 16 ran along the outside of the south western pitch and contained the same stratigraphic sequence. Trench 15 was shortened to avoid a hedgerow and Trench 14 was not excavated to full depth for the

whole length due to the identification of an electric duct.

The natural substrate, a loose light yellowish brown fine silt with moderate sub angular flint gravels [14/001] [15/001] [16/001] was encountered between 11.106 and 11.282mAOD. Overlying the natural substrate was a 0.10 to 0.20m thick interface of yellow fine silty sand with occasional CBM fragments [14/002] [15/002] [16/002]. The greatest quantity of CBM was recovered from [14/002] and contained probable late medieval or early post-medieval brick fragments, with [16/002] yielding 19th century fragments of pottery. The subsoil was in turn was overlain by a 0.15 to 0.30m thick deposit of loose mid grey orange brown sandy silt topsoil [14/001] [15/001] [16/001].

No archaeological remains were present.

4.9 Trench 17 (Fig 5)

4.9.1 List of recorded contexts

Number	Type	Description	Max. Length	Max. Width	Deposit Thickness	Height m.AOD
17/001	Dep	Topsoil	Tr.	Tr.	0.30m	11.675
17/002	Dep	Subsoil	Tr.	Tr.	0.20m	11.375
17/003	Nat	Natural	N/A	N/A	N/A	11.175
17/004	Cut	Cut of ditch	Tr.	1.10m	0.90m	11.375
17/005	Fill	Fill of ditch	Tr.	1.10m	0.90m	11.375

4.9.2 Summary

The natural substrate [17/003] comprising gravels to the east and silty gravel to the west were encountered at 11.175mAOD. Overlying the natural was a 0.20m thick fine yellowish brown fine silty sand with sub-rounded flint pebbles [17/002].

Cut into the subsoil was a linear ditch [17/004] a 'U' shaped ditch of 1.10m width and 0.90m depth containing a loose brown silt [17/005] with flint pebble inclusions, broken ceramics and metal of later 19th or early 20th century date. The ditch was sealed by a loose greyish brown sandy silt topsoil [17/001] of 0.30m thickness.

4.10 Trench 18 and 19 (Fig. 6)

4.10.1 List of recorded contexts Trench 18

Number	Type	Description	Max. Length	Max. Width	Deposit Thickness	Height m.AOD
18/001	Dep	Topsoil	Tr.	Tr.	0.20m	11.659
18/002	Dep	Subsoil	Tr.	Tr.	0.10m	11.459
18/003	Nat	Natural	N/A	N/A	N/A	11.359
18/004	Cut	Modern postholes	0.60m	0.45m	0.20m	11.459

18/005	Fill	Fill of modern post holes	0.60m	0.45m	0.20m	11.459

4.10.2 List of recorded contexts Trench 19

Number	Type	Description	Max. Length	Max. Width	Deposit Thickness	Height m.AOD
19/001	Dep	Metalled surface	15.00m+	Tr.	0.15m	11.659
19/002	Dep	Contamination	15.00m+	Tr.	0.60m	11.509
19/003	Dep	Subsoil	Tr.	Tr.	0.20	11.509
19/004	Nat	Natural	N/A	N/A	N/A	11.309
19/005	Dep	Topsoil	15.00m+	Tr.	0.15	11.659
19/006	Cut	Cut modern post hole	0.37m	0.40m	0.16m	11.509
19/007	Fill	Fill of modern post hole	0.37m	0.40m	0.16m	11.509

4.10.3 Summary

Trenches 18 and 19 were joined together as one long trench.

The natural substrate, a yellowish brown fine silt with moderate sub angular flint gravels [18/003], [19/004] was encountered at between 11.309 and 11.359mAOD. This was overlain by a 0.20m thick subsoil/ interface deposit of light yellowish brown fine silty sand with occasional CBM inclusions [18/002] [19/003].

Cut into the subsoil were a series of modern post holes [18/004] [19/006] containing mixed dark grey silty sand with concrete, metal and modern detritus [18/005] [19/007].

Overlying the post holes was a 0.15 to 0.20m thick deposit of loose dark greyish brown silty sand topsoil [18/001] [19/005] for all but the northern most 15m of the trench. The most northerly 15 metres were overlain by tarmac and metalling of 0.15m thickness [19/001]. Below the metalled and tarmac surface was a 0.60m thick area of contamination [19/002] which obscured the stratigraphic sequence.

No archaeological features were identified.

4.11 Trench 20 (Fig. 6)

4.11.1 List of recorded contexts

Number	Type	Description	Max. Length	Max. Width	Deposit Depth	Height m.AOD
20/001	Dep	Topsoil	Tr.	Tr.	0.15	11.328
20/002	Dep	Subsoil	Tr.	Tr.	0.15-0.35	11.178
20/003	Nat	Natural	N/A	N/A	N/A	11.028-10.828

4.11.2 Summary

The natural light to mid yellowish brown fine silty sand [20/003] was encountered at 11.028mAOD, this was overlain by a mid yellowish brown silty sand subsoil [20/002] with occasional CBM and bone inclusions and varied in thickness between 0.15m at the north to 0.35m at the southern end. A 0.15m thick deposit of loose dark greyish brown silty sand topsoil [20/001] over lay the subsoil.

No archaeological remains were identified.

5.0 THE FINDS

5.1 **The Bulk Finds** by Trista Clifford

5.1.1 A small finds assemblage was recovered during the evaluation at London Irish Rugby Club, Sunbury. All bulk finds were washed and dried by context. Materials were bagged by type and pottery marked with site code and context. The bulk assemblage is quantified by count and weight. An overview of the assemblage is shown below in Appendix 1.

5.2 **The Pottery** by Luke Barber

5.2.1 The archaeological work recovered a small assemblage of pottery all of which is of later post-medieval date. The material shows only slight signs of abrasion suggesting it has not been subjected to repeated redeposition. Context [8/005] produced a single jar base with all over glaze in post-medieval redware. Although not closely datable a mid 18th- to 19th- century date is probable. Context [16/002] produced two conjoining sherds from a willow pattern plate in transfer-printed ware of probable mid to later 19th-century date. By far the largest group was recovered from [17/005]. This context produced single sherds from a yellow ware jug (with white slip band decoration) and English porcelain saucer (with gold gilt line decoration) of general 19th- century date. The bulk of the assemblage is composed of 26 sherds from a heavy plain dinner plate and bowl in refined white earthenware. These pieces almost certainly belong to the second half of the 19th century, if not the very early 20th century.

5.3 **Metalwork** by Trista Clifford

5.3.1 Context [14/002] contained a small amorphous lump of iron. Iron nails were recovered from contexts [17/005] (1 heavy duty) and [19/007] (2 general purpose), these are 19th to 20th century in date. A heavy duty, 20th century iron attachment fitting was recovered from [17/005]. A late 20th century white metal ring fitting came from [18/005].

5.4 **Glass** by Trista Clifford

5.4.1 Fragments from a modern milk bottle were recovered from Contexts [7/003] and [18/005]. Several fragments from 20th century brown beer bottles were recovered from contexts [12/006], [18/005] and [19/007]. A fragment from a pale green glass vessel of 19th-20th century date came from context [17/005].

5.5 **Slag** by Trista Clifford

5.5.1 Context [17/005] contained a small piece of undiagnostic slag.

5.6 **Clay tobacco pipe** by Elke Raemen

5.6.1 Deposit [16/002] contained a small bowl fragment dating to the second half of the 17th century. A plain stem fragment, which dates to c. 1750-1910, was recovered from the same context.

5.7 The Animal Bone by Gemma Ayton

5.7.1 The assemblage contains 16 fragments of animal bone from contexts [20/002] and [6/004]. The bone is in a poor condition with little of the surface remaining. The bone is unidentifiable to species but does contains three fragments that have been recorded as 'cattle-sized' which include a long-bone fragment and possible pelvis fragment.

5.7.2 Due to the condition of the bone, the assemblage holds no potential for further analysis.

5.8 The Ceramic Building Material by Sarah Porteus

5.8.1 A total of 23 fragments of ceramic building material (CBM) with a combined weight of 1200g were recovered from five contexts. The earliest fragments were recovered from context [14/002], unfrogged brick fragments (7/396g) in a poorly fired orange sandy fabric with moderate medium sized quartz with sparse very coarse flint inclusions with a thickness of 54mm are of possible 15th to 17th century date. A fragment of brick in an orange fabric with cream silt streaking with sparse red iron rich inclusions and moderate medium sized rose quartz and sparse voids from context [20/002] is of probable 19th or 20th century date. Fragments of concrete containing abundant flint inclusions from context [18/005] are of 20th century date. Tile flakes from contexts [12/006], [16/002], and [20/002] in a brownish orange fabric with moderate fine to medium quartz and iron streaking and a tile fragment from [18/005] In an orange fabric with fine to coarse white angular quartz inclusions were all undated.

6.0 THE ENVIRONMENTAL SAMPLES by Lucy Allott

6.1 Introduction and methodology

6.1.1 Three samples were taken during archaeological work at the site to recover environmental remains and material suitable for dating. Two samples were taken from upper [6/004] and lower [6/005] fills of linear feature [6/003] and a third sample was taken from the basal fill [8/005] of linear feature [8/004]. Samples were processed in a flotation tank and the residues and flots were retained on 500µm and 250µm meshes and air dried. The residues were passed through graded sieves (4 and 2mm) and each fraction sorted for environmental and artefact remains (Table 2). Flots were scanned under a stereozoom microscope at x7-45 magnifications and preliminary identifications provided for macrobotanical remains present (Table 3) through comparison with modern reference material.

6.2 Results

6.2.1 Flots are dominated by uncharred vegetation including small roots and occasional seeds that are most likely of modern origin as evidence for root disturbances were recorded during excavation. Charcoal and charred macrobotanical remains are also present however these assemblages are very limited. Wild radish (*Raphanus* sp.) is present in sample <1>, [6/004] while stem node and internode fragments and other indeterminate charred plant remains are evident in each sample. The samples also contain small fragments of coal, fire cracked flint, worked flint, glass and industrial debris. The charcoal assemblages are too limited to provide material suitable for dating and botanical remains provide no further potential to examine the agriculture or vegetation environment associated with the use, or infilling of these linear features.

Sample Number	Context	Context / deposit type	Sample Volume litres	sub-Sample Volume litres	Charcoal >4mm	Weight (g)	Charcoal <4mm	Weight (g)	Land Snail shells	Weight (g)	Other (eg ind, pot, cbm)
1	6/004	Fill of linear feature	20	20			*	<2			Coal */<2g, FCF **/20g, Glass **/<2, Ind debris */<2g
2	6/005	Lower fill of linear feature	20	20							FCF **/54g, Flint */ <2g
3	8/005	Basal fill of linear feature	20	20					*	<2	Slag **/ <2g, Flint */ 10g, FCF */10g

Table 2: Residue Quantification (* = 1-10, ** = 11-50, *** = 51-250, **** = >250) and weights in grams

Sample Number	Context	weight g	Flot volume ml	Uncharred %	sediment %	seeds uncharred	Charcoal >4mm	Charcoal <4mm	Charcoal <2mm	other botanical charred	Identifications	Preservation	LSS	Ind debris hammerscale
1	6/004	26	160	80	15	*Sambucus nigra*, Chenopodiaceae indet., cf. *Atriplex* sp.	*	*		*	Indet. stem frags. (culm nodes), cf. *Raphanus* sp. fruit	**		*
2	6/005	64	220	75	24	cf. *Silene* sp., Chenopodiaceae indet., cf. Lamiaceae		*	*	*	Indet. stem frag. (culm node), Indet. CPR	*	*	
3	8/005	98	205	65	34	Chenopodiaceae indet., cf. Lamiaceae			*	*	Indet. CPR	*	*	

Table 3: Flot Quantification (* = 1-10, ** = 11-50, *** = 51-250, **** = >250) and preliminary identifications

7.0 DISCUSSION

7.1 Due to on site constraints Trenches 1, 2, 10, 13, 21, 22, 23 and 24 were not excavated equating to 330 square metres of trenching. In addition trenches 4, 5, 9 and 15 were excavated in part. Twelve trenches were excavated to the full 30 metre length. In total 567square metres were investigated.

7.2 No archaeology was identified in Trenches 3, 4, 5, 9, 20, 14, 15 and 16.

7.3 The earliest period represented on site was a small amount of late medieval or early post medieval ceramic building material from the subsoil of Trench 14 which may have been introduced to the site during manuring or ploughing of the fields. No features of this date were identified.

7.4 A boundary ditch of between 3.0m and 5.4m width at the top with an existing depth of 1.2m was identified running north to south in the northern field (in Trenches 6 and 8). This ditch appear to equate with a boundary line visible on the Ordnance Survey County Series 1:2500 1st Edition 1874-1894. A further north south ditch found at the southern end of the site (Trench 17) may also be a continuation of this boundary. Dating evidence suggested that the ditch was at least infilling by the mid 18th to 19th century, though its origins may be earlier. The boundary ditch was not identified during the geophysical survey.

7.5 To the east of the large boundary ditch in Trenches 6 and 8, plough scaring was identified indicating historical agricultural use of the land. Possible plough scarring was also identified in Trench 11, although these features may also be toothed machine scars as the area has been levelled for a path and lay next to a substantial bund of material.

7.6 In Trench 8 a shallow gully containing no datable finds was identified, this feature appears to be aligned with an anomaly identified during the geophysical survey of the site.

7.7 Modern pits were identified in Trenches 7, 12, 18 and 19 and may account for a number of anomalies identified in the geophysical survey. The modern post holes in Trenches 18 and 19 may relate to the back walls of housing, on the Ordnance Survey County Series 1:2500 map (3rd revision 1934). Three properties in the location of the trial trenches extended further back than the other gardens and these boundaries are reduced in line with the other properties within the last 50 years.

7.8 The thin coverage of topsoil and subsoil/interface deposits across site are indicative of some levelling and landscaping having taken place in preparation for the laying of rugby pitches. Made ground was only identified in Trench 9 where a large modern bank was present.

7.9 The finds assemblage and archaeological features do not suggest an area of intensive ancient occupation, however, more ephemeral archaeological features may have been removed during the levelling of the area for construction of pitches.

7.10 The geophysical survey identified some of the features uncovered during the evaluation but not detect others.

8.0 CONCLUSION

8.1 The excavation of 16 trial evaluation trenches with a combined total area of 567 square metres revealed a boundary ditch of probable post-medieval date which may have run north to south the full length of the site. Plough scarring and a shallow gully were also identified at the north eastern corner of the site. A few modern pits were also identified. Eight of the sixteen trenches revealed no archaeological features with a further five containing only modern intrusive features.

8.2 Due to mitigating circumstances a further eight proposed trenches could not be excavated.

8.3 Comparison with a geophysical survey of the area indicated that a gully feature had been picked up by the survey whilst the larger boundary ditch had not. This suggests that further anomalies indicated by the geophysical survey may be archaeological in origin and also suggest that features may exist which have not been identified using geophysical techniques.

8.5 The area has been levelled during the creation of rugby pitches suggesting that shallow features and topsoil finds have been removed, however deeper features may remain cut into the natural substrate.

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Stratascan (2010) Geophysical Survey Report: London Irish Rugby Club, Sunbury. Unpublished Report ref: 2756.

Cartographic Sources Consulted

Ordnance Survey County Series 1:2500 1st Edition 1874-1894

Ordnance Survey County Series 1:2500 3rd revision 1934.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeology South-East would like to thank Scott Wilson for commissioning the project and Gary Jackson of Surrey County Council for advice and assistance. The co-operation and assistance of Steve Tingley and the staff and patrons of the London Irish Rugby Club are also greatly acknowledged. The RSPCA are also thanked for their prompt assistance in dealing with a fox who became entangled in our fencing.

APPENDIX 1: QUANTIFICATION OF FINDS

Context	Pot	Wt (g)	CBM	Wt (g)	Bone	Wt (g)	Flint	Wt (g)	FCF	Wt (g)	Fe	Wt (g)	white metal	Wt (g)	Glass	Wt (g)	CTP	Wt (g)	Mortar	Wt (g)	Slag	Wt (g)	Rubber	Wt (g)	Plastic	Wt (g)
6/004					2	118																				
7/003															4	34										
3/005	1	32																								
12/006			1	4											1	52										
14/002			7	396							1	10														
16/002	2	6	1	6													2	<2			1	4				
17/005	28	800					1	30	1	246	2	696			1	18										
18/005			1	14									1	14	9	90			9	688			1	42	1	<2
19/007											2	16			2	4										
20/002			4	94	11	50																				

SMR Summary Form

Site Code	LIR10					
Identification Name and Address	London Irish Rugby Ground, The Avenue, Sunbury-on-Thames					
County, District &/or Borough	Surrey					
OS Grid Refs.	510400 169600					
Geology	Terrace river gravels					
Arch. South-East Project Number	4484					
Type of Fieldwork	Eval. √	Excav.	Watching Brief	Standing Structure	Survey	Other
Type of Site	Green Field √	Shallow Urban	Deep Urban	Other		
Dates of Fieldwork	Eval. 26.7.10-3.8.10	Excav.	WB.	Other		
Sponsor/Client	Scott Wilson					
Project Manager	Andy Leonard					
Project Supervisor	Sarah Porteus					
Period Summary	Palaeo.	Meso.	Neo.	BA	IA	RB
	AS	MED	PM √	Other Modern		

100 Word Summary.

Archaeology South-East was commissioned by Scott Wilson to undertake an archaeological evaluation on land at the London Irish Rugby Ground, Sunbury, Surrey. A total of 16 trial evaluation trenches with a combined total area of 567 square metres were excavated. These trenches revealed a boundary ditch of probable post-medieval date which may have run north to south the full length of the site. Plough scarring and a shallow gully were also identified at the north eastern corner of the site. Eight of the sixteen trenches revealed no archaeological features with a further five containing only modern intrusive features. Comparison with the previous geophysical survey of the site indicated that a gully feature had been picked up by the survey whilst the larger boundary ditch was not detected.

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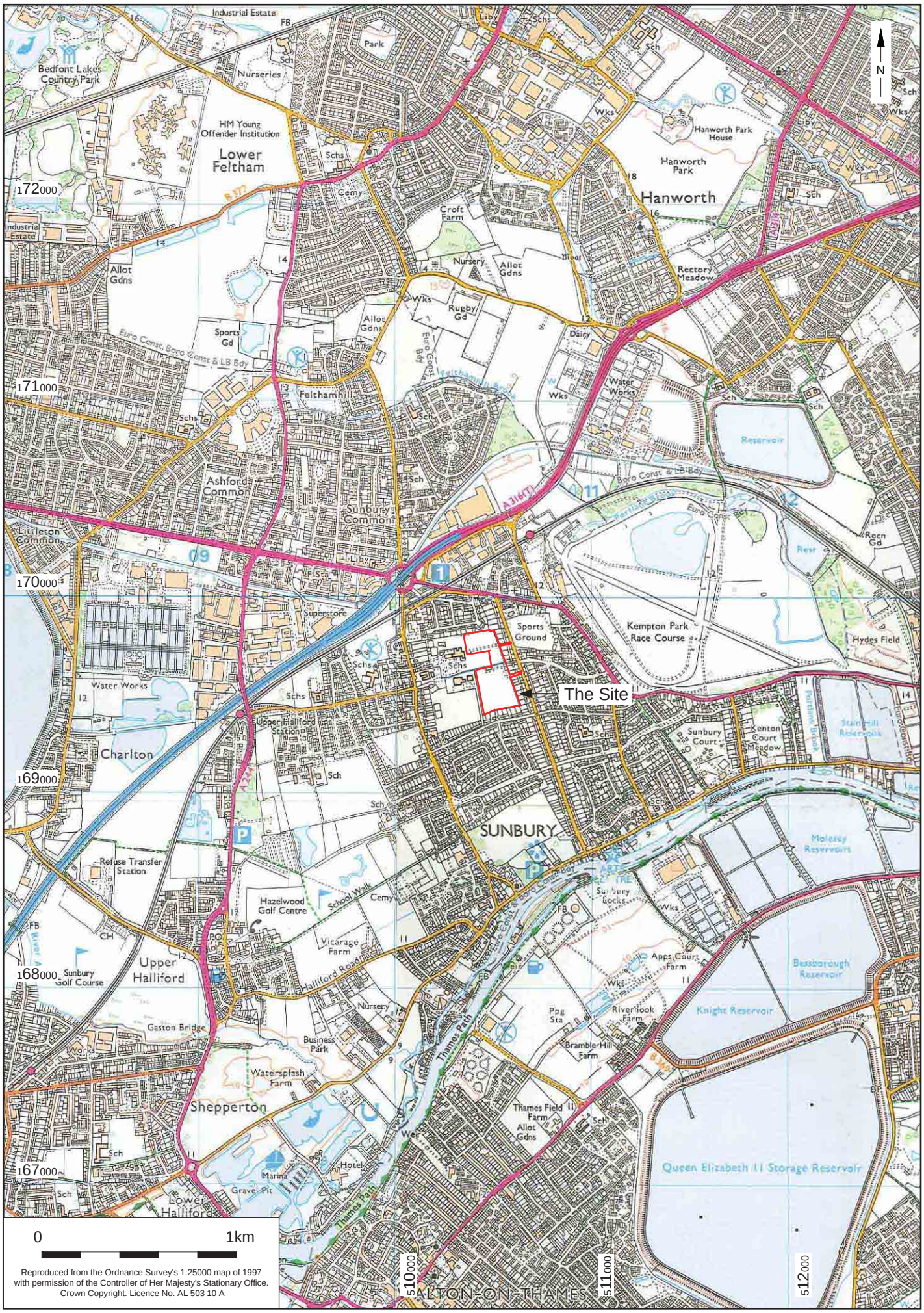
OASIS Form

OASIS ID: archaeol6-81552

Project details	
Project name	An archaeological evaluation at the London Irish Rugby Ground ,Sunbury, Surrey
Short description of the project	Archaeology South-East was commissioned by Scott Wilson to undertake an archaeological evaluation on land at the London Irish Rugby Ground, Sunbury, Surrey. A total of 16 trial evaluation trenches with a combined total area of 567 square metres were excavated. These trenches revealed a boundary ditch of probable post-medieval date which may have run north to south the full length of the site. Plough scarring and a shallow gully were also identified at the north eastern corner of the site. Eight of the sixteen trenches revealed no archaeological features with a further five containing only modern intrusive features. Comparison with the previous geophysical survey of the site indicated that a gully feature had been picked up by the survey whilst the larger boundary ditch was not detected.
Project dates	Start: 26-07-2010 End: 03-08-2010
Previous/future work	Yes / Not known
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	None
Current Land use	Community Service 2 - Leisure and recreational buildings
Monument type	DITCH Post Medieval
Significant Finds	NONE None
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	SURREY SPELTHORNE SUNBURY London Irish Rugby Ground, Sunbury
Postcode	TW16 5

Study area	567.00 Square metres
Site coordinates	TQ 510400 169600 50.9317122918 0.149656986869 50 55 54 N 000 08 58 E Point
Project creators	
Name of Organisation	Archaeology South-East
Project brief originator	Scott Wilson
Project design originator	Archaeology South-East
Project director/manager	Andy Leonard
Project supervisor	Sarah Porteus
Type of sponsor/funding body	Developer
Project archives	
Physical Archive recipient	Local Museum
Physical Archive ID	LIR10
Physical Contents	'Animal Bones','Ceramics'
Digital Archive recipient	Local Museum
Digital Archive ID	LIR10
Digital Contents	'none'
Digital Media available	'Images raster / digital photography'
Paper Archive recipient	Local Museum
Paper Archive ID	LIR10
Paper Contents	'none'

Paper Media available	'Context sheet','Drawing','Photograph','Plan','Report','Section','Unpublished Text'
Project bibliography 1	
Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	An Archaeological Evaluation at London Irish Rugby Ground, Sunbury-on-Thames, Surrey
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Porteus, S.
Other bibliographic details	Report: 2010130
Date	2010
Issuer or publisher	Archaeology South-East
Place of issue or publication	Archaeology South-East, Portslade
Description	A4 bound hard copy and PDF formats
Entered by	sarah porteus (s.porteus@ucl.ac.uk)
Entered on	25 August 2010



© **Archaeology South-East**		London Irish Rugby Club, Sunbury	Fig. 1
Project Ref: 4484	Aug 2010	Site location	
Report Ref: 2010130	Drawn by: FEG		

É **Archaeology South-East**		London Irish Rugby Ground	Fig. 2
Project Ref: 4484	Aug 2010	Trench location	
Report Ref: 1010130	Drawn by: JLR		

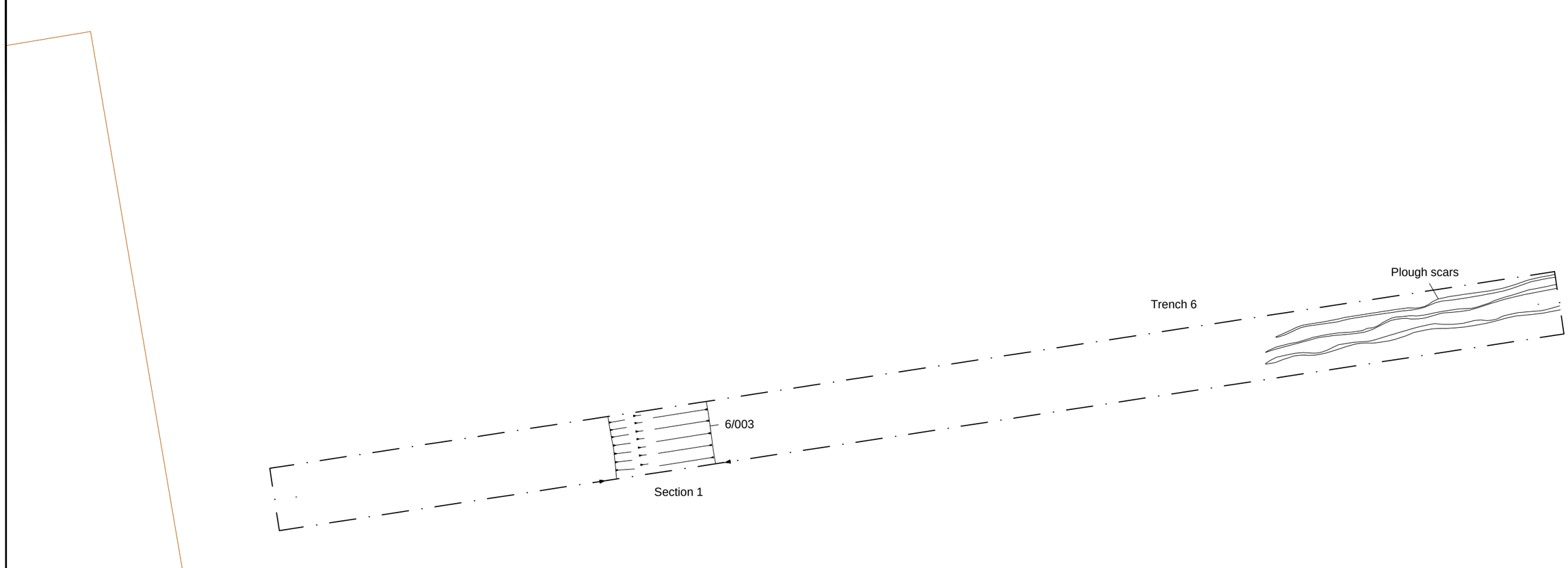
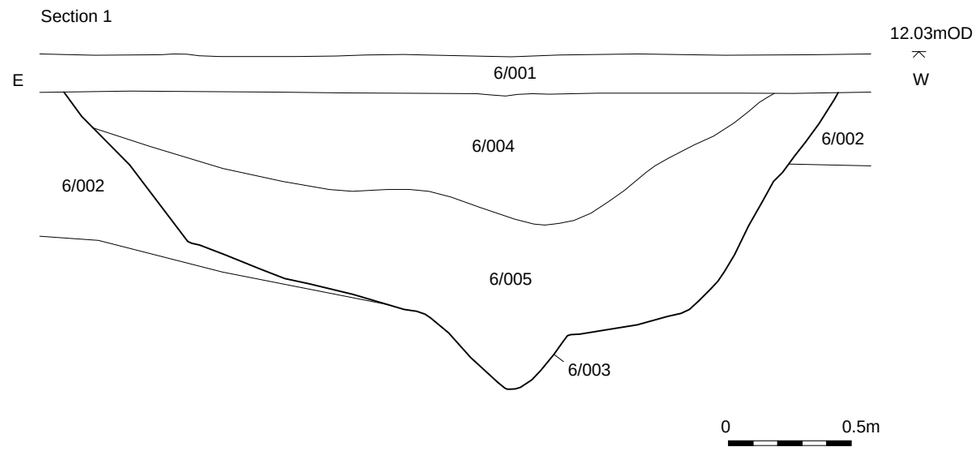


Fig. 3.1: 6/003 looking south



É **Archaeology South-East**		London Irish Rugby Ground	Fig. 3
Project Ref: 4484	Aug 2010	Trench 6: Plan section and photograph	
Report Ref: 1010130	Drawn by: JLR		

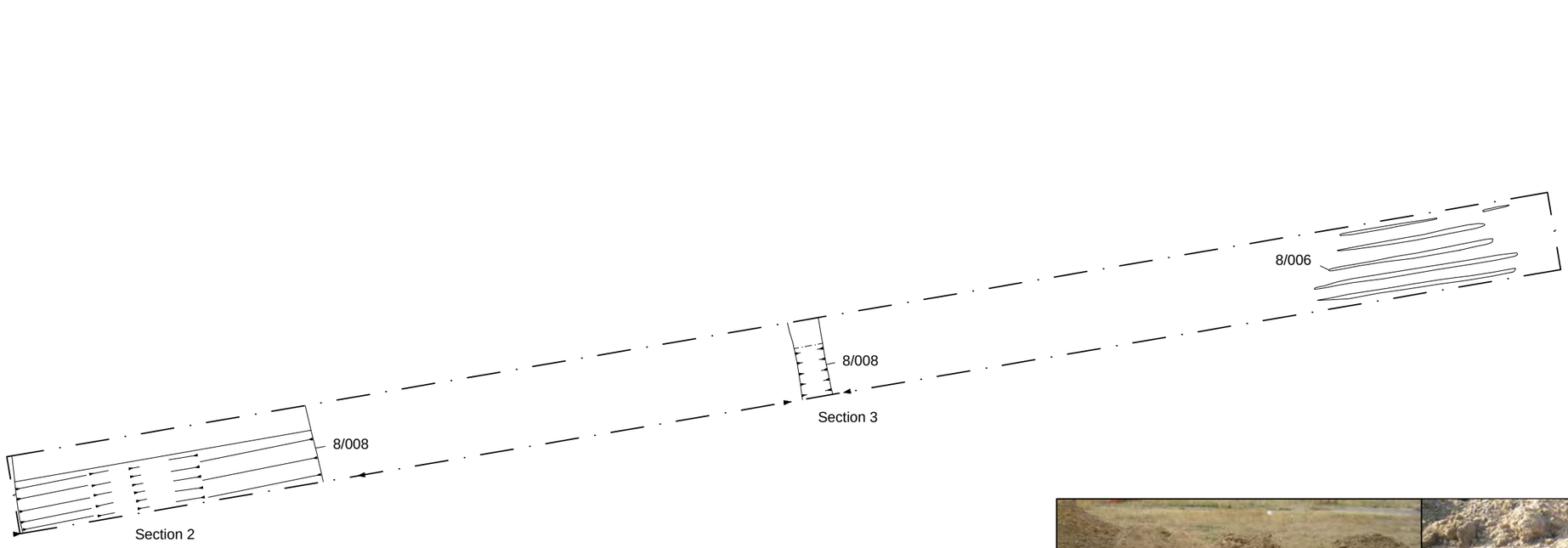
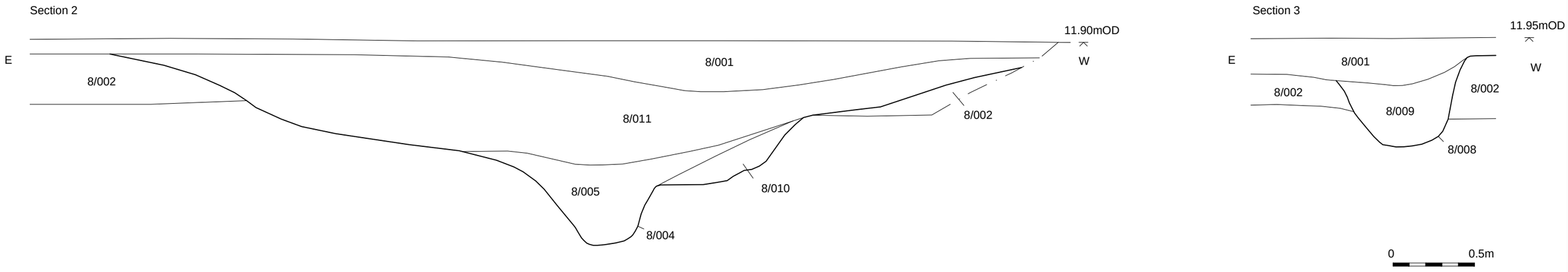


Fig. 4.1: 8/004 looking south

Fig. 4.2: 8/008 looking south



É **Archaeology South-East**		London Irish Rugby Ground	Fig. 4
Project Ref: 4484	Aug 2010	Trench 8: Plan, section and photograph	
Report Ref: 1010130	Drawn by: JLR		

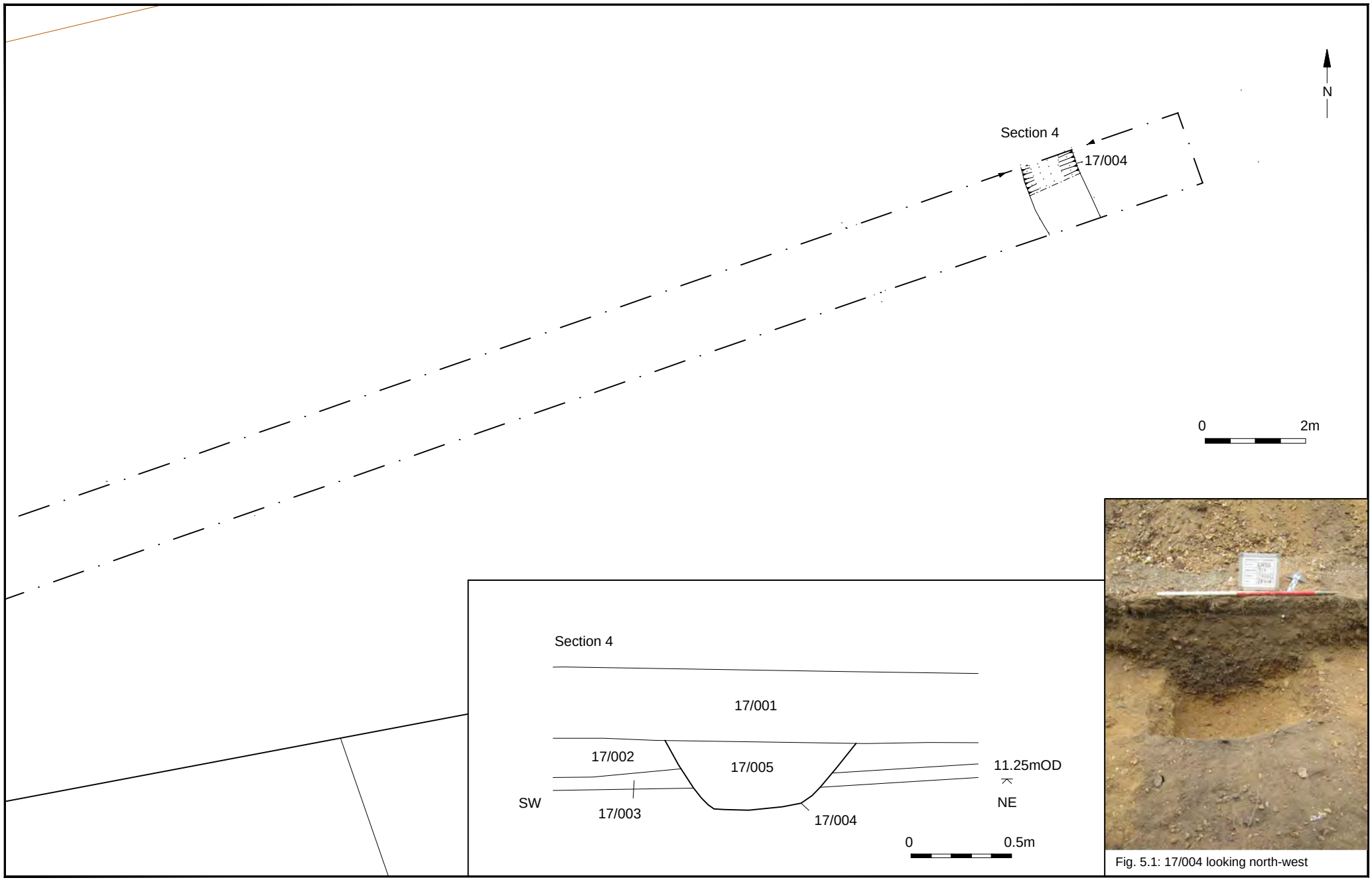


Fig. 5.1: 17/004 looking north-west

É **Archaeology South-East**		London Irish Rugby Ground	Fig. 5
Project Ref: 4484	Aug 2010	Trench 17: Plan, section and photograph	
Report Ref: 1010130	Drawn by: JLR		

É **Archaeology South-East**		London Irish Rugby Ground	Fig. 6
Project Ref: 4484	Aug 2010	Representative sections	
Report Ref: 1010130	Drawn by: JLR		

N

Sports Centre

El Sub Sta

Stand

A

B

C

D

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24

- Discrete positive anomaly - possible pit
- Positive anomaly with associated negative response - ferrous object
- Moderate strength positive anomaly with associated negative response - unknown origin
- Goal post/flood lighting
- Magnetic disturbance - associated with pipe/cable or possible field drain
- Magnetic disturbance - associated with edge of sand filled area
- Positive linear anomaly - cut feature of possible archaeological origin
- Negative linear anomaly - bank or earthwork of possible archaeological origin
- Area of very weak complex anomalies - of possible archaeological origin
- Positive area anomaly - cut feature of possible archaeological origin
- Negative area anomaly - bank or earthwork of possible archaeological origin
- Weak positive area anomaly
- Weak negative area anomaly
- Magnetic disturbance associated with nearby service, field boundary, goal posts or flood lighting
- Magnetic disturbance associated with nearby goal posts, flood lighting and other metallic objects
- Magnetic debris

0 20m

É **Archaeology South-East**		London Irish Rugby Ground	Fig. 7
Project Ref: 4484	Aug 2010	Trench location and geophysics results	
Report Ref: 1010130	Drawn by: JLR		

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