

COLCHESTER ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST

WATCHING BRIEF REPORT

CAT Project reference: 00/5g CAT Report: 75

Address: **NCP Car Park, Nunns Road, Colchester****NGR:** TL 9947 2542**Date:** 26th May - 2nd June 2000**Officer:** H Brooks**Report:**26th May 2000

Proposed construction is a new pay kiosk at the entry to the existing Nunns Road (i.e. Williams & Griffin) car park, with other associated groundworks. The plot had been marked out on the tarmac, and two short stretches of the footings trenches had been excavated. These were sketched (site location sketch attached). The open stretch at the extreme SE corner of the 8x7m structure (section 2) showed 600mm of modern brick rubble capped by tarmac, over the same depth of a dark grey brown stony topsoil, which would appear to be the old ground level before the car park was built. At 1.2m below present site level, the trench had bitten 200 mm into natural brown sandy clay. No finds. At the other exposed stretch (section 1), digging had been interrupted by the discovery of an unexpected manhole at 700mm below site level. This was completely sealed by the modern debris seen at the top of the other exposed section.

30th May 2000

Although work was anticipated for today, in fact nothing had happened because the contractors were waiting for a planning officer to visit, and also for an engineer to tell them about the manhole.

31st May 2000

Site is now being terraced flat to a level approximately 200mm above Nunn's Road pavement level. At this level, site level is still in recent material, particularly the grey gravelly material seen in the upper part of SX2.

1st June 2000

A large part of the footings trenches are now open and were seen by HB. A section (SX5) was drawn showing the stratigraphy of the extreme east edge of the site. This was natural clay cut by recent pits - one with a ceramic pipe visible in it, and another (on the northern edge of the site) probably very recent because it reached site level. Nothing earlier than post-medieval or modern.

2nd June 2000

Remaining part of footings trenches now visible. Two sections were drawn, of south edge of site (SX4) and east face of western footing trench (SX3). In both sections post-medieval topsoil or cuts lie directly over natural ground - this site has obviously been truncated heavily. There was a little brickwork over a concrete slab at the north edge of the site, which is all that remains of the brick terrace house which used to stand here.

27th June 2000

A further visit made after a call from the site foreman to report that human bones had been found. The circumstances are as follows: while demolishing the old pay booth, a concrete stanchion had been pulled up at the extreme SE corner of the structure. On lifting this lump, an amount of material had been plucked out of the ground, and this included human remains. HB inspected the find spot, and trowelled the face of the resulting hole. There was no trace of a grave cut - in fact all the visible material (rubbly brick debris) looked redeposited and probably dated (not surprisingly) to the time of construction of the old booth in the 1960s. The human remains, which consisted of two broken femurs, a number of tibia/fibula frags, a toe bone, a vertebra, and other fragments, had probably been dug up when the car park was built in the 1960s, and not reported for fear that the archaeologists would delay the work.. They had probably been put back into a hole close to where they were found. Where that hole was is more difficult to say because there are no medieval or later churches anywhere near this spot. For that reason, the bones are more likely to be Roman in date, and illegally buried within the town walls. Mr Martin Winter from Colchester Museums was consulted on the

matter, and agreed with this interpretation of events. In view of the fact that they were not *in situ* in a burial place, no further action was thought necessary.

Finds:

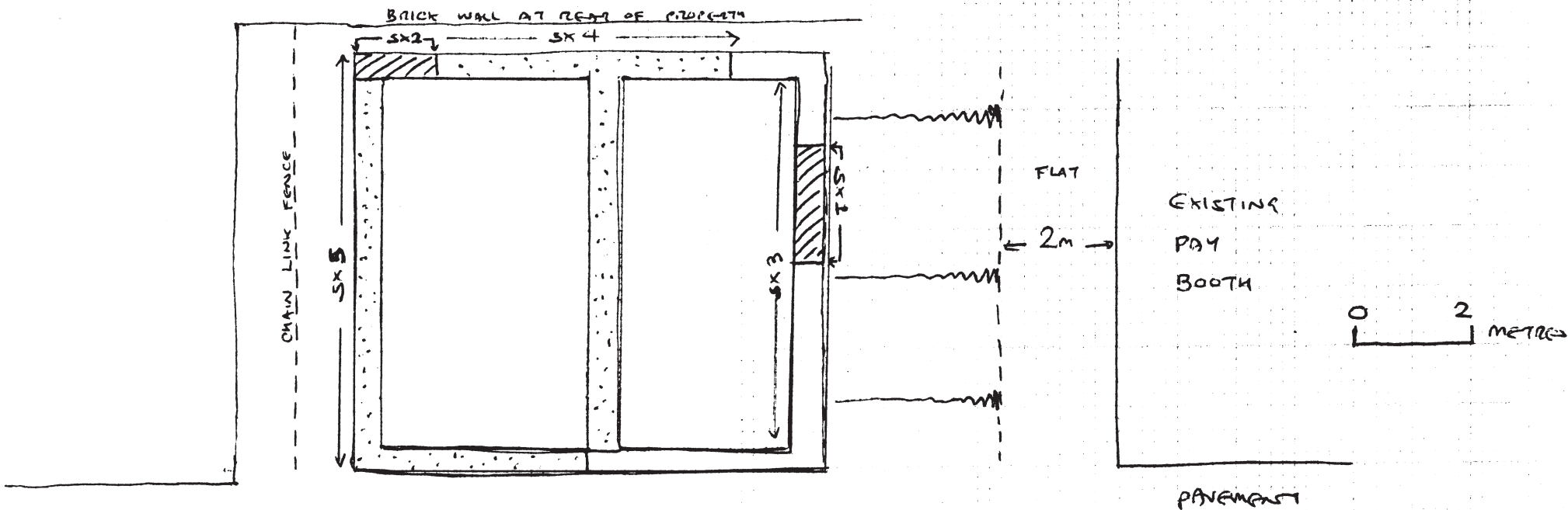
Human bones.

Summary:

Site heavily truncated and surprisingly 'clean'. Post-medieval or modern material directly over natural. Redeposited human bones found under old pay booth building.

NUNNS ROAD CAR PARK WATCHING BRIEF

30/5



 FOOTINGS TRENCHES 30/5

 " " " 1/6

 " " " 2/6

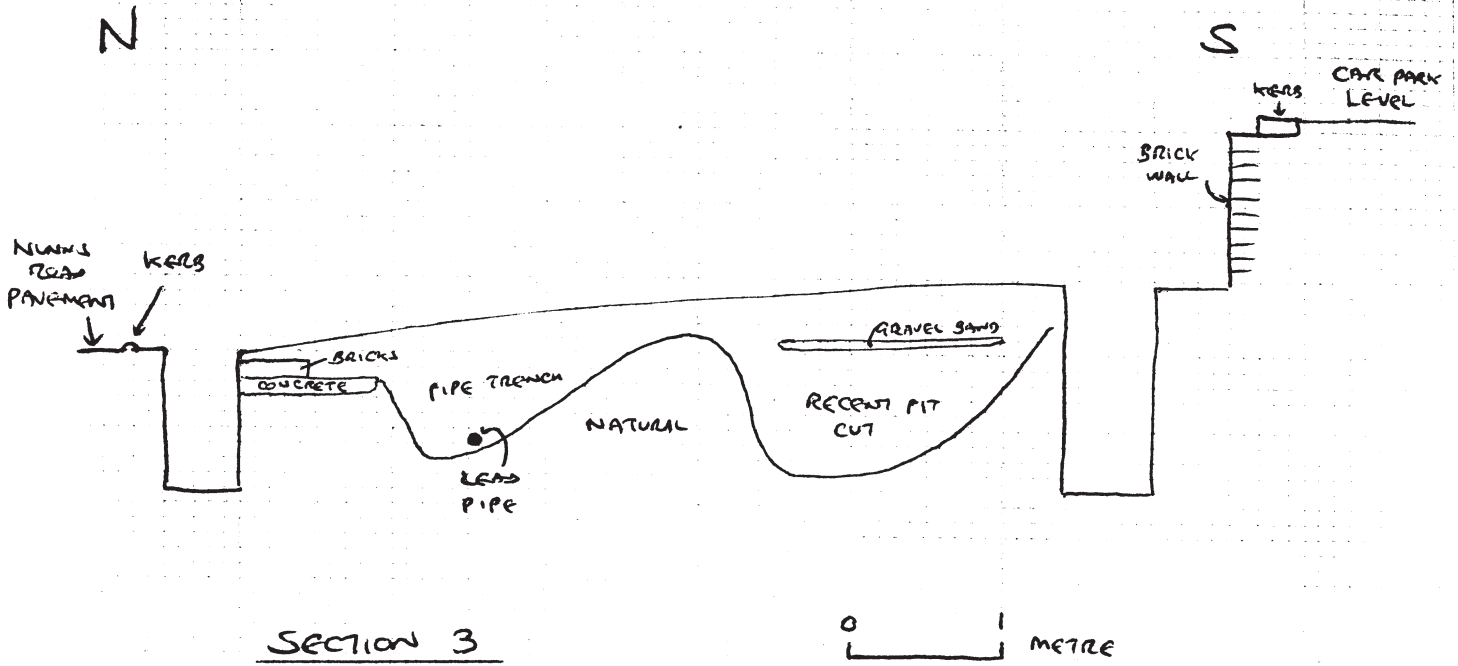
NUNNS ROAD

SITE SKETCH PLAN WITH SX LOCATIONS

NUNNS ROAD

EAST FACE OF WEST TRENCH

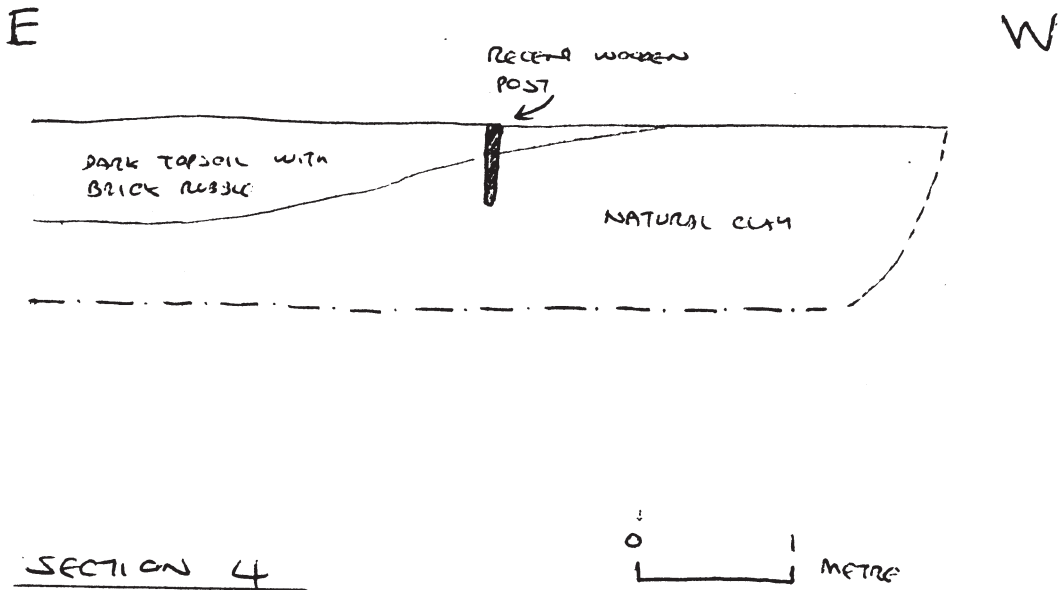
2/6/00



NUNNS ROAD

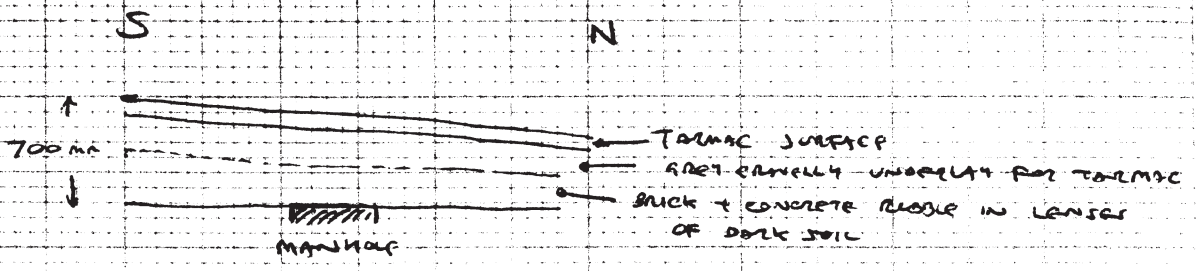
SOUTH FACE OF SOUTH TRENCH

2/6/00

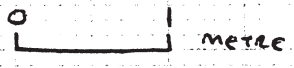


NCP CAR PARK NUNNS ROAD

26/5/00

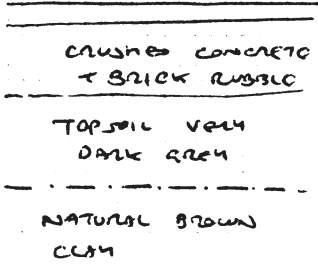


ST 1



26/5/00

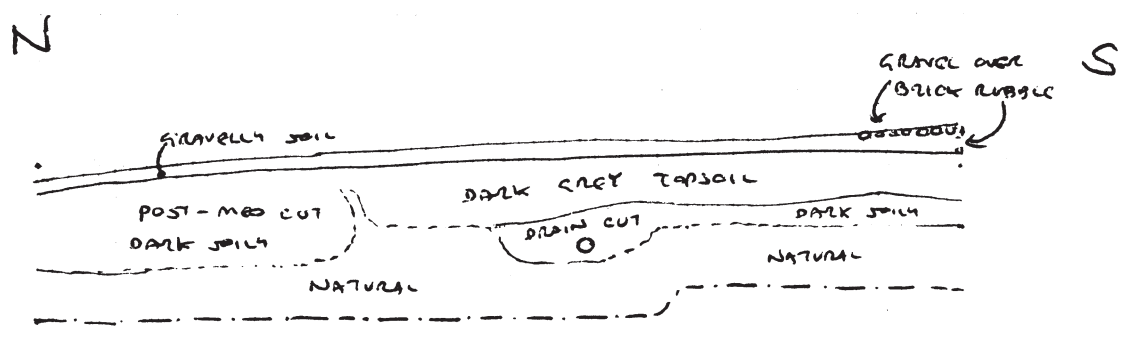
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ST 2

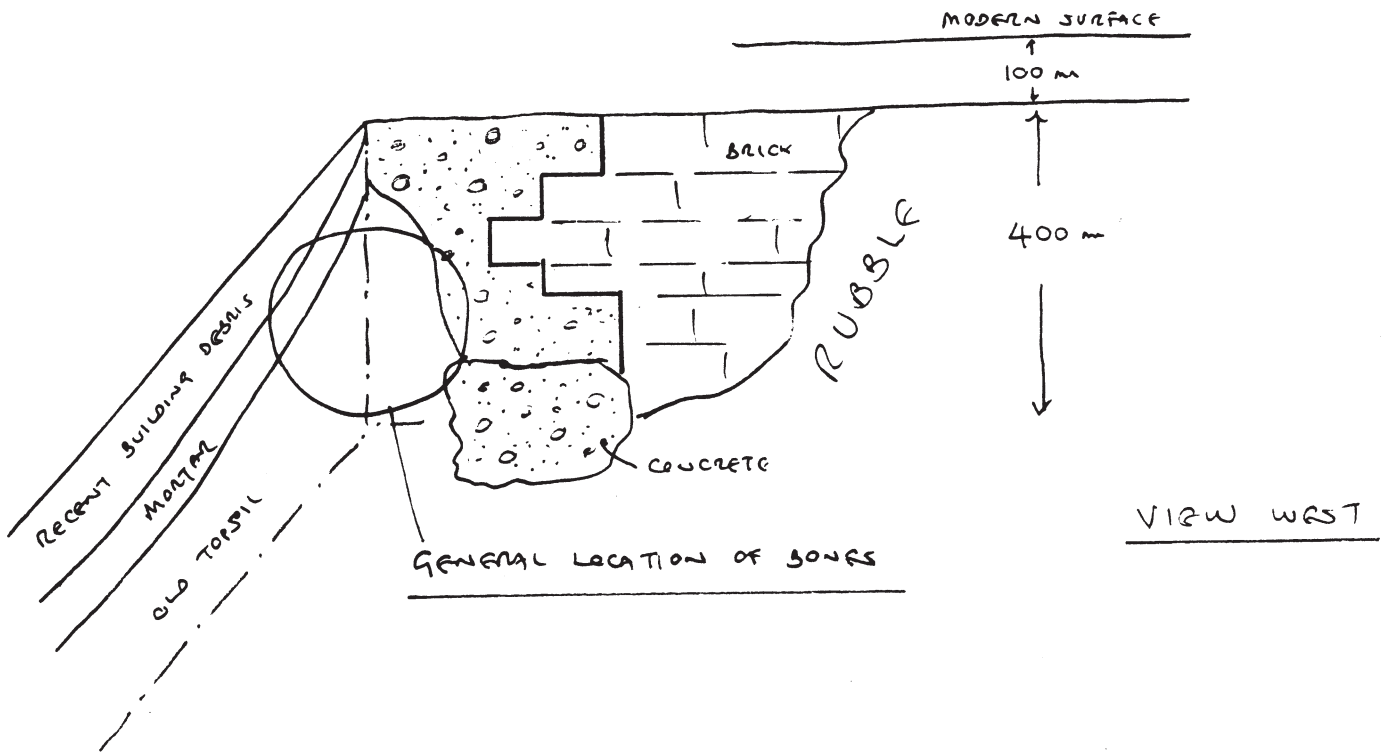
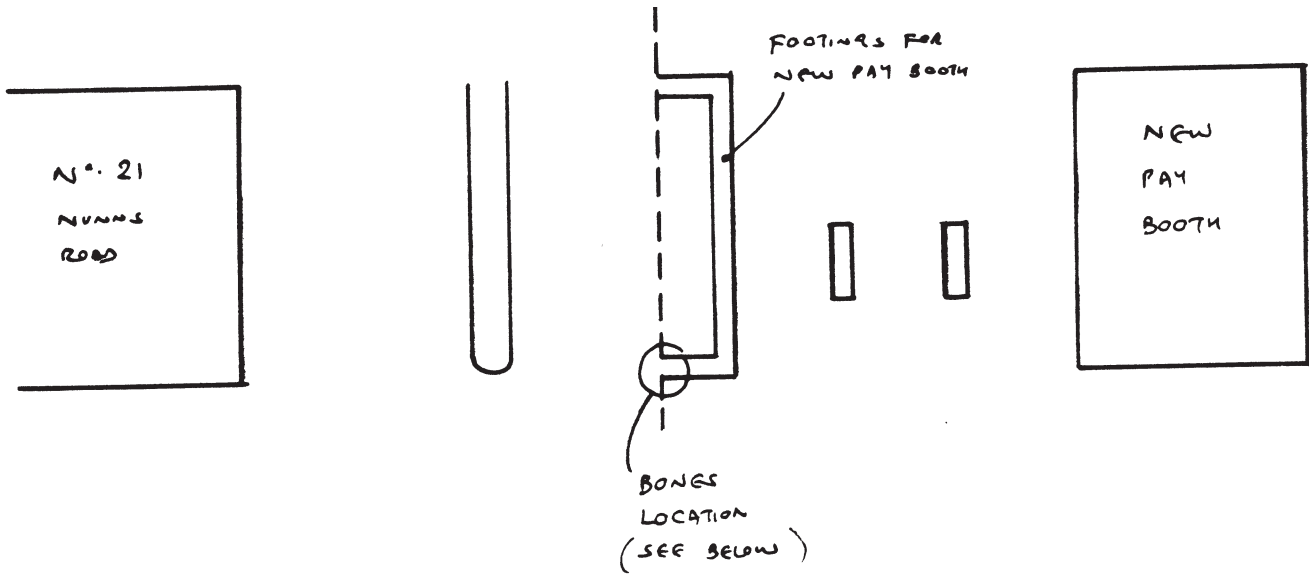


31/5/00



ST 5





PLAN AND VIEW OF LOCATION OF HUMAN REMAINS

NUNNS ROAD CAR PARK

27/6/00