

# Goffers Road, Blackheath, London Borough of Lewisham: An Archaeological Watching Brief Report

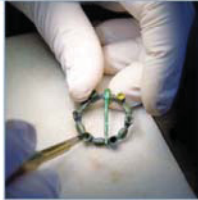
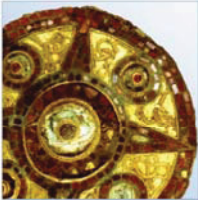
Planning Reference: N/A

National Grid Reference Number: TQ 39098 76527

AOC Project No: 32086

Site Code: GOF 12

Date: February 2012



ARCHAEOLOGY

HERITAGE

CONSERVATION

# Goffers Road, Blackheath, London Borough of Lewisham: An Archaeological Watching Brief Report

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**National Grid Reference (NGR):** TQ 39098 76527

**AOC Project No:** 32086

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**Date of Fieldwork:** 27th February 2012

**Date of Report:** February 2012

This document has been prepared in accordance with AOC standard operating procedures.

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## **Non-Technical Summary**

*On the 27th February 2012 AOC Archaeology Group undertook a watching brief at Goffers Road, Blackheath, London Borough of Lewisham. The watching brief was commissioned by Mott MacDonald on behalf of Thames Water. The work comprised the recording an investigation pit, targeted on an existing water pipe.*

*Natural Harwich Formation sands were observed at a height of 43.89mOD; they were overlain by a sequence of subsoil and topsoil which was only disturbed by the water pipe trench. No archaeological features or finds were observed during the monitoring.*

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The site is located to the east of Goffers Road, Blackheath, London Borough of Lewisham (Figure 1). The site is bounded on three sides by grassland; it is bounded to the west by Goffers Road. The site is centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) TQ 39098 76527.
- 1.2 The watching brief was focused on the excavation of a single investigation pit which measured 1.80m x 1.50m; it was targeted on an existing water pipe. The investigation pit was part of a programme to maintain and repair the water pipe.
- 1.3 This report details the results of an archaeological watching brief undertaken on the excavation of the investigation pit.

## 2 Planning Background

- 2.1 The scale and nature of the works did not require planning permission; however it was deemed to be good practice to implement a programme of monitoring in light to the sensitive location of the site.
- 2.2 The site lies within a 500m buffer zone around the Maritime Greenwich World Heritage Site and is also within an archaeological priority zone as designated by Lewisham Borough Council.
- 2.3 A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) was prepared for the site by Mott MacDonald (Mott MacDonald 2012) as part of the initial phase of the project.

## 3 Geology and Topography

- 3.1 The underlying geology across the site is of Harwich Formation sands and gravels, no superficial deposits have been recorded. The site is relatively flat and lies at approximately 44mOD.

## 4 Archaeological and Historical Background

- 4.1 The following background material has been summarised from the Written Scheme of Investigation for the site by Mott MacDonald (2012).

### Prehistoric

- 4.2 A small number of prehistoric finds and features have been recorded within 500m of the site. Several possible barrows have been identified on Blackheath, grouped under the term 'Blackheath Earthworks' (Greater London Historic Environment Record (GLHER) 070040/00/00). A collection of prehistoric worked flints were recovered from a location in Greenwich Park, to the north of the site (GLHER 071074/00/00).

### Roman

- 4.3 The site is located to the south-east of the Roman settlement area of *Londinium*; however Watling Street, the major Roman route from Dover to Wroxeter, runs along the northern boundary of Blackheath. A possible Roman bank and ditch are recorded to the north-west of the site with Roman pottery recovered from the bank, ditch and interior (GLHER 070004/00/00). A number of Roman period Kentish urns were recovered to the north-west of the site (GLHER 070018/00/00/ GLHER 070017/00/00) and a single coin of Tiberius was found to the north-west of the site (GLHER 070320/00/00). Further afield, a Roman villa was discovered within the grounds of Greenwich Park (UNESCO 2012).

## Early Medieval and Medieval

- 4.4 There are no Saxon remains recorded within 500m of the site, though the manor of Lewisham is recorded in around 900 AD when it was granted to the abbey of St Peter in Ghent. The name Greenwich has Saxon origins (*Grenewic*) and originally formed part of the manor of Lewisham (Lysons 1796).
- 4.5 One medieval find, a 13th to 14th century bronze steelyard weight, was recovered to the north of the site at Greenwich Park, within the World Heritage Site (GLHER 071073/00/00). The Palace of Placentia was constructed to the north of the site, at Greenwich, during the 15th century (UNESCO 2012).

## Post-Medieval

- 4.6 In comparison to the earlier periods, the post-medieval period is well-represented in the surrounding 500m and is a reflection of the expansion of London and its influence upon local settlements. The most significant post-medieval development is at Greenwich Park, to the north of the site. James I ordered the construction of a brick-built wall around Greenwich Park, replacing the former fence. The wall was originally 3.5m high and 3km long and is now a Grade II Listed Building. Parts of the wall have been repaired or replaced at later dates and at least one quarter of the boundary is now defined by iron railings (Listed Building Schedule 1000174). The Queen's House was completed in 1640 and was soon after used as a biscuit factory and accommodation for Dutch prisoners during Cromwell's rule. The redevelopment of the site was undertaken in the late 17th century with the restoration of the monarchy and was subsequently used as a hospital for retired seamen. The Maritime Greenwich World Heritage Site includes the Queen's House designed by Inigo Jones and completed in 1640, the Royal Observatory, designed by Sir Christopher Wren and built in 1675, and the Royal Hospital for Seamen, symbols of 'English artistic and scientific endeavour' in the 17th and 18th centuries. The site is located within the 500m buffer zone around the World Heritage Site but the excavation of the investigation pit is unlikely to disturb associated finds and features due to its small size and peripheral location.
- 4.7 At least three brick-built post-medieval conduits are known to exist beneath Greenwich Park, to the north of the site, one is now inaccessible (GLHER 070259/00/00). A possible 16th to 19th century structure was identified at Pagoda Gardens to the south-west of the site (GLHER 070036/00/00). A post-medieval post mill and later roundhouse were located in the area of the modern Talbot Place, to the south-east of the site (GLHER 070081/00/00). The historic cartographic sources show that the modern road layout had been established by 1850, with Goffers Road shown. By 1870 an old gravel pit is shown to the north-west of the site, along the western side of Goffers Road and a wooded area identified as 'The Mount' divides the old gravel pit from a large lake which is situated in the same location as the current pond, though considerably larger. The Town Plan of 1895 identifies the area as Whitfield's Mound and the lake is now the size of the modern pond. By 1951 the old gravel pit is no longer shown.

## 5 Aims of the Investigation

- 5.1 The general aim of the watching brief was to record the presence/absence of archaeological remains on the site and to establish the character, date and function of any archaeological features or deposits encountered.
- 5.2 The specific aims of the investigation were to determine the presence/absence of any archaeological remains relating to the Maritime Greenwich World Heritage Site.

## 6 Methodology

- 6.1 The watching brief was carried out on the 27th February 2012 and focused on the monitoring of the excavation of a single investigation pit targeted on an existing water main (Figure 2); the pit was originally planned to measure 3.00m x 3.00m, but was reduced in size to 1.80m x 1.50m due to the small diameter of the pipe. The pit was excavated by a 3 tonne 360 tracked excavator using a toothless bucket under the constant supervision of an archaeologist.
- 6.2 Fieldwork procedures followed the Museum of London Archaeological Site Manual (3<sup>rd</sup> Edition) (MoL 1994) and the Institute for Archaeologists' Code of Conduct (IfA 2010).
- 6.3 The excavation, recording and reporting conformed to current best archaeological practice and local and national standards and guidelines:
- English Heritage – Management of Archaeological Projects (EH 1991).
  - English Heritage – Archaeological Guidance Paper 3: Standards and Practices in Archaeological Fieldwork (EH 1998).
  - English Heritage – Environmental Archaeology: A guide to the theory and practice of methods, from sampling and recovery to post-excavation (EH 2002).
  - Institute for Archaeologists – Standards and Guidance and Guidelines for Finds Work (IfA 2008a).
  - Institute for Archaeologists – Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs (IfA 2008b).
  - Institute for Archaeologists – Code of Conduct (IfA 2010).
  - Rescue/United Kingdom Institute for Conservation – First Aid for Finds (3rd Edition) (2001).
  - United Kingdom Institute for Conservation – Conservation Guidelines No.2 (UKIC 1983).
  - United Kingdom Institute for Conservation – Guidance for Archaeological Conservation Practice (UKIC 1990).
- 6.4 Archaeological recording consisted of:
- Limited hand cleaning of sections and surfaces sufficient to establish the stratigraphic sequence exposed.
  - A scan for dating evidence from in-situ deposits and spoil.
  - Photographic recording of representative exposed sections and surfaces, along with sufficient photographs to establish the setting and scale of the groundworks.
  - Written records on pro-forma sheets.
  - Plans/Section drawings at suitable scales.
  - A record of the datum levels of archaeological deposits, where obtainable.
- 6.5 A unique site code, GOF 12, was obtained from the Museum of London prior to the commencement of fieldwork. This was used as the site identifier on all records.
- 6.6 The investigation pit was accurately located to the National Grid.
- 6.7 The watching brief was undertaken by Ian Hogg, under the overall direction of Paul Mason, Project Manager. The work was monitored by Philippa Adams for Mott MacDonald, and by Mark Stevenson on behalf of the Greater London Archaeological Advisory Service (GLAAS).

## 7 Results

### 7.1 Investigation Pit

7.1.1 Surface of Test Pit = 44.49m AOD

Level (OD)	Depth BGL	Context Number	Description/Interpretation
44.49m	0.00m	(100)	Topsoil
44.19m	0.30m	(101)	Subsoil
43.89m	0.60m	(102)	Natural Sand

7.1.1 The investigation pit was located over the water pipe immediately to the east of Goffers Road; it measured 1.80m x 1.50m (Figure 2).



Plate 1. Investigation pit section facing south-west.

7.1.2 Natural orange-yellow Harwich Formation sands (102) were observed at a height of 43.89mOD; they were sealed by mid brown silty sand subsoil (101), 0.30m thick. The subsoil was cut by the water pipe trench [105], this was linear, with vertical sides and a flat base; it measured 1.80m in length, 0.40m in width and was 1.60m deep. The pipe itself (104) was cast iron coated in bitumin and was 0.30m in diameter; the trench backfill (103) consisted of soft yellow sand. The pipe trench was overlain by topsoil (100), a dark greyish brown sandy silt, 0.30m thick. No archaeology was observed in the pit.

## 8 Finds and Environmental Samples

8.1 No finds were retrieved from the investigation pit and no environmental samples were taken.



## 9 Conclusions

- 9.1 During the course of the watching brief undisturbed deposits was identified in the investigation pit, consisting of Harwich formation sands, overlain by subsoil and topsoil. This sequence showed no signs of disturbance apart from the water pipe trench the pit was targeted on. No finds were observed within the pit.
- 9.2 No further work is required considering the lack of archaeological remains and the very limited nature of the works taking place.

## 10. Publication and Archive Deposition

- 10.1 Due to the nature of the project, publication will be restricted to a summary of results in the London Archaeological Round Up, and via the Archaeological Data Service (ADS) (Appendix B).
- 10.2 The archive, consisting of paper records, drawings, photographs, finds and digital records will be deposited with the London Archaeological Archive and Research Centre (LAARC).

## 11 Bibliography

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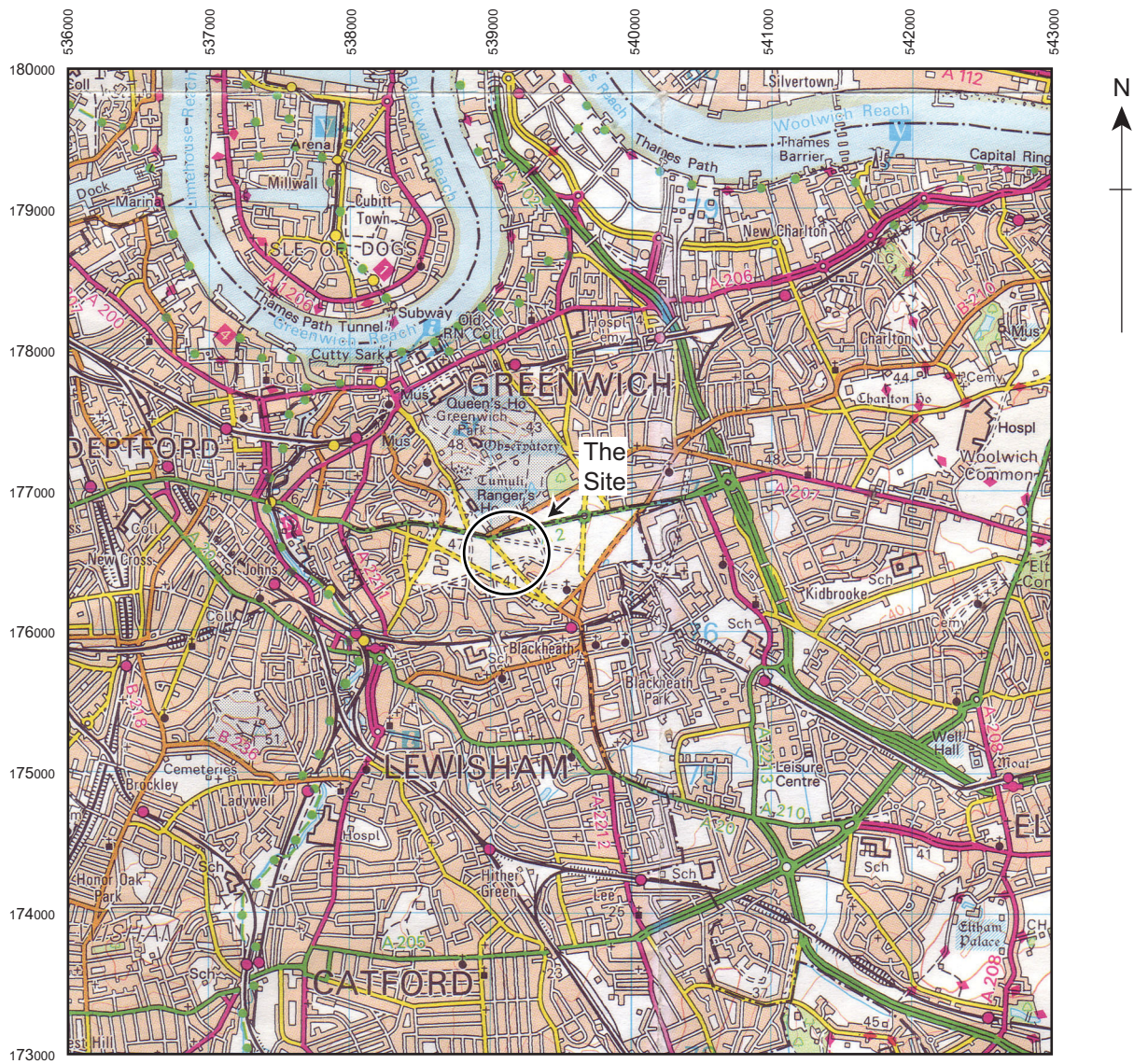
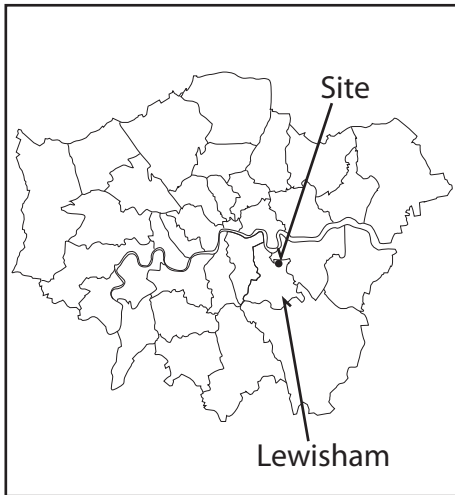
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United Kingdom Institute for Conservation (1983). *Conservation Guidelines No 2*.

United Kingdom Institute for Conservation (1990). *Guidance for Archaeological Conservation Practice*.

Site Location Within London



Based on the Ordnance Survey's 1:50 000 Landranger map of 2004 with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office, © Crown Copyright. Licence No. AL 100023757

500m 0 2 km

1:50 000

Figure 1: Site Location



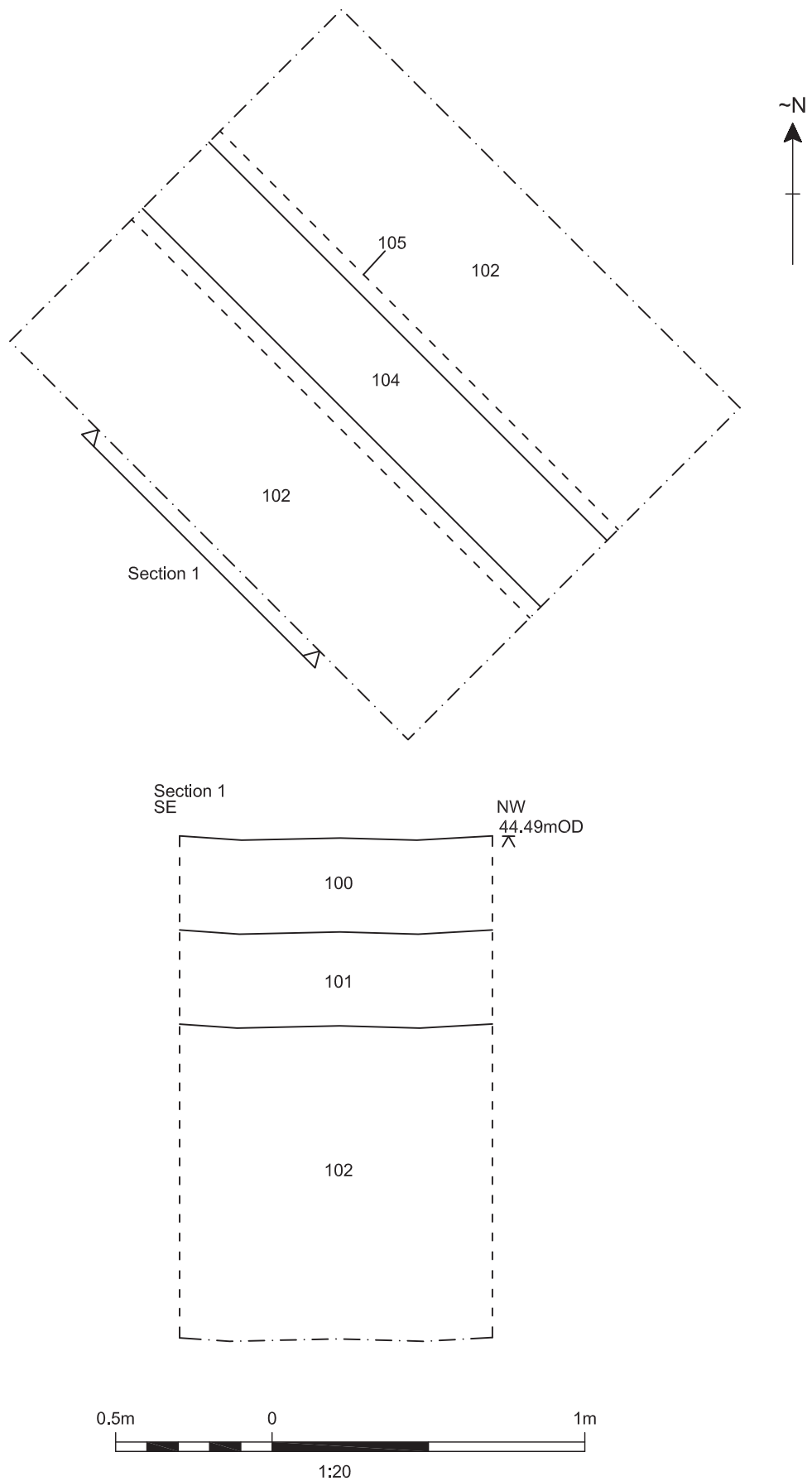
Based on the Ordnance Survey's 1:25 000 VectorMap District (Raster) 2010 with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office, © Crown Copyright. Licence No. AL 100023757

250m 0 1 km

1:25 000

**Figure 2:** Detailed Site Location





**Figure 4:** Investigation Pit Plan and Sample Section

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## Appendices

## Appendix A – Context Register

Context No.	Context Description	Length	Width	Depth
100	Topsoil	1.80m	1.50m	0.30m
101	Subsoil	1.80m	1.50m	0.30m
102	Natural	1.80m	1.50m	1.00m
103	Pipe trench backfill	1.80m	0.40m	1.60m
104	Water Pipe	1.80m	0.30m	0.30m
105	Pipe Trench Cut	1.80m	0.40m	1.60m

## Appendix B – Oasis Form

### **OASIS ID: aocarcha1-120216**

#### Project details

Project name Goffers Road, Blackheath

Short description of the project The work comprised the recording an investigation pit, targeted on an existing water pipe. Natural Harwich Formation sands were observed at a height of 43.89mOD; they were overlain by an undisturbed sequence of subsoil and topsoil. No archaeological features or finds were observed during the monitoring.

Project dates Start: 27-02-2012 End: 27-02-2012

Previous/future work No / No

Any associated project reference 32086 - Contracting Unit No. codes

Any associated project reference GOF 12 - Sitecode codes

Type of project Recording project

Site status Area of Archaeological Importance (AAI)

Current Land use Grassland Heathland 2 - Undisturbed Grassland

Monument type NONE None

Significant Finds NONE None

Investigation type 'Watching Brief'

Prompt Voluntary/self-interest



Project location

Country England

Site location GREATER LONDON GREENWICH GREENWICH Goffers Road, Blackheath

Postcode SE3

Study area 9.00 Square metres

Site coordinates TQ 3909 7652 51.4700217474 0.00278204036184 51 28 12 N 000 00 10 E  
Point

Height OD / Depth Min: 43.89m Max: 43.89m

Project creators

Name of  
Organisation AOC Archaeology

Project brief  
originator Mott MacDonald

Project design  
originator Mott MacDonald

Project  
director/manager Paul Mason

Project supervisor Ian Hogg

Type of  
sponsor/funding  
body Contractor

Name of  
sponsor/funding  
body Thames Water

Project archives

Physical Archive  
Exists? No

Digital Archive  
recipient LAARC

Digital Contents 'Stratigraphic'

Digital Media  
available 'Images raster / digital photography', 'Spreadsheets', 'Text'

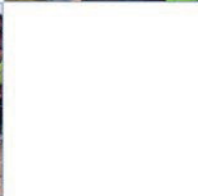
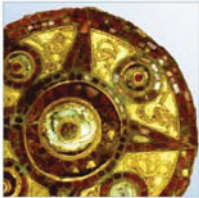
Paper Archive  
recipient LAARC

Paper Contents 'Stratigraphic'

Paper Media  
available 'Context sheet', 'Plan', 'Report', 'Section', 'Unpublished Text'

Entered by Ian Hogg (ian.hogg@aocarchaeology.com)

Entered on 28 February 2012



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