

Sutton Archaeological Services

Evaluation Report

on

Treehouse School,
Woodside Avenue,
Haringey, London, N10
WVE 06: (TQ 2825 8925)

for

Treehouse Trust



Fig. 1 Ordnance Survey Map of Area (1870's)

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by

J G PERRY: June 2006

Summary

Sutton Archaeological Services (SAS) carried out an archaeological evaluation at the Treehouse School, Woodside Avenue, Haringey, London, N10 on 18th May, 2004.

The site lay near to an area of archaeological importance as defined in London Borough of Haringey's Unitary Development Plan. Research by Sutton Archaeological Services for the research design indicated that there was Medieval and Post-Medieval archaeology and activity in the surrounding area.

Three trenches were excavated across the site revealing turf and topsoil over the sub-soil and natural clay.

No Medieval and Post-Medieval archaeology or activity was found. We recovered pottery dating from the 15th to 19th century and fragments of burnt flint.

We suggest that no further archaeological monitoring or intervention is needed and that the archaeological condition in the planning consent has been fulfilled. The decision to discharge the archaeological condition, however, rests with the local planning authority on the advice of the Archaeological Officer at English Heritage.

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Introduction

Origin and scope of report: This report relates to the site of the proposed development at the Treehouse School, Woodside Avenue, Haringey, London, N10.

The Treehouse Trust commissioned Sutton Archaeological Services to undertake an archaeological evaluation, to assess the impact of the development on the archaeology of the site.

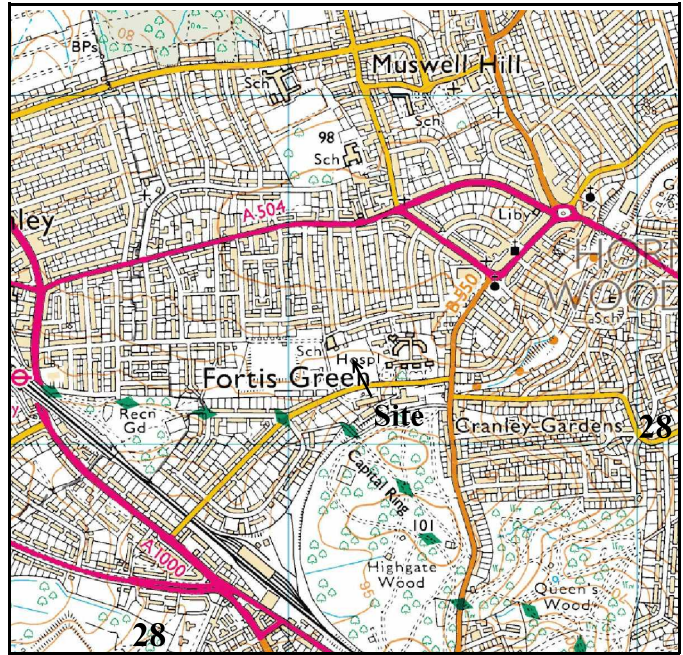


Fig. 2 Location Plan

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Location: The site lies on the western edge of the London Borough of Haringey, 1km north of Highgate and 750m south-west of Muswell Hill. It is in a mostly residential area of Fortis Green to the west of St. Luke's Woodside Hospital and east of Tetherdown School and some allotment Gardens. To the south is Woodside Avenue and Highgate Wood, with Grand Avenue to the north.

Topography: The site lies on the southern side of the Muswell Hill. The land slopes from north (92m aOD) to south (87.50m aOD) and from east (88.50m aOD) to (87.50m aOD), with the area of the site at about 89m aOD.

Geology: The underlying geology consists of areas of clay and sands and gravel.

Planning background

The proposed development is part of the grounds of present, temporary, Treehouse School.

The development consists of the construction of a permanent Treehouse School, with a recreational garden to the north, play areas, access road and car parking

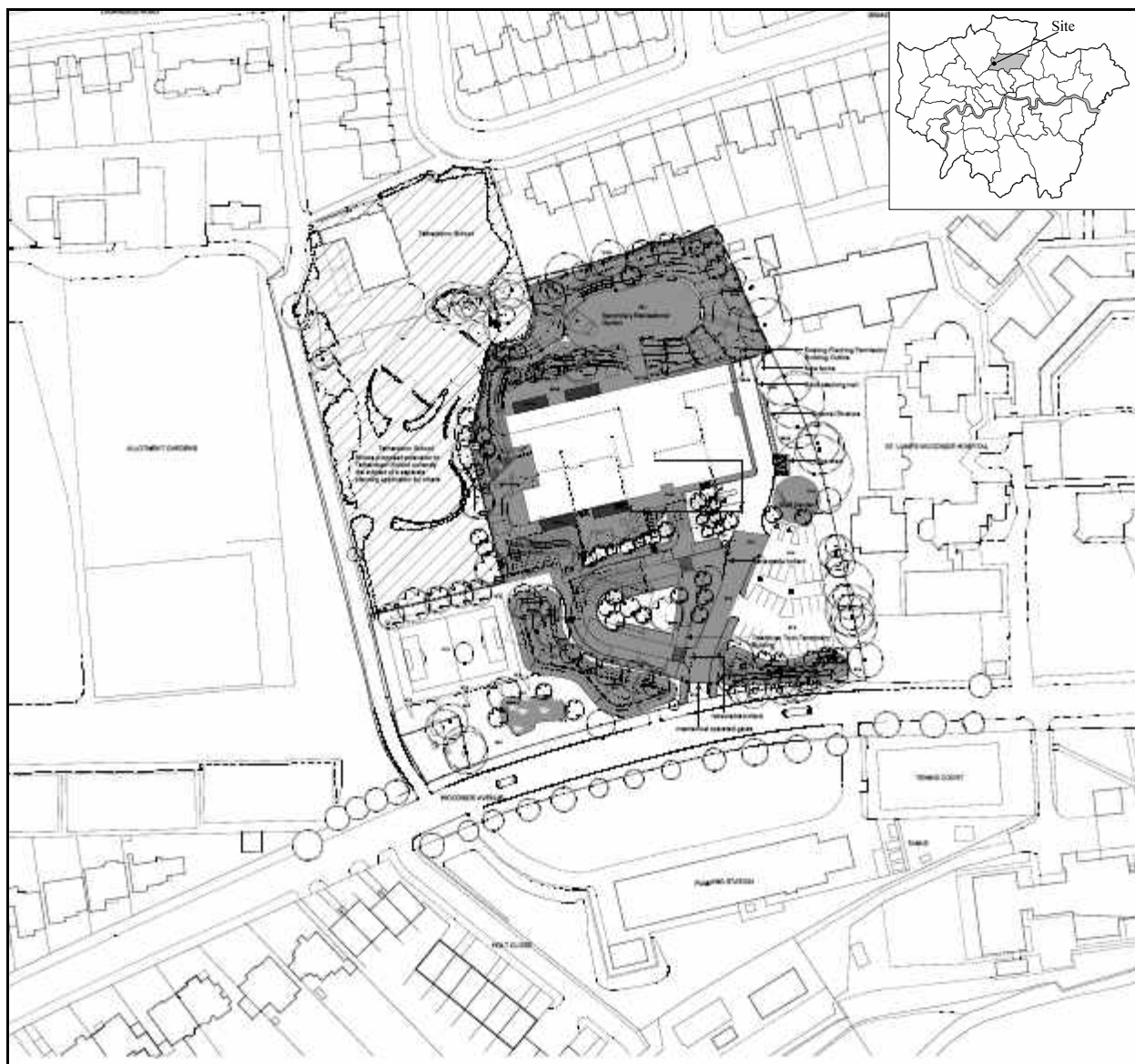


Fig. 3 Site Location Plan © Crown Copyright MC/98/38

The site does not lie in an area of archaeological importance as defined in the London Borough of Haringey's Unitary Development Plan, though it lies just to the north of one (Highgate Wood and Queens Wood).

English Heritage advised the Borough that an archaeological condition under PPG16¹ should be included in the planning approval.

Planning permission was approved by the London Borough of Haringey, and an archaeological condition under PPG 16 was included in the planning decision

¹ Department of the Environment: *Planning Policy Guidance: Archaeology and Planning*, HMSO, 1990.

No development shall take place until the applicant has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme for investigation which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The development shall only take place in accordance with the detailed scheme pursuant to this condition. The archaeological works shall be carried out by a suitably qualified investigating body which shall have been approved by Local Planning Authority.

Archaeological and historical background

Prehistoric: Prehistoric flints have been found in Highgate Wood, to the south of the site. In addition there are certain earthworks within the Wood that may suggest an Iron Age date. During the construction of the temporary school, the Highgate Society recovered 3 possible struck flints from a machine cut trench².

Pre-evaluation evidence suggested there was a low potential for Prehistoric archaeology on this site.

Roman: A large Roman pottery works is situated in Highgate Wood. This has been partially excavated, suggesting that the kilns were in production *c.* AD 50–160. The woods are also full of unidentified and undated earthworks and landscape features, suggesting there may be further kiln sites and ancillary structures.

Pre-evaluation evidence suggested there was a low potential for Roman archaeology on this site.

Saxon: In Saxon times the area was in Ossulstone Hundred and was part of the heavily wooded ancient Forest of Middlesex. In Domesday the forest sustained pannage for 19,255 swine.

Pre-evaluation evidence suggested there was a low potential for Saxon occupation and activity is considered low.

Medieval to Post-Medieval: Two Medieval settlements are known in the surrounding area. The first was at Muswell Hill, to the north of the site, and is named after a mossy spring, situated on Muswell Road. The spring, of reputed restorative properties, was a site of pilgrimage during the Medieval

² *Pers.com* Michael Hammerson, Highgate Society

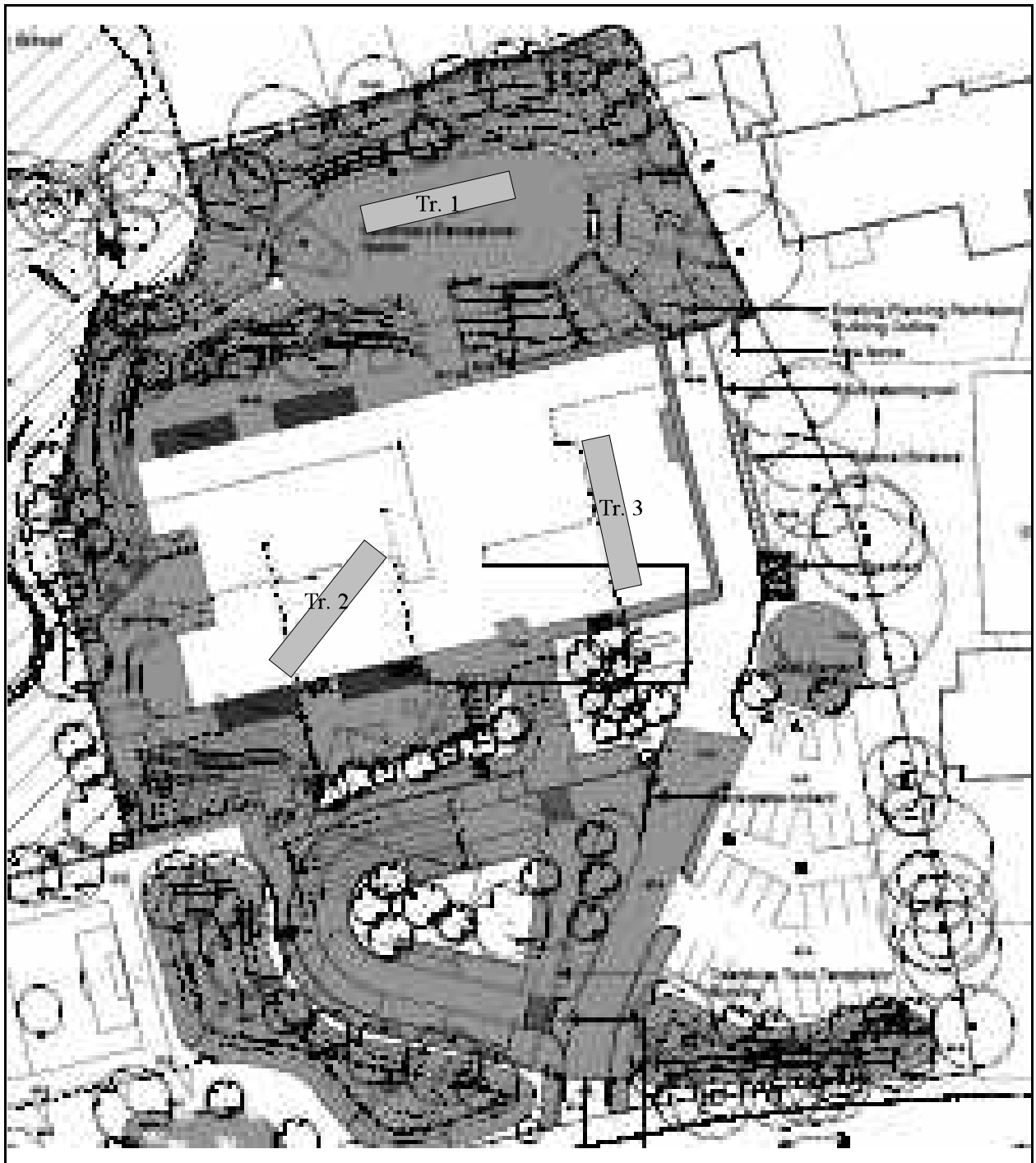


Fig. 4 Development and trench location plan

period. The site and the surrounding 66 acres were given in the 12th century to the Augustinian Canonesses of St Mary's Clerkenwell by the Bishop of London. Several Medieval roads converge and are associated with the settlement.

The second settlement was Highgate Village, which by the 13th century was a hamlet, which was accessed by a new road established in the 14th century. Toll gates erected along this road by the Bishop of London are thought to have given the area its name. The road and a 13th century chapel were maintained by a hermitage.

An ancient earthwork runs across Highgate Wood. This may have formed part of a park enclosure for deer during the period that the Bishop of London owned the wood. However it could also be a Prehistoric boundary or defensive work. Part of the deer park enclosing ditch lies in or close to the proposed development site.

To the north of the site, the settlement at Fortis Green is known from the Post-Medieval period. Further work by the Highgate Society produced sherds of Post-Medieval pottery.

Pre-evaluation evidence suggested there was a low to medium potential for Medieval and Post-Medieval occupation or activity on the site

Archaeological Proposals

Usually, where development may destroy archaeology, an archaeological investigation is undertaken to identify the presence or absence, extent, character, quality and date of any threatened deposits and, where necessary, to develop an appropriate mitigation strategy.

SAS proposes to undertake an archaeological evaluation and excavate 3 x 15m x 2m trench.

Aims and Objectives

In May 2006 Sutton Archaeological Services produced its research design. Based on our brief assessment of the evidence, we formed the objectives to look for signs of Medieval and Post-Medieval occupation and activity on the site, and if found to determine their extent, date, condition and significance.

The Institute of Field Archaeologists has defined the purpose of a field evaluation as follows.

“The purpose of field evaluation is to gain information about the archaeological resource within a given area or site (including its presence or absence, character, extent, date, integrity, state of preservation and quality), in order to make an assessment of its merit in the appropriate context, leading to one or more of the following:

- the formulation of a strategy to ensure the recording, preservation or management of the resource
- the formulation of a strategy to initiate a threat to the archaeological resource

- the formulation of a proposal for further archaeological investigation within a programme of research.”

Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluations, IFA, 2001

Archaeological Methodology

Standards: SAS carried out the archaeological evaluation in accordance with

- our research design dated May 2006. (See below for the change we had to make in positioning Trench 2 and 3.)
- the Institute of Field Archaeologists’ Code of Conduct, Code of Approved Practice for the Regulation of Contractual Arrangement in Field Archaeology, Standards and Guidance for Field Evaluations
- the archaeological guidance papers issued by English Heritage.
- the planning condition inserted by the London Borough of Haringey’s grant of planning permission .

Control: All excavation work was done under the control of the archaeologists on site.

Trenches: We dug 3 trenches as shown on Fig 3. As a large spoil heap was in the way the position of trenches 2 and 3 they were moved approximately 3-4m from thier intended locations. This did not interfere with our aims to spread the trenches evenly across the site, and to position trenches in the area of maximum proposed destruction.

Trench	Position	Dimensions (metres)
1	northern part of the site	15 x 2
2	south-western part of the site	15 x 2
3	south-eastern part of the site	15 x 2

We broke open each trench with a JCB 3CX Site Master, using a pneumatic breaker, a wide-bladed (1.50m+) smooth-edged ditching bucket and, where appropriate, a toothed bucket.

Non-archaeological deposits: In each trench we removed by machine, in level spits of no more than 10-15 cm, the topsoil and subsoil. Work continued removing all overburden until we reached the first significant archaeological layer (or the natural deposits), at which point all machine work ceased in that trench. (We excavated up to 20cm into the natural to make sure we had reached true natural

and not re-deposited material.) In this way we excavated trenches 1, 2 and 3 without finding any significant archaeological deposits.

Site records: We recorded all features as we proceeded, by written records, plans, sections and photographs. In all, we recorded 9 contexts - numbered [001] to [009] - in a single context recording system. The site was recorded in accordance with the Fieldwork Methodology in Appendix III of our Research design, and using the Museum of London's recording system.

Appendix 1 to this report is a list of the contexts found, and Fig. 4 shows the site matrix.

Levels: All levels were taken from the developers site survey, value 6.85m aOD.

Backfilling: After excavating and recording we backfilled the trenches and roughly levelled the ground, leaving surplus spoil on site.

Evaluation results

Trench 1

Trench 1 was located in the northern part of the site and oriented east to west (west: 89.62m aOD to east: 89.82). Context [007] was the turf and topsoil, a brown silty clay. The depth of the deposit was between 6-8cm.

Underlying [007] was the sub-soil, a mid brown silty clay deposit [008] (west: 89.56m aOD to east: 89.74). The deposit had a depth of 21-25cm.

Context [009] was the natural greyish brown clay and extended across the whole of the trench.

There were no archaeological features and the finds were

- 1 sherd Bordar Ware
- 2 sherds Black ware
- 4 sherds P.Med Redwares
- 2 sherds Victorian
- 2 sherds Victorian stoneware
- 1 sherd Porcelain
- 1 sherd 17th Clay pipe
- 3 sherds 18th Clay pipe
- 9 pieces Burnt flint

Trench 2

Trench 2 was in the south-western part of the site and oriented roughly north (88.79m aOD) to south (88.27m aOD). The southern part of the trench cut through some disturbed ground and a 19th century land drain.

Context [001] was the turf and topsoil, a brown silty clay. The deposit about 10-11cm in depth.

The underlying context was a silty clay sub-soil deposit context [002] (north: 88.69m aOD to south: 88.17m aOD). The depth of the deposit was between 17-19cm.

Underlying the sub-soil deposit [002] was the natural geological clay [003] (north: 88.49m aOD to south: 88.01m aOD) which extended across the whole of the trench.

There were no other archaeological features and the only finds were

- 3 sherds Midland Purple
- 1 sherds Bordar Ware
- 2 sherds Staff Slip ware
- 4 sherds P.Med Redwares
- 5 sherds Stoneware
- 5 sherds Victorian
- 1 sherds Victorian stoneware
- 6 sherds P.Med tile
- 1 frag Coal
- 8 sherds 18th Clay pipe
- 7 sherds Burnt flint

Trench 3

Trench 3 was sited in the south-eastern part of the site and oriented roughly north (88.75m aOD) to south (88.41m aOD).

Context 004 was the turf and topsoil up to 30cm deep.

Below the topsoil was context 002, a silty clay sub-soil deposit (north: 88.69m aOD to south: 88.33m aOD) to a depth of 16-20cm.

The underlying context was the natural clay 003 (north: 88.49m aOD to south: 88.15m aOD).

There were no other archaeological features and the only finds were

- 10 sherds Bordar Ware
- 1 sherd Staff Slip ware
- 7 sherds P.Med Redwares
- 6 sherds Victorian
- 2 sherds P.Med tile
- 1 sherd Clay pipe - 17th
- 3 sherds Clay pipe - 18th
- 2 frags Burnt flint.

Assessment and interpretation

The evidence from the SAS preliminary research indicated that there was Medieval and Post-Medieval archaeology and activity in the surrounding area.

The evaluation only revealed turf and topsoil over the sub-soil and natural clay. Trench 2 revealed a disturbance at the southern end of the trench. This disturbance may relate to the building of the temporary school building.

Although no features were found, quantities of burnt flint and Post-Medieval pottery were made.

Although there is no known Prehistoric occupation or activity in the immediate area, the burnt flint may suggest otherwise. The quantity and size of the flint from trenches 2 and 3 were quite small, but trench 1 produced 19 large fragments. The lack of any Prehistoric settlement evidence on site suggests that the flint migrated from higher up the slope.

The pottery assemblage recovered was quite varied, with pottery spanning the 16th to 20th centuries. Again, the lack of any settlement evidence on site suggests that the pottery migrated from the settlement at Fortis Green further up the slope. Fortis Green is recorded as a hamlet by at least the 16th century³. The date of the pottery assemblage conforms with the known date of the settlement.

We found no evidence of occupation or activity of any period on the site.

³ *Land at Woodside Avenue, Fortis Green, London Borough of Haringay, N10*. Desk based assessment. 2004
PCA

Archaeological Potential

Following the evaluation our revised view is that this site has no potential for archaeological remains of any period.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Our findings set out above lead us to conclude that the proposed development does not threaten to destroy any archaeological remains of national, regional or local importance, deserving further investigation or preservation.

We recommend that no further archaeology is needed, though the decision to discharge the archaeological condition rests with the archaeological advisor at English Heritage and the local planning authority.

Publications and dissemination

The evidence is not worthy of publication but a note on the evaluation will be placed in the *London Archaeologist's* round-up and a copy of the report lodged in the local library.

Archive

The resulting archive, including all of the finds, will be donated by the developer and deposited with the Museum of London when the final report has been completed

	Trench 1	Trench 2	Trench 3
Turf & Topsoil	007	001	004
Subsoil	008	002	005
Natural clay	009	003	006

Fig. 5 Context Matrix

Context No.	Trench	Description	Interpretation
001	2	A friable to very soft, mid brown silty clay, containing occasional small to large flint pebbles	Turf and topsoil
002	2	A friable to very soft, mid to light brown silty clay, containing 20-25% small to medium flint pebbles and occasional large flint pebbles	Sub-soil
003	2	A firm, light greyish brown clay, containing very occasional small to medium flint pebbles	Natural clay
004	3	A friable to very soft, mid brown silty clay, containing small to large flint pebbles	Turf and topsoil
005	3	A friable to very soft, mid brown silty clay, containing 20-25% small to medium flint pebbles and occasional large flint pebbles	Sub-soil
006	3	A firm, light greyish brown clay, containing 20-25% small flint and occasional medium to large flint pebbles	Natural clay
007	1	A friable to very soft, mid brown silty clay, containing small to large flint pebbles	Turf and topsoil
008	1	A friable to very soft, mid brown silty clay, containing 20-25% small to medium flint pebbles and occasional large flint pebbles	Sub-soil
009	1	A firm, light greyish brown clay, containing 20% small flint and occasional medium to large flint pebbles	Natural clay

	Trench 2		Trench 1		Trench 3	
	No.	gm	No.	gm	No.	gm
Midland Purple	3	0.055	-	-	-	-
Bordar Ware	1	0.005	1	0.005	10	0.050
Staff Slip ware	2	0.015	-	-	1	0.025
Black ware	-	-	2	0.015	-	-
P.Med Redwares	4	0.055	4	0.080	7	0.125
Stoneware	5	0.040	-	-	-	-
Victorian	5	0.050	2	0.015	6	0.030
Victorian stoneware	1	0.01	2	0.030	-	-
Porcelain	-	-	1	0.005	-	-
P.Med tile	6	0.155	-	-	2	0.085
Coal	1	0.010	-	-	-	-
Clay pipe - 17th	-	-	1	0.015	1	0.015
Clay pipe - 18th	8	0.035	3	0.045	3	0.045
Sub-Total	36	0.430	16	0.210	30	0.375
Burnt flint	7	0.065	19	0.555	2	0.045
Total	43	0.495	35	0.765	32	0.420



Plate 1 Typical section (Tr. 2)



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