

**139-141 MARE STREET
LONDON BOROUGH OF HACKNEY**



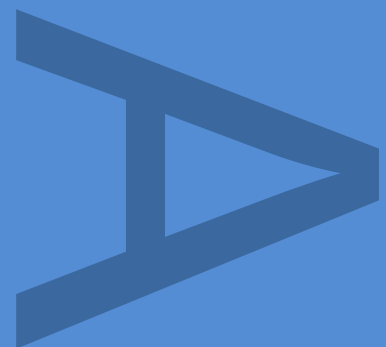
ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF



PCA REPORT NO: R11421

SITE CODE: MRE13

MAY 2013




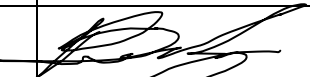
PRE-CONSTRUCT ARCHAEOLOGY

DOCUMENT VERIFICATION

**139-141 MARE STREET
LONDON BOROUGH OF HACKNEY**

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

Quality Control

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Revision No.	Date	Checked	Approved

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An Archaeological Evaluation at 139-141 Mare Street, London Borough of Hackney

Site Code: MRE13

Central NGR: TQ 3483 8402

Local Planning Authority: London Borough of Hackney

Planning Reference: 2013/0226

Commissioning Client: CgMs Consulting

Written/Researched by: Paw Jorgensen
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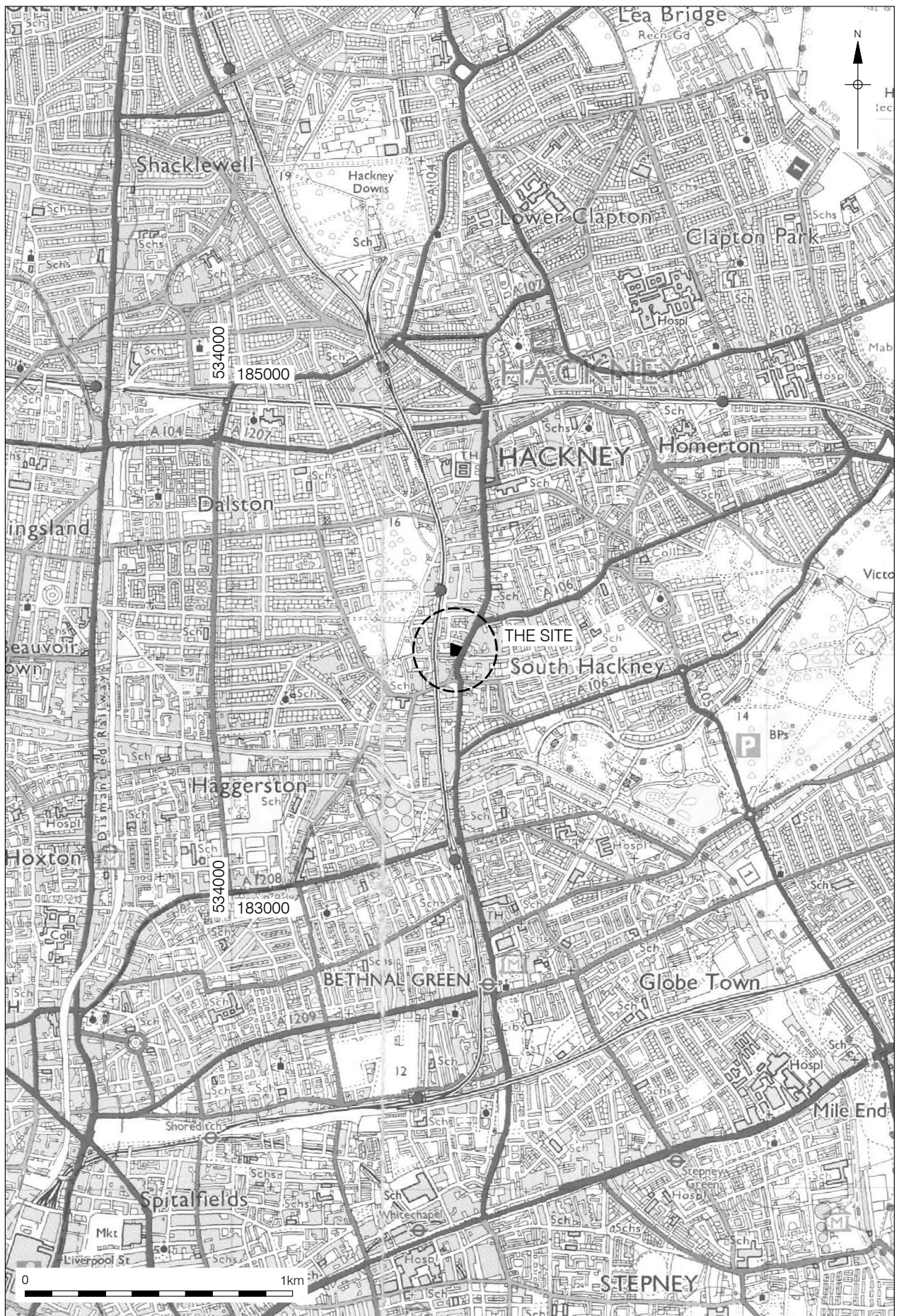
ABSTRACT

Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd has been commissioned by CgMs Consulting to undertake the excavation of two (2m x 2m) archaeological test pits at 139-141 Mare Street, Hackney, London, E8 3RH (centred on NGR ref: TQ 3483 8402). The work was carried out on 30th April 2013. This report details the findings and working methods of the test pit evaluation of the site.

The principal purpose of the evaluation was to determine if the graveyard of the 19th century Baptist Chapel north of the site extended along the south side of the former building and into the study site. Natural sandy clay was encountered at the base of both test pits. While a portion of the vestry of the Chapel was uncovered, the excavation of the two trenches revealed no evidence for human burials. In addition to the vestry wall a probable former property boundary wall was also encountered. No features predating the 19th century were observed in either test pit.

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 On 30th April 2013 Pre-Construct Archaeology carried out the excavation of two archaeological test pits measuring 2m x 2m in plan. Both were excavated to the top of the natural gravels. The work was commissioned by Richard Meager of CgMs Consulting and was monitored by Adam Single, the Archaeological Advisor to the London Borough of Hackney. Paw Jorgensen of Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd supervised the work on site and authored this report under the project management of Tim Bradley, also of Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd. The work was undertaken in accordance with the approved Written Scheme of Investigation for the work (Meager 2013)
- 1.2 Prior to this phase of work a Desk Based Assessment determining the archaeological potential for the site was produced by Richard Meager of CgMs Consulting (Meager 2012).
- 1.3 The site is located within an Archaeological Priority Zone as defined by the London Borough of Hackney.
- 1.4 Upon completion of all phases of the work the resultant archive will be deposited with the Museum of London LAARC under the site code MRE13.

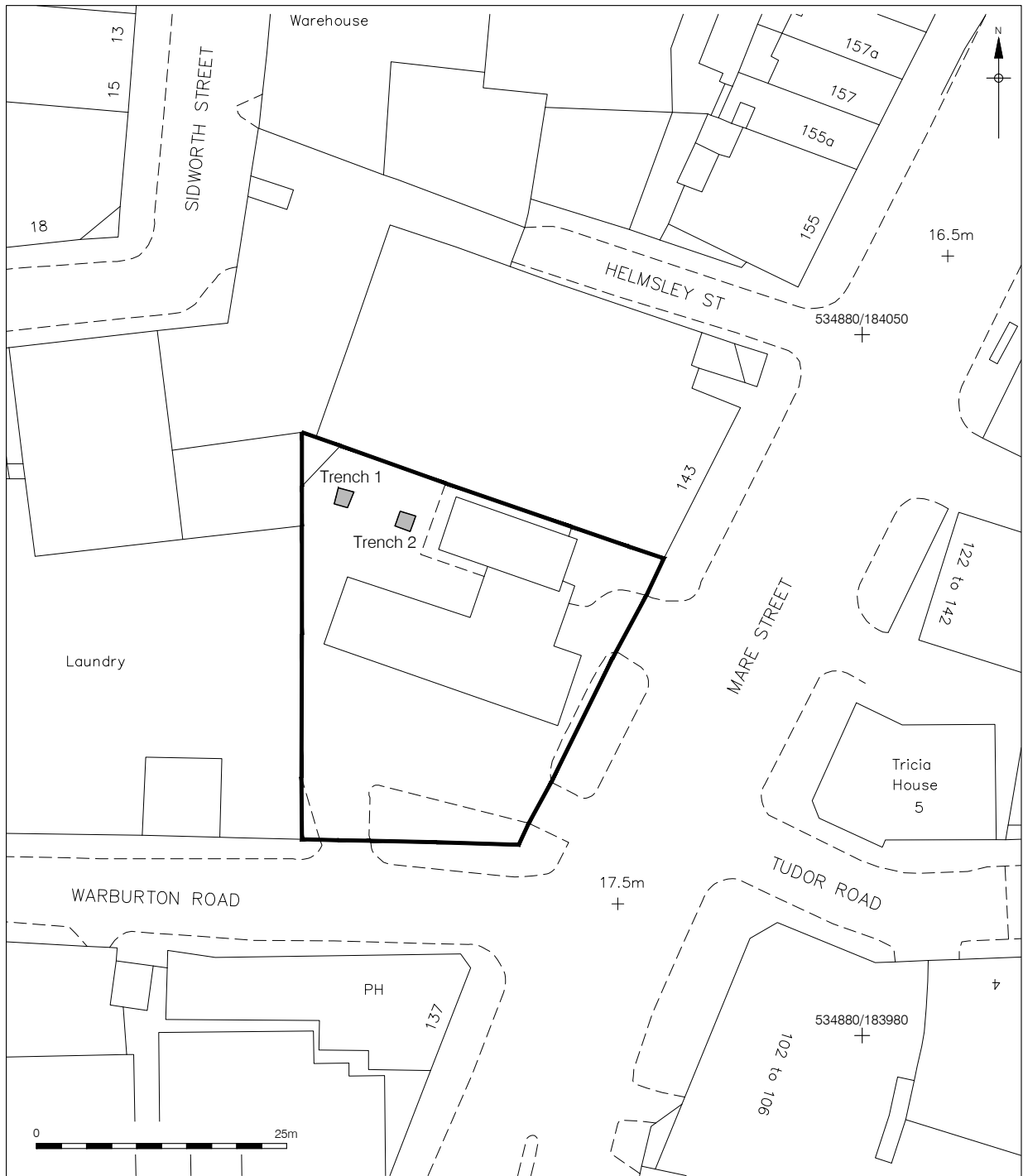


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Figure 1
Site Location
1:20,000 at A4



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Figure 2
 Trench Location
 1:625 at A4

2 BACKGROUND TO THE PROJECT

2.1 Site location

2.1.1 The site comprises numbers 139-141 Mare Street in the London Borough of Hackney. It is located immediately to the northwest of junction of Warburton Road with Mare Street; these streets delimit the site to the south and east respectively. Commercial properties border the site to the north and west.

2.2 Geology

2.2.1 In 2005 the URS Corporation carried out a borehole survey of the site. The borehole logs show that severe truncation of up to at least 3m in depth had occurred in the central portion of the site, presumably a result of subterranean petrol tanks installed during the operation of a petrol station on site. Along the peripheral areas of the site the truncation appeared less severe (Meager 2012).

2.2.2 The logs for the boreholes close to the perimeter of the site showed geological deposits occurring from approximately 0.40m below the current ground surface. From this point the logs recorded a deposit varying from medium dense orange/brown coarse grained clayey sand with occasional gravel to firm orange/brown clay with occasional pockets of fine sand (Meager 2012).

2.2.3 This is broadly consistent with the description given by the British Geological Survey for the Hackney Gravel Member forming the drift geology underlying the site. The Hackney Gravel Member is described in the BGS Lexicon of Named Rock units as comprising "sand and gravel, locally with lenses of silt, clay or peat" which averages between 6m and 10m in thickness (British Geological Survey 2013).

2.2.4 The bedrock geology shown by the British Geological Survey to underlie the site comprises London Clay (British Geological Survey 2013). None of the borehole undertaken by URS extended below the superficial deposits into the underlying London Clay.

2.3 Topography

2.3.1 Topographically the site is situated at approximately 17.9m OD. There is currently little variance in levels across the site, which is a result of artificial levelling of the area.

2.4 Archaeological and Historical Background

2.4.1 The following is a brief summary of the archaeological and historical background of the site as detailed in a Desk Based Assessment prepared for the study site by Richard Meager of CgMs Consulting (2012).

- 2.4.2 Geologically the site is situated over the Hackney Gravel formation, which has proved to be one of the richest sources of Palaeolithic material in the country. Significant flint assemblages were observed during basement excavations and brickearth/gravel extraction during the late 19th century.
- 2.4.3 Activity in the area seems to have waned during the Mesolithic and evidence for human activity in the immediate area of the site during the Neolithic, Bronze Age and Iron Age is absent altogether. There is also a lack of evidence for activity within the area during the Roman period.
- 2.4.4 It has been suggested that the name Hackney is of Saxon origin forming a compound of the words *Haccan* meaning battle and *ey* meaning river or alternatively meaning the island (eyot) of the Saxon chief *Hacca*. Despite the possible Saxon origin of the name, Hackney does not appear in Domesday Book (Meager 2012). There is also an absence of archaeological evidence pointing to Anglo-Saxon occupation in the vicinity of the site.
- 2.4.5 Mare Street immediately east of the site and Hackney Road to the northeast are thought to be of medieval origin. The earliest known documentary evidence for the existence of Mare Street dates to 1443 and refer to a small settlement *Merestret*. Archaeological evidence for activity in the area during the medieval period include the remains of a possible manor house, a timber revetted stream, a well and horticultural soils.
- 2.4.6 By the end of the 16th century settlement along Mare Street had developed and by the time of John Rocque's 1745 survey buildings facing Mare Street are shown within the eastern part of the site. Development of the area continued throughout the 18th century and by the early 19th century a number of buildings existed within the confines of the site. The Mare Street Baptist Chapel was built just north of the study site between March and November of 1812. A small burial ground covering approximately 61m² and which is believed to have been in use from 1812 to c. 1855 existed to the south of the chapel.
- 2.4.7 The chapel is thought to have been rebuilt between 1855 and 1856 after it was destroyed by fire in 1854. Sometime after 1870 but before 1898 a vestry was added onto the southwest corner of the chapel. The vestry extended south into the northwest corner of the study site. By 1870 most of the study site was occupied by buildings.
- 2.4.8 Both the Baptist chapel and the buildings occupying the study site suffered severe bomb damage during World War II when a V2 rocket exploded adjacent to the site in February 1945. The 1948 Ordnance Survey shows the site clear of buildings with the exception of a ruin in the northeast corner. To the north of the site the Baptist chapel is also labelled as a ruin.
- 2.4.9 With the exception of a car sales lot in the southern part of the site the study site appears to remain undeveloped until 1959 or the early 1960s when a garage was constructed with buildings occupying the western and northern sides of the property. In the early 1980s the garage buildings were demolished and a new service station built. The service station building and canopy are part of the present site layout.

2.5 Planning Background

- 2.5.1 The archaeological evaluation of the site is being undertaken as a predetermination exercise in order to determine if the burial ground of the Mare Street Baptist Chapel extended to the south of the former Chapel building.
- 2.5.2 In March 2012, The Department for Local Communities and Local Government published the *National Planning Policy Framework* (replacing *Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment*). Chapter 12, “Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment”, provides guidance for planning authorities, property owners, developers and others on the conservation preservation and investigation of Heritage Assets.
- 2.5.3 In considering any proposal for development, the planning authority will be mindful of the policy framework set by the above government guidance, by current Development Plan policy and by other material considerations.
- 2.5.4 The relevant Strategic Development Plan framework is provided by ‘The London Plan’ (July 2011). The relevant local policy is provided by the London Borough of Hackney’s Core Strategy, adopted in 2010. It contains the following policy statement regarding the Historic Environment:

Core Strategy Policy 25: Historic Environment

All development should make a positive contribution to the character of Hackney’s historic and built environment. This includes identifying, conserving and enhancing the historic significance of the borough’s designated heritage assets, their setting and where appropriate the wider historic environment.

2.6 Original Research Objectives

- 2.6.1 Does the graveyard of the former Mare Street Baptist Chapel extend along the south side of the former building?

2.7 Archaeological Methodology

- 2.7.1 Two test pits measuring 2m by 2m in plan were excavated to the top of the natural gravel. Both test pits were located 3m away from the northern edge of the study site and were excavated in 100mm spits by a JCB fitted with a flat-bladed grading bucket. All excavation work was carried out under archaeological supervision.
- 2.7.2 When excavation was completed the sides and base of the test pits were cleaned and archaeological features explored by hand.
- 2.7.3 All significant archaeological deposits and features were survey located using a Leica 1200 GPRS unit. Deposit and feature descriptions were recorded on pro-forma context sheets comparable to those used elsewhere in the Greater London area and a representative section of each test pit was drawn on polyester based drafting film (permatrace) at a scale of 1:10. In addition to this all significant features were photographed using a high resolution digital camera.
- 2.7.4 The excavation of the two test pits were undertaken under good weather and lighting conditions and through dry soils. There were no visual and/or olfactory evidence for contaminants in the soil although protective gloves were worn as a precaution.
- 2.7.5 In order to prevent unauthorised access to the excavation areas these were barriered off using Heras fencing panels. Upon completion the test pits were backfilled by machine.

3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL SEQUENCE

3.1 Natural

3.1.1 The earliest deposit encountered during the investigation was a natural deposit of reddish yellow to reddish brown firm sandy clay. This was encountered in both trenches, albeit at a lower level (16.61m OD) in TP 1 due to later truncation caused by the construction of the vestry of the former Baptist chapel to the north of the study site. In TP 2 the natural was first observed at 16.64m OD.

3.2 19th Century

3.2.1 In TP 2 the natural sandy clay had been truncated by a small shallow feature, [16], of unknown function. This feature was located against the east edge of the test pit and extended east beyond the limits of the trench. It measured 1.05m north-south by 0.55m east-west and survived to a depth of 0.13m. The sides of the cut were steep with a sharp break of slope at the top. At the bottom the break formed a more gradual transition into a slightly concave base. To the north the feature had been truncated by a modern intrusion which seemed to occupy much of the upper portion of TP 1. Filling feature [16] was a deposit comprising light, slightly brownish grey moderately firm sandy silty clay with occasional rounded and sub-rounded pebbles, charcoal flecks and ceramic building material fragments. Excavation of the fill yielded pottery sherds dated to the 19th century.

3.2.2 Sealing the fill of feature [16] in TP 2 and the natural sandy clay in TP 1 was a layer of made ground recorded as [6]. This comprised moderately compact, heavily mottled dark greyish brown silty sand with frequent brick fragments, charcoal flecks and occasional medium sized chalk fragments.

3.2.3 Cutting this in both trenches was the construction cut for a roughly east-west aligned brick wall, [1]/[14] recorded variably as [11] and [13]. The sides of the construction cut were vertical with a sharp break of slope at the top and a rounded, more gradual break of slope at the bottom where it transitioned into a flat base. It was only seen on the north side of the wall due to the wall's proximate location along the southern edge of the trench. On this side the cut extended 0.25m beyond the northern edge of the wall.

3.2.4 The wall [1]/[14] had been constructed on a 25mm thick bed of light slightly yellowish grey sandy lime mortar consistent with the mortar used as a bonding agent for the brickwork of the 0.36m wide wall. In TP 1 only the lower three courses of brickwork survived while the lower six courses survived in TP 2. The wall was constructed using unfrogged bricks measuring 220mm x 110mm x 70mm laid in English bond with 20mm thick flush pointed mortar joints.

- 3.2.5 Filling the construction cut was a deposit of moderately firm mid brownish grey silty sandy clay [10]/[12] with moderately frequent medium to large brick fragments, medium sized charcoal fragments and rounded and sub-rounded pebbles. Excavation of the construction cut backfill produced 19th century pottery sherds.
- 3.2.6 In TP 1 a narrow brick wall, [2], ran parallel to wall [1]. This had been constructed using dry laid fragmented purple fabric frogged bricks laid in a stretcher bond one brick wide. Only the lower two courses of the wall survived below the construction cut, [5], for a later wall, [3], to the north.
- 3.2.7 A third wall was, [3], observed in TP 1 along the north edge of the test pit. This was constructed of frogged yellow fabric bricks set in light grey cement mortar. It extended beyond the east, west and north boundaries of the trench although it did not extend as far east as TP 2. Only the south (exterior) side of the wall was seen, and this had been covered with a 15-20mm thick coat of cement render.
- 3.2.8 The construction cut, [5], for this wall occupied much of the northern half of the trench and had truncated the earlier narrow wall, [2]. Only the south side of the construction cut was seen and this was moderately steep with a sharp break of slope at the top and a more gradual break at the bottom. The cut was backfilled with a deposit of yellowish brown to mid-brown mottled soft sandy silty clay with occasional brick fragments and rounded pebbles. Excavation of the fill yielded a single sherd of 19th century pottery.
- 3.2.9 Sealing both trenches was a layer of modern made ground followed by the bedding sand for the current concrete pavers.

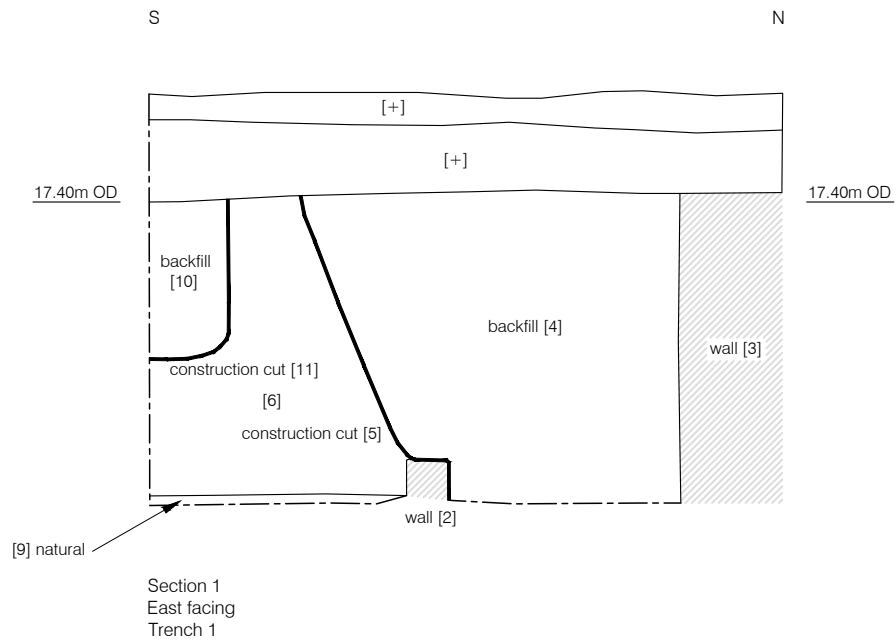


..... 1898 Ordnance Survey Map



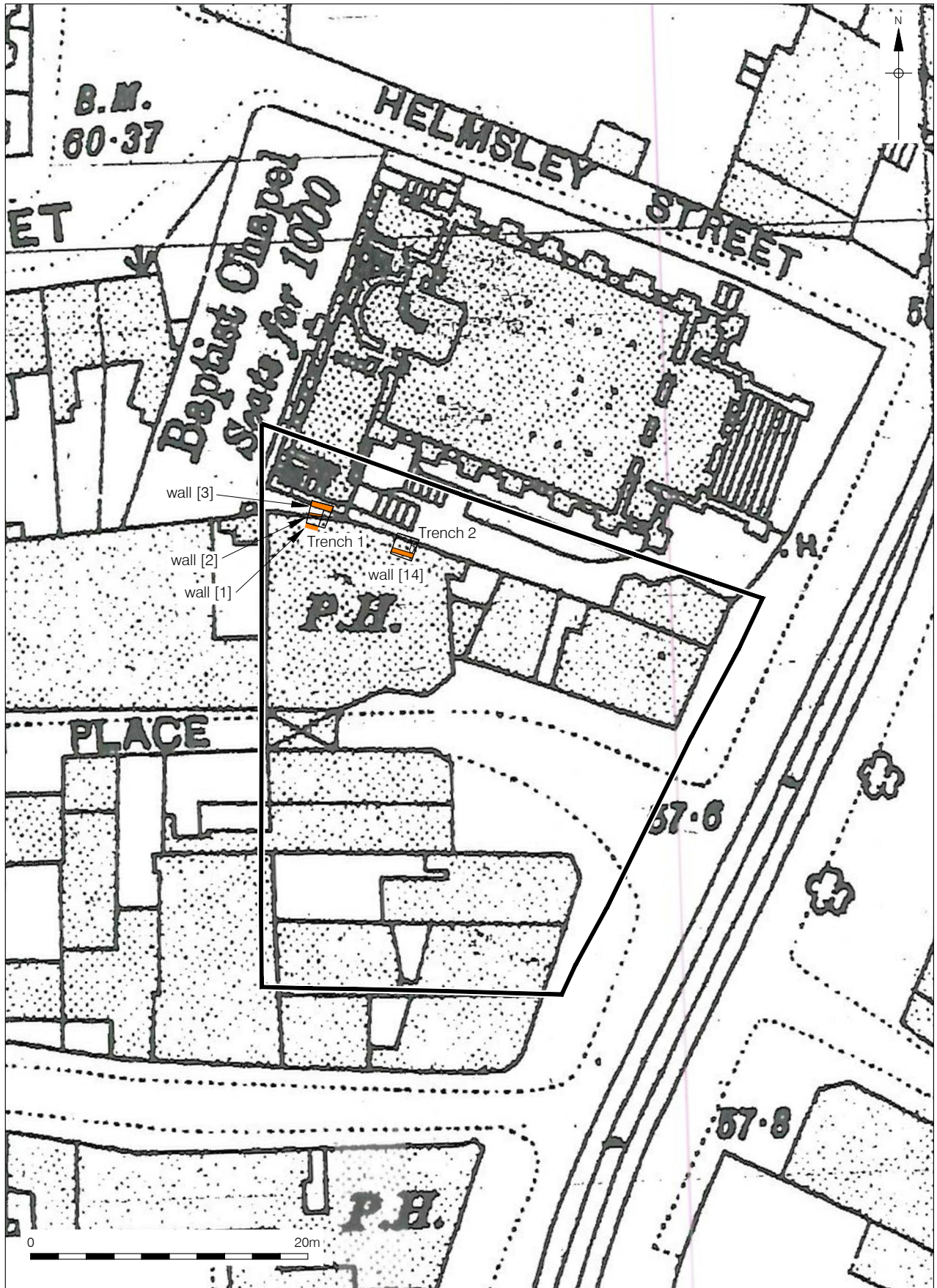
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Figure 3
Plan of Trenches 1 & 2
1:50 at A4



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Figure 4
Section 1
1:20 at A4



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Figure 5
Features overlain onto the 1898 Ordnance Survey
1:400 at A4

4 INTERPRETATION AND CONCLUSION

4.1 Interpretation

- 4.1.1 The east-west aligned brick wall [1]/[14] seen along the southern edge of both test pits is likely to represent the remains of a boundary wall delineating the grounds of the former Baptist Chapel to the north. Alternatively it could be related to the building shown on the 1813 St John Hackney map along the northern boundary of the site (Fig 4 in Meager, 2012).
- 4.1.2 In TP 1 a narrow wall [2] was seen running broadly parallel to wall [1]. This wall was only 0.10m wide and would not have been capable of supporting a substantial structure. It had been constructed of reused dry laid brick fragments and was likely used as a sleeper wall for a timber or lean-to structure built against the north side of wall [1].
- 4.1.3 It is possible that this structure continued to exist until the construction of the vestry on the south side of the Baptist chapel in the late 19th century. The cement rendered wall, [3], extending along the north edge of TP 1 is likely the remains of the south wall of the vestry.

4.2 Original Research Objectives

Did the graveyard of the Baptist chapel extend along the south side of the building?

- 4.2.1 Excavation of the two test pits did not reveal any evidence to suggest that the area to the south of the chapel had been utilised as a graveyard. Neither features resembling grave cuts nor any deposits reminiscent of cemetery soil were encountered during the investigation. Additionally, no disarticulated human remains were identified during the excavation of the test pits.

5 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- 5.1 Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd would like to thank Richard Meager of CgMs Consulting for commissioning the work on behalf of their client, Sherrygreen Homes Ltd. Thanks are also extended to Adam Single of the Greater London Archaeology Advisory Service for monitoring the work on behalf of the London Borough of Hackney.
- 5.2 The author would like to thank Tim Bradley for his project management, Richard Archer for the surveying and his assistance on site and Hayley Baxter for preparing the illustrations.

6 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html> (accessed on 01 May 2013)

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Meager, R., 2012 *Archaeological Desk Based Assessment: 139-141 Mare Street Hackney London E8*. CgMs Consulting unpublished report

Plates

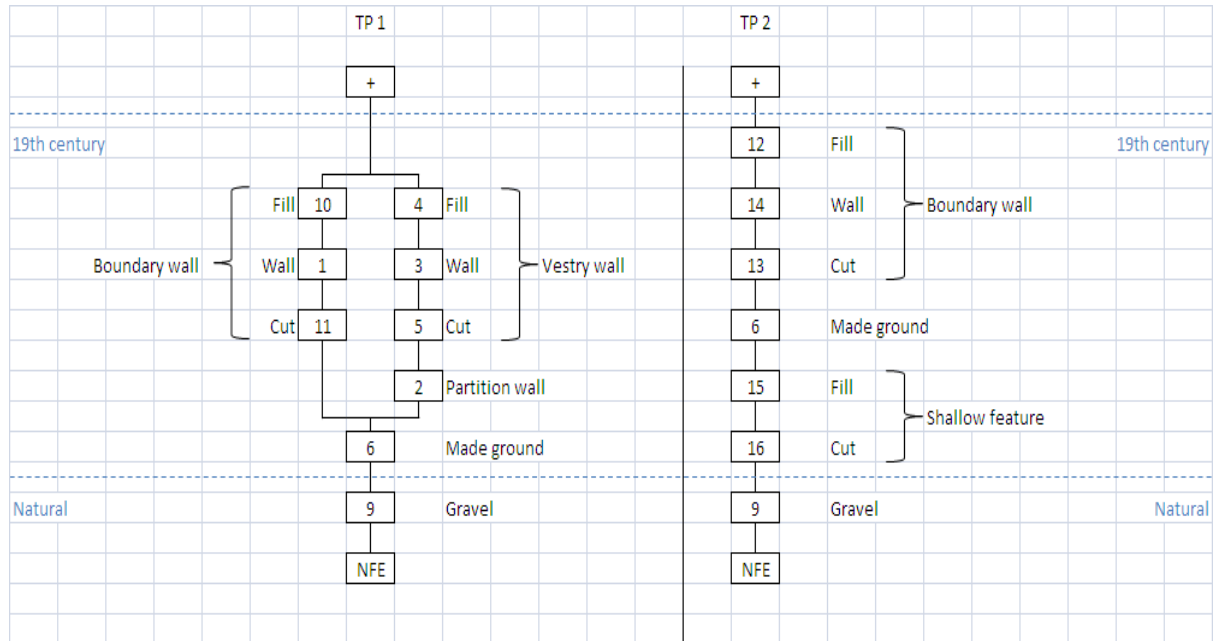


Plate 1: Overview of TP 1, facing east



Plate 2: Overview of TP 1, facing west

Appendix 1: Site matrix



Appendix 2: Context Register

Context	Trench	Type	Description
1	TP 1	Masonry	Boundary wall
2	TP 1	Masonry	Sleeper wall
3	TP 1	Masonry	South wall of vestry
4	TP 1	Deposit	Fill of [5]
5	TP 1	Cut	Construction cut for [3]
6	TP 1	Layer	Made ground
7	TP 1	VOID	VOID
8	TP 1	VOID	VOID
9	TP 1	Layer	Natural gravel
10	TP 1	Deposit	Fill of [11]
11	TP 1	Cut	Construction cut for [1]
12	TP 2	Deposit	Fill of [13]
13	TP 2	Cut	Construction cut for [14]
14	TP 2	Masonry	Boundary wall - Same as [1]
15	TP 2	Deposit	Fill of [16]
16	TP 2	Cut	Cut of shallow feature

Appendix 3: OASIS Form

OASIS ID: preconst1-149463

Project details

Project name	139-141 Mare Street, Hackney
Short description of the project	<p>In April of 2013 Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd was commissioned by CgMs Consulting to undertake the excavation of two (2m x 2m) archaeological test pits at 139-141 Mare Street, Hackney, London, E8 3RH (centred on NGR ref: TQ 3483 8402). The work was carried out on 30 April 2013. This report details the findings and working methods of the test pit excavation.</p> <p>The principal purpose of the excavation of the test pits was to determine if the graveyard associated with the former Chapel north of the site extended along the south side of the former building and into the study site. While a portion of the vestry of the Chapel was uncovered the excavation of the two trenches revealed no evidence for human burials. In addition to the vestry wall a former property boundary wall was also encountered. No features predating the 19th century were observed in either test pit.</p>
Project dates	Start: 30-04-2013 End: 30-04-2013
Previous/future work	No / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	MRE 13 - Sitecode
Any associated project reference codes	2013/0226 - Planning Application No.
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status (other)	Archaeological Priority Zone
Current Land use	Other 15 - Other
Monument type	WALLS Post Medieval
Significant Finds	POTTERY Post Medieval
Methods & techniques	"Targeted Trenches"
Development type	Urban commercial (e.g. offices, shops, banks, etc.)
Development type	Urban residential (e.g. flats, houses, etc.)
Prompt	National Planning Policy Framework - NPPF
Position in the planning process	Pre-application

Project location

Country	England
Site location	GREATER LONDON HACKNEY HACKNEY 139-140 Mare Street
Postcode	E8 3RH
Site coordinates	TQ 3483 8402 51 0 51 32 18 N 000 03 20 W Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 17.00m Max: 17.00m

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd
Project brief originator	Adam Single
Project design originator	CgMs Consulting
Project director/manager	Tim Bradley
Project supervisor	Paw Jorgensen
Type of sponsor/funding body	Developer
Name of sponsor/funding body	Sherrygreen Homes Ltd

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	LAARC
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography", "Images vector", "Spreadsheets", "Survey", "Text"
Paper Archive recipient	LAARC
Paper Media available	"Context sheet", "Drawing", "Report", "Section"

Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
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