

1 Penrhyn Road, Kingston-upon-Thames, London

An Archaeological Watching Brief

Central NGR: TQ 1809 6888

Local Planning Authority: Royal Borough of Kingston

Planning Reference: 13/12022/FUL

Commissioning Client: CgMs Consulting

Written/Researched by: Paw Jorgensen
Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited

Project Manager: Tim Bradley (MIfA)

Contractor: Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited
Unit 54 Brockley Cross Business Centre
96 Endwell Road
Brockley
London SE4 2PD

Tel: 020 7732 3925
Fax: 020 7732 7896
E-mail: tbradley@pre-construct.com
Web: www.pre-construct.com

© Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited
April 2013

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In April of 2013 Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd was commissioned by CgMs Consulting to carry out an archaeological watching brief during the excavation of three geotechnical test pits at 1 Penrhyn Road in Kingston-upon-Thames, London. The work was carried out on 10 April 2013 under the supervision of Paw Jorgensen and the project management of Tim Bradley, both of Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd.
- 1.2 Two of the test pits, TP1 and TP2, measured 2.6m by 0.6m in plan and were excavated to a depth of 3.3m and 3.6m, respectively. The third test pit, TP3, measured 2.3m by 0.5m in plan and was excavated to a depth of 2.7m below the current ground level within the site. TP 1 and 2 were excavated immediately adjacent to the river Hogsmill while TP3 was set back approximately 11m from the edge of the stream.

2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL SEQUENCE AND INTERPRETATION

2.1 Test Pit 1

- 2.1.1 In TP 1 the gravels comprised dark grey loose fine to medium sandy gravel at 4.2m OD.
- 2.1.2 Sealing the gravels was a layer of dark to very dark greenish grey soft sandy alluvial clay. The top of the alluvial deposit was encountered at 4.7m OD in TP1. this deposit was a layer of mid-brown to olive brown soft sandy alluvial silt with occasional iron staining and, in TP1, occasional decomposed organic material (presumably roots) and sub-rounded pebbles (at 5.1m OD).
- 2.1.3 Overlying the alluvial deposits was a 0.70m thick deposit of 20th century made ground containing concrete fragments, plastic etc. This also acted as bedding for a tarmac surface laid down across the northern part of the site and which was still visible in TP1 at a height of 5.9m OD. Sealing these surfaces was a further layer of made ground capped with concrete raising the level of the ground to its current height of approximately 7.3m OD.

2.2 Test Pit 2

- 2.2.1 In TP 2 the gravels comprised dark grey loose fine to medium sandy gravel at 3.8m OD.
- 2.2.2 Sealing the gravel was a layer of dark to very dark greenish grey soft sandy alluvial clay. The lower part of this deposit contained frequent small shells (4-8mm). The top of the alluvial deposit was encountered at 4.0m OD. Overlying both this was a layer of mid-brown to olive brown soft sandy alluvial silt with occasional iron staining. Unlike the lower alluvial deposit the upper deposit was encountered at a higher level in TP2 than TP1 (at 5.6m OD).
- 2.2.3 Overlying the alluvial deposits was a 0.35m thick deposit of made ground containing

concrete fragments, plastic etc. This also acted as bedding for a tarmac surface laid down across the northern part of the site and which was still visible in TP2 at a height of 6.0m OD. Sealing these surfaces was another layer of made ground capped with concrete raising the level of the ground to its current height of approximately 7.3m OD.

2.3 Test Pit 3

2.3.1 In TP 3 the gravel consisted of yellowish red to yellowish brown loose fine sandy gravel with horizontal bands of fine to medium gravel at 5.4m OD.

2.3.2 The alluvial sequence was absent and here the natural gravel was instead sealed by a deposit of dark brown silty sand reminiscent of a possible topsoil horizon. This deposit, which was first encountered at 6.0m OD, contained sub-rounded and sub-angular pebbles occurring at a moderate frequency throughout the horizon as well as occasional animal bone fragments. During excavation of the deposit no temporally diagnostic material was encountered and thus the deposit remains undated.

2.3.3 Overlying the topsoil (?) horizon in TP3 was a 0.44m thick deposit of made ground containing concrete fragments, plastic etc. In TP3 the tarmac surface was absent although here the ground raising deposit was overlain by an 80mm thick brick surface, the top of which was at 6.5m OD. Sealing these surfaces was another layer of made ground capped with concrete raising the level of the ground to its current height of approximately 7.3m OD.

INTERPRETATION

2.4 The top of the natural gravel occurred lower in TP1 and 2. This is not surprising considering the proximate location of TP1 and 2 to the river. The elevational difference between the gravel in these two trenches and the gravel in TP3 is likely reflective of the palaeotopography of the riverbank. The alluvial sequence in TPs 1 & 2 is reflective of the riverine environment of the Hogsmill in these locations while the absence of such deposits in TP3 suggests that this area may lie beyond the historic course of the river.

2.5 The deposition of the first phase of ground raising material and the establishment of the tarmac (in TP1 and 2) and brick (in TP3) surfaces may have occurred during the canalising of the Hogsmill in the 1930s.

3 PLATES



Plate 1: Site overview, facing south-southeast



Plate 2: Site in relation to the river Hogsmill, facing south



Plate 3: Test pit 1, facing south



Plate 4: Test pit 2, facing north



Plate 5: Test pit 3, facing north