

**7-19 AMHURST ROAD, HACKNEY
E8 1LL**

**ASSESSMENT OF AN
ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING
BRIEF**

SITE CODE: AMH12

**LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY:
LONDON BOROUGH OF HACKNEY**

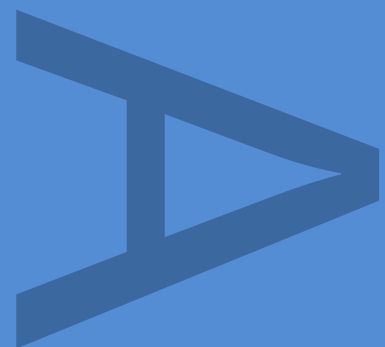
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PRE-CONSTRUCT ARCHAEOLOGY



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7-19 AMHURST ROAD, HACKNEY E8 1LL

ASSESSMENT OF AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL
WATCHING BRIEF

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Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd	
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	Name & Title	Signature	Date
Text Prepared by:	Alistair Douglas		November 2013
Graphics Prepared by:	Hayley Baxter		November 2013
Graphics Checked by:	Josephine Brown		November 2013
Project Manager Sign-off:	Chris Mayo		November 2013

Revision No.	Date	Checked	Approved
1	28/01/14	C Mayo	T Bradley

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

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Site Code: AMH12

Local Planning Authority: London Borough of Hackney

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Written and Researched by: Alistair Douglas and Peter Boyer
Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited, January 2014

Project Manager: Chris Mayo

Commissioning Client: AngloHolt Construction Limited

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: cmayo@pre-construct.com

Website: www.pre-construct.com

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1 ABSTRACT

- 1.1 This report details the results of an archaeological investigation undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited on land at 7-19 Amhurst Road, London Borough of Hackney E8 1LL. The project was supervised by the authors and the work was monitored by Adam Single, Greater London Archaeological Advisory Service (GLAAS) acting as planning advisor to the London Borough of Hackney. Initially an archaeological evaluation was conducted in 2012, followed by a mitigation watching brief, carried out between the 19th August and 5th November 2013. This report documents the results of the watching brief.
- 1.2 The investigation recorded the underlying natural drift geology on the site as river terrace gravels capped by brickearth c. 0.50m thick. The terrace gravels were encountered between 10.71 and 10.40m OD.
- 1.3 Archaeological evidence is totally absent for the prehistoric and Roman periods and indicates that during the medieval and post-medieval periods the site was open ground, although it may have been used for agricultural or horticultural purposes. In the north-west of the site the course of an in-filled water channel was exposed, that probably represented a stream active in the later medieval period. The stream appears to have completely silted up by the early 17th century. The site appeared to have remained largely undeveloped until the late 19th century when a row of terraced housing was built fronting onto Amhurst Road.

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited (PCA) was commissioned by AngloHolt Construction Limited to undertake an archaeological investigation at 7-19 Amhurst Road, London Borough of Hackney, E8 1LL. The site is an irregular shaped parcel of land bounded to the north-east by Amhurst Road, to the north-west by a car park, to the south by railway tracks and to the east by No. 5 Amhurst Road. The site covers an area of 1,354 square meters and is centred at National Grid Reference TQ 34881 84952 (see Figure 1).
- 2.2 The initial archaeological investigation consisted of an archaeological evaluation undertaken by PCA in September 2012 and reported separately (Douglas 2012). The evaluation comprised of two stepped trenches (Trenches 1 and 2) (see Figure 2).
- 2.3 Based upon the results of the evaluation, Adam Single of GLAAS recommended that further groundworks at the site which were necessitated by the development should be subject to an archaeological mitigation watching brief. The main purpose of the watching brief was to improve the understanding of the water-course revealed in the evaluation, particularly its date and relationship with medieval and later, nearby land use.
- 2.4 The archaeological watching brief was conducted between the 19th August 2013 and 5th November 2013 and carried out by Peter Boyer and Alistair Douglas. The project manager was Chris Mayo.
- 2.5 The watching brief followed a Written Scheme of Investigation prepared by Chris Mayo (2012b). The works were conducted according to English Heritage guidelines (GLAAS 2009).
- 2.6 The completed archive comprising written, drawn, and photographic records and artefacts will be deposited with the Museum of London. The site archive was identified continuing the unique site code AMH12, previously used for the evaluation stage.

3 PLANNING BACKGROUND AND PROJECT OBJECTIVES

3.1 National Guidance: National Planning Policy Framework

3.1.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was adopted on March 27 2012, and now supersedes the Planning Policy Statements (PPSs). The NPPF constitutes guidance for local planning authorities and decision-takers both in drawing up plans and as a material consideration in determining applications.

3.1.2 In considering any planning application for development the local planning authority will be guided by the policy framework set by the NPPF, by current Local Plan policy and by other material considerations.

3.2 Regional Policy: The London Plan

3.2.1 The relevant Strategic Development Plan framework is provided by “The London Plan, Spatial Development Strategy for Greater London Consolidated with Alterations since 2004” (Feb 2008). It includes the following policy relating to archaeology within central London:

Policy 4b.15 Archaeology

The Mayor, in partnership with English Heritage, the Museum of London and Boroughs, will support the identification, protection, interpretation and presentation of London’s archaeological resources. Boroughs in consultation with English Heritage and other relevant statutory organisations should include appropriate policies in their DPDs for protecting Scheduled Ancient Monuments and archaeological assets within their area.

3.3 Local Policy: Archaeology in the London Borough of Hackney

3.3.1 The relevant local policy is provided by the London Borough of Hackney’s Core Strategy, which was adopted in 2010. It contains the following policy statement with regards to 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.

3.4 Planning Permission

3.4.1 The proposed development will see the erection of a part-4, part-6 and part-7 storey mixed use development comprising: 648sqm (GIA) of retail floor space (Class A1); 2435sqm (GIA) of hotel floor space including 72 rooms and ancillary cafe/bar; 1975sqm (GIA) of student accommodation including 56 suits; and associated refuse and recycling facilities; servicing and landscaping. The proposal incorporates a basement structure which extends across the entire foot print of the development and will necessitate excavation to over 3.0m below ground level.

3.4.2 The scheme has full planning permission (application number 2011/2209) with a condition

(number 8) requiring archaeological work:

No development shall take place until the applicant has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work, in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted by the applicant and approved by the local Planning Authority.

Reason: To protect and record archaeological remains at the site.

3.4.3 An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by PCA in advance of the proposed development. Following the installation of a secant wall which was constructed by means of driven sheet piles, a watching brief was carried out on the bulk ground reduction for the basement construction.

3.5 Project Objectives

3.5.1 The watching brief aimed to address the following primary objectives:

- To better define the natural topography of the site, and the height at which it survives.
- To establish the presence or absence of prehistoric activity, perhaps in association with the channel recorded during the evaluation.
- To establish the presence or absence of Roman activity.
- To establish the presence or absence of medieval activity. Can it be confirmed that the site was unused during these periods due to its location away from the medieval centre around Mare Street, as suggested by the evaluation work?
- To investigate and record the channel feature revealed during the evaluation. Can it be ascertained what date it was first in-filled? Was this a deliberate action or the result of natural silting?
- To confirm the presence or absence of post-medieval activity at the site, which was suggested to be lacking during the evaluation work.
- To confirm the date and nature of the made ground deposits.
- To establish the nature, date and survival of activity relating to any archaeological periods at the site.
- To establish the extent of all past post-depositional impacts on the archaeological resource.

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

- 4.1 Following the evaluation the development groundworks were subject to a mitigation watching brief carried out in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (Mayo 2012b) approved by Adam Single (GLAAS). The principal aim of the watching brief was to further understanding of the water channel discovered in evaluation Trench 1, in particular its course and any associated human activity.
- 4.2 Initial groundworks at the site comprised the construction of a tower crane, requiring a crane base at the centre of the site. Excavations for this structure by 360° mechanical excavator were archaeologically monitored.
- 4.3 Thereafter site reduction was conducted by a groundworks contractor using a 360° mechanical excavator using, where reasonably practical, a flat-bladed grading bucket, excavating in steady passes so as to allow archaeological inspection and recording. Use of a toothed bucket was permissible for the emptying of existing backfilled basements and the removal of modern intrusions.
- 4.4 Regrettably the position within the site where the channel was found to survive corresponded to the position of the site gates and vehicular access by which muckaway was being facilitated; for this reason it was not possible to expose a full cross-section perpendicular to the alignment of the channel, and neither could the full extent of the feature be ascertained. Consequently only the southern edge of the palaeochannel was ever exposed during the evaluation.
- 4.5 The site is known to be partially occupied by 19th-century basements near the frontage with Amhurst Road, which were backfilled with demolition rubble following a fire in 2003. PCA did not consider it necessary to monitor the emptying of this rubble; however the excavations necessary to remove the basement structures and all excavations beyond the existing basement structures were monitored by a professional archaeologist in the employ of PCA.
- 4.6 The alluvial sequence within the palaeochannel was recorded on-site at the evaluation stage by PCA geoarchaeologist, Lisa Snape.

5 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

- 5.1 The site sits on slightly sloping ground which rises from c. 12.50m AOD at the northern extent to c. 13.30m AOD in the south-eastern extent (survey Peter Smith Architects, drawing number 0925(S)01 Rev A, March 2011).
- 5.2 The British Geological Survey of Great Britain, Sheet 256 North London, shows that the site lies on River Terrace Deposits, also known as Hackney Gravels. These terrace gravels overlie London Clay at depth.
- 5.3 A geological study undertaken at the site (logs provided by Applied Geology, May 2012, see table below) confirmed the drift geology to be Hackney Gravels recorded at varying heights. The variation in height was considered to be the consequence of previous development as well as slight variations in topography.

Intervention	Height of Hackney Gravels
BH 1	c. 10.75m OD
BH 4	c. 9.40m OD
TP 1	c. 11.46m OD
TP 2	c. 11.06m OD
TP 3	c. 11.30m OD
TP 6	C. 10.99m OD

- 5.4 The archaeological evaluation encountered untruncated terrace gravels in Trench 1 at 10.71m OD and similar gravels exposed in Trench 2 at 10.40m OD. In both trenches the terrace gravel was overlain by a natural deposit of yellow with reddish brown mottling) silty sandy clay (a brickearth type deposit) of moderate/stiff compaction, between 0.30m-0.50m thick. In Trench 1 the brickearth [3] was at a height of 11.14m OD. In Trench 2 the top of the brickearth type deposit [21] was at heights between 11.09m OD and 11.04m OD.
- 5.5 The watching brief confirmed that the brickearth and the palaeochannel (recorded in Trench 1) were truncated by the 19th-century basements that fronted onto Amhurst Road. Elsewhere the sequence of the natural deposition of terrace gravels overlain by brickearth extended across all parts of the site.

6 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

6.1 General

6.1.1 The site is not located within an Archaeological Priority Area (APA) as defined by the London Borough of Hackney; however it is in close proximity to two other APAs, one focussed on Mare Street to the east and another on Dalston Lane to the west. Because of its proximity to these two APAs and the medieval core settlement of Hackney and its subsequent post-medieval development, the site does lie in an area where 'heritage assets of archaeological interest may be anticipated'.

6.2 Prehistoric

6.2.1 Prehistoric activity is well attested on the Hackney gravel terrace with finds chiefly of worked flints. In the near vicinity to the site, close to the medieval St Augustine's Tower the Greater London Historic Environment Record (GLHER) (Ref 080079/00/00) records a find spot of 8 handaxes, 1 core, 14 retouched and 28 unretouched blades. Further away a single flint blade was also recovered in an evaluation at 422 Mare Street (GLHER ref 084860/00/00).

6.3 Roman

6.3.1 The site lies close to a putative Roman road running along the course of Homerton High Street. Further to the west Kingsland High Street follows the course of Roman Ermine Street the main road connecting Roman Londinium to Camulodunum (Colchester) (Humphrey 2010).

6.4 Medieval

6.4.1 Hackney is not mentioned in the Domesday Survey of 1086 but it is believed to have formed part of the manor of Stepney (Weinreb and Hibbert 2008, 367). The earliest records for the settlement detail the parish church of Hackney, which was a sinecure rectory, presumably from 1275 when it had a vicar and vicarage that had evidently become endowed by 1291. The military order of the Knights Templar are known to have been landowners in Hackney and it is thought that their following of the teachings of St Augustine, Bishop of Hippo, led to the donation of land to establish the Church of St Augustine (Humphrey 2010).

6.4.2 The site lies close to the tower of the church of St Augustine and the core of the medieval village. The tower is all that remains of the church the body which was demolished in 1797. The tower is dated to the 16th century but parts may be older (GLHER ref MLO83894).

6.5 Post-Medieval

6.5.1 The growth of London in the 15th and 16th centuries led to villages such as Hackney becoming more important as places where the nobility and rich merchants could build homes not too far removed from their places of business in the City (Weinreb and Hibbert 2008, 367).

6.5.2 By the 17th and 18th century ribbon development had spread along Mare Street.

6.5.3 At the beginning of the 19th century, Hackney was still rural in character. Greenwood's map of 1827-30 shows Hackney in the early 19th century with development along Mare Street but

with the land behind the street frontage largely open fields. The area of the site appears to be open ground.

- 6.5.4 With the coming of the railways in the middle of the 19th century the population of Hackney would expand dramatically. Census returns record the expansion of population; in 1801 the population of Hackney was 12,730, by 1821 it had grown to 22,494, by 1851 the population and reached 53,589 and at the beginning of the 20th century the population was over 200,000 (Weinreb and Hibbert 2008, 368).
- 6.5.5 Stanford's map of 1862 shows a newly laid out Amhurst Road and the site appears to still be open ground. The brick field to the north of the site however is surely a precursor to the development to come. The OS map of 1873 shows the site developed with a terrace of houses built along the frontage with Amhurst Road with ancillary buildings to the rear.
- 6.5.6 The terrace row on the site stood virtually unchanged until a severe fire in 2003 led to the demolition of all the properties formerly on the site.

7 PHASED ARCHAEOLOGICAL SEQUENCE

7.1 Introduction

7.1.1 The stratigraphic sequence was initially formulated during the evaluation. The same sequence was confirmed during the watching brief and is divided into six phases as follows:

- Phase 1 – Natural drift geology
- Phase 2 – Late medieval
- Phase 3 – Early post-medieval
- Phase 4 – 18th and early 19th century
- Phase 5 – Later 19th century
- Phase 6 – Modern

7.1.2 In this report the archaeological sequence is reported by phase and where necessary incorporates the results of the trial-trench evaluation in order to qualify salient points.

7.2 Phase 1: Natural

7.2.1 Phase 1 represents the natural drift geology, which was encountered across the site to the base of excavations. This generally comprised orange coloured sandy gravel [57], the surface elevation of which was recorded between 10.71m AOD and 10.40m OD. This deposit forms part of the Pleistocene Thames River Terrace sequence, here known as Hackney Gravel.

7.2.2 In the areas of the site not heavily truncated by 19th-century development, a yellow (with reddish brown mottling) sandy silty clay, brickearth type deposit [56]/[60], of moderate/stiff compaction up to c. 0.50m thick, capped the terrace gravel. The surface of this deposit generally sloped downwards from south to north, being recorded at elevations between c. 11.14m AOD and 10.85m AOD.

7.2.3 The watching brief established that the 19th-century basements that formed the surviving remains of terrace buildings that had fronted onto Amhurst Road, had totally truncated the brickearth.

7.3 Phase 2: Late Medieval

7.3.1 Phase 2 was represented by the formation of a light grey with yellow mottling silty sandy clay, of moderate/friable compaction. The deposit was initially recorded in both evaluation trenches overlying the natural brickearth and is thought to represent a sub-soil disturbed by bioturbation. It was subsequently recorded across much of the site during the watching brief as [55], being c. 0.2m to 0.3m thick with the surface elevation varying slightly between 11.29m AOD and 11.34m AOD. A large fragment of glazed ridge roof tile dated to the 14th or 15th century was recovered from this deposit during the evaluation and may be an indication that the soil was being worked during this period, probably for agriculture.

7.3.2 Towards the north of the site, a palaeochannel [5] at least 5.0m wide and 1.21m deep was initially exposed in Trench 1 during the evaluation (Figure 4 – this is included here as a more

complete cross-section across the channel was recorded during the evaluation than the subsequent watching brief). The channel was orientated E/W but it was not possible to determine in which direction the stream flowed. It was filled with a sequence of sand, gravel, sandy gravels and overlain by a sandy silt with occasional shell fragments noted in this latter fill. A detailed geoarchaeological description of the backfilling sequence was recorded during the evaluation and is also included in this report as Appendix 4. No dating evidence was recovered from any of the channel fills during the evaluation but the stratigraphic position of the channel and pottery from a final infilling deposit suggested that it was probably an active stream during the medieval period, becoming finally backfilled during the early post-medieval period.

7.3.3 The channel was further exposed to the west during the watching brief, when it became apparent that it had been truncated in its entirety to the north and east of Trench 1 by the 19th-century basements but its course to the west extended over 15m to the limits of the site (see Figure 3). It also extended further to the south than the alignment projected during the evaluation, as demonstrated by a tangential section across the feature exposed during the watching brief (Figure 3 and Plate 1).

7.3.4 During the watching brief the channel fill [58] was described as mid-grey sandy silt with occasional animal bone, ceramic building material (CBM) and charcoal fragments, moderate rounded medium pebbles and occasional organic/wood fragments. Some larger pieces of CBM were recovered from this deposit including early post-medieval orange fabric brick, abraded medieval peg tile and post-medieval peg tile, giving a suggested deposition date of c. 1600-1800 (Appendix 3) and thus confirming the earlier suggestion of a post-medieval infilling date.

7.4 Phase 3: Early Post-Medieval

7.4.1 Phase 3 represents activity dated to the early post-medieval period. During the evaluation the uppermost fill of the palaeochannel was recorded as a grey brown silty sandy clay with frequent fragments of wood and other organic matter, which is likely to have accumulated naturally when the stream was no longer active but the ground still boggy. A similar sequence of filling in of the channel was observed in the watching brief. Here dark brown silty sand clay [59] with moderate medium rounded pebbles up to c. 0.50m thick overlay the sandy silt fill [58]. Further deposits were recorded overlying the infilling materials, which during the evaluation yielded moderate amounts of animal bone and fragmentary CBM suggesting 16th- or 17th-century deposition. It may be that these deposits represented the deliberate filling in of the water-course which was already largely silted up.

7.5 Phase 4: 18th and early 19th century

7.5.1 Phase 4 represents the site prior to development in the 19th century. Layers overlying the backfilled palaeochannel recorded during the evaluation were interpreted as horticultural type and a similar horticultural type soil [61] approximately 0.30m thick was recorded above the palaeochannel during the watching brief. The surface of this deposit was recorded between c. 11.77m AOD and 11.83m AOD

7.5.2 Horticultural type soils [52]/[53]were also observed outside the footprint of the 19th-century terrace housing, across the southern and western part of the site. These extensive deposits of agricultural/horticultural soils do suggest that the site was an open field throughout the post-Medieval period.

7.6 Phase 5: Later 19th century

7.6.1 Phase 5 represents activity in the later 19th century. The horticultural soils were in part overlain by yellow brown gravel that was probably put down to consolidate the ground prior to development. This layer was between 0.08m and 0.13m thick and was recorded at upper elevations between 11.82m AOD and 11.92m AOD. It was overlain by a variable made ground deposit recorded at an upper elevation of 12.15m AOD.

7.6.2 Brickwork that formed part of the back walls to the Victorian terrace that fronted onto Amhurst Road was seen along the edge eastern edge of Trench 1 during the evaluation and noted in both plan and section. The back wall [51] to the terrace was also more extensively exposed and recorded in the crane base during the watching brief (Figure 3 and Plate 2).

7.7 Phase 6: Modern

7.7.1 Modern deposits comprised the most recent overburden extant across the site and post-dating demolition of the 19th-century terrace buildings. This material was up to 0.5m thick and recorded at surface elevations between 13.21m AOD to the south and 12.70m AOD to the north during the archaeological investigations.

8 SUMMARY OF THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL PHASES

- 8.1 Phase 1 represents the natural drift geology encountered across the site. The surface of Terrace Gravels was recorded between 10.71m AOD and 10.40m AOD. These were overlain by a natural brickearth type deposit at heights between 11.14m AOD and 11.04m AOD. The watching brief confirmed that beyond the footprint of the 19th-century terrace buildings this untruncated sequence of natural deposition extended across the site.
- 8.2 Phase 2 represents the earliest identifiable archaeological horizon, an archaic sub-soil that is thought to represent an agricultural soil that was worked in the medieval period. A palaeochannel identified in the north of the site may have been an active stream in the late-medieval and early post-medieval period.
- 8.3 Phase 3 represents the filling in of the stream; in part this seems to have been a natural process but also appears to have had an anthropogenic component (see Appendix 3). The finds recovered from upper fills of the stream suggest that it was completely filled in by c. 1650.
- 8.4 Phase 4 represents formation of an agricultural type soil that overlay the water-course and extended across the site. Throughout the post-medieval period prior to its development in the 19th century the site appears to have been open ground and probably used for agriculture/horticulture. The Greenwood map of 1827-30 shows that most of the site was a large field.
- 8.5 Phase 5 represents the second half of the 19th century when the site was developed. Stanford's map of 1863 shows the site still as mainly open ground fronting onto the newly laid out Amhurst Road. However by 1870 the OS map shows that the site had now been built upon with a row of terrace houses fronting onto Amhurst Road.
- 8.6 Phase 6 represents the modern overburden recorded across the site.

9 ORIGINAL RESEARCH OBJECTIVES AND REVISED RESEARCH QUESTIONS

9.1 Original Research Objectives

9.1.1 *To better define the natural topography of the site, and the height at which it survives.*

The investigation encountered untruncated terrace gravels at surface elevations between 10.71m AOD and 10.40m OD. These were overlain by a natural brickearth type deposit at heights between 11.14m AOD and 11.04m AOD. The watching brief did not further define the natural sequence recorded during the evaluation

9.1.2 *To establish the presence or absence of prehistoric activity, perhaps in association with the channel recorded during the evaluation.*

In common with the evaluation, the watching brief found no evidence for archaeological activity or remains of prehistoric date. Rather it showed a barren landscape containing a stream channel which was in-filled by the early post-medieval period, with no earlier activity.

9.1.3 *To establish the presence or absence of Roman activity.*

The archaeological investigations produced no evidence for Roman activity.

9.1.4 *To establish the presence or absence of medieval activity. Can it be confirmed that the site was unused during these periods due to its location away from the medieval centre around Mare Street, as suggested by the evaluation work?*

Both the evaluation and the watching brief revealed that overlying the brickearth was a sub-soil that may represent a soil horizon that was being agriculturally worked during the medieval period. However no further evidence of medieval activity was unearthed and no further work is required on the few pieces of medieval CBM recovered from the site, which are considered to simply be stray finds within a worked soil horizon. No evidence was seen for management of the stream channel (i.e. dredging) and the implication is simply that it was a natural water-course.

9.1.5 *To investigate and record the channel feature revealed during the evaluation. Can it be ascertained what date it was first in-filled? Was this a deliberate action or the result of natural silting?*

At the north end of the site the natural deposits were truncated by a meandering stream that may have formed sometime between the Pleistocene and the Medieval period. The depositional sequence of the stream suggests that a period of low fluvial energy was followed by a stage of increased flow before returning to low fluvial energy. It does seem probable that the stream was finally deliberately in-filled in around 1650, having previously almost completely silted up natural processes (see Appendix 4).

9.1.6 *To confirm the presence or absence of post-medieval activity at the site, which was suggested to be lacking during the evaluation work.*

The site probably continued to be used for agricultural or horticultural purposes prior to its development in the later 19th century. No further work is required for the limited post-

medieval pottery or CBM recovered from the site.

9.1.7 *To confirm the date and nature of the made ground deposits.*

The earliest made ground deposits are dated from the 16th/early 17th century onwards. The first deposit encountered was probably to level off the surface of the stream channel, whilst later (dumped) deposits served to consolidate and raise the ground.

9.1.8 *To establish the nature, date and survival of activity relating to any archaeological periods at the site.*

Human activity at the site has been seen to date from the medieval period onwards, beginning with the working of land perhaps for agricultural purposes. In the 16th/early 17th century the surface of the mostly silted stream was levelled off perhaps to allow easier working of the land, as implied from the Greenwood map of 1827-30 (see Douglas 2012, Figure 6). The site was first structurally developed in the second half of the 19th century.

9.1.9 *To establish the extent of all past post-depositional impacts on the archaeological resource.*

The north-eastern half of the site was seen from the watching brief to have undergone severe truncation from the row of terrace houses fronting onto Amhurst Road, built by 1870, which had cellars truncating to beyond the level of the brickearth. Otherwise the site showed no significant truncation.

9.2 Revised Research Questions

9.2.1 The investigation has addressed all of the original research objectives, and PCA does not consider that any revised research questions are presented which could be addressed by this development.

10 CONCLUSIONS AND PUBLICATION OUTLINE

10.1 Conclusions

- 10.1.1 The results of the archaeological investigation at 7-19 Amhurst Road provide a topographic and geological model of a landscape underlain by terrace gravels and covered by a brickearth horizon; a landscape that was incised by a meandering stream that was finally filled in during the early post-medieval period, having undergone gradual sedimentation (see Appendix 3). The land was probably used for farming from at least the medieval period onwards and remained open fields until development in the later 19th century.
- 10.1.2 No further work is required for the finds (pottery, CBM and animal bone) recovered from the site.
- 10.1.3 Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited does not consider that further specific post-excavation work for this development is necessary or appropriate.

10.2 Site Archive and Publication

- 10.2.1 The archive (evaluation and watching brief) consists of:

Context sheets	44 sheets
Plans @ 1:20	3 (8 sheets)
Sections @ 1:10	8 (20 sheets)
Photographs	94 images
Finds (all types)	1 box

- 10.2.2 The entire site archive will be deposited at the London Archaeological Archive and Research Centre (LAARC) under site code AMH12, following approval of this report. PCA will provide a copy of this report to the local studies library, and it will be supplied to the Greater London Historic Environment Record by the Archaeology Advisor to the London Borough of Hackney.
- 10.2.3 The results of the archaeological investigation will be published as an entry in the London Archaeologist 'Round-Up'.

10.3 Confidence

- 10.3.1 PCA considers that the archaeological fieldwork was completed in accordance with all relevant guidelines, best-practice documents and the approved Written Scheme of Investigation.
- 10.3.2 The work was undertaken in good weather conditions. The client and the development contractor were sympathetic to the archaeological work and accommodated it entirely in line with the Written Scheme of Investigation.
- 10.3.3 We consider that the results detailed in this report are reliable.

11 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- 11.1 Pre-Construct Archaeology would like to thank AngloHolt Construction Limited for commissioning and funding this watching brief. Many thanks are also extended to Matthew Mercer and Bryan Allen of AngloHolt Construction Limited for their cooperation and assistance.
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- 11.4 Special thanks are given to Chris Mayo for his project management and the editing of this report.

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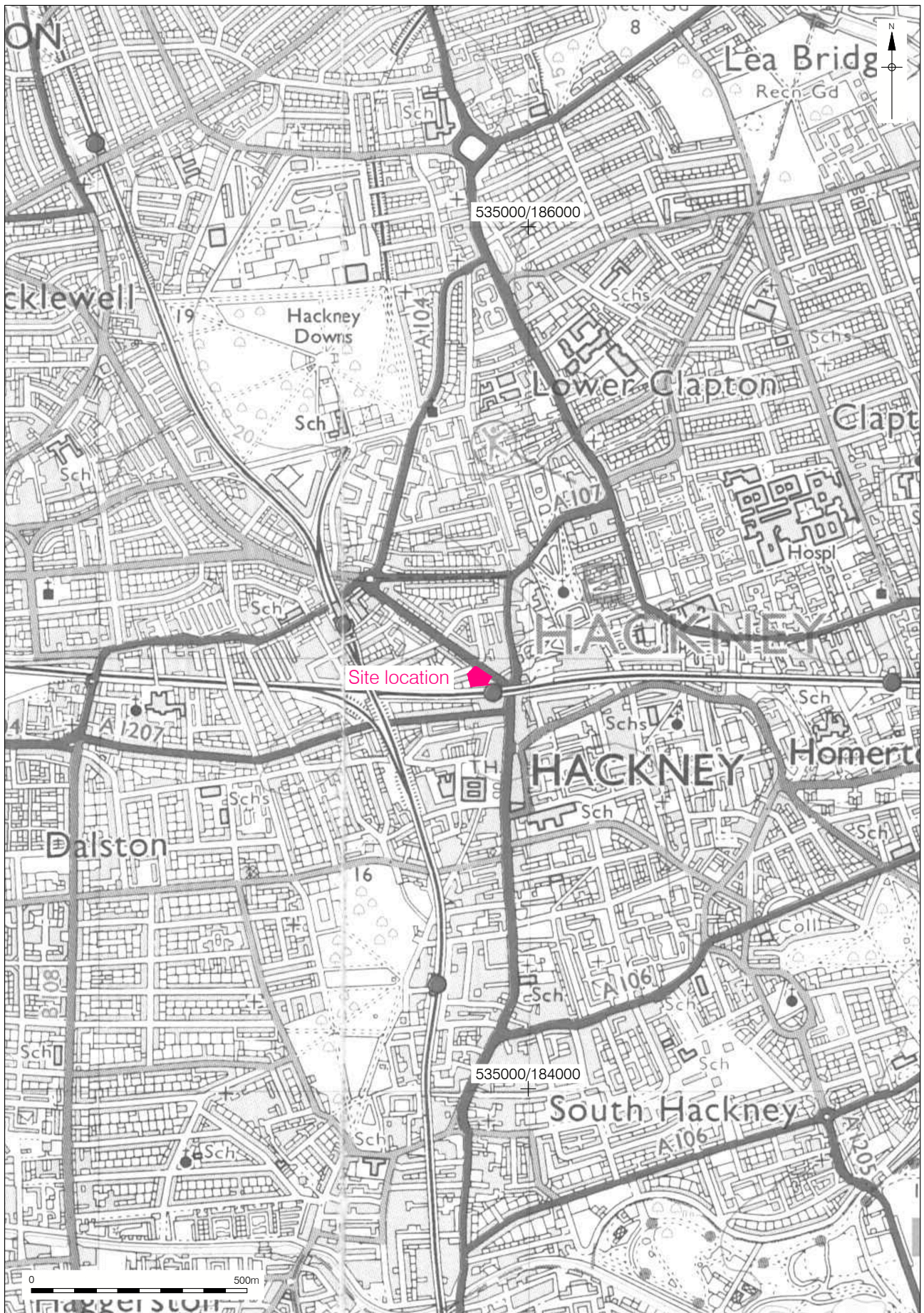
12.2 Cartographic sources referred to in the text

British Geological Survey of Great Britain, Sheet 256 North London

Greenwood's map 1827-30

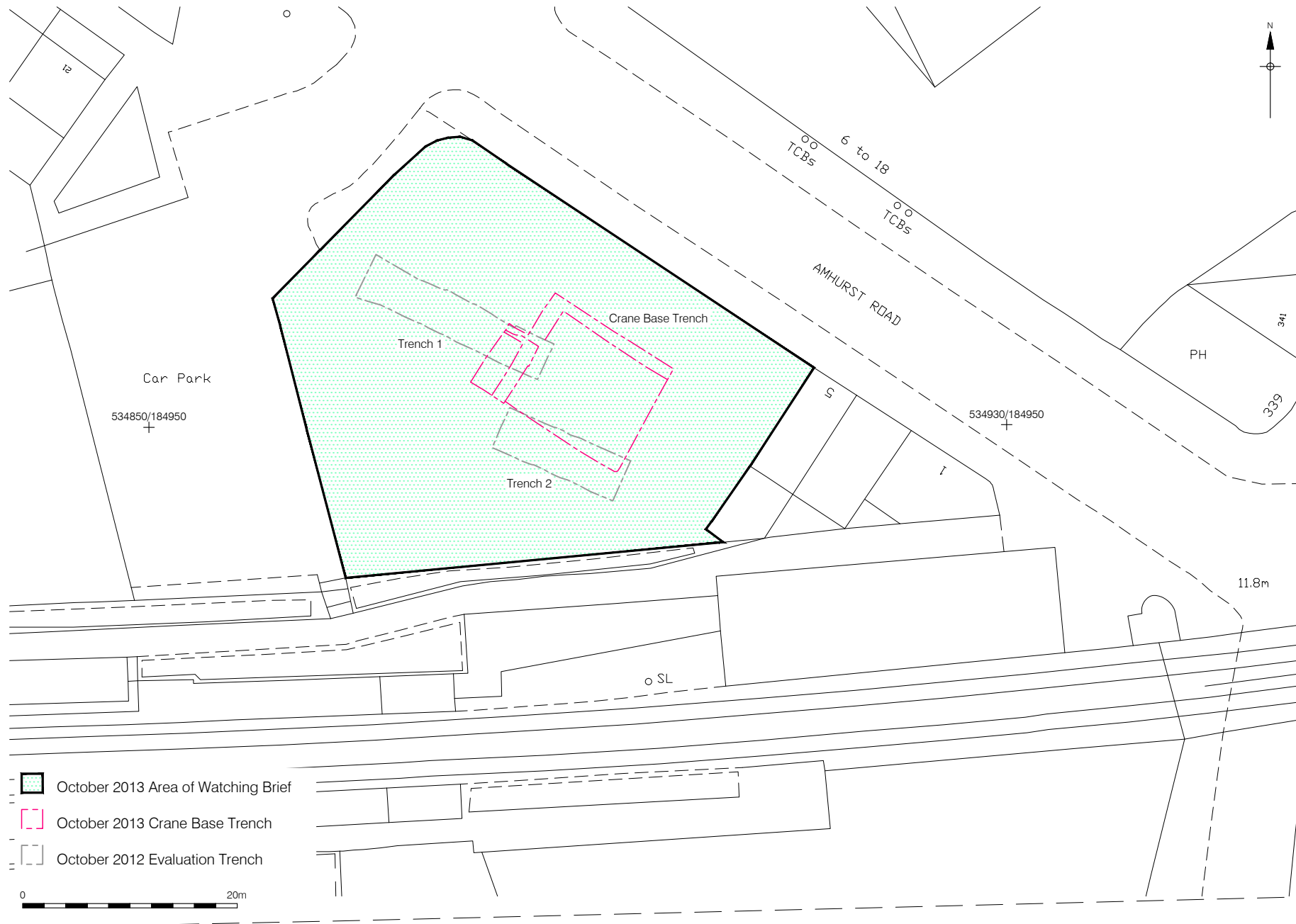
Stanford's map 1863

OS map 1870



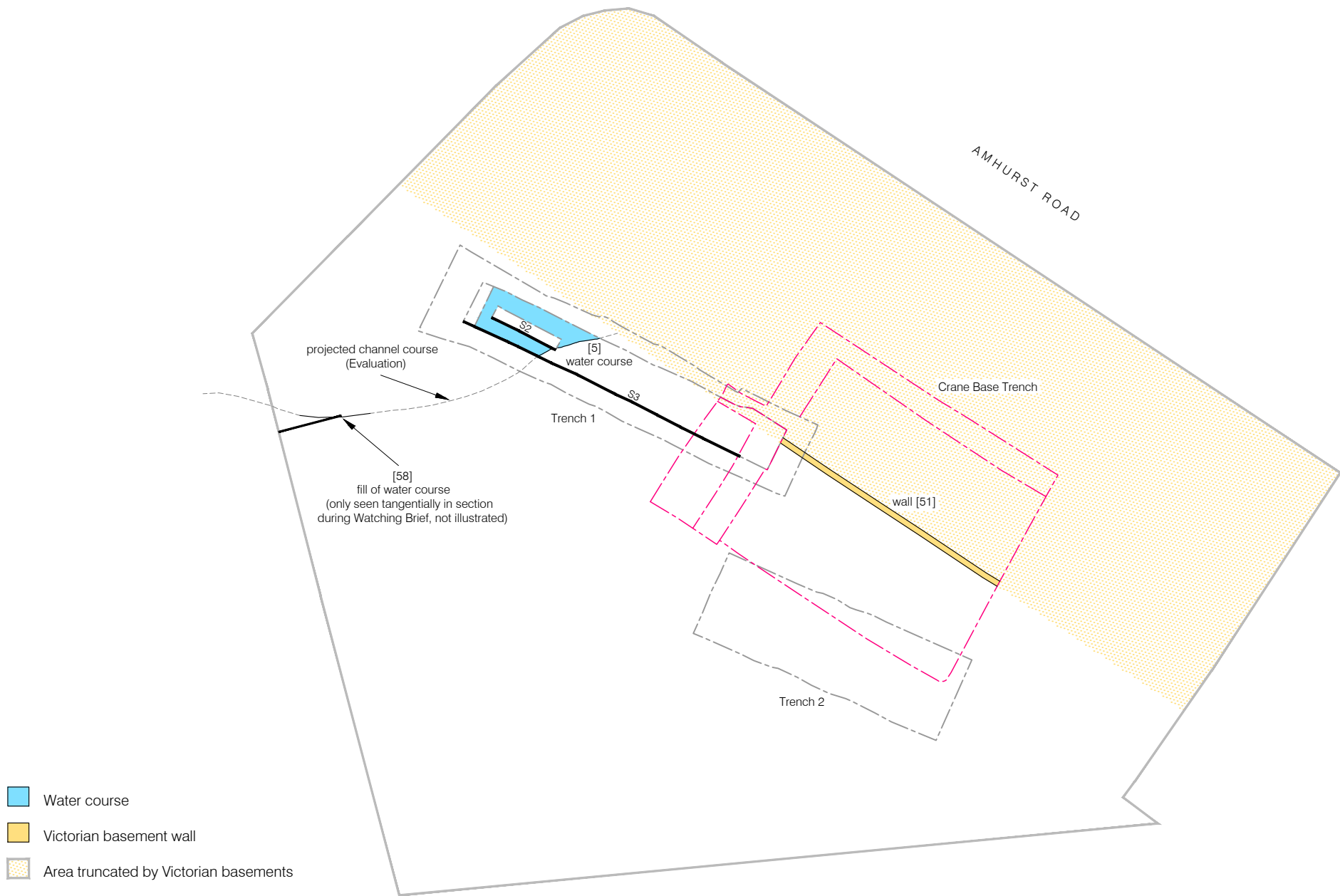
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 03/10/12 MR

Figure 1
 Site Location
 1:12,500 at A4



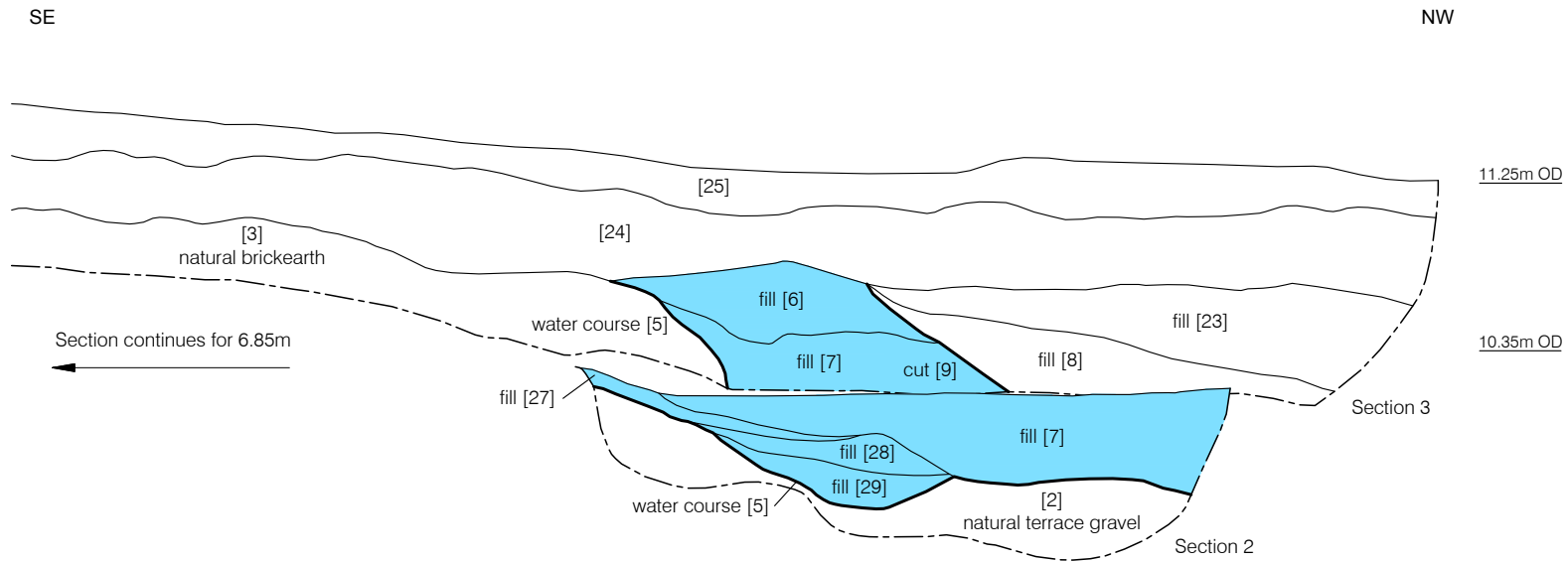
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Figure 2
 Trench Locations & Area of Watching Brief
 1:500 at A4



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Figure 3
Plan of features
1:250 at A4



Sections 2 & 3
Trench 1
Northeast Facing



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Figure 4
Section through water course
1:40 at A4

APPENDIX 1: PLATES



Plate 1: Palaeochannel Exposed during Watching Brief, Looking South



Plate 2: Basement Exposed during watching Brief, Looking South-West

APPENDIX 2: CONTEXT INDEX

Watching Brief contexts were started from 50 to ensure isolation from the previous evaluation work.

Context No	Trench	Phase	Plan	Section	Type	Description
50	W/B	6			Fill	Modern basement fill
51	W/B	5			Masonry	Rear wall to terrace
52	W/B	4			Layer	Horticultural soil
53	W/B	4			Layer	Horticultural soil – below [52]
54	W/B	5			Cut	Construction cut for wall [51]
55	W/B	2			Layer	Sub-soil above brickearth
56	W/B	1			Layer	Natural brickearth
57	W/B	1			Layer	Terrace gravel
58	W/B	2			Fill	Fluvial fill of channel
59	W/B	3			Fill	Poss deliberate filling in of channel
60	W/B	1			Layer	Natural brickearth
61	W/B	3			Layer	Silty sand overlying channel

APPENDIX 3: THE CERAMIC BUILDING MATERIAL

By Kevin Hayward, Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited

A small assemblage of ceramic building material was recovered during a watching brief at Amhurst Road (see Table 1). The building material was examined using the London system of classification with a fabric number allocated to each object. The application of a 1kg masons hammer and sharp chisel to each example ensured that a small fresh fabric surface was exposed. The fabric was examined at x20 magnification using a long arm stereomicroscope or hand lens (Gowland x10).

Context	Fabric code	Description	No	Wt (g)	Date	Suggested spot date
58	3046	Early post medieval brick	1	120	1180-1800	1600-1800
	2271	Abraded medieval peg tile no glaze	1	28058		
	2276	Post medieval peg tile	2			

Table 1 Ceramic building material [58]

Most of this ceramic building material is in a rather worn condition indicating some post-depositional movement. The fabric types represented are very common for London and their only value here has been as a dating tool. No further work is recommended on their fabric or form.

APPENDIX 4: GEOARCHAEOLOGICAL REPORT

By Lisa Snape, Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited

Introduction

This report summarises the geoarchaeological findings of a palaeochannel indentified in Trench 2 during the evaluation of land at 7-19 Amhurst Road, London Borough of Hackney.

Aims and Objectives

- 1) Provide an assessment and interpretation of the likely mode of disposition of sedimentary units associated with the palaeochannel in Trench 1.
- 2) Determine the environmental significance of sedimentary units associated with the palaeochannel, and where necessary, apply appropriate sampling strategies.

Methodology

A sondage (3.30m x c. 0.50m x c. 1.0m deep) was machine excavated through the palaeochannel to expose a complete sequence of the channel fills through its truncation interface with the deposits through which it cut. The sedimentary sequence was logged using standardised sedimentological terminology following (Jones et al., 1999). Descriptions included boundary types, coarse components and sediment colour recorded using standard Munsell colour charts.

Results

Depth OD (m)	Thickness (maximum) (cm/m)	Stratigraphy	Context	Description
10.13	0.47	Lower alluvium	7	GLE5/1 greenish grey. Compact. Silty clay (20:80%) Occasional shell inclusions (<5% frequency)
Sharp boundary				
9.90	0.08	Coarse fluvial sands and gravels	27	5YR4/6 Yellowish red. Loose. Sand. Poorly sorted. Gravel ranged from angular to rounded in shape (1-4cm in size). Fe mottling present.
Sharp boundary				
9.92	0.20	Fine fluvial sands and gravels	28	GLE5/1 Greenish grey. Sandy silt (60:40%). Moderately sorted. Frequent pebble inclusions. Sub-rounded pebble inclusions (20%), degraded wood/twigs (5% frequency).
Sharp boundary				
9.72	0.19	Fluvial sands	29	10YR5/3 Brown. Spongy. Sand. Well sorted. Occasional pebble inclusions (<5%) 1cm in size.

Depth OD (m)	Thickness (maximum) (cm/m)	Stratigraphy	Context	Description
Sharp boundary				
9.68	0.43	Terrace gravels	2	10YR4/4 Dark yellowish brown. Sand. Moderately sorted. Loose. Sub-rounded gravel inclusions (1-2cm in size) 45% frequency.

Interpretation

The sequence provides a small window of evidence into the history of the palaeochannel which cut through the site. As the channel meandered through the area, the terraces below were incised as a result of strong fluvial activity which effected the down cutting of the gravels. Over time, fluvial sands [29], fine fluvial sands and gravels [28] and coarse fluvial sands and gravels [27] were deposited. These subtle changes in texture and composition illustrates that the river changed from low to high fluvial energies, with the deposition of coarse sands and gravels [27] towards the southwest and to the north [1] (not seen in section). Subsequent deposition of coarse sands and gravels on the inside of a bend appeared to slope up on one flank of the channel to be exposed at the bottom of the trench. This channel was later infilled with lower [7] and upper [6] alluvium. The lower silty clay alluvium containing occasional shell fragments shows a return to lower fluvial energies. Over time, during the medieval period, the river was no longer active and the land began to stabilise resulting in the build-up of organic material [6].

Discussion and Recommendations

Unfortunately no column samples could be obtained from the palaeochannel sequence due to the unstable sides of the sondage and inflowing water. A detailed sedimentary description of the sequence was sufficient to make a basic interpretation of the channel formation process. The evidence shows a typical meandering river which may have formed at any point between the Pleistocene up unto the Medieval period. No dating evidence (artefacts or ecofacts) was obtained from the lower channel sequence and so there are insufficient data to understand the rate of sedimentation in the channel or when its formation started. Two bulk samples <1> [6] and <2> [7] were taken from the upper and lower alluvium, however no further work is recommended.

APPENDIX 5: OASIS REPORT

OASIS ID: preconst1-169022

Project details	
Project name	7-19 Amhurst Road: An Archaeological Watching Brief
Short description of the project	The project consisted of an archaeological watching brief that followed an evaluation of the site. Archaeological evidence was totally absent for the prehistoric and Roman periods and indicates that during the medieval and post-medieval periods the site was open ground, although it may have been used for agricultural or horticultural purposes. In the north-west of the site the course of an in-filled water channel was exposed, that probably represented a stream active in the later medieval period. The stream appears to have completely silted up by the early 17th century. The site appeared to have remained largely undeveloped until the late 19th century when a row of terraced housing was built fronting onto Amhurst Road.
Project dates	Start: 19-08-2013 End: 05-11-2013
Previous/future work	Yes / No
Any associated project reference codes	preconst1-134936 - OASIS form ID
Any associated project reference codes	AMH12 - Sitecode
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	None
Current Land use	Vacant Land 1 - Vacant land previously developed
Monument type	OPEN FIELD Medieval
Monument type	OPEN FIELD Post Medieval
Monument type	PALAEOCHANNEL Medieval
Significant Finds	TILE Post Medieval
Significant Finds	CBM Post Medieval
Investigation type	"Watching Brief"
Prompt	National Planning Policy Framework - NPPF
Project location	
Country	England
Site location	GREATER LONDON HACKNEY HACKNEY 7-19 Amhurst Road
Postcode	E8 1LL
Study area	1354.00 Square metres
Site coordinates	TQ 34881 84952 51.5468240016 -0.0545600925265 51 32 48 N 000 03 16 W Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 10.40m Max: 10.71m
Project creators	
Name of Organisation	Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited
Project brief originator	Adam Single
Project design originator	Chris Mayo
Project director/manager	Chris Mayo
Project supervisor	Alistair Douglas
Type of sponsor/funding body	Commercial Developer
Name of sponsor/funding body	AngloHolt Construction Limited
Project archives	
Physical Archive recipient	LAARC
Physical Contents	"Ceramics"
Digital Archive	LAARC

recipient
Digital Contents "Stratigraphic"
Digital Media available "Images raster / digital photography"
Paper Archive recipient LAARC
Paper Contents "Stratigraphic"
Paper Media available "Context sheet", "Plan"

Project bibliography 1

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title 7-19 Amhurst Road, Hackney E8 1LL: Assessment of an Archaeological Watching Brief
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Entered on 20 January 2014

PCA

PCA SOUTH

UNIT 54
BROCKLEY CROSS BUSINESS CENTRE
96 ENDWELL ROAD
BROCKLEY
LONDON SE4 2PD
TEL: 020 7732 3925 / 020 7639 9091
FAX: 020 7639 9588
EMAIL: info@pre-construct.com

PCA NORTH

UNIT 19A
TURSDALE BUSINESS PARK
DURHAM DH6 5PG
TEL: 0191 377 1111
FAX: 0191 377 0101
EMAIL: info.north@pre-construct.com

PCA CENTRAL

7 GRANTA TERRACE
STAPLEFORD
CAMBRIDGESHIRE CB22 5DL
TEL: 01223 845 522
FAX: 01223 845 522
EMAIL: info.central@pre-construct.com

PCA WEST

BLOCK 4
CHILCOMB HOUSE
CHILCOMB LANE
WINCHESTER
HAMPSHIRE SO23 8RB
TEL: 01962 849 549
EMAIL: info.west@pre-construct.com

PCA MIDLANDS

17-19 KETTERING RD
LITTLE BOWDEN
MARKET HARBOROUGH
LEICESTERSHIRE LE16 8AN
TEL: 01858 468 333
EMAIL: info.midlands@pre-construct.com

