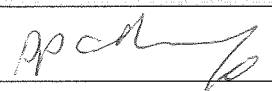



DOCUMENT VERIFICATION

59-63 BERMONDSEY STREET  
LONDON BOROUGH OF SOUTHWARK

WATCHING BRIEF

Quality Control

|                                   |                 |  |             |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------|--|-------------|
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**An Archaeological Watching Brief at 59-63 Bermondsey Street, London Borough of Southwark, SE1**

**Site Code: BSZ 06**

**Central National Grid Reference: TQ 3322 7984**

**Written and Researched by Anies Hassan  
Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited, July 2006**

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July 2006**

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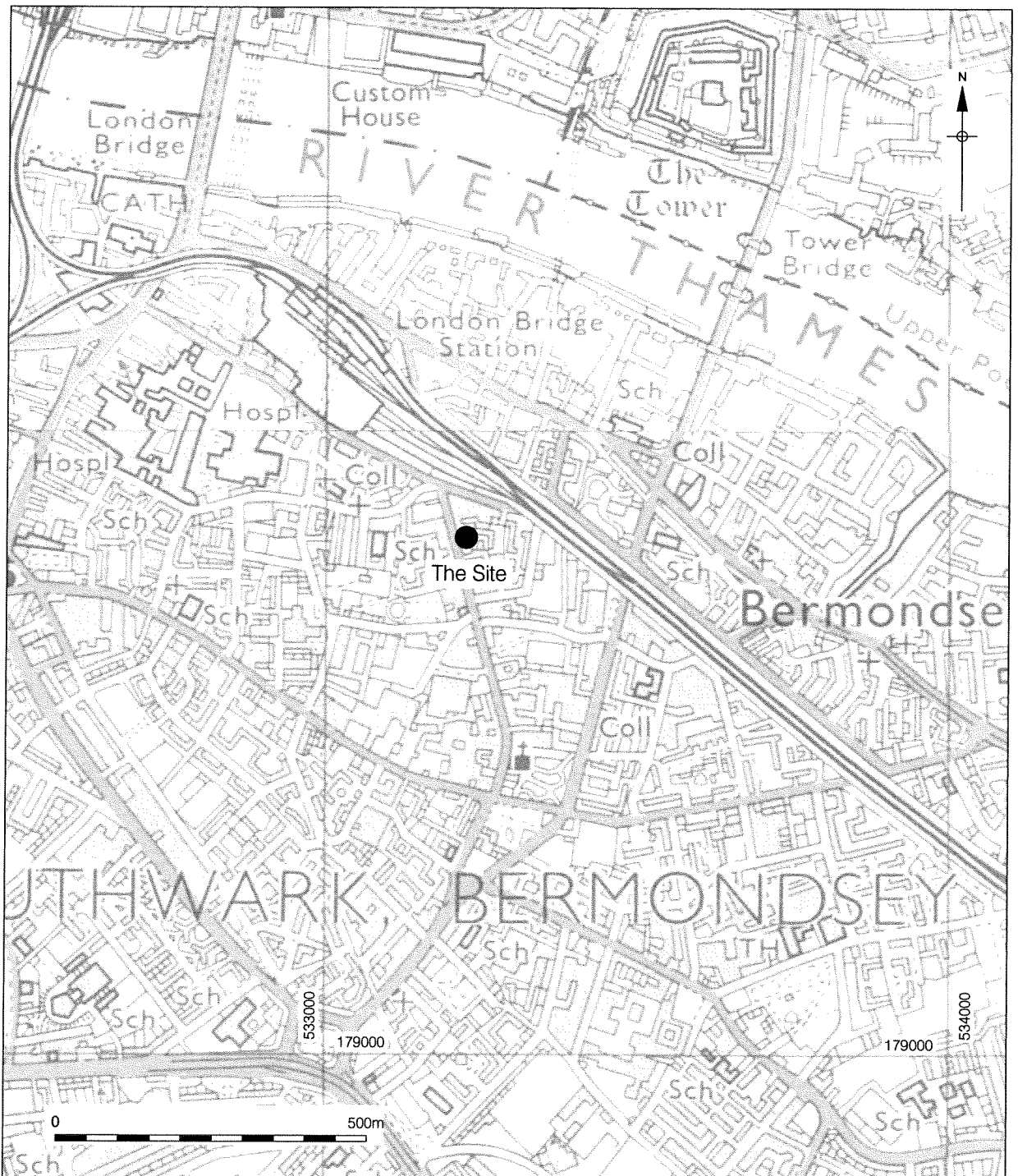
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## **1 ABSTRACT**

- 1.1 This report details the results of an archaeological watching brief commissioned by CgMs consulting at 59 – 63 Bermondsey Street, London, SE1 (Figure 1). The site is centred on National Grid Reference TQ 3322 7984. The watching brief monitored the excavation of ground beam and service trenches for a new development to the rear of 59 - 63 Bermondsey Street, providing coverage across the site. Two areas of deep excavation around failed piles were also monitored. The watching brief took place between the 27<sup>th</sup> of March and 11<sup>th</sup> of July 2006 and was supervised by Anies Hassan of Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd.
  
- 1.2 The study area has undergone much redevelopment documented from 1739 but most recently a police station and pub. The watching brief revealed alluvial clay overlain by late 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century deposits and remnants of brick walls.

## **2 INTRODUCTION**

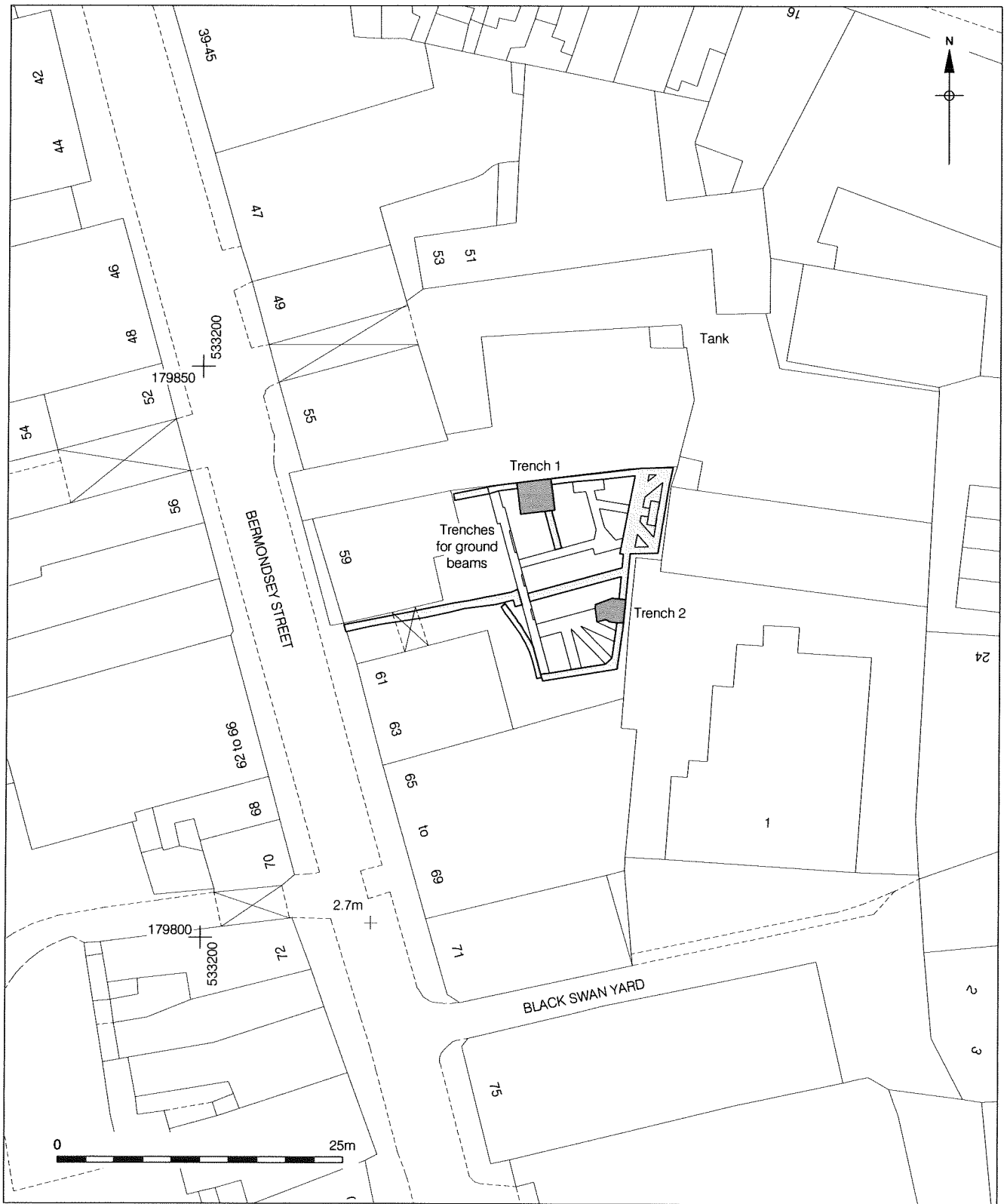
- 2.1 An archaeological watching brief was conducted by Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd on land to the rear of 59 – 63 Bermondsey Street, London, SE1 between the 27<sup>th</sup> of March and 11<sup>th</sup> July 2006 (Figure 1). The work was commissioned by CgMs Consulting, prior to the development. It was supervised by the author, project managed by Chris Mayo, monitored by Jonathan Smith of Southwark Council and followed a specification by CgMs in 2006 (Meager 2005b).
- 2.2 The site is bordered by Bermondsey Street to the west, buildings fronting onto Bermondsey Street to the north and south, and properties in White's Grounds Estate to the east (Figure 2).
- 2.3 The watching brief monitored the excavation of ground beam trenches, services trenches and two areas to investigate failed piles. These trenches provided coverage in all directions across the site.
- 2.4 The completed archive comprising written and drawn records will be deposited at the Museum of London under the site code BSZ 06.



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Figure 1  
Site Location  
1:20,000



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- Trenches excavated under archaeological supervision
- Deep trenches excavated under archaeological supervision

Figure 2  
Trench Location  
1:500

### **3 GEOLOGICAL, ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The site lies on geological deposits of London clay forming the London Basin and further studies show the site to be lying over alluvium (Meager 2005a).
- 3.2 Five trial pits and one borehole executed at the study site in November 2004 revealed only made ground to a depth of 2.2m (c. 0.86m OD) in the trenches and to a depth of 4.7m in the borehole with organic material from 3.0–4.7m BGL. These deposits contained ash, clinker, brick, rotting wood, concrete fragments and shell. The borehole, to the east of the study area, revealed sand and gravel, to a depth of 10.2m, overlying clay (Meager 2005a).
- 3.3 Bermondsey Street was originally built as a causeway connecting the settlement around Borough with Bermondsey Abbey during the medieval period.
- 3.4 Prior to the construction of the causeway there seems to have been a little prehistoric activity around Bermondsey Street. This is also true during the Roman and Anglo-Saxon periods (Meager 2005a).
- 3.5 Activity increased in this area upon the construction of the causeway where the earliest developments date to the late twelfth century along the frontages of what became Bermondsey Street and Long Lane (connecting Bermondsey Abbey to the Thames to the north, via Bermondsey street, and Borough High Street to the west, via Long Lane). Medieval remains found within a 200m radius of the site included walls, drains, ditches and tanning pits (Meager 2005a).
- 3.6 The development of Bermondsey Street accelerated during the post medieval period, evidenced by cartographic sources dating from 1739-45 onwards (Meager 2005a).
- 3.7 The current ground surface is level at a height of approximately 3.06m OD.



## **4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY**

- 4.1 As per the 'Specification for an Archaeological Monitoring Exercise: 59 – 63 Bermondsey Street, London SE1' (Meager 2005b), ground works at the site were monitored to ensure that any archaeological remains were recorded and interpreted. Excavation was conducted by mechanical digger fitted with a toothless ditching bucket.
- 4.2 All materials excavated were observed and stratigraphic changes and features were recorded using the 'single context' method.
- 4.3 Trenches 1 and 2, to investigate failed piles, were monitored; the former was 3.0m by 2.8m, c.2.5m deep and located at the northern edge of the site. The latter was 2.0m by 2.0m, c.2.3m deep and located towards the southwest corner (Figure 2). Over 50% of the intended ground beam and service trenches were monitored; generally speaking these trenches were c. 1m wide and between 0.8m and 2.0m deep. Following their completion, the watching brief was ceased having recorded impact across the site.
- 4.4 Site levels were calculated from the ground floor level of the development. This had a value of 3.06m OD.

## **5 ARCHAEOLOGICAL SEQUENCE**

### **5.1 Phase 1: 'Natural' Deposits**

5.1.1 Trench 1, at the central northern edge of the site and measuring 3.0m by 2.8m, revealed blue-grey alluvial clay [103] at a level of c.1m OD and continuing to the base of the trench at c. 0.56m OD. The same deposit was also found in Trench 2 at the same height.

### **5.2 Phase 2: 19<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> Century Activity**

5.2.1 All trenches were found to contain substantial layers of made ground, seen in Trenches 1 and 2 to seal the alluvium [103]. Two distinct deposits were identified: [101] was a dark brown sand-clay-silt with frequent inclusions and 19<sup>th</sup> century ceramic; [102], sealing [101], was a grey brown clay-sand-silt with frequent inclusions and 19<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> century detritus. Both layers had a maximum combined thickness of 1.96m as recorded in Trenches 1 and 2, at an upper height of c. 2.86 m OD. While layer [101] was seen across the site, [102] was concentrated in the southeastern area.

5.2.2 In a section of a north-south service trench in the southwest corner of the site, two sections of deeply-frogged stock brick wall were seen in section. These 19<sup>th</sup> or 20<sup>th</sup> century walls represent remains of one of the previous structures on site, for example the police station as shown on an 1872 OS map or its later manifestation as a public house (Meager 2005a).

5.2.3 All deposits and remains on site were sealed beneath the concrete slab forming the rear surface to the site. It was 0.1m thick at an upper height of c. 3.06m OD.

## **6 INTERPRETATION AND CONCLUSIONS**

- 6.1 The watching brief recorded alluvial clay in the north and southeast of the site. This deposit may represent the filling of one of Southwark's many abraded stream channels or tributaries of the Thames, or the result of seasonal flooding. Similar evidence has been found other sites on Bermondsey Street, for example at 156 – 170 where medieval alluvial clay was recorded at an upper height of 0.18m OD (Keith-Lucas 2003), at 171 – 173 where Early Iron Age to medieval alluvial silt was recorded at an upper height of 0.29m OD (Darton 2002) and at 151 – 153 where 17<sup>th</sup> century alluvial clay was recorded at an upper height of 0.35m OD (Wooldridge 2000).
- 6.2 No deposits, features or artefacts dating from before the 19<sup>th</sup> century were observed at the site.
- 6.3 Two deposits of made ground were recorded across the site, indicating that it had previously undergone an extensive 'cut-and-fill' exercise. It is possible that this may be consistent with the intensive development of the site from the 19<sup>th</sup> century onwards. Two small sections of wall, of similar date, were recorded and relate to the same development process.

## **7 BIBLIOGRAPHY**

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Meager, R. 2005a 'Archaeological Desk Based Assessment: 59 – 63 Bermondsey Street, London SE1', unpublished report for CgMs Consulting

Meager, R. 2005b 'Specification for an Archaeological Monitoring Exercise: 59 – 63 Bermondsey Street, London SE1', unpublished report for CgMs Consulting

Wooldridge, K. 2000 'An Archaeological Excavation at 151 – 153 Bermondsey Street, SE1, London Borough of Southwark', unpublished report for Pre-Construct Archaeology

## **8 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

- 8.1 Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited would like to thank Richard Meager of CgMs Consulting for commissioning the work on behalf of Donald Halstead Associates, who kindly funded it. Thanks also to Jonathan Smith of Southwark Council for monitoring the project.
- 8.2 The author would like to thank David Hall for on site assistance, Chris Mayo for project management and editing, and Adrian Nash for the illustrations.

## **APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT INDEX**

| <b>Context No.</b> | <b>Type</b> | <b>Description</b>                    |
|--------------------|-------------|---------------------------------------|
| 100                | Deposit     | Modern Concrete                       |
| 101                | Deposit     | 19 <sup>th</sup> century made-ground  |
| 102                | Deposit     | 19 <sup>th</sup> century made-ground  |
| 103                | Deposit     | Alluvial clay deposit                 |
| 104                | Masonry     | 19 <sup>th</sup> century wall remnant |
| 105                | Masonry     | 19 <sup>th</sup> century wall remnant |

## APPENDIX 2: OASIS REPORT FORM

**OASIS ID: preconst1-16984**

### Project details

|  |  |
|--|--|
| Project name                           | An Archaeological Watching Brief at 59-63 Bermondsey Street, London Borough of Southwark, SE1  |
| Short description of the project       | The site is centred on National Grid Reference TQ 3322 7984. The watching brief monitored the excavation of ground beam and service trenches for a new development to the rear of 59 - 63 Bermondsey Street, providing coverage across the site. Two areas of deep excavation around failed piles were also monitored. The watching brief took place between the 27th of March and 11th of July 2006 and was supervised by Anies Hassan of Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd. The watching brief revealed alluvial clay overlain by late 19th and 20th century deposits and remnants of brick walls. |
| Project dates                          | Start: 27-03-2006 End: 11-07-2006  |
| Previous/future work                   | No / No  |
| Any associated project reference codes | BSZ06 - Sitecode   |
| Type of project                        | Field evaluation   |
| Site status                            | None   |
| Current Land use                       | Other 15 - Other   |
| Methods & techniques                   | 'Targeted Trenches', 'Visual Inspection'   |
| Development type                       | Urban commercial (e.g. offices, shops, banks, etc.)  |
| Prompt                                 | Planning condition   |
| Position in the planning process       | After full determination (eg. As a condition)  |

### Project location

|                         |  |
|-------------------------|--|
| Country                 | England  |
| Site location           | GREATER LONDON SOUTHWARK BERMONDSEY ROTHERHITHE AND SOUTHWARK 59 – 63 Bermondsey Street, London, SE1 |
| Postcode                | SE1  |
| Study area              | 350.00 Square metres   |
| National grid reference | TQ 3322 7984 Point   |
| Height OD               | Min: 1.00m Max: 1.00m  |

### Project creators

|                          |                               |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Name of Organisation     | Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd |
| Project brief originator | CgMs Consulting               |

|                               |   |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Project design originator     | Richard Meager  |
| Project director/manager      | Tim Bradley / Chris Mayo  |
| Project supervisor            | Anies Hassan  |
| Sponsor or funding body       | Donald Halstead Associates  |
| Project archives              |   |
| Physical Archive Exists?      | No  |
| Digital Archive recipient     | LAARC   |
| Digital Media available       | 'Images raster','Spreadsheets','Text'   |
| Paper Archive recipient       | LAARC   |
| Paper Media available         | 'Context sheet','Correspondence','Drawing','Photograph','Plan','Section'                      |
| Project bibliography 1        |   |
| Publication type              | Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)   |
| Title                         | An Archaeological Watching Brief at 59-63 Bermondsey Street, London Borough of Southwark, SE1 |
| Author(s)/Editor(s)           | Hassan, A   |
| Date                          | 2006  |
| Issuer or publisher           | Pre-Construct Archaeology   |
| Place of issue or publication | London  |
| Description                   | A4 document   |
| Entered by                    | Archivist (archive@pre-construct.com)   |
| Entered on                    | 1 August 2006   |