

An Archaeological Evaluation on Land at Crown Street Motors, Dagenham

Site Code: RNM13

Central National Grid Reference: TQ 5020 8466

Planning Reference: 13/0510/FUL

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Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited, February 2014**

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February 2014**

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1 ABSTRACT

- 1.1 An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited between the 6th November 2013 and 4th February 2014 on Land at Crown Street Motors, Dagenham.
- 1.2 The work was preceded by a watching brief on eight geotechnical test pits conducted on the western area of the site, which revealed significant thicknesses of heavily contaminated made ground in this area of the site. This was followed up by a trial trench evaluation across the eastern half of the site. The aim of the evaluation was to evaluate the archaeological potential of the site, to determine the presence or absence of any surviving archaeology and establish the impact of the proposed development on the archaeological resource.
- 1.3 A sequence of subsoil overlying the natural deposits was recorded across the site with no archaeological features or finds being observed during the exercise.

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited in two phases between the 6th November 2013 and 4th February 2014 at Crown Street, Dagenham (Fig. 1). The project was designed and managed by Tim Bradley of Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited and was commissioned by CgMs Consulting on behalf of Weston Homes. The site was supervised by Paw Jorgenson and Guy Seddon.
- 2.2 An initial geotechnical watching brief was conducted on western side of the site, and this was followed by an archaeological evaluation on the eastern side, which was supervised by Paw Jorgensen and the author. The evaluation was undertaken in two phases to coordinate with the demolition programme for the site. Due to the presence of buried tanks in the north western area of the site, proposed evaluation Trench 3 was subdivided into two trenches in order to in order to achieve the agreed evaluation site coverage.
- 2.3 The evaluation was conducted following the demolition of the previous car dealership buildings with attached garage workshops and in advance of the construction of terraced housing and a block of flats with associated access, gardens and car parking.
- 2.4 The site is bounded by Crown Street to the south, Rainham Road South to the east, Sandown Avenue to the north and Plumtree Close to the west. It was centred on National Grid Reference TQ 5020 8466.

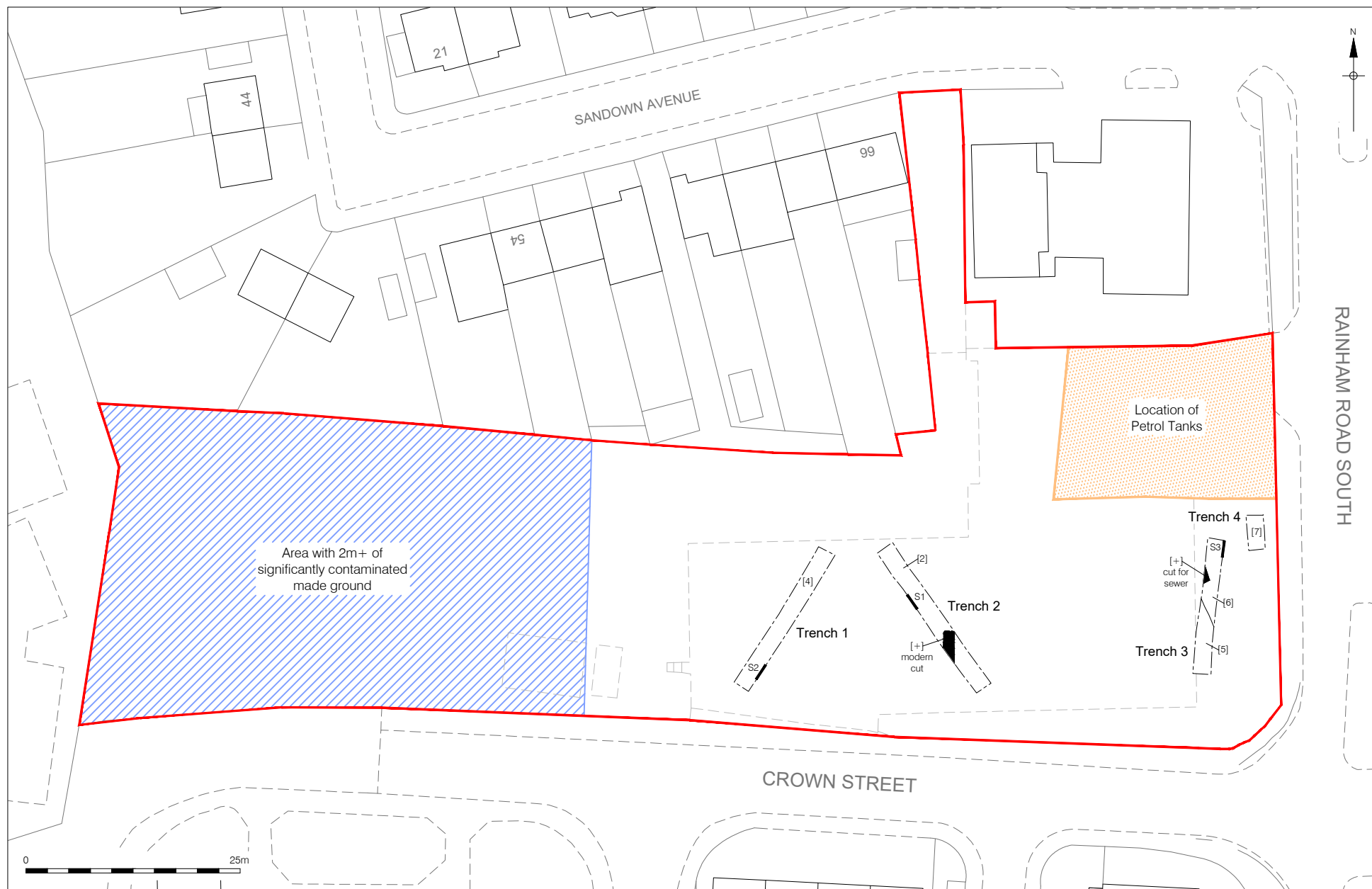


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11/02/14 MR

Figure 1
Site Location
1:20,000 at A4



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Figure 2
Detailed Site and Trench Location showing modern features
1:625 at A4

3 METHODOLOGY

- 3.1 The evaluation was conducted in accordance with the approved Written Scheme of Investigation prepared by Tim Bradley of Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited. The fieldwork was designed to assess the presence or absence of significant archaeological remains, which may require further investigation.
- 3.2 The preceding watching brief during the excavation of eight geotechnical pits on the western half of the site revealed significant deposits (in excess of 2m) of heavily contaminated modern made ground in this area. However, across the eastern side natural terrace deposits were identified approximately 1m below ground level, and this area was therefore the focus of the trial trench evaluation.
- 3.3 The agreed scope of the evaluation was for excavation of three trenches, each measuring 20m x 1.8m, positioned to provide even spatial coverage of the eastern side of the site. Due to the presence of subterranean petrol tanks in the north western area of the site, the trench layout was reconfigured slightly, with Trench 3 being split to retain the required sample area.
- 3.4 A mechanical excavator fitted with a 1.8m wide flat ditching bucket was used under archaeological supervision to remove non-archaeological soils down to the highest archaeological horizon or natural level. In total four archaeological evaluation trenches were opened across the site (Figure 2).
- 3.5 Following the opening of the trenches they were cleaned and investigated by hand. Investigation was intended to identifying the extent and nature of the deposits and to recover dating evidence. The deposits were assigned individual context numbers. The trenches were also allowed time for features to weather out.
- 3.6 Heights above Ordnance Datum were established on site by use of GPS.
- 3.7 Upon the completion of the archaeological work the trenches were backfilled under archaeological supervision.
- 3.8 The completed archive, including all written, drawn and photographic records, will be deposited with the London Archaeological Archive and Research Centre under the Site Code RNM13.

4 PLANNING BACKGROUND

- 4.1 The planning background is laid out in detail in the site specific Desk-Based Assessment produced by CgMs Consulting. A summary is outlined below.

DEVELOPMENT PLAN FRAMEWORK

- 4.2 In March 2012, the government published the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which replaces national policy relating to heritage and archaeology (PPS5: Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment). The Practice Guide issued in support of PPS5 is still valid however, and English Heritage has provided documentation translating former PPS5 policy into its NPPF counterpart.

- 4.3 Section 12 of the NPPF, entitled *Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment* provides guidance for planning authorities, property owners, developers and others on the conservation and investigation of heritage assets. Overall, the objectives of Section 12 of the NPPF can be summarised as seeking the:

- Delivery of sustainable development
- Understanding the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits brought by the conservation of the historic environment
- Conservation of England's heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, and
- Recognition of the contribution that heritage assets make to our understanding of the past.

- 4.5 In considering any planning application for development, the planning authority will be mindful of the framework set by government policy, in this instance the NPPF, by current Development Plan Policy and by other material considerations.

- 4.6 The relevant Strategic Plan framework is provided by the London Plan published 22 July 2011. Policy relevant to archaeology at the site includes:

POLICY 7.8 HERITAGE ASSETS AND ARCHAEOLOGY

STRATEGIC

A. LONDON'S HERITAGE ASSETS AND HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT, INCLUDING LISTED BUILDINGS, REGISTERED HISTORIC PARKS AND GARDENS AND OTHER NATURAL AND HISTORIC LANDSCAPES, CONSERVATION AREAS, WORLD HERITAGE SITES, REGISTERED BATTLEFIELDS, SCHEDULED MONUMENTS, ARCHAEOLOGICAL REMAINS AND MEMORIALS SHOULD BE IDENTIFIED, SO THAT THE DESIRABILITY OF SUSTAINING AND ENHANCING THEIR SIGNIFICANCE AND OF

UTILISING THEIR POSITIVE ROLE IN PLACE SHAPING CAN BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT.

- B. DEVELOPMENT SHOULD INCORPORATE MEASURES THAT IDENTIFY, RECORD, INTERPRET, PROTECT AND, WHERE APPROPRIATE, PRESENT THE SITE'S ARCHAEOLOGY.**

PLANNING DECISIONS

- C. DEVELOPMENT SHOULD IDENTIFY, VALUE, CONSERVE, RESTORE, RE-USE AND INCORPORATE HERITAGE ASSETS, WHERE APPROPRIATE.**
- D. DEVELOPMENT AFFECTING HERITAGE ASSETS AND THEIR SETTINGS SHOULD CONSERVE THEIR SIGNIFICANCE, BY BEING SYMPATHETIC TO THEIR FORM, SCALE, MATERIALS AND ARCHITECTURAL DETAIL.**
- E. NEW DEVELOPMENT SHOULD MAKE PROVISION FOR THE PROTECTION OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES, LANDSCAPES AND SIGNIFICANT MEMORIALS. THE PHYSICAL ASSETS SHOULD, WHERE POSSIBLE, BE MADE AVAILABLE TO THE PUBLIC ON-SITE. WHERE THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSET OR MEMORIAL CANNOT BE PRESERVED OR MANAGED ON-SITE, PROVISION MUST BE MADE FOR THE INVESTIGATION, UNDERSTANDING, RECORDING, DISSEMINATION AND ARCHIVING OF THAT ASSET.**

- 4.7 In terms of designated heritage assets no Scheduled Ancient Monuments, Historic Battlefields or Historic Wreck sites have been identified within a 1km zone around the study site. The site does not lie within an Area of Archaeological Significance nor are there any listed buildings on the site.

5 GEOLOGICAL AND TOPOGRAPHICAL BACKGROUND

5.1 Geology

- 5.1.1 The British Geological Survey Sheet 257 (Romford: 1996) shows the site to lie within an area of Taplow Gravels, overlying London Clay.

5.2 Topography

- 5.2.1 The site has an overall fall in level from east to west from a height of 7.72m AOD by Rainham Road South to 4.63m AOD on the western edge. This is broken into two broadly level areas. The east end of the site sits at around 7.50m AOD with a rapid drop in height at the northern junction with Sandown Avenue where a level of 5.63m AOD is recorded. There is also a rapid drop in level in the centre of the site to c.5.70m AOD and the west end of the site is level but with a gentle downward gradient westwards. At the extreme western edge of the site there is also a sharp drop towards the former course of the Wantz Stream.
- 5.2.2 The nearest watercourse is the Wantz Stream which is culverted immediately to the west of the site and re-emerges above ground c.400m south of the site.

6 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

6.1 The archaeological background of the site is laid out in detail in the Desk-Based Assessment produced by CgMs Consulting. A summary of that information is reproduced below.

6.2 Prehistoric

6.2.1 Elsewhere in the Thames Valley, Taplow gravels, which underlie the site, have produced Palaeolithic flint artefacts. Dagenham has also produced a number of Palaeolithic implements.

6.2.2 Archaeological excavations at a site called Beam Washlands, on the eastern bank of the Wantz Stream, c.900m south of the study site, recorded two concentrations of early Mesolithic worked flint. The worked flint was recovered from the interface between a fluvial deposit and a layer of peat that formed from the late Mesolithic period onwards. A number of middle to late Iron Age cremations were also recorded.

6.2.3 Archaeological investigations in the vicinity of the site have produced evidence of late pre-historic activity. Dagenham Park Community School c.1km south-west of the study site recorded a pit containing a fragment of early Neolithic pottery. The same site also produced a number of ditches, pits and postholes along with a relict land surface and evidence of possible salt production dating to the late Bronze Age/ early Iron Age has been recorded.

6.2.4 Archaeological investigations undertaken on Church Street, c.300m south-west of the site, recorded a number of undated features and a ditch containing a single sherd of Bronze Age pottery. A pit containing late Bronze Age/ early Iron Age pottery was found at Blackborne Road c.800m west of the study site along with another undated pit. Another small pit containing two sherds of late Bronze Age/ early Iron Age pottery was found at allotments on Reede Road, c.600m north-west of the site.

6.2.5 Archaeological investigations on the north side of Rainham Road South c.400m southeast of the study site, recorded two north-south aligned ditches and several other features including a circular pit containing Middle Iron Age pottery (HER Ref. MLO99276 at TQ 50475 84371). In addition, the investigations also recorded a number of undated shallow pits and a posthole.

6.3 Roman

6.3.1 Excavations at the Beam Washlands site, c.900m south of the study site, recorded three phases of Roman activity. During the 1st phase (c. 100BC-130AD) the site was divided into two main functional areas, the north-west had a domestic and economic focus, with the south-east of the site being used more for agricultural purposes, with a cremation cemetery being located to the east. During the 2nd phase of activity (c.125-

240AD) pottery production developed within the north-western part of the site. The 3rd phase of activity (c.200-409AD) saw settlement and related activity shift to the south.

6.4 Anglo Saxon, Early Medieval and Medieval

- 6.4.1 The only Anglo-Saxon finds recorded in the area come from excavations at the Beam Washlands, in the form of a gully and pit.
- 6.4.2 Dagenham parish is referred to frequently during the Medieval period in documentary sources. Early settlement was focussed on Church Street and Crown Street (which was routed further south than its current location adjacent to the study site). The Church of St Peter & St Paul, c.200m south-west of the study site, was a Medieval foundation with 13th century fabric still extant in the chancel .
- 6.4.3 The HER records the discovery of Medieval features at a number of sites along Church Street and Crown Street between c.50-250m from the study site. These include a possible wheelwright's house, a 14th century cottage, ditches and quarry pits.
- 6.4.4 The site was clearly located close to the core of the Medieval settlement, but as development would have been focussed on the roads, the site itself is likely to have lain within gardens/agricultural land. The site can therefore be considered to have a moderate potential for evidence dating to the Medieval period, especially relating to land division and agricultural practice.

6.5 Post Medieval and Modern

- 6.5.1 The HER records continued activity focussed on Church Street and Crown Street, including at the possible wheelwright's house, the church as well as rubbish pits and yard surfaces.
- 6.5.2 A copy of a map of the Manor of Barking from 1653 shows Dagenham as a linear settlement focussed along Church Street and Crown Street. The site itself lay in fields behind the houses fronting Crown Street and alongside what is now Rainham Road South.
- 6.5.3 The 1841 Dagenham Tithe Map together with the associated Tithe Award gives greater detail. The Wantz stream forms the western boundary to the site. The site falls across a number of fields.
- 6.5.4 By the first edition Ordnance Survey in 1864, the westernmost field contained a C-shaped pond.
- 6.5.5 By 1936 the site had changed substantially. Most of the field boundaries had been removed and a T-shaped building had been erected at the east end along with two ranges of smaller units and two additional buildings. The pond had been connected to

the Wantz Stream. To the north of the site Sandown Avenue had been laid out and properties built along much of its length.

6.5.6 By 1961 a garage had been erected at the east end of the site with ancillary buildings behind it. The pond and connecting stream had been filled in.

6.5.7 In the late 1960s and 1970s buildings to the south of the study site were demolished, Crown Street was re-routed along the southern edge of the area and the garage had been extended to the west.

7 ARCHAEOLOGICAL DESCRIPTION

7.1 Trench 1

Phase 1: Natural

- 7.1.1 The earliest horizon encountered within this trench was natural sand [4] that formed the basal limit of excavation. This was composed of loosely compacted mid reddish brown sand and was located at a height of 6.09m OD at the northern end of the trench, falling to 5.94m OD to the south.

Phase 2: Post-Medieval

- 7.1.2 Overlying the natural deposits was a subsoil layer, [3] composed of a loosely compacted mid brown gravelly sand, 0.33m thick. This was overlain by 0.70m of modern made ground.

7.2 Trench 2

Phase 1: Natural

- 7.2.1 The natural sand [2] were the earliest horizon recorded within this trench. This deposit took the same form as [4] in Trench 1 and had a height of 6.54m OD at the southern end of the trench, falling to 6.32m OD in the north.

Phase 2: Post-Medieval

- 7.2.2 Sealing the natural sand was a layer of subsoil, [1], 0.34m thick. Although allocated a separate number, [1] was identical to context [3] in Trench 1. The subsoil was sealed by 0.40m of modern made ground.

7.3 Trench 3

Phase 1: Natural

- 7.3.1 The underlying natural sand exposed in Trench 3, [6], was the same sand as observed elsewhere on site and were observed at 6.94m OD.
- 7.3.2 Overlying Context [6], at the southern end of Trench 3, was a layer of light greyish brown silty sand [5] 1.30m thick.
- 7.3.3 Overlying Context [5] was 0.25m of modern made ground.

7.4 Trench 4

Phase 1: Natural

- 7.4.1 In Trench 4 the natural sands, [7], were observed at 6.69m OD and were directly sealed by 0.20m of modern made ground.



South West Facing Shot of Trench 1



South East Facing Shot of Trench 2



South Facing Shot of Trench 3



North Facing Shot of Trench 4

8 THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SEQUENCE

8.1 Phase 1: Natural

8.1.1 The natural reddish sand deposits that underlay the site were exposed in all of the trenches. Levels recorded at the surface of the sand ranged from 6.94m OD in Trench 3 falling to 5.94m OD in Trench 1, showing the fall of the natural topography westwards, into the valley created by the former course of the Wantz Stream.

8.1.2 Overlying the natural sand in Trench 3 was a sterile layer of light greyish brown silty sand, [5]. This variation in the natural stratum is likely to represent the silting up of a natural depression within the underlying sand.

8.2 Phase 2: Post-Medieval

8.2.1 In Trenches 1 & 2 the natural sands were overlain by subsoil, which is likely to represent an agricultural horizon formed prior to the development of the site in the 20th century - this was directly overlain by modern deposits.

8.2.2 The natural sand in Trenches 3 and 4 was directly sealed by modern deposits, with no subsoil being recorded. This is likely to reflect the naturally rising topography of the area, with the higher eastern area of the site being more significantly impacted by the modern development of the site.

9 INTERPRETATION AND CONCLUSIONS

9.1 The following research objectives were put forth in the Written Scheme of Investigation and these can now be addressed:

9.1.1 *To determine the natural topography of the site.*

The evaluation demonstrated that the natural topography of the site fell from a height of 6.94m OD in Trench 3 in the east of the site to 5.94m OD in Trench 1 at the west of the site towards the former course of the Wantz Stream.

9.1.2 *To establish the presence or absence of prehistoric activity, whether settled occupation or artefact scatters.*

No evidence of prehistoric activity was observed on the site.

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

No evidence of Roman activity was observed on the site.

9.1.4 *To establish the presence or absence of medieval activity on site.*

No evidence of medieval activity was observed on the site.

9.1.5 *To establish the presence or absence of post-medieval activity on site.*

The post-medieval activity was represented by the presence of a subsoil deposit likely to have been formed/reworked during the post-medieval period when the area of the site was principally occupied by agricultural land.

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

The only period of activity represented on the study site was post-medieval. The evidence for this period was a possibly developed subsoil horizon in Trenches 1 & 2, suggesting that the site lay in agricultural land through the post-medieval period.

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

The area of the site was not developed beyond that of agricultural landscape until the modern period. It is probable that during the construction of Crown Street Motors there was a certain amount of landscaping and terracing of the site, with removal of upper layers of topsoil and subsoil from the east, where the natural sands were recorded directly overlain by modern deposits. Despite the survival of subsoil across the centre of the site in the location of Trenches 1 and 2, no archaeological finds or features were recorded during the evaluation.

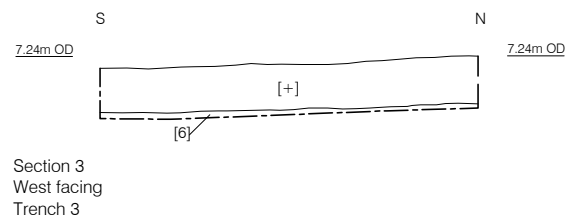
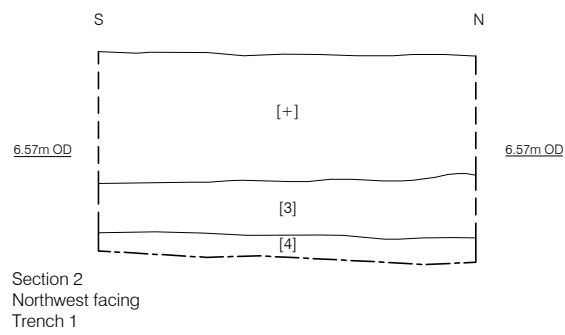
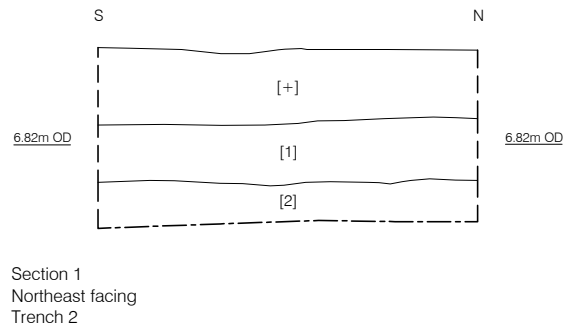


Figure 3
Sections 1 to 3
1:40 at A4

10 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- 10.1 Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited would like to thank Duncan Hawkins of CgMs Consulting for commissioning the work, and to the crew on site for their assistance. We would also like to thank Adam Single of English Heritage for monitoring the project.
- 10.2 The author would like to thank Richard Archer for his help in the field and the archaeological survey, Chris Cooper for organising the logistics, Mark Roughley for the illustrations and Tim Bradley for his project management and editing.

11 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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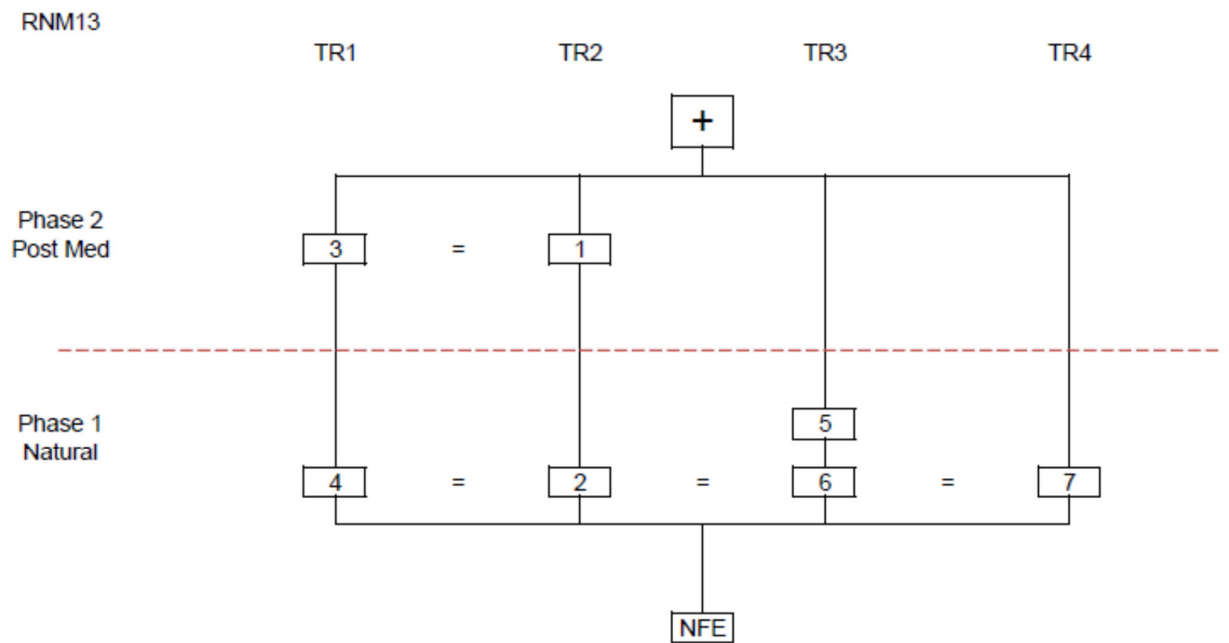
Bradley, T, 2013. Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Evaluation on Land at Crown Street Motors, Dagenham. Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited: Unpublished Report.

Butler, C, 2013. An Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment, Crown Street, Dagenham. CgMs Consulting: Unpublished Report

APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT INDEX

Site Code	Context No.	Trench	Plan	Section / Elevation	Type	Description	Date	Phase
RNM13	1	2	*	1	Layer	Subsoil	Post Med	2
RNM13	2	2	TR2	1	Layer	Natural Gravelly Sand	Natural	1
RNM13	3	1	*	2	Layer	Subsoil	Post Med	2
RNM13	4	1	TR1	2	Layer	Natural Gravelly Sand	Natural	1
RNM13	5	3	TR3	*	Layer	Natural Sand	Natural	1
RNM13	6	3	TR3	3	Layer	Natural Gravelly Sand	Natural	1
RNM13	7	4	TR4	*	Layer	Natural Gravelly Sand	Natural	1

APPENDIX 2: SITE MATRIX



APPENDIX 3: OASIS FORM

Project details

Project name	An Archaeological Evaluation on Land at Crown Street Motors, Dagenham
Short description of the project	An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited between the 6th November 2013 and 4th February 2014 at Crown Street Dagenham. A Watching Brief on eight geotechnical test pits was conducted on the western area of the site and a four trench evaluation undertaken on the eastern half. A sequence of subsoil overlying the natural deposits was recorded across the study site with no archaeological features or finds being observed during the exercise.
Project dates	Start: 06-11-2013 End: 04-02-2014
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	RNM13 - Sitecode
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status (other)	Archaeological Priority Zone
Current Land use	Vacant Land 3 - Despoiled land (contaminated derelict and ?brownfield? sites)
Monument type	NONE None
Significant Finds	NONE None
Methods & techniques	"Sample Trenches"
Development type	Housing estate
Prompt	Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPS
Position in the	After full determination (e.g. As a condition)

planning process

Project location

Country	England
Site location	GREATER LONDON BARKING AND DAGENHAM DAGENHAM Crown Street Motors, Dagenham
Postcode	RM10
Site coordinates	TQ 5020 8466 51.540321034 0.166105915481 51 32 25 N 000 09 57 E Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 5.95m Max: 6.94m

Project creators

Name	of Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited
Organisation	

Project	brief CgMs Consulting
originator	

Project	design Duncan Hawkins
originator	

Project	Tim Bradley
director/manager	

Project supervisor	Alexis Haslam/Paw /Guy Seddon
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Type	of Developer
sponsor/funding	
body	

Name	of Weston Homes
sponsor/funding	
body	

Project archives

Physical	Archive	No
Exists?		

Digital Archive Local Museum
recipient

Digital Contents "Stratigraphic", "Survey"

Digital Media "Spreadsheets", "Text"
available

Paper Archive Local Museum
recipient

Paper Media "Context sheet", "Photograph", "Section", "Unpublished Text"
available

Project bibliography 1

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

Title An Archaeological Evaluation on Land at Crown Street Motors,
Dagenham

Author(s)/Editor(s) Seddon, G.

Date 2014

Issuer or Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited
publisher

Place of issue or Brockley, London
publication

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