AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF AT AREA 3, PHASES 2A & 2B, EDWIN STREET, CANNING TOWN, NEWHAM, E16 1PZ

LONDON BOROUGH OF NEWHAM

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ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

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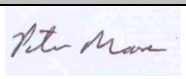
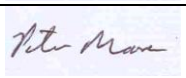
Graphics Checked by:	Peter Moore		4/2/15
Project Manager Sign-off:	Peter Moore		4/2/15

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An Archaeological Watching Brief at Area 3, Phases 2A & 2B, Edwin Street, Canning Town, London Borough of Newham, E16 1PZ

Site Code: EDN15

Central National Grid Reference: TQ 4018 8172

Written and Researched by Maria Buczak
Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited, February 2015

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Planning Application Number: 14/00232/VARDWG

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1 ABSTRACT

1.1 An archaeological watching brief was undertaken between 21st and 28th January 2015 at Area 3, Phases 2A & 2B, Canning Town, London Borough of Newham, by Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited, as part of the archaeological investigations on the ongoing regeneration of the area. This site consisted of a "C"-shaped block of land bounded by the A13 to the north, Fife Road to the south, Edwin Street to the west and the Keir Hardie School to the east. The watching brief was commissioned by Countryside Properties plc.

1.2 The watching brief was carried out on the deep excavations for services and road construction on a strip within the site which stretched east to west across the northern section of the site.

1.3 A probable field drainage ditch of unknown date, and a possible pit feature of unknown date, were observed. Natural deposits were also revealed during the excavation; a fairly uniform alluvial sequence lay above river terrace sands and gravels which sloped upwards from west to east.

1.4 The only other deposits encountered on site were modern layers of made ground and redeposited alluvium.

2 INTRODUCTION

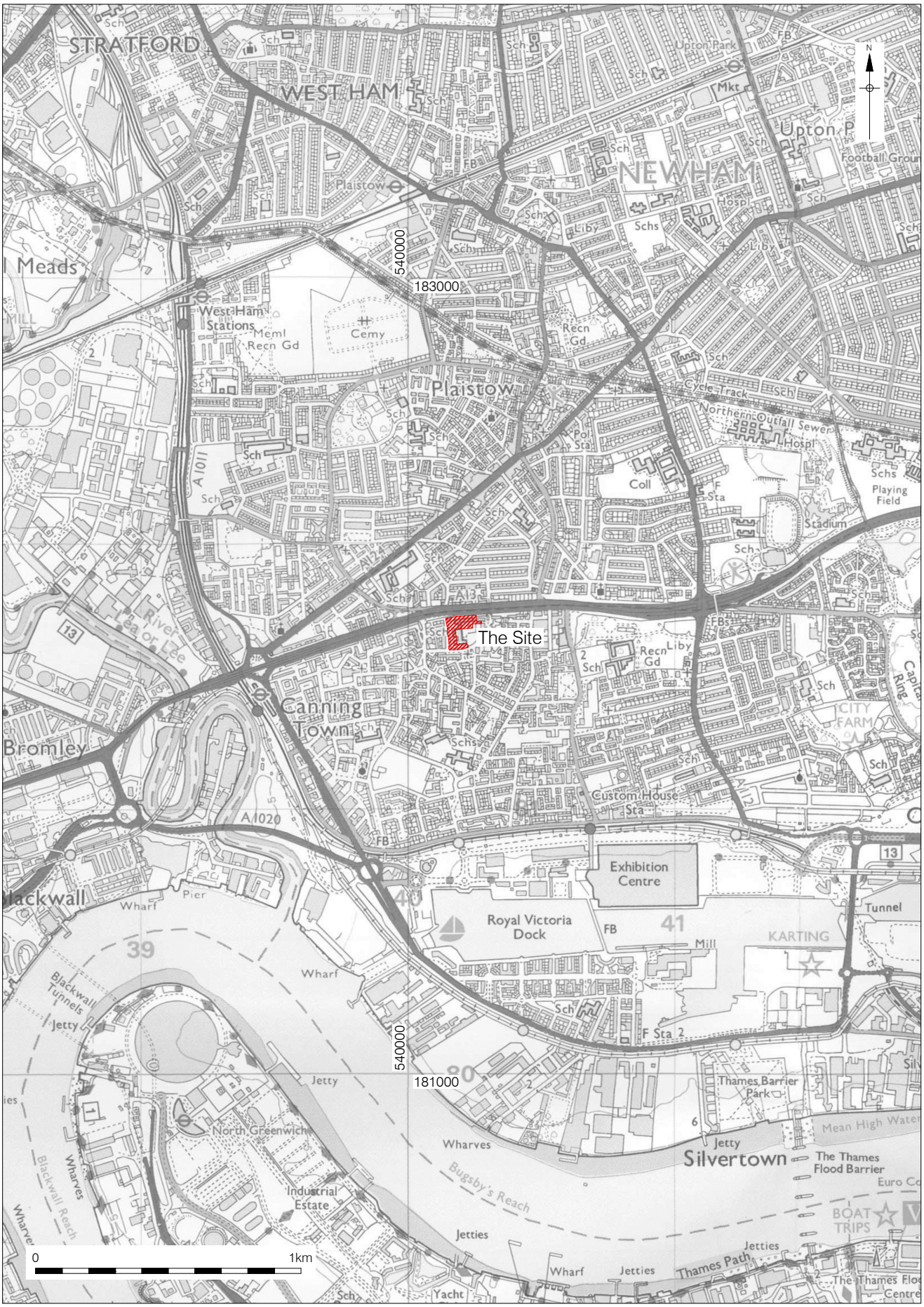
2.1 This report details the results and working methods of an archaeological watching brief undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd. on land at Area 3, Phase 2A 7 2B, Canning Town, London Borough of Newham (Figure 1) between 21st and 28th January 2015.

2.2 The boundaries of the site are defined by Newham Way (A13) to the north, Edwin Street to the west, Fife Road to the south, and the Keir Hardie School to the east. The archaeological watching brief established that because all foundations were to be piled, and that most service connections were to be made from existing services external to the site, that appropriate archaeological monitoring would most effectively be undertaken on the major works associated with the construction of a new road and the underlying new service routes right across the northern part of the site (Figure 2). The archaeological watching brief was undertaken on the excavation of a service and road corridor which was up to 5.7m wide, and 50m long, and up to 2.6m deep at the eastern end and 0.60m deep at the western end, giving a significant archaeological insight into the natures of the deposits and archaeology of the site.

2.3 The watching brief was commissioned by Countryside Properties plc; the project was managed for Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd. by Peter Moore and the supervising archaeologist was Maria Buczak. The project was monitored by Adam Single for English Heritage (GLAAS) on behalf of the London Borough of Newham.

2.4 The National Grid Reference of the site was centred at TQ 4023 8167.

2.5 The site was given the code EDN15.



30/01/2015 AMB

Figure 1
Site Location
1:20,000 at A4

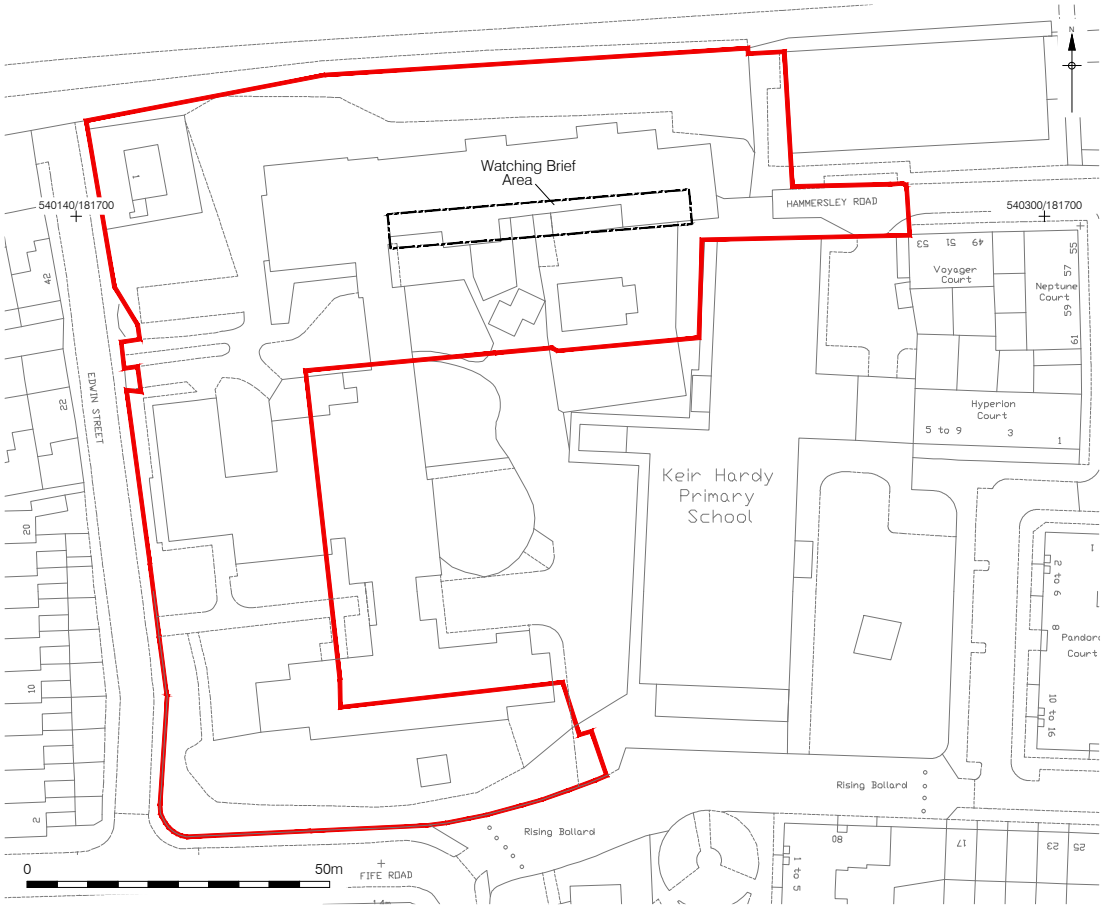


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Figure 2
Detailed Site Location
1:1,250 at A4

3 PLANNING BACKGROUND

3.1 **National Guidelines**

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 Chapter 12 of the NPPF concerns the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment, with the following statements being particularly relevant to the proposed development:

> 128. In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. Where a site on which development is proposed includes or has the potential to include heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation.
>
> 129. Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this assessment into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal

3.1.3 Additionally:

> 141. Local planning authorities should make information about the significance of the historic environment gathered as part of plan-making or development management publicly accessible. They should also require developers to record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost (wholly or in part) in a manner proportionate to their importance and the impact, and to make this evidence (and any archive generated) publicly accessible. However, the ability to record evidence of our past should not be a factor in deciding whether such loss should be permitted.

3.1.4 In considering any planning application for development, the local planning authority will now be guided by the policy framework set by the NPPF.

3.1.5 The NPPF also states that:

> 214. For 12 months from the day of publication, decision-takers may continue to give full weight to relevant policies adopted since 2004 even if there is a limited degree of conflict with this Framework.
>
> 215. In other cases and following this 12-month period, due weight should be given to relevant policies in existing plans according to their degree of consistency with this framework (the closer the policies in the plan to the policies in the Framework, the greater the weight that may be given).

3.1.6 The provisions set out in the new guidelines superseded the policy framework set out in previous government guidance namely Planning Policy Statement 5 (PPS 5) 'Planning for the Historic Environment'. Planning Policy Statement 5 had itself replaced Planning Policy Guidance Note 16, PPG 16, which was issued in November 1990 by the Department of the Environment.

3.1.7 Although the replacement of PPG 16 with PPS 5 gave new guidance the Unitary Development Plans of most local authorities still contain sections dealing with archaeology that are based on the provisions set out in PPG 16.. The key points in PPG16 can be summarised as follows:

3.1.8 Archaeological remains should be seen as a finite and non-renewable resource, and in many cases highly fragile and vulnerable to damage and destruction. Appropriate management is therefore essential to ensure that they survive in good condition. In particular, care must be taken to ensure that archaeological remains are not needlessly and thoughtlessly destroyed. They can contain irreplaceable information about our past and the potential for an increase in future knowledge. They are part of our sense of national identity and are valuable both for their own sake and for their role in education, leisure and tourism.

3.1.9 Where nationally important archaeological remains, whether scheduled or not, and their settings, are affected by a proposed development there should be a presumption in their physical preservation.

3.1.10 If physical preservation in situ is not feasible, an archaeological excavation for the purposes of 'preservation by record' may be an acceptable alternative. From an archaeological point of view, this should be as a second best option. Agreements should also provide for subsequent publication of the results of any excavation programme.

3.1.11 The key to informed and reasonable planning decisions is for consideration to be given early, before formal planning applications are made, to the question of whether archaeological remains are known to exist on a site where development is planned and the implications for the development proposal.

3.1.12 Planning authorities, when they propose to allow development which is damaging to archaeological remains, must ensure that the developer has satisfactorily provided for excavation and recording, either through voluntary agreement with archaeologists or, in the absence of agreement, by imposing an appropriate condition on the planning permission.

3.2 **Regional Guidance: The London Plan**

The over-arching strategies and policies for the whole of the Greater London area are contained within the Greater London Authority's London Plan (July 2011) which includes the following statement relating to archaeology:

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.

LDF preparation
F Boroughs should, in LDF policies, seek to maintain and enhance the contribution of built, landscaped and buried heritage to London's environmental quality, cultural identity and economy as part of managing London's ability to accommodate change and regeneration.

G Boroughs, in consultation with English Heritage, Natural England and other relevant statutory organisations, should include appropriate policies in their LDFs for identifying, protecting, enhancing and improving access to the historic environment and heritage assets and their settings where appropriate, and to archaeological assets, memorials and historic and natural landscape character within their area.

3.3 Local Planning Policy

3.3.1 This study aims to satisfy the objectives of the London Borough of Newham, which fully recognises the importance of the buried heritage for which they are the custodians. The Core Strategy of the Borough's Local Development Framework was adopted on the 26th of January 2012 and replaces the policies of the Unitary Development Plan. However, the Core Strategy contains no policies relating to archaeology; the relevant policy statements regarding the protection of the buried archaeological resource within the Borough are still the saved policies that form part of the UDP. These statements are outlined below:

ARCHAEOLOGY
Archaeology: Investigation, Excavation and Protection

3.114 Archaeological remains often provide the only evidence of the Borough's past. They are a finite and fragile resource very vulnerable to modern development and land use. The archaeology of the Borough is a community asset which should be preserved and the needs of development balanced and assessed against this. Early consideration of and consultation on archaeological issues will maximise preservation in accordance with PPG16. The destruction of such remains should be avoided if possible and either left in situ if the remains are of national or particular local interest, or excavated and recorded prior to development, where remains are of lesser importance. Site layouts designed to retain archaeological features intact will be considered favourably by the Council.

3.115 The Greater London Archaeology Advisory Service (GLAAS - part of English Heritage) provides impartial advice to Newham Council. Sites of potential archaeological importance, to which this policy relates, can be defined as any site within an Archaeological Priority Area (APA). APAs are defined by GLAAS as areas having particular interest or value (Please refer to Map EQ6), or as sites where it can reasonably be shown from existing sources of information (most notably the Greater London Sites and Monuments Record) that remains of archaeological importance may survive. For further information, please refer to SPG Note 'Archaeological Code of Practice'. An archaeological assessment (either a desk study or a preliminary field investigation) will normally be required for any development involving a site more than 0.4 acres within an APA. The Council will also require such an assessment for smaller sites within the APAs, and sites outside the APAs, where this is clearly justified by the archaeological sensitivity of the site. Developers should undertake early consultation with the Council, and recognised archaeological organisations such as GLAAS, to avoid uncertainty and later delays.

POLICY EQ43: The council will promote the conservation, protection and enhancement of the archaeological heritage of the borough. Developers of sites of potential archaeological importance will be

required to produce a written report, as part of the application for planning permission, on the results of an archaeological assessment or field evaluation carried out by a suitably qualified archaeological contractor; and when remains of importance are identified, the council will seek preservation of the remains in situ. On other important sites, where the balance of other factors is in favour of granting planning permission by means of the imposition of conditions on the grant of planning permission, and possibly by legal agreements, the council will ensure that adequate provision is made for the protection, excavation and recording of remains, and the subsequent publication of the records of excavation, providing a written account of the archaeological exploration, including records of finds.

3.116 The Council will promote co-operation between landowners, developers and archaeological organisations in accordance with the British Archaeologists' and Developers' Liaison Group Code.

3.4 Site Specific Background

3.4.1 Planning permission (Planning Ref 08/01599/FUL) has been granted for the proposed development at the site. A schedule of planning conditions has been issued, including Condition 35 which specifies that a programme of archaeological works is required in accordance with an approved Written Scheme of Investigation.

3.4.2 The implementation of the programme of archaeological work as preceded by the preparation of a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) which was submitted by PCA and approved by Mr Adam Single of the Greater London Archaeological Advisory Service, English Heritage acting in his capacity as advisor to the London Borough of Newham, prior to the excavation of the area.

3.4.3 The site is located within an Archaeological Priority Areas as defined by the London Borough of Newham's Unitary Development Plan. The areas defined as Archaeological Priority Areas can be seen by viewing the map located at: http://www.newham.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/5185AA23-7A1C-43BF-8753-D9CA8FCD0616/0/Archaelogical_Priority_AreasEQ6.pdf

3.4.4 The site does not contain, nor is adjacent to, any Scheduled Ancient Monuments.

4 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

4.1 Geology

4.1.1 The British Geological Survey shows the underlying solid geology of the site to consist of London Clay overlain by alluvium (clay, silts, peats and sands) and river terrace deposits (undifferentiated sand and gravel).

4.2 Topography

4.2.1 The site is located on an area of almost flat ground, which rises only very slightly from east to west. Ground level at the east end of the excavated trench was at a height of 1.68m OD, while ground level at the trench's western end lay at a height of 1.80m OD.

4.2.2 The site is located approximately half a mile east of Bow Creek and approximately two miles north of the Thames.

4.3 Landscape Features

4.3.1 The area of monitoring was situated within a much larger plot of land bounded by Newham Way to the north, Keir Hardie School to the east, Fife Road to the south and Edwin Street to the west. Once occupied by recently demolished flats, the area now comprises a flat featureless development site.

5 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 Most of the archaeological and historical background reproduced below came originally from the evaluation report of the adjacent site (Killock 2012).

5.2 **Prehistoric**

5.2.1 Two Palaeolithic handaxes are known from Prince Regent's Lane, Plaistow, northeast of the study site (MLO7966, TQ4100 8200), and another two from the River Lea, northwest of the study site (MLO22719, TQ4000 8200).

5.2.2 No finds of Mesolithic or Neolithic date are recorded from the immediate vicinity of the site. Environmental deposits, comprising peat and underlying organic rich sands, dated to the Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age, were identified at Canning Town station, south of the study site (MLO64387, TQ 3950 8110). Archaeological investigations before and during the construction of the Canning Town Junction (A13 Thames Gateway DBFO Road Scheme) found five broad sediment units, namely made ground over silt & clay, over Peat, over sands, clays & silts and sand & gravel. In the borehole nearest the study site (less that 500m to the northwest) the deposits indicated rising gravels, thickening peats and deepening made ground (Stafford et all, 2012). No direct evidence of any human activity was found during these investigations.

5.2.3 Bronze Age finds from the study area include a 'broadward' spearhead found in the Plaistow Marshes area before 1865 (MLO25406, TQ 4040 8140). Bronze Age peat deposits containing wood, burnt flint, and a fragment of pottery, were found at Butchers Row, southeast of the study site (MLO67684, MLO67685, TQ 4045 8146). Undated worked prehistoric flint, together with alluvial clays, peat and a watercourse, was discovered at the Elizabeth Fry School, north of the study site (MLO66983, MLO66984, MLO66985, TQ 3995 8256).

5.2.4 Excavations at the Beckton Golfers' site, c.2.5km to the east of the study site but in a similar topographical location, revealed peat deposits containing two phases of worked timber including a platform dating to the Early Bronze Age and a brushwood trackway dating to the Middle Bronze Age. The purpose of such structures was to facilitate access from the higher drier gravel terrace into the wetlands of the floodplain. The latter were exploited for sedges, rushes, fishing and wildfowling. The features at Beckton were found within the datum envelope -1.5m AOD to + 1.5m AOD

5.2.5 Overall while the archaeological potential of the site for the Bronze Age can therefore be defined as moderate/high, archaeological remains of this period are likely to occur as findspots and possibly as discrete features, rather than as widespread 'horizons' of activity.

5.2.6 A gold coin of Cunobelinus was found in Plaistow, north of the study site in 1866 (MLO24138, TQ4000 8250). Peat deposits dated to the Iron Age were identified at the Butcher's Row site, to the southeast of the study site (MLO67686, TQ 4045 8146), and a cremation burial was found at the Cumberland School, Alexandra Street, north of the study site (MLO76367, TQ 4000 8190).

5.2.7 Traditionally the Iron Age is not well evidenced elsewhere on the northern Thames floodplain, which is thought to be the result of environmental conditions, with much of the Iron Age corresponding with a period of prolonged marine transgression.

5.2.8 During the Archaeological Evaluation of Area 3, Phases C and D, on the study site, no direct evidence of prehistoric occupation was found. However, a layer of decayed vegetation above a sandy alluvial palaeosoil demonstrated a period of stabilisation in the marsh which had previously been the predominant feature of the local environment.

5.2.9 Although this organic layer yielded no features or artefacts that might have definitively demonstrated human activity on the site, the presence of prehistoric human activity in the area was hinted at by the occurrence of large charcoal fragments within the layer below; the ground surface where this vegetation formed. The palaeosoil had clearly been buried by alluvial deposition which marked the return of the higher water levels that have characterised the history of the area.

5.3 **Roman**

5.3.1 The Roman city of *Londinium* occupied an area that corresponds to the modern City of London, a small suburb located on the south side of the Roman bridge covered the area of north Southwark. No sizeable Roman settlements are located within the vicinity if the study site and the area would have formed part of the agricultural hinterland of Roman London.

5.3.2 Residual Roman pottery was found in a nineteenth century deposit at Prince Regent Lane north of the study site (MLO63572, TQ4114 8214). Two drainage/boundary ditches were identified at the Cumberland School, Alexandra Street, north of the study site, containing pottery and ceramic building material (CBM; MLO78043, TQ 4000 8190).

5.4 **Saxon**

5.4.1 There is no evidence for significant Saxon occupation in the vicinity of the site. The Middle Saxon centre of *Lundenwic* was established to the west of the abandoned Roman settlement of *Londinium* in the area of Covent Garden and the Strand[1]. The settlement was established in the 7th century and remained in this area during the 8th century before being abandoned in the mid-9th century due to the frequency of Viking attacks. Later Saxon occupation was centred on the re-settled City of London and the royal site as Westminster.

5.5 **Medieval**

5.5.1 A small number of chance finds from this period are recorded within a 1 kilometre radius of the study site. These include a Medieval iron lancehead from Canning Town in 1912 southwest of the study site (MLO25427, TQ 3950 8140). A 15th century iron spur was found in the Plaistow area prior to 1912 (MLO25428, TQ 4000 8200). A Medieval wooden drain, made from a tree trunk, was found at Hayday Road, Canning Town, northeast of the study site (MLO25429, TQ 4025 8195). An 11th or 12th century iron spur was found in Canning Town, southwest of the study site (MLO57245, TQ 3950 8140). Throughout the Medieval period the study area will have lain within the large tracts of marshland which dominated the area at this time.

5.6 **Post-Medieval**

5.6.1 John Rocque's Map of 1745, and the Chapman & Andre Map survey of 1777, both shows the study site lying within the 'Plaistow Level' marshland.

5.6.2 During the Archaeological Evaluation of Area 3, Phases C and D, on the study site, a ditch feature was encountered which was probably once a field drainage ditch within the marsh. The date it was initially excavated is unknown but artefacts from its fill suggest it was still being backfilled in the 18th century or later.

5.6.3 Clayton's Map of 1821 shows the line of the Barking Road running northeast from Bow Creek. No development has taken place within the study site.

5.6.4 The First Edition Ordnance Survey (1867) shows the bulk of the study site to remain within Plaistow Marshes. Edwin Street has been laid out along the western boundary.

5.6.5 During the 1860s, Cherry Island, a small market-garden partly surrounded by marsh ditches, was developed. It would have occupied the area now bounded by Newham Way, Edwin Street, Fife Road and Forty Acres Lane, thus just outside the western boundary of the study site. Around 1868, Bradley and Thomas Streets were lain out and a number of squalid cottages were built on Cherry Island, reportedly a nuisance to the local board. Far more favourable was a clean and orderly gipsy camp which also existed on Cherry Island, but which must have disappeared by 1894, as the 1984 Ordinance Survey map shows housing now occupying Cherry Island (Sainsbury, 1986).

5.6.6 The Second Edition Ordnance Survey (1894) shows the extent of development within the marsh. Corner Street and Richard Street have been laid out within the northwest corner of the study site, fronted by terraced houses and a school. Fife Road, through the middle of the site, has been laid out and named, and the line of Watford Road has been laid out also. The eastern side and the southwest corner of the site however remain undeveloped.

5.6.7 The Third Edition Ordnance Survey (1919) shows the study site fully developed. In addition to the streets present on the previous map, Watford Road, Charford Road, Totnes Road and Exeter Road now occupy the eastern side of the study site. All of these streets are shown fronted by terraced houses, save for the southern part of Edwin Street and the western part of Richard Street, which remain open. The subsequent Revised Ordnance Survey (1935) shows no changes within the study site.

5.6.8 The part of Canning Town between Silvertown Road to the west, Freemasons Road to the east and Royal Dock Road to the south, within which lies the entire study site, is known to have suffered significant bombing damage during World War Two.

5.6.9 The Archaeological Evaluation carried out in Area 3, Phases C and D, of the study site encountered areas of heavily scorched ground sealed by an extensive layer of charcoal which were almost certainly attributable to the effects of wartime bombing and associated fire damage.

5.6.10 The 1952 Ordnance Survey demonstrates the extent of this destruction; small sections of terraced housing survive on Edwin Street, Richard Street, Charford Road, Totnes Road and Exeter Road. The 1954 Ordnance Survey shows the creation of the Keir Hardie County Primary School in the northwest corner of the study site, the removal of Corner and Richard Streets, and the presence of an electricity substation on Fife Road.

5.6.11 The Archaeological Evaluation carried out in Area 3, Phases C and D, of the study site encountered areas of heavily scorched ground sealed by an extensive layer of charcoal which were almost certainly attributable to the effects of this wartime bombing and associated fire damage.

5.6.12 The 1959 Ordnance Survey shows the redevelopment of the eastern side of the study site, including the foreshortening of Watford Road, Totnes Road, Exeter Road and South Molton Road and the creation of Lowe Avenue. New housing is shown fronting the above roads.

5.6.13 The 1970 Ordnance Survey shows the replacement of the remaining pre-war terraced housing with low rise blocks, and high rise blocks including Wood Point and Pattinson Point. Totnes Road and Charford Road have been replaced by a central open area. Garages are positioned close to Richard Street to the north and north of Exeter Road to the south of the study site.

5.7 Previous Archaeological Investigations

5.7.1 As mentioned above, the archaeological evaluation of the adjacent Area 3, Phases C and D, on the study site encountered evidence for wartime bombing and fire damage, a post-medieval drainage ditch and a prehistoric land surface during a period of stabilisation in the marsh with suggestions, albeit no definitive evidence, of human activity upon it.

5.7.2 An earlier archaeological evaluation undertaken in Area 3, Phases 1A and 1B (Langthorne, 2010) and a still earlier watching brief carried out in Area 3, Blocks 1, 2, 4 and 5 (Pullen and Humphrey, 2008) revealed no evidence for human activity on the site.

5.7.3 Together, these results suggest a generally low probability of encountering archaeological remains on the site, no doubt due to its long-lived status as an marshland, and the subsequent deep impact of modern development after the area was drained.

6 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

6.1 Methods

6.1.1 The excavation of a 50m long by maximum 5.7m wide trench for the construction of new service routes beneath a new east-west road across the northern part of the site was to be archaeologically monitored because it offered the only clear excavation across the site which extended into made ground on a significant scale, and sufficiently beneath made ground to examine the full sequence of deposits on the site.

6.1.2 The trench was not excavated to a uniform depth across its length or breadth, due to the varying need to step (or not) the trench for safety due to the soil conditions, and because different formation depths were required for the various services. The trench was stepped at roughly 0.60m-0.80m intervals below ground level, then reduced further, until roughly 1.50m below ground level, before three narrower trenches within the overall trench (each 0.65m wide) were then excavated to their individual formation levels.

6.1.3 The trench was also dug progressively shallower from east to west. Thus, the impact of excavations varied from only 0.60m below ground level at the west from a maximum of 2.60m below ground level to the east.

6.1.4 The entire trench was also not opened completely in one go; rather, small sections were opened and backfilled progressively.

6.1.5 The excavation was carried out by a mechanical excavator using a toothless ditching bucket under the supervision of an archaeologist.

6.1.6 During machine excavation, any discrete archaeological features encountered were cleaned and evaluated by hand tools and recorded in plan at 1:50 or in section at 1:10 or 1:20 using standard single context recording methods. Photographs were also taken as appropriate.

6.2 Excavations

6.2.1 The table below summarises the dimensions of the archaeologically monitored area:

Trench	N-S	E-W	Maximum Depth
1	5.70m	50m	-0.92m OD

6.2.2 Natural deposits (alluvial layers and river terrace deposits) were encountered along the entire length of the trench, but London Clay was not reached.

7 ARCHAEOLOGICAL DESCRIPTION

7.1 Natural Deposits

7.2 River Terrace Deposits (Figure 4)

7.2.1 A sandy gravel layer [3], representing natural river terrace deposits, was observed at a level of -0.47m OD at the eastern end of the trench. The surface of this deposit sloped gradually down towards the west for approximately 9.70m until it disappeared completely below the excavation depth limit at -0.92m OD. This pattern of rising gravels from west to east was also observed during the 2012 Archaeological Evaluation on this site (Killock, 2012) and reflects the continuation of the rising gravels seen at the A13 Canning Town investigations.

7.2.2 Between 8m and 10m along the trench from its eastern end, this natural sand and gravel deposit was additionally observed rising from north to south. This probably represents the proximity of the edge of the terrace gravels roughly parallel to the A13.

7.3 Alluvial Deposits (Figure 4; Plates 1-2)

7.3.1 A layer of clayey sand [6] was occasionally observed at the base of the trench in the more deeply excavated areas in the western half of the trench. It is a natural alluvial layer comprising fine sediments which indicate slow-moving low-energy water deposition.

7.3.2 The surface of this deposit was encountered at levels of between -0.66m OD and -0.10m OD but was encountered too infrequently and sporadically to be able to confidently propose any kind of pattern to its slope, or lack thereof.

7.3.3 A light greyish brown silty clay alluvium [2] was encountered across the entire length of the trench, lying above both river gravels [3] and sandy alluvium [6]. The very fine nature of its sediments again suggest it may have been the result of slow-moving low-energy water deposition.

7.3.4 The surface of this deposit was encountered at levels of 0.70m OD in the west sloping down to -0.22m OD in the east, as modern layer [1] above impacted progressively deeper from west to east. Only 0.40m thick in the east, it became gradually thicker towards the west as the river gravels below it sloped down, reaching a maximum thickness of 0.90m in the west where it was also observed to continue below the excavation depth.

7.4 Natural Fluvial features (Figure 4)

7.4.1 Between around 10m and 20m from the east end of the trench, an interruption in the usual alluvial sequence was observed; greyish brown alluvial layer [2] appeared to be disturbed by a large feature, albeit with sometimes poorly defined edges. This feature [12] was filled exclusively by natural, clean alluvial deposits (clayey sand [11], bluish-grey gravelly clay [4] and greyish brown silty clay [5]) indicating a natural, fluvial feature; perhaps the edge of a palaeochannel.

7.4.2 The more coarsely-grained sediments comprising some of its fills suggest that, at least at some points, it may have relatively fast-flowing. Its upper fill was encountered at approximately 0.20m OD and the feature had a maximum depth of 0.80m, although it too continued below the excavation depth limit.

7.5 Archaeological Features

7.6 Drainage Ditch [8] (Figure 3; Plate 3)

7.6.1 A linear feature [8] with a fill of redeposited alluvium [7] was observed truncating alluvium [2] in the western half of the trench. Aligned north-south, it was 1.95m wide and reached a maximum depth of 0.80m but continued below the excavation depth limit. Its surface was encountered at a level of 0.36m OD.

7.6.2 The absence of artefacts or cultural inclusions within its fill means it cannot be definitively demonstrated to be cultural, however its very regular shape and clearly defined edges suggest a man-made feature.

7.6.3 Probably a field drainage ditch within the marsh, its date is unknown. A probable drainage ditch also aligned north-south was found during the 2012 Archaeological Evaluation on this site; its date of excavation was unclear but it appears it was still being backfilled during the 18th century or later.

7.7 Possible Pit [10] (Figure 3; Plate 4)

7.7.1 A sub-circular feature [10] with a sandy, leached fill [9] was also encountered in the western half of the trench at a level of 0.60m OD. The absence of cultural inclusions and artefacts in its fill again make it impossible to definitively prove a cultural origin, while its poorly-defined shape in plan might be suggestive of a cultural feature, for instance a tree bole. A cursory investigation with hand tools, however, proved its edges to be quite clearly-defined, suggesting it is man-made.

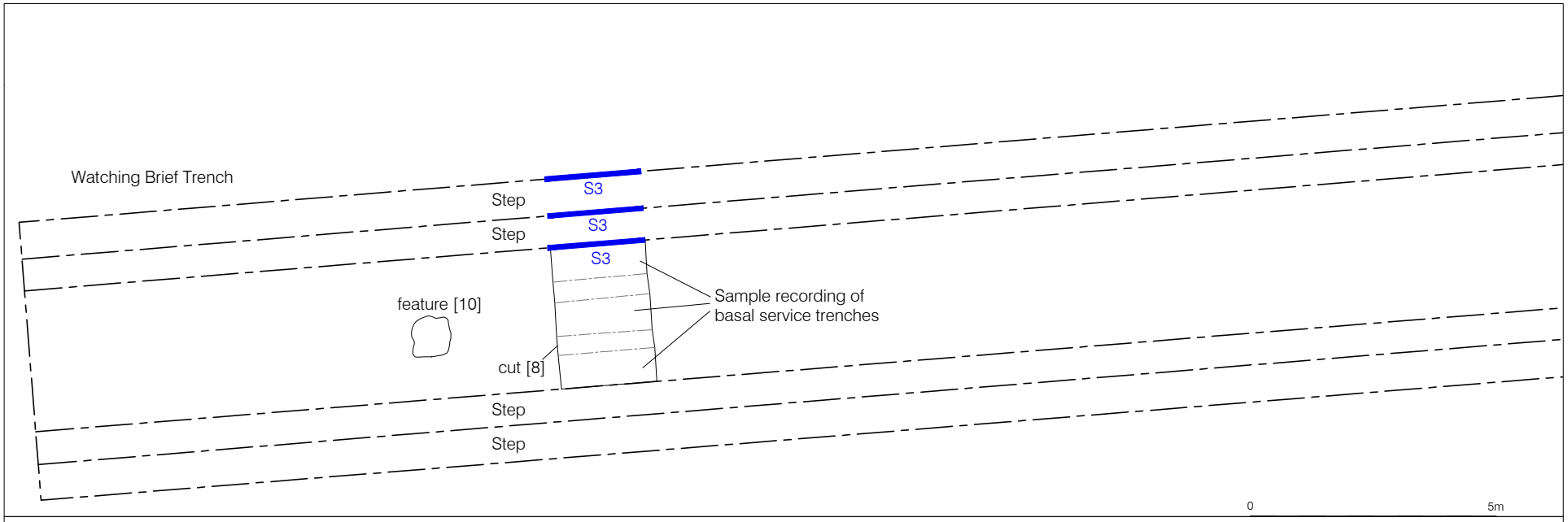
7.7.2 Only 0.65m (E-W) x 0.70m (N-S) and 0.30m deep, it could be a small pit. Its purpose and date are unknown, although its leached fill might be suggestive of quite an early date, possibly even prehistoric.

7.8 Modern deposits (Plates 1-2)

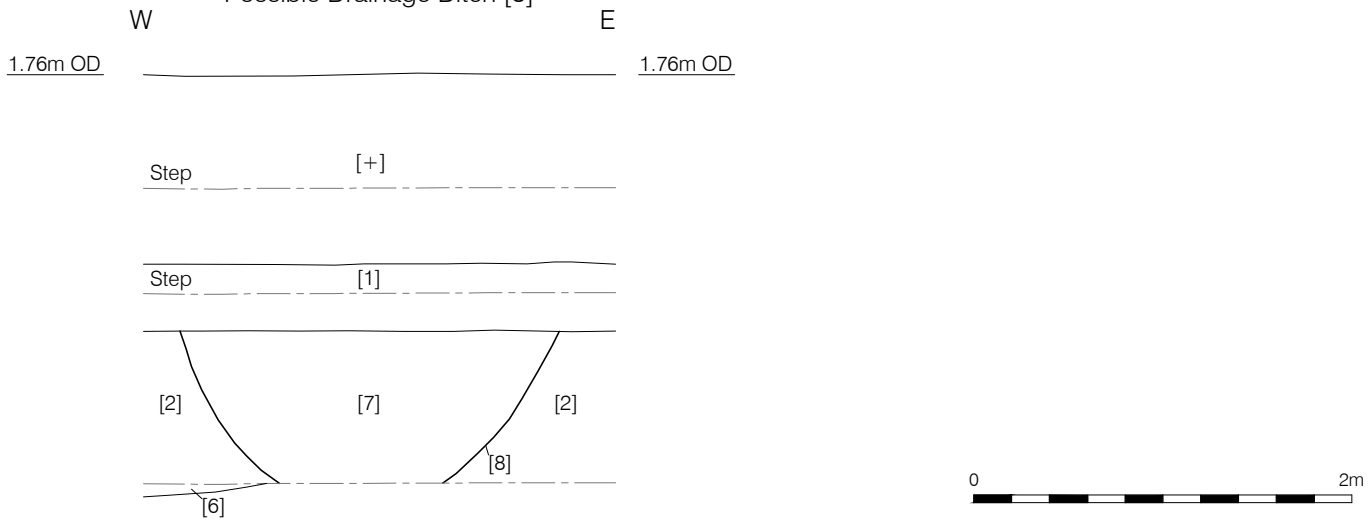
7.8.1 All features and alluvial layers were sealed by a thin layer (about 0.30m thick) of light brownish-grey silty clay [1]. Although similar in consistency to the natural alluvium [2] below, its darker colour and the presence of very recent plastic and ceramic artefacts prove it to be a very modern layer of redeposited ground, evidently relating to relatively recent development of the site. This layer impacts slightly deeper as one progresses along the trench from west to east.

7.8.2 Finally, [1] was sealed by a thick layer (1.25m thick on average) of loose rubble; modern made ground [+].

7.8.3 No features or artefacts were present which could be associated with any peripheral activity to the Cherry Island settlement.

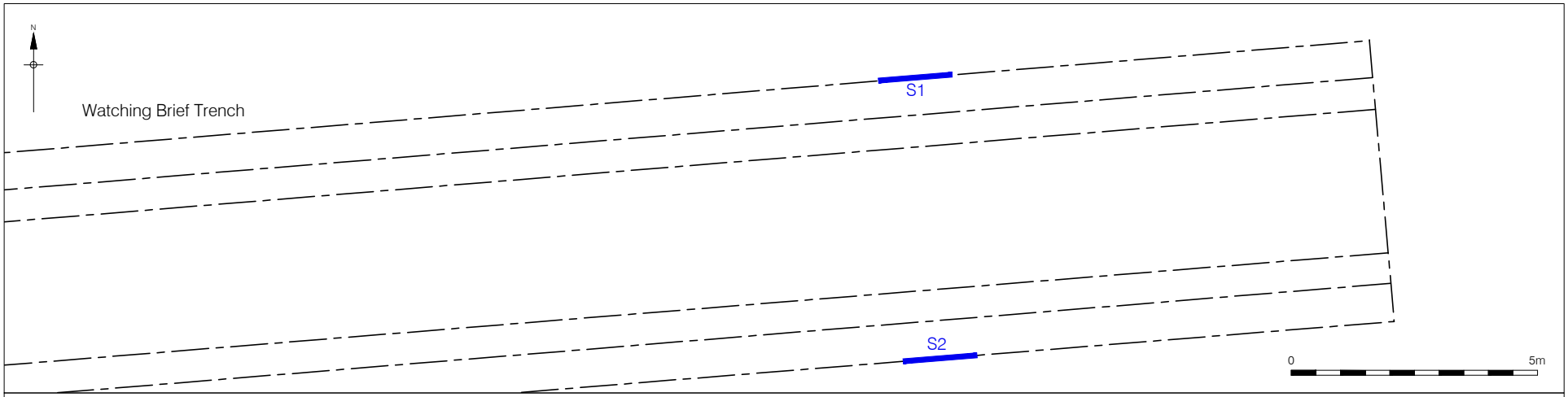


S3: South Facing Section Showing
Possible Drainage Ditch [8]

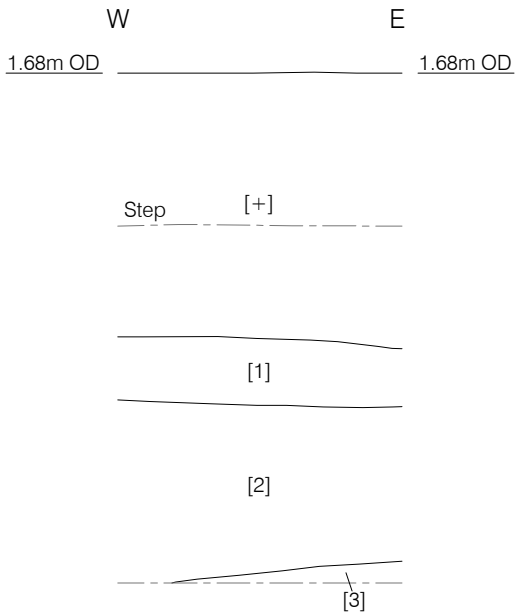


30/01/2015 AMB

Figure 3
Plan of Features 8 and 10; Section 3
Plan 1:125; Section 1:40 at A4



S1: South Facing
Representative Section



S2: North Facing
Representative Section

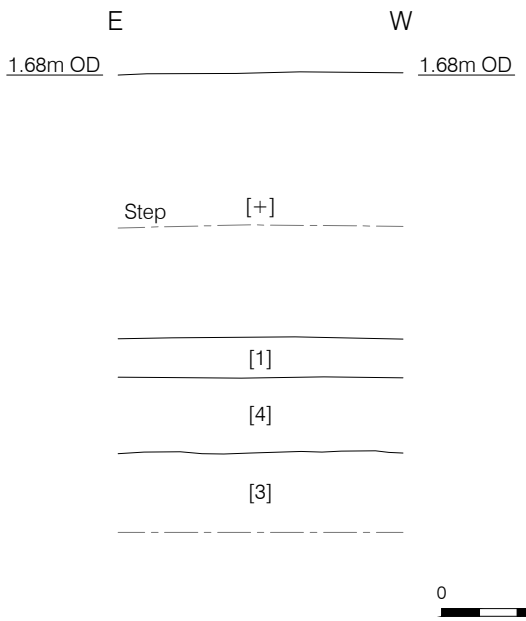


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Figure 4
Sections 1 and 2
Plan 1:125; Sections 1:40 at A4

Plate 2 – South Facing Section showing usual sequence of deposits encountered in the Trench – modern layers above alluvial layer [2]

Plate 3 – Ditch [8] visible in South Facing section

Plate 4 – North Facing view of possible Pit [10]

8 INTERPRETATION AND CONCLUSIONS

8.1 Interpretation

8.1.1 River terrace sands and gravels slope up from west to east, a pattern in keeping with that found elsewhere on site and reflecting a continuation of rising gravels seen at the A13 Canning Town investigations.

8.1.2 Natural sands and gravels are overlain by a largely undifferentiated sequence of alluvial deposits. This sequence is disturbed only by the observed archaeological features and in just one instance by some kind of fluvial feature.

8.1.3 Only two possible cultural features were encountered on site; a field drainage ditch which probably ran within the marsh and a small possible pit feature, both of unknown date. Both appear to be cultural but cannot be definitively proved to be so owing to their lack of cultural inclusions or artefacts.

8.1.4 All features and alluvial deposits are immediately overlain by modern layers of redeposited alluvium, and loose made ground.

8.1.5 Excepting the two features mentioned above, no other evidence for human activity beyond the most recent modern period was observed. This is no doubt due to the fact that the study site was unsuitable for use for most of the archaeological past as it lay within the Plaistow Marshes until the 19th century when it was reclaimed.

8.2 Conclusions

8.2.1 This watching brief has demonstrated that some probable cultural features, albeit of unknown date, are present on the site, and thus that there is the potential for more in the vicinity. However, overall, the evidence for human activity in this area is very minimal beyond the most recent modern era, both due to the deep impact of modern development and the land's former state as marshland for most of the archaeological past.

9 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

9.1 Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited would like to thank Countryside Properties plc for commissioning the work, especially Richard Reeves for commissioning the work and David Taylor the Site Manager, for his support and help. We would also like to thank project architect Nick Hutton, Shepeard Epstein Hunter, for his help throughout.

9.2 The author would like to thank Adela Murray-Brown for the figures, and Peter Moore for project management and editing.

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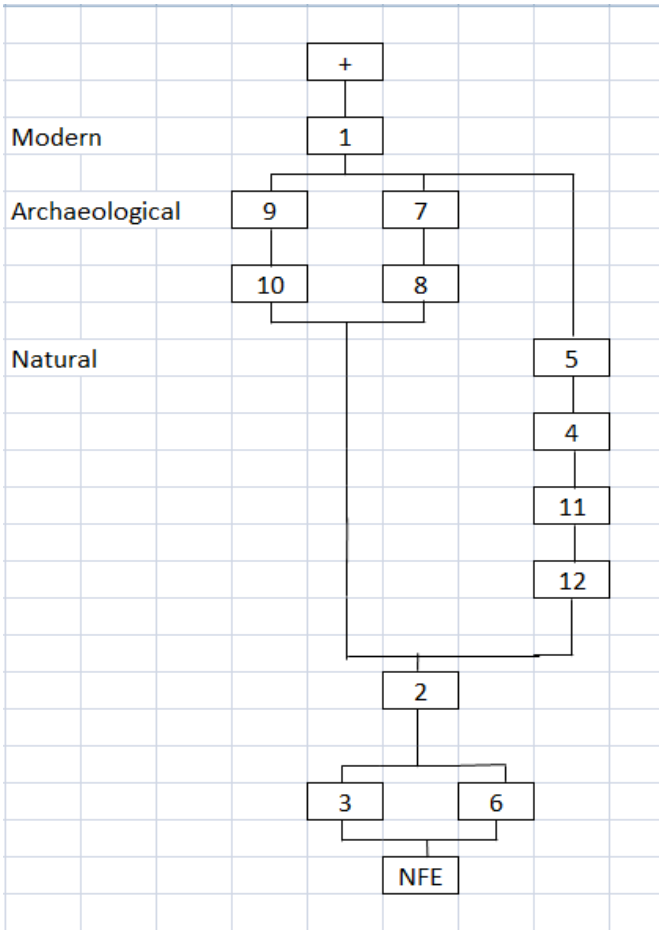
APPENDIX 1 – CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

Context	Grid Square/Trench	Type	Description
1	TR 1	Layer	Redeposited alluvium (modern)
2	TR 1	Layer	Brownish grey silty clay alluvium
3	TR 1	Layer	Natural sandy gravel
4	TR 1	Fill	Gravelly clay fill of [12]
5	TR 1	Fill	Silty clay fill of [12]
6	TR 1	Layer	Clayey sand alluvium
7	TR 1	Fill	Fill of [8]
8	TR 1	Cut	Drainage ditch
9	TR 1	Fill	Leached fill of [10]
10	TR 1	Cut	Possible pit cut
11	TR 1	Fill	Clayey sand fill of [12]
12	TR 1	Cut	Fluvial feature

APPENDIX 2 – SITE MATRIX



APPENDIX 3 – OASIS REPORTING FORM

10.1 OASIS ID: preconst1-202159

Project details

Project name	An Archaeological Watching Brief at Area 3 Phases 2A and 2B, Canning Town
Short description of the project	An archaeological watching brief was undertaken between 21st and 28th January 2015 at Area 3, Phases 2A and 2B, Canning Town, London Borough of Newham, by Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited, as part of the archaeological investigations on the ongoing regeneration of the area. This site consisted of a
Project dates	Start: 21-01-2015 End: 28-01-2015
Previous/future work	Yes / No
Any associated project reference codes	EDN15 - Sitecode
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	Local Authority Designated Archaeological Area
Current Land use	Vacant Land 1 - Vacant land previously developed
Monument type	DITCH Uncertain
Monument type	PIT Uncertain
Significant Finds	POT Modern
Investigation type	"Watching Brief"
Prompt	Planning condition

Project location

Country	England
Site location	GREATER LONDON NEWHAM CANNING TOWN Area 3, Phases 2A, and 2B Edwin Street, Canning Town, Newham
Postcode	E16 1PZ
Study area	1000.00 Square metres
Site coordinates	TQ 4018 8172 51.516484034 0.0205324644891 51 30 59 N 000 01 13 E Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: -0.92m Max: 0.70m

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited
Project brief originator	GLAAS
Project design originator	Peter Moore
Project director/manager	Peter Moore
Project supervisor	Maria Buczak

Type of sponsor/funding body	Developer
Name of sponsor/funding body	Countryside Properties plc

Project archives

Physical Archive recipient	LAARC
Physical Contents	"Ceramics"
Digital Archive recipient	LAARC
Digital Contents	"Stratigraphic","Survey"
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography","Spreadsheets","Survey","Text"
Paper Archive recipient	LAARC
Paper Contents	"Stratigraphic"
Paper Media available	"Context sheet","Drawing","Matrices","Photograph","Plan","Report","Section","Unpublished Text"

Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	An Archaeological Watching Brief at Area 3, Phases 2A and 2B, Edwin Street, Canning Town, London Borough of Newham, E16
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Buczak, M.
Other bibliographic details	R11972
Date	2015
Issuer or publisher	PCA
Place of issue or publication	London
Description	Unpublished client report
URL	http://www.oasis.ac.uk

Entered by	Peter Moore (pmoore@pre-construct.com)
Entered on	4 February 2015

11 OASIS:

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Cite only: http://www.oasis.ac.uk/form/print.cfm for this page

11.1

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